

II. THE GALILEAN MINISTRY 1:14—9:50

A. THE FIRST PERIOD 1:14—3:12

1. THE BEGINNING OF HIS MINISTRY 1:14, 15

TEXT 1:14, 15

Now after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: Repent ye, and believe the gospel.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 1:14, 15

24. What events occurred between the temptation in the wilderness and the imprisonment of John the Baptist? Cf. John chapters two through five.
25. Into what particular part of Galilee did Jesus come?
26. In what sense did Jesus preach the gospel? i.e. What was the good news He preached?
27. Why repentance before faith?
28. What time was fulfilled?
29. What is the Kingdom of God?

COMMENT

TIME—April, A. D. 28. We shall consider the incidents in detail in a later section. Suffice to say here that there was a year and one half lapse of time between the temptation of Jesus and the imprisonment of John the Baptist.

PLACE—Probably Nazareth and Capernaum. Cf. Luke 4:14; also Luke 4:16-32; Matt. 4:12-17.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Read Matt. 4:12-17; Luke 4:14, 15; John 4:1-3, 43-45.

OUTLINE—1. Jesus preaches. 2. His message.

ANALYSIS

- I. JESUS PREACHES. VS. 14A
 1. The time of His preaching.
 2. The place of His preaching.
- II. HIS MESSAGE. 14B, 15
 1. Gospel of God.
 2. Time fulfilled.
 3. Kingdom of God is at hand.
 4. Repent and believe.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. JESUS PREACHES—14A

Mark omits the marriage at Cana—our Lord's first Passover— his dis-

course with Nicodemus and John's testimonies of him,—passing promptly to our Lord's public, official ministry.

Do not fail to note that Christ begins to preach when John ceases.

Galilee. The light of his gospel was to spring up upon the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali. See Matt. 4:13. He would also go out of the jurisdiction of Herod, who had imprisoned John. Galilee was the northern division of Palestine, and was divided into Upper and Lower Galilee—the former called also "Galilee of the Gentiles."

Preaching the gospel, etc. How beautifully Mark here describes our Lord's first preaching, as distinct from John's, which was under the law, and a mere heralding of something better to come. The substance of this discourse was the good tidings of the kingdom having come, as spoken of by Daniel, 2:44. And this is the very message which Isaiah sees the messenger publishing, as he comes with beautiful (or timely) feet upon the mountains, (Isa. 52:7) viz. the advent of the kingdom of God. Christ preached the "good news" of his kingdom of grace—the new dispensation in which he was to reign. They had other ideas of his kingdom, that it was temporal and consisted in earthly power and show.

15. *The time, etc.* The period mentioned by the prophets when Christ was to appear. The nation had expectations of the Messiah about this time. The seventy weeks of Daniel (or 490 years) were now accomplished. The time and place of our Lord's birth agreed with the interpretations of prophecy common among the Jews.

Repent ye, etc. John preached repentance. So did Christ, but not without the gospel as the burden of his preaching. He preached repentance and faith. They were commanded to turn from sin and from all their false views, and to embrace the gospel.

FACT QUESTIONS 1:14, 15

39. At what approximate date did the preaching of Jesus occur?
40. What was the time lapse between the temptation of Jesus and His preaching in Galilee?
41. In what towns of Galilee did He preach?
42. What prophecy was fulfilled in His preaching in Galilee? Cf. Matt. 4:13.
43. How did Daniel 2:44 and Isa. 52:7 relate to the message of Jesus?
44. What is repentance? How did it relate to the persons who heard Christ's message? i.e. of what did they repent?

2. THE CALL OF THE FISHERMEN. 1:16-20

TEXT 1:16-20

And passing along by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew

the brother of Simon casting a net in the sea; for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they left the nets, and followed him. And going on a little further, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending the nets. And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after him.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 1:16-20

30. Was this the first time Jesus had seen Simon and Andrew? Cf. John 1:25-35.
31. In what specific manner did Jesus keep His promise to make fishers of men? i.e. what elements were involved in the process?
32. Compare Luke 5:1-11 and tell why these two were so willing to immediately leave their nets and follow him.
33. Please notice the type of men called by Jesus to be his followers, and later his apostles. Does this give hope to us?
34. Why did these men leave their business to follow one who offered them no money?

COMMENT 1:16-20

TIME—April, A. D. 28

PLACE—Along the sea of Galilee near Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Read Matt. 4:18-22; Luke 5:1-11

OUTLINE—1. The place and persons of the call of the master vs. 16. 2. The call to man-fishing vs. 17. 3. The immediate response vs. 18. 4. Two more to answer the call. vs. 19. 5. They left the nets to others and they went after him. vs. 20.

ANALYSIS

- I. THE PLACE AND PERSONS OF THE CALL. VS. 16.
 1. By the shore of the sea of Galilee.
 2. Simon and Andrew—fishermen.
- II. THE CALL TO MAN-FISHING, VS. 17.
 1. From Jesus personally.
 2. Obtain by following Him.
- III. THE IMMEDIATE RESPONSE. VS. 18.
 1. Left nets.
 2. Followed Him.
- IV. TWO MORE TO ANSWER THE CALL. VS. 19.
 1. Just a little way from where He called Simon and Andrew.
 2. Not fishing but mending nets.
- V. NETS LEFT TO OTHERS—THEY WENT AFTER HIM. VS. 20.
 1. Immediate answer to an immediate (urgent) call.
 2. Left father and work (and money) to follow Him.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Observe the Harmony. The fact of our Lord's first gaining disciples when John first points him out to two of his followers, is recorded in John 1:25-35. Simon and Andrew were then first made acquainted with Christ, and this explains their prompt compliance here. After their first call, they had continued in their worldly business. This is the further call to attend upon Christ in his ministry, leaving all and following him wheresoever he went. There is still a further call to the Apostleship, with ordination, ch. 3:14. The accounts in Matthew and Mark are almost in the same words. Luke is more full, and gives us the narrative of a miracle which Christ wrought at this time; which throws light upon Mark's more brief statement here. It is worthy of note, that this miracle, so full of meaning, was twice wrought by our Lord; both now, when he called them to their work, and at the last, when he was about to leave them. John 21:6. And in both cases, he would show by it how he could and would make their work successful. See Eze. 47:10; Jer. 16:16. He who could make them from *fishermen* to become *fishers of men*, could make them catch men in their new work as easily and abundantly as now he could make them catch fish. So our Lord uses the figure of a net. Matt. 13:41.

20. *Hired servants*. This would intimate that they were not of the poorest class.

FACT QUESTIONS 1:16-20

45. When and where did the calling of the four occur?
46. Read carefully Matt. 4:18-22 and Luke 5:1-11 and see if these are indeed parallel accounts—some feel they are not—what do *you* believe?
47. Read John 1:25-35 and show how it relates to this incident.
48. State the *three* calls of Christ to these men.
49. Why the miracle of the draught of fish? Why given twice? Cf. John 21:6.
50. Why mention the hired servants as in vs. 20?

3. A SABBATH IN THE LIFE OF JESUS 1:21-34

TEXT 1:21-34

And they go into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught. And they were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes. And straightway there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying, what have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Nazarene? Art thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And the unclean spirit, tearing him

and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What is this? a new teaching! With authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him. And the report of him went out straightway everywhere into all the region of Galilee round about.

And straightway, when they were come out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and straightway they tell him of her and he came and took her by the hand, and raised her up; and the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were sick, and them that were possessed with demons. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many demons; and he suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 1:21-34

35. Who went into Capernaum?
36. Why use the word "straightway" in vs. 21?
37. How did Jesus have such ready access to teaching in the synagogue?
38. From what did Jesus teach?
39. Didn't everyone teach from the same source of authority? Why then the astonishment?
40. How did the scribes teach without authority?
41. When did the possessed man cry out? i.e. How soon?
42. Why did the demon cry out?
43. In what sense was the evil spirit "unclean"?
44. In what sense could Jesus destroy the evil spirit? Aren't they immortal?
45. Why did Jesus rebuke the evil Spirit? Wasn't the testimony of the demon true?
46. What is meant by the expression "tearing him"?
47. Who cried with a loud voice, the demon or the man?
48. Why refer to casting out of the evil spirit as a teaching?
49. Upon what basis was the popularity of Jesus built?
50. Did Jesus have a home in Capernaum? Why go to the house of Simon and Andrew?
51. Please note the miraculous elements in the raising of Peter's mother-in-law. List them.
52. Why wait until the setting of the sun to bring the sick?
53. What percent were healed?
54. Why not let the demons speak?

COMMENT

TIME—The incidents of this lesson are assigned by the best authorities to May A.D. 28, in the second year of the Lord's ministry. Mark does not adhere to the chronological order.

PLACE—At Capernaum, on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, a city of about 30,000 inhabitants, called the Lord's "own city," because he made his earthly home there. It has disappeared so completely that even its site is unknown, some identifying it with the ruins of Tel Hum on the north, and others at Khan Minyeh on the west of the sea.

CONNECTING HISTORY—According to Andrews the interval in the ministry of Christ between the Baptism and the present section contains the following events:

January, A.D. 27. The fast in the wilderness and the temptation.

February, A.D. 27. Jesus returns from the wilderness of temptation to Bethabara, where John bears testimony to him (John 1:15-37).

February, A.D. 27. Here Jesus gains his first disciples, Philip, Andrew, and Peter, who belonged in Bethsaida of Galilee, and all return to Galilee (John 1:38-51).

March, A.D. 27. Jesus performs his first miracle at Cana (John 2:1-11).

March, A.D. 27. Goes to Capernaum for a few days (John 2:12, 13).

April 11-18, A.D. 27. Goes to Jerusalem to the first passover of his public ministry.

April, A.D. 27. Drives the money-changers from the temple (John 2:14-35).

April, A.D. 27. Conversation with Nicodemus (John 3:1-21).

May to September, A.D. 27. Preaching and baptizing in Judea (John 4:2).

Autumn, A.D. 27. Driven from Judea by Pharisees, he leaves for Galilee (John 4:1-3).

December, A.D. 27. Going through Samaria, he talks with the woman by Jacob's well (John 4:4-42.) Heals nobleman's son (John 4:46-54).

January to March, A.D. 28. Period of retirement in Galilee. John the Baptist imprisoned (Matt. 4:12).

March 30 to April 5, A.D. 28. Attends Passover at Jerusalem. Cure of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda (John 5).

April, A.D. 28. Returns to Galilee (Luke 4:14. Matt. 4:12); preaches at Nazareth, his early home; but being rejected there (Luke 4:16-32), he goes to Capernaum, where he makes his home (Matt. 4:12-17). Then follows the incident of our present study.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—The general view of Christ's ministry given (vers. 14, 15) is related also in Matt. 4:17, and Luke 4:14, 15. Then come in the accounts of his Galilean ministry found in John 4:46-54, followed

by Luke 4:16-31. Vers. 16-20 are reported in Matt. 4:18-22, Luke 5:1-11; and vers. 21-28 in Luke 4:31-37.

OUTLINE—1. *Teaching in the Synagogue.* 2. *The Unclean Spirit Cast Out.* 3. *The Great Healer at Work.*

ANALYSIS

- I. TEACHING IN THE SYNAGOGUE, VS. 21, 22.
 - 1. The Great Teacher in the Synagogue. Mark 1:21; Luke 4:33.
 - 2. Astonished at His Doctrine. Mark 1:22.
- II. THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT CAST OUT, VS. 23-28.
 - 1. The Man with the Unclean Spirit. Mark 1:23; Luke 4:34, 35.
 - 2. The Demon Obeys His Voice. Mark 1:26, 27; Luke 4:35.
 - 3. The People Amazed. Mark 1:27, 28; Luke 4:36, 37.
- III. THE GREAT HEALER AT WORK, VS. 29-34
 - 1. Heals in Peter's House. Mark 1:29-31; Matt. 8:14, 15; Luke 4:38.
 - 2. The Multitudes Healed. Mark 1:32-34; Matt. 8:16, 17; Luke 4:40.

INTRODUCTION

After a year's preparatory teaching, the Savior began the selection of the disciples who were to become his apostles, calling Simon and Andrew from their nets (verse 16), also James and John from the same calling (verse 17) and Matthew from his place at the receipt of custom in Capernaum. Following these incidents we have an account of how the Lord passed Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, in that city. Indeed, by comparing the other accounts we seem to have a full account of one day's ministry in the life of our Lord, and as there were no doubt many other days like it, it gives us a vivid picture of his work on earth.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. TEACHING IN THE SYNAGOGUE—21. *And they went into Capernaum.* Christ was now attended by the disciples whom he had just called from their nets and boats upon the sea of Galilee. (Henceforth, as long as his earthly ministry continues, they attend his footsteps. They were called upon a week day, while at work, and probably all came on Friday into Capernaum, in order to attend the synagogue service upon the Sabbath. It is well to keep in mind that the Lord, during his Galilean ministry, made Capernaum his home, as far as he had one on earth. Its position on the northwest coast of the sea enabled him to reach easily all the populous towns on its shores and all parts of Galilee. Brought up in Galilee, this was always his favorite portion of Palestine, and all his apostles but Judas, the traitor, were Galileans. *Straightway on the Sabbath.* On Saturday, the Jewish day of rest and worship. Our Lord "born under the Law," kept the law of Moses blamelessly, was even circumcised, attended the feasts and observed the Jewish Sabbath,

but at the same time proclaimed himself Lord of the Sabbath day. *Entered the synagogue.* This was our Lord's usual custom on the Sabbath and the apostle Paul in his missionary labors followed the same custom. It gave an opportunity to teach a Jewish audience. *The synagogue.* There is no mention of synagogues in the law of Moses, or in the prophets. They are supposed to have been introduced during the Captivity, on account of the need of special teaching, and to have been continued ever afterwards wherever Jews were found. As we sometimes use the word *church* to denote the congregation, and sometimes the building, so the word *synagogue* was sometimes used in this double sense. The arrangements of a Jewish congregation, as well as the construction of the synagogue, seem to have resembled those of a modern Christian church. The people in the front part of the building sat facing the pulpit or desk on a platform which was occupied by the reader or speaker. Behind the pulpit were ranged high seats of honor, "chief seats," where the scribes and Pharisees loved to sit facing the people. A chest or ark was near the pulpit, in which the Scriptures of the Old Testament were deposited. From the pulpit the Scriptures were read; and the reader, or some other person, expounded, taught, or preached. Prayers were also offered; and at the close a solemn benediction was pronounced, and the people responded Amen, and dispersed. These exercises took place every (Saturday) *Sabbath. And taught.* It was the custom in the synagogue to invite members of the congregation or visitors of note to make remarks. It is obvious that in the synagogues of Palestine this was the safety-valve, the open sphere, the golden opportunity for any fresh teaching to arise—*Stanley.* Christ preached in many synagogues, for there was always opportunity given to a distinguished Jewish teacher. Only once in the synagogue at Nazareth, Luke 4:16, is he represented as reading the Scriptural lesson. The reason of this is that the lesson was never read by a stranger but always by a member of the synagogue.

22. *They were astonished at his doctrine.* Never had such a teacher stood before them. There was no lifeless droning over dry traditions or idle ceremonies, but his teaching was fresh as the morning, original, going to the root of things, authoritative, and burning with Divine fire. It is not strange that the great Teacher whose doctrines have revolutionized the earth, astonished the audiences who listened to him in Judea and Galilee. Taught as one who had authority. He taught with the authority of one who knows all the facts and all their bearings. Being Divine he knew all about heaven and hell and the way there, all about God and the truths he had revealed to the Jews, and all his plans and purposes for his kingdom in the future. It was this perfect knowledge that gave him the authority with which he spoke, and gives superiority to the

Bible over all philosophical systems and attempts at religious systems. He never was in doubt, nor had he ever to lean on the authority of others, because he knew all things. *And not as the scribes.* The scribes were the learned men of the Jewish nation, the men who had to do with *letters.* Almost all the writing that was required in the nation would be done by them; most of the reading, too. The transcribing of the Scriptures would devolve on them. Hence the interpretation of the Law and Prophets, in the synagogues, would devolve chiefly on them. They also engaged in idle discussion and differed among themselves.

II. THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT CAST OUT—23. *A man with an unclean spirit.* The address of the great Teacher was interrupted by a piteous cry of a demoniac. In the audience was a man with an unclean spirit. He had evidently remained silent until Jesus was nearly done, and then his cry arose. *An unclean spirit.* Some have held that the possession of unclean spirits and of demons was only a way of described epilepsy or lunacy. *Abbot* well says: "That there is described here, not a case of physical and mental disease, but rather a real and actual possession of the soul by a fallen spirit is, I think, clear, both from the tenor of the narrative here, and from parallel passages in the New Testament. How could a lunatic know Christ to be the Holy One of God, when as yet he was unknown even to his disciples? How could he fear that Christ would destroy him, who came to heal the sufferer, but to destroy the Devil? How could lunacy be said to come out of him, or to cry with a loud voice?" In order that I may add as much light as space will permit upon a difficult and controverted subject, I quote from *Dean Alford* and *Dr. Clark.* "What was this demoniacal possession? But we may gather from the Gospel narrative some important ingredients for our description. The demoniac was one whose being was strangely interpenetrated by one or more of those fallen spirits, who are constantly asserted in Scripture (under the name of demons, evil spirits, unclean spirits, their chief being the Devil, or Satan) to be the enemies and tempters of the souls of men. He stood in a totally different position from the abandoned wicked man, who morally is given over to the Devil. This latter would be a subject for punishment, but the demoniac for deepest compassion. There appears to have been in him a double will and double consciousness—sometimes the cruel spirit thinking and speaking in him, sometimes his poor crushed self crying out to the Savior of men for mercy; a terrible advantage taken, and a personal realization, by the malignant powers of evil, of the fierce struggle between sense and conscience in the man of morally divided life. It has been not improbably supposed that some of these demoniacs may have arrived at their dreadful state through various progressive degrees of guilt and sensual abandon-

ment. Lavish sin, and especially indulgence in sensual lusts, superinducing, as it would often, a weakness in the nervous system, which is the especial bond between body and soul, may have laid open these unhappy ones to the fearful incursions of the powers of darkness.—*Alford*. To the frequent inquiry, How comes it that similar possessions do not occur at the present day? it may be answered: (1) It cannot be proved that they do not sometimes occur even now. It cannot be said that in many cases of insanity, and in some cases of spiritualism, the malady may not be traced to the direct agency of demons. (2) But, admitting that such possessions are not common, yet there was a reason in our Savior's day for the external manifestation of Satan's power. The crisis of the moral history of the world was at hand. The Devil was allowed to exercise unusual power in temptation on the souls and bodies of men, in order that Christ might meet him openly, and manifest his power in his victory over him. When God was manifested in the flesh, then demons may have been permitted to manifest themselves specially among men.—*Clark*.

24. *What have we to do with thee?* The Savior had not, so far as appears, been formally interfering by any specific action; but his very presence on the scene was felt to be interference. There emanated from him, round about, an influence that went in upon men blissfully, counterworking all evil influences. The unclean spirit felt the power, and resented it as an interference,—an interference, not with itself in particular, but with the entire circle of kindred spirits. "What hast thou to do with us?" *Art thou come to destroy us?* Note the *us*,—*Camest thou to destroy us?* *Is it the intent of thy mission to put down all demonic power?* Note the word *destroy*. It has no reference to the annihilation of being. *I know thee*. Not as an acquaintance, but by fame and report. Earth has not recognized her King, has not seen him through his disguise; but heaven and hell alike bear witness unto him. *The Holy One of God*. Such is Christ, both morally and officially. This term expresses the character in which this being recognized his deadly enemy. Christ is the exact opposite of the unclean spirits, being holy, and producing holiness in others.

25. *And Jesus rebuked*. The original word is very peculiar, and strictly means *rated*. Our Savior *chides* the evil spirit. He never on any occasion gave any quarter to anything demonic. *Hold thy peace*. The word translated *Hold thy peace* is exceedingly graphic. *Be muzzled*. It is a word for a beast. He silences the devils, even when they spake the truth, lest he should seem to approve of witnesses who were liars by nature. It was to bring the truth itself into suspicion and discredit, when it was borne witness to by the spirit of lies. *Come out of him*. Two distinct person-

alities are here recognized. The demon is treated as a person as much as the man. The one was just as much a disease or a principle as the other, no more, and no less.

26. *The unclean spirit had torn him.* Thrown him into convulsions. *Cried with a loud voice.* The evil spirit seems to have resisted to the last obedience to the Master's command.

27. *Amazed . . . questioned.* Each turned to his neighbor in astonishment, to ask his opinion, Saying, What is this? New teaching with authority! And he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they obey him! Such is, apparently, the correct reading and rendering of the abrupt remarks which the astonished people made to one another.—*Morison.* *Doctrine* is, as elsewhere, the teaching taken as a whole, including manner as well as substance.—*Ellicott.* *With authority.* The authority with which he taught found its guaranty in the authority backed by power with which he forced the devils themselves to render obedience. Christ's cures differed from the pretences of the exorcists, just as his teaching did from that of the scribes.—*Godet.*

28. *His fame.* Literally, the *report* of him. *Spread abroad.* Flew, as it were, on the wings of the wind, into all the surrounding district of Galilee.

III. THE GREAT HEALER AT WORK.—29. *And forthwith.* The day's work was not nearly ended. As soon as they left the synagogue, the Lord comes in contact with a case of suffering. *Entered the house of Simon Peter.* Peter and Andrew now lived in Capernaum, though their former home had been at Bethsaida.

30. *Simon Peter's wife's mother.* Peter, though the Romanists claim him as the first of the Popes, was a married man. Many years after this, Paul (1 Cor. 9:3) speaks of Peter as then having a wife and traveling with him. *Lay sick of a fever.* Malarious fevers of a malignant type are common in the vicinity of Capernaum. In the very imperfect medical language of that day, fevers were simply divided into little and great fevers. Luke, who was a physician, characterizes this as a "great fever." That she was entirely prostrated by it, is evident by the language here, "laid and sick of a fever."—*Abbott.* The quantity of marshy land in the neighborhood, especially at the entrance of the Jordan into the lake, has made fever of a very malignant type at times the characteristic of the locality.—*Geikie.*

31. *He came.* Observe all the graphic touches in this verse: the Lord (1) *went to the sufferer,* (2) *took her by the hand,* (3) *lifted her up,* and (4) *the fever, rebuked* by the Lord of life (Luke 4:39), *left her* and (5) she began to *minister unto them.*

32. *And at Even, when the sun did set*, i. e., the close of the sabbath, which, amongst the Jews, ended with the setting sun. There are two reasons why the time should be thus specified. (1) It was natural that the sick should be brought in the cool of the evening, rather than in the scorching heat of the afternoon. (2) It was the sabbath, and the feeling which made the Pharisees question the lawfulness of a man's carrying the bed on which he had been lying (John 5:10) on the sabbath, would probably have deterred the friends of the sick from bringing them as long as it lasted. *They brought to him*. The news that he was in the city, and of his healing power had not time to spread. *All that were diseased*. The term *diseased* in its current modern acceptation, is perhaps a trifle too strong to represent the import of the original expression; but when looked at etymologically, *dis-eased*, that is *sundered from ease*, or *ill at ease*, and thus *unwell*, it is all that could be desired. *Possessed with devils*. With demons or evil spirits. It is no doubt a correct enough description; but the word *devil* or *devils* is never used in the original, when demoniacs are spoken of. It is always the word *demon* or *demons*, or the generic term *spirit* or *spirits*.

33. *All the city*. The effect was to rouse and gather the entire population of the city, to obtain healing for themselves or friends, or at least to see and hear the new teacher. *At the door*, of Peter's house where Jesus was.

34. *He healed many . . . cast out many devils*. Jesus came as the great Healer. Disease is the result, the outgrowth, the representative, of sin; and Christ's healing of the maladies of the body is an exhibition of his power and willingness to heal the maladies of the soul.—*Dean Howson*. Matthew says (8:17) that here was fulfilled the prophecy "which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Isa. 53:4, 5). How did he bear the infirmities of the sick? Not literally. He removed them from others, but did not become diseased himself. Neither in removing sins from others does he become stricken with sin himself. *Suffered not the devils to speak*. The reasons for this prohibition are suggested in the comments on verse 25.

FACT QUESTIONS 1:21-34

51. What advantage was there in making Capernaum His headquarters during His Galilean ministry?
52. Why attend the synagogue?
53. When did the synagogue originate? In what two senses is the word synagogue used? How does this relate to the word church?
54. Why didn't Christ read the lesson in the synagogues?

55. Did the manner or the content astonish those in the synagogue?
56. Was the man with the unclean spirit in the assembly or did he run in from the outside?
57. Is demon possession just another way of describing insanity? Explain.
58. Give one thought each from Clark and Abbott as quoted here.
59. Why was the evil spirit so unhappy with Christ?
60. Why did Christ rebuke the evil spirit?
61. Is there some difference in the amazement here and that spoken of in vs. 21?
62. How could Peter be the first Pope and yet have a wife?
63. What type of fever is here mentioned?
64. How did so many folk know of the whereabouts of Jesus?
65. Read Isa. 53:4, 5 and show its fulfillment here.

SIDELIGHTS

1. *Teaching with authority.* Whoever *knows* any subject can teach it with *authority*. Some men are authorities on science, some on literature, some on medicine: because they know more about these subjects than others do. But Christ is the only one who has ever been into the other world, and returned to this; and therefore he is *authority* upon the future life. He *knows* the final result of sin, and the glory of heaven, and the way to it. And because he is *divine*, and knows all things, there can be no mistake about what he says: he speaks with perfect authority.—P.

2. *Synagogue worship.* I attended the Jewish worship at Jerusalem, and was struck with the accordance of the ceremonies with those mentioned in the New Testament. The sacred roll was brought from the chest or closet where it was kept; it was handed by an attendant to the reader; a portion of it was rehearsed; the congregation rose and stood while it was read, whereas the speaker, and all others present, sat during the delivery of the address which formed a part of the service.—H. B. Hackett.

3. *Devils Bearing Witness.*—They were ready to speak *because* they knew his nature and work. The mere belief of the facts and doctrines of Christianity will never save our souls. "The devils believe, and tremble." Let us take heed that ours is a faith of the *heart* as well as of the head. "The life of Christianity," says Luther, "consists in possessive pronouns." It is one thing to say, *Christ is a Savior*, it is quite another to say, *Christ is my Savior and my Lord*. The devil can say the first; the true Christian alone can say the second.—Ryle.

LESSONS

1. The true way to keep God's holy day is to follow Christ to church; to rest from labors and to worship in the sanctuary.

2. We should have such an experience of religion that we may be able to speak to men with authority.

3. We can trust Christ perfectly, because all he says is with the authority of one who knows.

4. It is safe to follow one who has power over the principalities and powers of evil.

5. Every disciple of Christ should be a helper and a healer. He should minister to the afflicted, whether in body or mind. He should cast out unclean spirits by the power of the love of Christ.

POINTS FOR TEACHERS

There are two great thoughts in this lesson, and both concentrate in Christ. First, *Christ, the Great Teacher*, and second, *Christ, the Great Healer*. Note 1. How he teaches by example; he is in the house of worship on God's holy day; 2. he leads his disciples there; 3. Observe him teaching, (1) in solid earnest, (2) no idle speculation, (3) he teaches what he knows. 4. Hence he teaches with authority. What we know we can teach with authority. His was the authority of absolute knowledge; we can teach with the authority of faith. He next appears as the Great Physician who heals not only sicknesses but sins. Observe (1) He healed a dear friend of his disciples (verse 29-31), as he is glad to heal those we love, if we bring them to him. (2) Then he healed great multitudes (verse 32-34), showing the nature of his religion to heal and to help. We should note also that Christ refused the aid, testimony or any compromise with devils, and we should learn by his example (1) never to compromise with sin, (2) to decline all aid tendered by the devil, or in his name, (3) seek to overcome the devil and all his works.

4. HEALING OF THE LEPER—1:35-45

TEXT 1:35-45

And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed. And Simon and they that were with him followed after him; and they found him; and say unto him, All are seeking thee. And he saith unto them, Let us go elsewhere into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth. And he went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out devils. And there cometh to him a leper, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And being moved with compassion, he stretched forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou made clean. And straightway the leprosy departed from him, and he was made clean. And he strictly charged him, and straightway sent him out, and saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but

go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing the things that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. But he went out, and began to publish abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into a city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS: 1:35-45

55. Are we to understand that this incident occurred after the busy sabbath of 1:21-34?
56. Did Jesus have a particular reason for prayers? If so, what was it?
57. Why get up so early?
58. Why not pray in his room?
59. What needs did Jesus have that could be satisfied in prayer?
60. Why did Simon follow Jesus? Who was seeking Jesus? For what reason?
61. Did Jesus come to heal or to preach? Does Jesus say in vs. 38 that He was sent from heaven to preach?
62. How did Jesus have such ready access to the synagogues?
63. Was there a crowd about Jesus when the leper came to Him? Cf. Matt. and Luke.
64. Give three characteristics of the leper.
65. Do our physical and emotional infirmities "move with compassion" our Savior? Cf. Heb. 4:14, 15.
66. Why touch the leper?
67. Why didn't Jesus inquire of the Father's will in the healing?
68. How long did it take to effect a complete cure of the leprosy?
69. Why be so stern when He has just been so tender?
70. Why go to the priest? To whom was "the testimony" (vs. 44) to be given?
71. Why did the leper disobey Jesus?

COMMENT 1:35-45

TIME—April-June, A.D. 28. The healing of Peter's wife's mother occurred immediately after the same sabbath on which Jesus' teaching in the synagogue was interrupted by the demoniac. After this he began his first missionary tour of Galilee. The healing of the leper was toward the latter part of the tour, in May or June. This was in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Emperor of Rome; Pontius Pilate was now Governor of Judea and Herod Antipas Tetrarch of Galilee.

PLACES—Capernaum, and the towns and cities of Galilee. This was Jesus' first missionary circuit of Galilee. The sea, or lake of Galilee, was 13 miles long, from 4 to 6 miles wide, was 165 feet deep in the deepest part, and lay 700 feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea. Its western and

northern shores were at this date densely inhabited, and five populous cities, Bethsaida, Chorazin, Capernaum, Magdala and Tiberias, stood upon or near its bank. It was on the direct route between the great city of Damascus and the Mediterranean, and was hence an appropriate center for the Lord's missionary labors. Its shores are now desolate, and the boats that once covered its surface have almost entirely disappeared. The rule of the Turks, the lawlessness, and the raids of the Bedouin, have desolated one of the fairest spots on the earth.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—The healing of Peter's wife's mother and others (vers. 29-34) is recorded also in Matt. 8:14-17, and Luke 4:38-41. The first circuit of Galilee (vers. 35-39), also in Luke 4:42, 44 followed by Matt. 4:23-25. The healing of the leper (vers. 40-45), also in Matt. 8:2-4, and Luke 5:12-16.

OUTLINE—1. *The Lonely Prayer.* 2. *Seeking to Save the Lost.* 3. *Healing the Leper.*

ANALYSIS

- I. THE LONELY PRAYER. VS. 35-37.
 1. Prayer in the Secret Place. Mark 1:35; Luke 4:42.
 2. Sought by the Disciples. Mark 1:36, 37; Luke 4:42.
- II. SEEKING TO SAVE THE LOST. VS. 38, 39.
 1. The First Missionary Tour. Mark 1:38; Matt. 4:23; Luke 4:43.
 2. Preaching in the Synagogues. Mark 1:39; Matt. 4:23; Luke 4:44.
- III. HEALING THE LEPER. VS. 40-45.
 1. The Leper's Appeal. Mark 1:40; Matt. 8:2; Luke 5:12.
 2. The Lord Hears and Heals. Mark 1:41, 42; Matt. 8:3; Luke 5:13.
 3. Leper spreads Abroad the Story. Mark 1:45; Luke 4:15.

INTRODUCTION

The Sabbath service in the synagogue had been interrupted by the outcry of the demoniac while Jesus was preaching. After his cure, and the close of the public services, Jesus with his four disciples retires to the modest home of Peter and Andrew, where he works a miracle, the beginning of a series which leads to the height of his fame and popularity and success through Galilee. The leper was healed on the first missionary circuit of Galilee, not long after the preaching of the Sermon on the Mount.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. THE LONELY PRAYER.—35. *And in the morning.* On Sunday morning, immediately after the busy Sabbath day, Mark graphically brings the scene before our eyes. The previous day had been a long day of conflict with and victory over the kingdom of sin and death. He now retires to refresh himself in the haven of prayer, in communion with

his Father. He prepares himself in the desert for a second great mission of love, this time accompanied by his first four disciples. *A great while before day*. Our Lord always prepared himself for special work or for trial by solitary prayer. See Matt. 14:23; Mark 6:46; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 22:41. It is possible that his night was sleepless because of his anxiety for others; and he arose from his sleepless couch to pray for strength. We may learn from his example (1) that when we are restless and anxious the best relief is found in prayer; (2) the prayer most efficacious, when we have a special burden, is solitary prayer, the prayer of the closet. Christ was wont to seek *solitude* for special occasions of prayer. *Solitary place*. Not merely *solitary*, for a garden might be solitary, but *desert, desolate*, as the word in all other places is rendered. "A remarkable feature of the lake of Gennesaret was that it was closely surrounded with desert solitudes. These "desert places" thus close at hand on the table lands or in the ravines of the eastern and western ranges, gave opportunities of retirement for rest or prayer. 'Rising up early in the morning while it was yet dark,' or 'passing over to the other side in a boat,' he sought these solitudes, sometimes alone, sometimes with his disciples. The lake in this double aspect is thus a reflex of that union of energy and rest, of active labor and deep emotion which is the essence of Christianity, as it was of the life of Him in whom that union was first taught and shown."—*Stanley's Sinai and Palestine. And there prayed*. The original word does not simply denote asking. Prayer, says Petler, is a holy conference with God. Prayer gave him power. The gate to heaven is prayer. No man is strong enough or spiritual enough to be able to neglect it. By daily food the body lives and is able to perform its functions. By daily prayer the soul lives, and only by prayer performs its work of grace. Christ communed in the wilderness with his own soul and with the Father for forty days before he began his ministry, and here he waits before the Lord before beginning his special work in Galilee.

36. *Simon, and they were with him*. The Simon here named is Simon Peter, the apostle, to whose house the Lord had gone after the discourse at the synagogue on the day before. The others with him were probably Andrew his brother, and James and John, who had now left their secular business to attend the Savior. Peter, impetuous, abrupt, impulsive, did not hesitate to intrude himself on the Lord's retirement. He is always the same, wherever he appears in the four gospels; self-confident, generous, bold, often making mistakes from his impulsiveness, and always ready to correct them. On this occasion he, no doubt, acted as the leader in the search after the praying Savior. *Morison* says: "When they awoke in the morning, and found him gone, they seemed to have got alarmed

lest he should have left them, betaking himself to some other sphere of labor. So, too, the inhabitants of the little city in general seem to have felt. Hence the haste and eagerness of Simon and his companions (Andrew, James and John, see vers. 29), as indicated by the strong verb employed: they pursued him, as if he were fleeing from them. Peter was the leader of the pursuing party, thus giving early indication of the impulsive ardor of his nature."

37. *And they found him.* Search and uncertainty is implied, since he had retired to an unfrequented spot. *They said unto him.* Peter said this to induce him to return and the crowd besought him to stay. The will of the multitude did not govern him, as they supposed, hence the reply in the next verse. *All seek thee.* That is, though indefinitely, all the people (in Capernaum.) The people in general had no sooner risen in the morning than they thought of the wonderful preacher and healer and demon-expeller. (Luke 4:42). They wanted still to hear more, and to see more; and hence they came, one after another to the house where he had been lodging in quest of him. The emphasis is on the word *seek*.

II. SEEKING TO SAVE THE LOST.—38. *Let us go into the next towns.* The disciples had pressed the Lord to return to Capernaum, because all men there were seeking for him, but he replies by a request for them to attend him to other cities. In Luke (4:43) he says. "I must preach the kingdom of God in other cities also." *Towns.* The word so translated means village cities, country towns, imperfectly enclosed towns, and unenclosed villages. Josephus says, concerning the two Galilees, Upper and Lower, "The cities lie thick; and the multitude of villages are everywhere full of people, in consequence of the richness of the soil, so that the very least of them contains about 15,000 inhabitants" (War, 3:3, 2). "Christ had no ambition to be a metropolitan preacher. Having awakened spiritual desires in the people of Capernaum, he went elsewhere that he might awaken them in others also."—*Abbott.* *For therefore came I forth.* To preach. He wrought miracles, but these were mainly to arrest attention and to induce people to give a ready ear to his preaching. *Preached.* The form of Jesus' preaching was essentially Jewish. It was concise, epigrammatic, oracular, so pointed as to stick in the mind like an arrow. It swarmed with figures of speech. He thought in images, pictures. The qualities of the preacher were (1) authority; (2) boldness; (3) power; (4) graciousness.—*Stalker's Life of Our Lord.* The places of preaching were the synagogues in each city, and the times, the Sabbath days. Besides, he was constantly teaching and healing during the week. *Throughout all Galilee.* Throughout the whole region, as well as the nearest towns (Matt. 4:23). Josephus says that in his day "there were

240 towns and villages in Galilee" (Life, 45). Galilee, the northernmost province of Judea, was the scene of Christ's most abundant labors; all the apostles except Judas Iscariot were Galileans; its inhabitants were simple-minded and comparatively free from the control of the priestly class, which ruled in Judea, and from the bigotry and intolerance of the Jews who dwelt about Jerusalem. The greater part of Mark's Gospel is confined to our Lord's ministry in Galilee. *Cast out devils*. Referred to again and again as the most remarkable exhibition of his power, being utterly incurable and unmanageable by men; and as the best type of his whole work on earth, casting out all evil, all that mars this world, and fitting the world for the kingdom of heaven. For a discussion of devils or demons and demoniacs, see the preceding section. The Lord not only cast out demons and thus delivered men from their power, but he came to destroy the power of the devil.

III. HEALING THE LEPER—40. *There came a leper to him*. This account is also given in Matthew 8:2-4, and in Luke 5:12, 13. Matthew places it after the Sermon on the Mount, but he does not aim to follow the chronological order closely, and we are only to infer that it came soon after the descent from the mountain, after he entered "a certain city" and before his return to Capernaum. Luke says that the leper was healed at a "certain city" but does not say what one. Luke says, "A man full of leprosy" (Luke 5:12). This disease is nothing short of a foul decay, arising from the total corruption of the blood. It was a living death, as indicated by bare head, rent clothes, and covered lip. In the middle ages, a man siezed with leprosy was "clothed in a shroud, and the masses of the dead sung over him." In its horrible repulsiveness it is the gospel type of sin.—*Farrar*. Leprosy began with little specks on the eyelids and on the palms of the hands, and gradually spread over different parts of the body, bleaching the hair white wherever it showed itself, crusting the affected parts with shining scales, and causing swellings and sores. From the skin it slowly ate its way through the tissues, to the bones and joints, and even to the marrow, rotting the whole body piecemeal. The lungs, the organs of speech and hearing, and the eyes, were attacked in turn, till at last consumption or dropsy brought welcome death. The dread of infection kept men aloof from the sufferer; and the law proscribed him as above all men unclean. The disease was hereditary to the fourth generation.—*Geikie*. *The leprosy*. We find that nearly everywhere the disease is most common on the seashore, and that, when it spreads inland, it generally occurs on the shores of lakes or along the course of large rivers.—*Medical Press*. Is the leprosy contagious? A review of the evidence led the speaker to the conclusion that this disease was not contagious by ordinary contact; but it may be transmitted by the blood and

secretions. It is a well-established fact that when leprosy has once gained for itself a foothold in any locality; it is apt to remain there and spread. Being the worst form of disease, leprosy was fixed upon by God to be the especial type of sin; and the injunctions regarding it had reference to its typical character. It was accompanied by the emblems of death. (Lev. 13:45, comp. with Num. 6:9. Ezek. 24:17). It involved ceremonial uncleanness (see Num. 19:13. Ezek. 45:25); and the exclusion of the leper from the congregation (Lev. 13:44-46. Num. 5:1-3; 12-14, 15. 2 Chron. 24:19-21) strikingly typified the separation of the sinner from God's presence. *Kneeling down*. Not an act of worship, but a gesture of entreaty. There is no contrivance of our body but some good man in Scripture hath hallowed it with prayer. The publican standing, Job sitting, (Job. 2:8,) Hezekiah lying on his bed, (2 Kings 20:2,) Elijah with his face between his legs, (1 Kings 18:42.) But of all postures give me St. Paul's: "For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Eph. 3:12; Acts 7:60.—*Thomas Fuller*. *If thou wilt, thou canst*. If thou art willing, thou art able. The leper had faith in the miraculous power of Jesus, but had a doubt about his willingness to exercise it on such an object as him, on one so unclean. Here was (1) a thorough consciousness of his own misery and helplessness; (2) he knew it was not too bad for Christ's power. It has been well said that the language of faith always is, not if thou canst, but if thou wilt. He is willing to leave the whole matter in Christ's hands. (3) Let us pause on this little word IF. "If" embodies doubt; and faith, in its earlier stages, almost always involves doubt, but, when the soul can use "if," it has made great progress in faith. *Cleanse me*. He felt the impurity of his disease, not merely ceremonial, but actual,—as we should feel the impurity of sin, and pray not merely, forgive, but cleanse.

41. *Moved with compassion*. Jesus felt for the leper what he and his Father feel for all sinners, an unutterable compassion and love. *Touched him*—To have touched him was, in the eyes of a Jew, to have made himself unclean, but he had come to break through the deadly externalism that had taken the place of true religion, and could have shown no more strikingly how he looked on mere rabbinical precepts than by making a touch, which, till then, had entailed the worst uncleanness, the means of cleansing. Slight though it seemed, the touch of the leper was the proclamation that Judaism was abrogated henceforth.—*Geikie*. His hand became not unclean from the leprosy, but the leprous body was made clean by his holy hand.—*Chrysostom*.

42. *The leprosy departed*. At the touch and command, the leprosy immediately departed and the man was well.

43. *Straitly charged him*. Strictly and positively charged him.

44. *Say nothing to any man.* Our Lord almost uniformly repressed the fame of his miracles, for the reason given in Matt. 12:15-21, that, in accordance with prophetic truth, he might be known as the Messiah, not by wonder-working power, but by the great result of his work upon earth. See chap. 12:16-19. Thus the apostles always refer primarily to the resurrection, and only incidentally, if at all, to the wonders and signs. Another reason, perhaps, was that the Lord wished him to obtain the legal certificate of cleanness from the priest before too much was said. It might be refused through prejudice. *Show thyself to the priest. At Jerusalem. Those things which Moses commanded.* Viz., (1) two birds, "alive and clean" (Lev. 14:4); (2) cedar wood, (3) scarlet, (4) hyssop; this was for the preliminary ceremony (Lev. 14:4-7). On the eighth day further offerings were to be made—(1) two he-lambs without blemish, (2) one ewe-lamb, (3) three tenth deals of fine flour, (4) one log of oil. If the leper was poor, he was permitted to offer one lamb and two doves or pigeons, with one-tenth deal of fine flour. The law was still in force and the Lord strictly enjoins that it be observed.

45. *Began to publish.* Where men ought to publish Christ, alas! how silent are they. Here, when the great Savior commanded silence, this man will publish the cure. Thus our Lord's work was hindered. How many from ill-timed zeal prevent much good! *Could no more openly enter into the city.* Not the city of Capernaum, but any city or town. He was compelled to go into the desert places. He was unable, because, the moment that his presence was recognized in a town, he was liable to be surrounded and hemmed in by a surging crowd of ignorant, and ignorantly expectant, gazers, wonderers and volunteer followers. One sees now how wise it was to tell the leper to hold his tongue. *And they came to him from every quarter.* The people kept coming to him, notwithstanding the difficulty of reaching him, and the inconvenience connected with a sojourn, even for a very limited period, in an unpopulated district.

FACT QUESTIONS 1:35-45

66. Give the time for this section—i.e. date, the name of the emperor, governor and tetrarch.
67. State three places involved in these verses—i.e. 1:35-45.
68. What is the condition of Capernaum today?
69. Please read Matt. 8:14-17; Luke 4:38-41 for a parallel account of part of the record in Mark. Read Luke 4:42-44; Matt. 4:23-25; also Matt. 8:2-4 and Luke 5:12-16 for the rest of the account.

70. Mention again the purpose of prayer in the life of Jesus. Read Matt. 14:23; Luke 5:16; 6:12.
71. What one lesson can we learn from the praying of Jesus?
72. What is meant by the word "solitary" in reference to the place of prayer?
73. What more than mere petition was involved in the praying of Jesus?
74. Why did Peter so urgently, eagerly seek for Jesus?
75. Why did the multitude of Capernaum seek Jesus? Why didn't He return?
76. What was the possibility for preaching in Galilee—i. e. how many towns, how many people?
77. Mention two qualities of the preaching of Jesus.
78. Why especially mention casting out demons?
79. Where and when in the ministry of our Lord was the leper healed?
80. How serious was the leprosy of the one healed?
81. Why did the leper kneel to Jesus?
82. Why the question of "If thou wilt"?
83. Did the leper doubt the power of Christ?
84. How deeply was Jesus moved with the need of the leper? Why touch him?
85. Why go to the priest if he was already healed?

SUMMARY 1:14-45

In this section Mark has furnished a striking exhibition of both the divine authority and the divine power of Jesus. Such was the authority which he could exercise over men, that when he commanded the four fishermen to follow him, they left all they had on earth, without a question or a moment's delay, and followed him. And such was the authority with which he commanded demons, that although these wicked spirits were not willingly obedient, they instantly departed from their victims at his bidding. Such, too, was his power, that at his touch the malignant fever, the incurable leprosy, and all the maladies which afflict the body, were instantly healed. Such, finally, was his unexampled meekness, that amid these displays of divine authority and power, when popular applause ran high, he retired by night to pray, or wandered away into desert places. His meekness was as high above the capacity of a merely human being, as were his miracles. *McGarvey.*

DIFFERENCE FROM MATTHEW

One of the characteristic differences between Mark and Matthew, their

difference in regard to arrangement, is conspicuous in their modes of treating the subject-matter of the preceding section. Mark uses almost the same material with Matthew, but how differently he arranges it! They both begin with the removal of Jesus to Galilee, after the imprisonment of John, and follow this with the call of the four fishermen; but Matthew next introduces the general statement of the preaching throughout Galilee (iv. 23-25), which Mark reserves until after the cures at Simon's house (i. 39); he next devotes considerable space to the sermon on the mount, which Mark omits; then he introduces as his first mentioned miracle the cure of the leper (viii. 1-4), which is the third miracle mentioned by Mark (i. 40-45); his second miracle is the cure of the centurion's servant (viii. 5-13), of which Mark says nothing; his third is that of Simon's mother-in-law, which is the second with Mark; and finally, they unite in following this last miracle with the cures at Simon's door. This difference alone is sufficient proof that Mark's narrative is not an abridgement of Matthew's.—*McGarvey*

SIDE-LIGHTS

1. *The Leprosy.*—Wandering a little way outside the walls of the city we came upon the dwellings of the lepers. The place is separated from all other human habitations, and consists of a rude court or enclosure, containing about twenty huts or kennels. At the sound of our voices and footsteps the lepers came out into the sunlight, clamoring with most unearthly sounds for charity. Death was visibly eating them away. Some were of a liver color, others white as snow—all deformed. Handless arms were held out to us; half-consumed limbs obtruded; countenances woefully defaced and eyeless were turned up to us, and cries came out from palateless mouths that were wildly imploring and inhuman. The old law which prohibited the leper from touching or drawing near to a clean person, was scrupulously regarded by them, so that, even when they begged, they stretched out to us little iron cups into which we might drop our alms.—*Tompson.*

2. *Leprosy as a Type.*—Thus sin affects the soul, rendering it unclean, separating it from God, producing spiritual death; unfitting it forever for heaven and the company of the holy, and insuring its eternal banishment, as polluted and abominable. Some, as they look on infancy, reject with horror the thought that sin exists within. But so might any one say who looked upon the beautiful babe in the arms of a leprous mother. But time brings forth the fearful malady. New-born babes of leprous parents are often as pretty and as healthy in appearance as any; but by and by its presence and workings become visible in some of the signs described in the 13th chapter of Leviticus.—*Land and Book, 11:519.*

3. How to be Healed.—(1) We must see Jesus, inquire after him, acquaint ourselves with him. (2) We must humble ourselves before him, as this leper, seeing Christ, fell on his face; we must be ashamed of our pollution, and, in the sense of it, blush to lift up our faces before the holy Jesus. (3) We must earnestly desire to be cleansed from the defilement and cured of the disease of sin, which renders us unfit for communion with God. (4) We must firmly believe in Christ's ability and sufficiency to cleanse us. Lord, thou canst make me clean, though I be full of leprosy. No doubt is to be made of the merit and grace of Christ. (5) We must be importunate for pardon and grace: He fell on his face and besought him. They that would be cleansed must reckon it a favor worth wrestling for. (6) We must refer ourselves to the good will of Christ: Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst.—*M. Henry.*

LESSONS

1. We cannot save sinners, but we can bring them to Christ, the Savior.
 2. Every one, like Christ, needs seasons of retirement and prayer. Spiritual growth comes from activity in Christian work, and seasons of restful communion with God.

3. The hardest work in the world is casting out the devils of sin. Building cities and ruling empires are nothing in comparison.

4. Sin is like leprosy—incurable, loathsome, contagious, hereditary, painful, all-pervasive, from small beginnings; shameful, separating from others.

5. Learn from the leper how the sinner should come to Jesus and be saved. He felt his disease; despaired of human help; believed in the power of Jesus; he came with his leprosy and submitted to the will of Jesus.—*Clark.*

6. In the services we are called to render one another, we fail far oftener from want of will than want of power. We fail to use many opportunities, not because we cannot, but because we will not, use them.—*Howson.*

7. The healed by Christ are his living witnesses that he can save men. Even enemies must acknowledge the change. Every transformed sinner is a living witness of Christ's power to save.

POINTS FOR TEACHERS

1. Review the Sabbath day's work, the wonderful discourse, the admiring multitude, the demoniac healed, all Capernaum stirred, the woman healed, the throngs that gather at the house of Peter, the multitude of miracles. 2. Observe the Savior at rest in the darkness of night, rising to pray before the dawn, possibly praying to be saved from popularity, in lonely prayer in the morning twilight. 3. Note the eager search led by

Peter, their triumphant assurance of his popularity, all men seeking for him, his rejection of the popular breeze, and determination to go elsewhere. 4. Observe his missionary circuit and his work: (1) Preaching in the synagogues, (2) teaching daily, (3) healing the distressed and diseased or sin-laden. 5. Note the healing of the leper, his awful disease, a type of sin, unclean, banished from men. 6. Observe *how* he is healed: (1) He wants to be healed, (2) believes that Christ can heal him, (3) comes to Christ, (4) falls before him and implores mercy, (5) the Lord has compassion, (6) touches and heals. Thus every sinner by faith and coming to Christ can be healed of his sins. The lesson sets forth Christ as the great Healer. (1) He prepared for his great labors by solitary prayer (v. 35), as we need the more to commune with God, and get strength from heaven, the more we have to do. (2) He made his first missionary tour through Galilee (vs. 36-39); and on this tour (3) he healed a leper—the type of sin and its cure (vs. 40-45,) a most helpful illustration of the evil of sin, and of the way of salvation by going to Christ to be saved.

5. FORGIVENESS AND HEALING—2:1-12

TEXT 2:1-12

And when he entered again into Capernaum after some days, it was noised that he was in the house. And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, no, not even about the door: and he spake the word unto him. And they come, bringing unto him a man sick of the palsy, borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the crowd, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed whereon the sick of the palsy lay. And Jesus seeing their faith saith unto the sick of the palsy, Son thy sins are forgiven. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak? he blasphemeth: who can forgive sins but one, even God? And straightway Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, saith unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house. And he arose, and straightway took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 2:1-12

72. What had occurred between the healing of the leper and entering

back into Capernaum?

73. In which house in Capernaum was Jesus staying?
74. Why so much interest in the words of Jesus?
75. Was Jesus preaching to the people or merely conversing with them?
76. Why bring the palsied man to Jesus—why not just tell Jesus about him and let His power operate over the distance?
77. Wasn't it wrong to destroy property to see Jesus? Why didn't Jesus rebuke them?
78. Was there some connection between the sickness of the palsied man and sin in his past life? What?
79. Just what was involved in "speaking blasphemy"?
80. Why didn't Jesus heal the sickness first and then forgive sins?
81. This was the first step of our Lord toward Calvary—show how this was true.

COMMENT

TIME—May-June, A. D. 28. The paralytic was cured some days after the healing of the leper on Jesus' return from his first tour of Galilee. The calling of Matthew was not very long after. But Matthew's feast was probably several weeks later, in the autumn, A.D. 28, following Mark 5:21. See *Andrew's Life of Christ*, pp. 277-283.

PLACE—The paralytic was cured at Capernaum. Matthew's place for the receipt of custom was at Capernaum, probably, upon the Damascus road near its entrance into the city. The road from Damascus to the cities along the coast passed by "Jacob's Bridge" over the Jordan, and thence along the shore of the lake—*Andrews*. The feast of Matthew was also at Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—The healing of the paralytic (Matt. 9:2-8; Luke 5:17-26).

LESSON OUTLINE—1. *Coming to Christ in Faith*. 2. *The Accusation of the Scribes*. 3. *The Power of the Son of Man*.

LESSON ANALYSIS

- I. COMING TO CHRIST IN FAITH. Vs. 1-4.
 1. The Lord Preaching in Capernaum. Mark 2:2; Luke 5:17.
 2. The Palsied Man Brought. Mark 2:3; Matt. 9:2; Luke 5:18.
 3. Faith Overcomes Difficulties. Mark 2:4; Luke 5:19.
- II. THE ACCUSATION OF THE SCRIBES. Vs. 5-9.
 1. Sins Forgiven. Mark 2:5; Matt. 9:2; Luke 5:20.
 2. The Charge of Blasphemy. Mark 2:7; Matt. 9:3; Luke 5:21.
 3. The Lord's Reply. Mark 2:8, 9; Matt. 9:4, 5; Luke 5:22, 23.

III. THE POWER OF THE SON OF MAN, Vss. 10-12.

1. Power to Forgive Sins Asserted, Mark 2:10; Matt. 9:6; Luke 5:24.
2. The Power to Forgive Sins Demonstrated, Mark 2:11, 12; Matt. 9:6; Luke 5:25.

INTRODUCTION

The return to Capernaum and the healing of the paralytic followed, after a short period, the history of which is not recorded, the healing of the leper. The incident narrated in this text occurred at the close of our Lord's first missionary circuit of Galilee. His labors were now devoted to this northern district of Palestine, where prejudices and bigotry were not so intense as in Judea. He was now at the most popular period of his earthly ministry. He had shown his divine power by many miracles, healing the nobleman's son at Capernaum, bringing myriads of fish to the disciples' net on the Sea of Tiberias, and restoring the demoniac in the synagogue. Though rejected at Nazareth, he was received with honor at Capernaum. His teachings, whether on the hill top, or beside the lake, or in the house of worship, were heard by wondering throngs, and his steps throughout Galilee were attended by multitudes, drawn by the fame of his miracles and the fascination of his words. The Pharisees and leaders, though suspicious, were not yet openly his enemies, and the unthinking masses followed him with blind expectation of a new Judean kingdom which was to transform the Romans at once from masters to slaves, and bend the world in homage. Just at this hour occurred two significant miracles: the one silently asserting Jesus as superior to all ceremonial regulations, the other calmly claiming for him the divine prerogative of forgiving sin.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. COMING TO CHRIST IN FAITH—1. *Again he entered Capernaum.* Matthew says, "he entered his own city," the city he made his home, in which some have supposed that his mother now dwelt. It was "after days," some time having been occupied in his teaching and healing tour of Galilee. The excitement that followed his displays of divine power, and especially the healing of the leper, had rendered seclusion necessary until it should subside and he had remained "without in desert places" for a time. He evidently entered Capernaum quietly, but the tidings soon spread that he was in the house, probably either the home occupied by his mother and brethren, or the home of Peter, where we recently found him. His own house, as far as he had one, was now in Capernaum (Matt. 4:13).

2. *Many were gathered together.* Luke (5:17) says, there were present Pharisees and doctors of the law from Galilee, Judea and Jerusalem.

They had evidently gathered by a concerted arrangement to examine into the claims of a teacher who was creating so profound a sensation, and were moved by hostile purposes. This is the first time the antagonism of these classes shows itself. Hence, as he taught the throng that crowded the house, they sat by as spectators, censors, and spies, to pick up something on which to ground a reproach or accusation. How many are there in the midst of our assemblies where the gospel is preached that do not *sit under* the word, but *sit by*! It is to them as a tale that is told them, not as a message that is sent them; they are willing that we should preach before them, not that we should preach to them. *And he* preached the word to them. The simple language of Mark outlines the picture so that we can almost see the eager throngs filling the house, crowding around the door on the outside until there was no more entrance, stretching their heads over each other in order to see and hear, and the Lord, without any formality, declaring the word of the kingdom. *Preached*. It is not the same Greek word that is found in Mark 1:39. That means to announce as a herald; thus simply to speak, as rendered in the Revision. The Savior was in a private house, and sat *talking* to the people. Such is the import of the term. It is almost always rendered *speak* in the Common Version, sometimes *talk* (or *say* or *utter*); never *preach*, except here and in four or five places in the Acts of the Apostles, and in all of these it would be better to render it *speak*.

3. *They come . . . bringing one sick of the palsy*. Four persons bear the invalid, who was perfectly helpless, to the house while Christ was engaged in teaching. Albert Barnes, in his notes (Matt. 4:24), classifies the infirmities which, in the New Testament, are included under the general name of palsy: (1) The paralytic shock affecting the whole body; (2) a stroke affecting only one side, or a part of the body; (3) paraplegy, affecting all the system below the neck; (4) catalepsy, caused by a contraction of the muscles in the whole or a part of the body (5) the cramps, a fearful and common malady. The disease, in its worst forms, was incurable. *Borne of four*. Borne on his pallet or bed, with one person at each corner.

4. *Could not come nigh unto him for the press*. The crowd. Here, then, we have a reason, as one has observed, why it was "expedient that our Lord should depart," and that "the Comforter should come." The throng of multitudes crowding after the bodily presence of Christ was a hindrance to the gospel; while many could not "get at him by reason of the press," and even some, for a season, might go "empty away." His body was necessarily limited by space, but the spirit of the Lord is in all places. *Uncovered the roof*. Unable to enter the house, they climbed to its roof, either by an outside staircase, a ladder, or from the roof of an adjoining

house. The following from *Thompson* will make the account easily understood: "The houses of Capernaum, as is evident from the ruins, were like those of modern villages in this same region, very low, with flat roofs reached by a stairway from the yard or court. The roof is only a few feet high, and by stooping down and holding the corner of the couch, merely a thickly-padded quilt, as at present in this region, they could let down the sick man without any apparatus of ropes or cords to assist them. I have often seen it done, and done it myself, to houses in Lebanon, but there is always more dust than is agreeable. The materials now employed for roofs are beams about three feet apart, across which short sticks are arranged close together and covered with thickly-matted thorn-bush, called *bellan*. Over this is spread a coat of stiff mortar, and then comes the marl, or earth, which makes the roof. Now, it is easy to remove any part of this without injuring the rest. No objection, therefore, would be made on this account by the owners of the house. They had merely to scrape back the earth from a portion of the roof over the *lewan*, take up the thorns and short sticks, and let down the couch between the beams at the very feet of Jesus. The end achieved, they could easily restore the roof as it was before." *The bed*. This was a small, low couch or bed of the commonest description, such as was used by poor people, having a mere network of cords stretched over the frame to support the mattress. Sometimes merely a sheepskin, used for the service of the sick, or as a camp-bed.

II. THE ACCUSATION OF THE SCRIBES—5. *When Jesus saw their faith*. Their faith was shown by their action. A living faith is always a power that moves. It is not a strong conviction of any doctrine about Christ, but a strong trust in Christ. These men had no theories about Jesus, but had confidence in him as the great Healer and sought to come to him *Matthew Henry* quaintly says: "When the centurion and the woman of Canaan were in no care at all to bring the patients they interceded for into Christ's presence, but believed that he could cure them at a distance, he commended their faith. But though in these there seemed to be a different notion of the thing, and an apprehension that it was requisite the patient should be brought into his presence, yet he did not censure and condemn their weakness, did not ask them, 'Why do you give this disturbance to the assembly? Are you indeed under such a degree of infidelity as to think I could not have cured him though he had had been out of doors?' But he made the best of it; and even in this he saw their faith. It is a comfort to us that we serve a Master that is willing to make the best of us." The palsied man had faith as well as his bearers, for they would not bring him against his will. *Thy sins be forgiven thee*. Matthew says, "Be of good cheer," etc. The Jews held that

all disease was a punishment for sin (John 9:2), and in a deeper sense, all evil of every kind is the fruit of sin. Nor is it unlikely that in this case the paralysis was really the punishment of his special sins (probably of sensuality). Accordingly, he first of all promises forgiveness, as being the moral condition necessary to the healing of the body; and then, having by forgiveness removed the hinderance, he proceeds to impart that healing itself by an exercise of his supernatural power.

6. *Certain of the scribes.* The doctors of the law that Luke says had come from Judea and Jerusalem. They had come to criticise and condemn, and hence had eyes and ears open to discover a fault. Not long before Jesus had startled the theologians at Jerusalem when he attended the passover, and hearing of his wonderful popularity in Galilee they had come to scent out heresy. *Reasoning in their hearts.* Matthew says, "within themselves". They did not speak out, but Christ read their hearts.

7. *Why doth this man thus speak?* Another reading adopted by the revisers and the critical editors. *Tischendorf, Hort and Westcott* is even more forcible: "Why doth this man speak thus? He blasphemeth." *Speak blasphemies.* "Blasphemy", says George Mackenzie, in his *Laws and Customs of Scotland in Matters Criminal* (Tit. iii., 1), "is called in law, *divine lese majesty or treason*; and it is committed either (1) by denying that of God which belongs to him as one of his attributes, or (2) by attributing to him that which is absurd and inconsistent with his divine nature," or, as it may be added (3), by assuming one's self, or ascribing to others, what is an incommunicable property or prerogative of God. It is with a reference to this third form of the offense that the word is used in the passage before us. *Who can forgive sins but God only?* Christ had not yet said that he forgave sins; only that his sins were forgiven. Nor could he claim to forgive sins, were he only a man, without blasphemy, and when he asserts the power to forgive sins he declares that he is the Son of God. Says *Geikie*: "His claim of this divine power was the turning point in the life of Christ, for the accusation of blasphemy, muttered in the hearts of the rabbis present, was the beginning of a process that ended after a time on Calvary, and he knew it."

9. *Whether is it easier to say, . . . Thy sins be forgiven thee.* To say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," was easy, for no visible result could test the saying. To say, "Take up thy bed and walk," was not apparently so easy, for failure would cover with confusion. He said the last, leaving the inference—If I can do the most difficult, then, of course, I can do the easier. Here we have the true character of a miracle; it is the outward manifestation of the power of God, in order that we may believe in the power of God in things that are invisible.—*F. W. Robertson.* As much as

the soul excels the body does the forgiveness of sin rise above the cure of bodily sickness. But Christ adapts his mode of speech to their capacities, who in their carnal minds felt more influence by outward signs than by the whole putting forth of his spiritual power as availing to eternal life.

—*Calvin.*

III. THE POWER OF THE SON OF MAN.—10. *That ye may know.* By doing that which is capable of being put to proof, I will vindicate my right and power to do that which in its very nature is incapable of being proved. By these visible tides of God's grace I will give you to know in what direction the great under-currents of his love are setting, and that both are obedient to my word. *The Son of man* cannot simply mean a man, or a mere man, for this would be untrue in fact, since the powers in question do not belong to men as such, nor could any reason be assigned for this circuitous expression of so simple an idea. The true sense is determined by Daniel 7:13, where the phrase is confessedly applied to the Messiah, as a partaker of our nature, a description which itself implies a higher nature, or, in other words, that he is called the Son of man because he is the Son of God. This official application of the term accounts for the remarkable and interesting fact that it is never used by any other person in the gospel, nor of Christ by any but himself. *Hath power on earth to forgive sins.* "Authority" is a better rendering than "power," and it is so given by the American Revision Committee. He had "authority" from the Father who had sent him, and who had committed judgment to his hands on earth. Not merely authority while on the earth to forgive sins, nor authority to forgive sins committed on the earth, but authority to exercise the function of forgiveness of sins upon the earth; that is, that ye may know that this is the Messiah's earthly mission. Bengel finely remarks: "This saying savors of heavenly origin." The Son of man, as God manifest in man's flesh, has on man's earth that power which in its fountain and essence belongs to God in heaven.—*Alford.* Sins are against God, and therefore only God can forgive them; for in the nature of things only he can forgive against whom the offense has been committed.

11. *Arise, take up thy bed.* A light mattress. Other men brought him on the bed; he can now carry himself away, bed and all. Christ's argument here affords a fair test of all priestly claims to absolve from sin. If the priest has power to remit the eternal punishment of sin, he should be able, certainly, to remit the physical and temporal punishment of sin. This Christ did; this the priest does not, and cannot do. Any popish priest can say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," and the credulous may believe that a miracle of pardon is performed; but it is not quite so easy to perform the bodily miracle.

12. *Insomuch that they were all amazed.* Amazed at the high claims of Jesus and at the demonstration that his claims were well founded. The scribes had whispered in their hearts the charge of blasphemy, but the people saw a manifestation of divine power and glorified God, because, as Luke says, "God had given such power to men." They looked upon Jesus, not as Divine, but as the commissioned agent of the Divine will.

IV. POWER TO FORGIVE SINS.—This whole incident illustrates: (1) The difference between the spiritual authority of Christ and that of his apostles, none of whom assumed to forgive sins. See Acts 8:22-24. (2) It affords a test for all claims of priests or bishops to pardon sin, or to officially pronounce the absolution of sin. If they possessed the power to absolve from sin they should be able, like Christ, to relieve from the temporal consequences of sin. Romish priests claim a prerogative that was never claimed by Peter or the other apostles, which belongs to the Lord alone, and which it is not only presumption but blasphemy for any man or set of men to claim who cannot manifest divine credentials to confirm their claims.

FACT QUESTIONS 2:1-12

86. When did the healing of the paralytic occur?
87. What was the incident immediately before this? The one soon after?
88. Where was this incident in relation to His first circuit of Galilee?
89. Mention two miracles which promoted the popularity of Jesus. Where had He been rejected?
90. What evidence do we have that the mother of Jesus and His brothers lived in Capernaum?
91. Who came to the house from Judea and Jerusalem? Cf. Luke 5:17. Why were they there?
92. Mark 1:39 and 2:2 both speak of the preaching of Jesus but they use two different words—what are they?
93. Name three infirmities classified under the general heading of palsy.
94. Explain the reason why the crowd suggested the need for the com-
forter.
95. Discuss the procedure used in uncovering the roof. Was this nec-
essarily destructive?
96. How did Jesus "see" their faith?
97. Show how Jesus "made the best" out of the failure of the four.
98. In what way were the words of Jesus concerning the forgiveness
of sins appropriate to the belief of the Jews? Cf. John 9:2.

99. Did Jesus intend to teach His deity by His actions and words with the palsied man? Why didn't the scribes believe Him?
100. Why use the word "easier" in reference to the forgiveness of sins?
101. Explain the true character of a miracle?
102. Read Daniel 7:13 and show its application in this connection.
103. "In the nature of things only he can forgive against whom the offense has been committed."—how had the palsied man sinned against Jesus?
104. What proof have we of the failure of present day priests to forgive sins?
105. Who was amazed? Who were incensed? Why?
106. This incident shows the difference between the spiritual authority of Christ and that of his apostles—in what manner?

SIDELIGHTS

MORAL PARALYSIS—In one of our city hospitals a young woman of beautiful face and form had lain motionless for many months. Except for the brightness of her face, and the action of the hands, her body was apparently dead. Yet she spoke with great confidence of her restoration to health at some future time, and was enthusiastic in planning good works then to be executed. A physician remarked that it was the saddest case he had ever witnessed. It was a paralysis, not of the flesh, but of the mind: it was a *moral paralysis*. The will itself had lost its power of action. She could plan for the future, but not *will* anything at the present moment. After a few months the inactivity bred fatal disorder and she passed away. This is a picture of the moral paralysis of many. They mean to be Christians at some time; they do not determine to do it *now*.—Anon.

LESSONS

1. Sin is like paralysis—a weakness and torpor of the conscience, and the will to do good.
2. It is our privilege to bring those to Christ who cannot or will not come of themselves.
3. Difficulties are in the way of the sinner's cure, to prove and strengthen faith. Faith will find or make a way to come to Christ.
4. Christ forgives and saves only on condition of faith; for the faith that loves and chooses God is the beginning of heavenly life in the soul. It is useless to forgive those who immediately plunge into sin again.
5. The first need of the soul is forgiveness; then follows the healing of the soul from its sinful nature.
6. Christ knows our inmost thoughts and motives—a terror to the bad, but a comfort to the good.

7. THE LESSON.—This may be regarded as an enacted parable of sin and redemption. The paralytic typifies the sinner by his original helplessness (Isaiah 40:30; John 6:44; 15:5), faith, by his earnestness to come to Christ in spite of obstacle (Ps. 25:15; 86:2, 7), a common Christian experience, by the delay he suffers between his repentance and faith, and his cure (James 5:7, 8) and the power of divine grace, in the ability to obey Christ's command, received in the very attempt to comply with it (Phil. 4:13).—*Abbott.*

POINTS FOR TEACHERS

1. Consider Christ's return, from whence, and to what place and how received. 2. Note the evidences of strong faith in the palsied man and his bearers. 3. Bring out the circumstances; Christ teaching in a house, crowds around, no way to reach him, the palsied man, helpless, brought on a couch by four men, no other way and they open the flat roof and let the sick man down to Christ. 4. Observe the language of Christ, the complaint of the scribes, and the answer of Christ. 5. Consider who forgives sins, blasphemy for a man to make such a claim, why Christ had power. 6. Point out how he demonstrated his power, as no pope or priest ever does. 7. Observe that we have in this lesson an "ENACTED PARABLE OF SIN AND REDEMPTION," together with Christ's example in dealing with sinners. (1) The paralytic—a type of sinners (vs. 1-3). (2) He is brought to Christ (vs. 3, 4), as we must bring sinners by our labors and our prayers. (3) He comes in faith and finds forgiveness (v. 5). (4) Forgiveness is proved and followed by healing (vs. 6-12), as renewed lives follow and prove the forgiveness of our sins. (5) Then sinners, even of the worst class, are called to be the disciples of Christ.

6. THE CALL OF MATTHEW AND HIS FEAST 2:13-17

TEXT 2:13-17

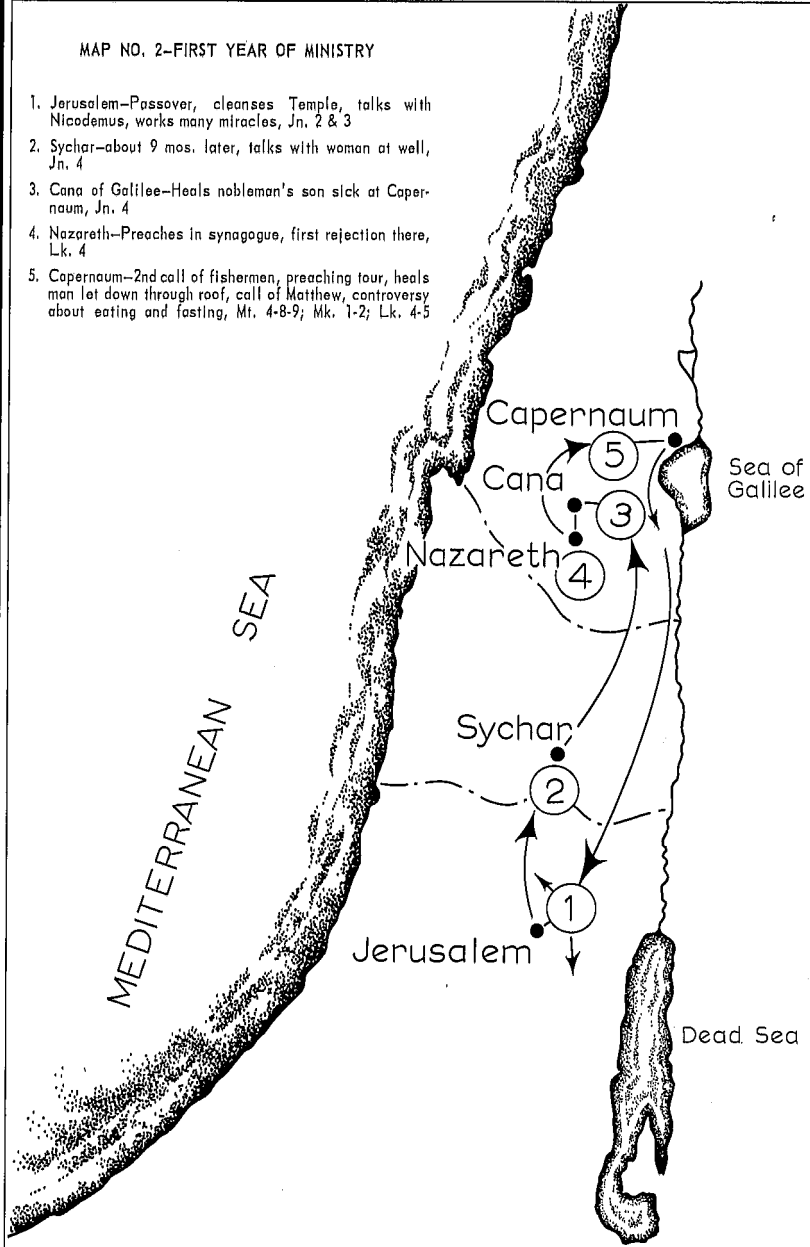
And he went forth again by the seaside; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the place of toll, and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass, that he was sitting at meat in his house, and many publicans and sinners sat down with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him. And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with the sinners and publicans, said unto his disciples, He eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners. And when Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 2:13-17

82. Why did Jesus do most of His teaching outside?

MAP NO. 2—FIRST YEAR OF MINISTRY

1. Jerusalem—Passover, cleanses Temple, talks with Nicodemus, works many miracles, Jn. 2 & 3
2. Sychar—about 9 mos. later, talks with woman at well, Jn. 4
3. Cana of Galilee—Heals nobleman's son sick at Capernaum, Jn. 4
4. Nazareth—Preaches in synagogue, first rejection there, Lk. 4
5. Capernaum—2nd call of fishermen, preaching tour, heals man let down through roof, call of Matthew, controversy about eating and fasting, Mt. 4-8-9; Mk. 1-2; Lk. 4-5



83. Isn't it rather strange to read of a tax collector working by the Sea of Galilee? Explain.
84. Was this the first meeting of Jesus with Matthew? How account for the immediate response?
85. Why did Jesus go to eat at the home of Matthew? Be specific.
86. Are we to conclude that the publicans and sinners were at the feast only because they followed Jesus?; or did they come by invitation?
87. What was wrong with eating and drinking with publicans and sinners?
88. Why ask the disciples—why not ask Jesus?
89. In the answer of Jesus was He being ironical in His reference to the well and the sick?

COMMENT 2:13-17

TIME—Early Summer A.D. 28.

PLACE—Near the northern shore of Galilee—on the road from Damascus as it entered Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 9:9; Luke 5:27, 28.

OUTLINE—1. Teaching the multitude by the seaside, vs. 13. 2. Matthew called from his work to follow Jesus, vs. 14. 3. The feast in the home of Levi, v. 15. 4. The criticism of eating with sinners; the answer of Jesus, v. 16, 17.

ANALYSIS

- I. TEACHING THE MULTITUDE BY THE SEASIDE, V. 13.
 1. The place where He had taught before.
 2. A great crowd present because of previous miracles.
- II. MATTHEW CALLED FROM HIS WORK TO FOLLOW JESUS. VS 14-17
 1. The place of toll was noticed by our Lord.
 2. Immediate response.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- I. TEACHING THE MULTITUDES BY THE SEASIDE, V. 13.

13. *By the seaside.* Our Lord often is found in the open air preaching to the multitudes—especially was this true beside the Sea of Galilee. There were many villages from which came the many people to hear Him.

- II. MATTHEW CALLED FROM HIS WORK TO FOLLOW JESUS. VS. 14-17

14. *He saw Levi*—There were many who fished in the lake—There were many more who came in and out of the city—from all of these would Levi collect taxes. Jesus had already healed one leper—he is about to heal another—a social leper of the society of His day. Here was a Jew hired to collect taxes of his own people for the despised Romans. If such tax collectors were paid a common wage for their work it would have been scorned as an occupation—but when all knew they assessed beyond

the amount prescribed and kept the overcharge for themselves it became a position of utter contempt. "By Mark alone is he called the son of Alphaeus. There is no reason to suppose that this was any other Alphaeus than the one referred to in all the lists of the apostles where we have "James, the son of Alphaeus." In three of the lists he stands next to Matthew and Thomas. Matthew and James are thus presumably brothers; and if, as is almost certain, Thomas was the twin brother of Matthew, Alphaeus was the father of three of the twelve. If the word "brother" is rightly supplied before "of James" in Luke 6:16 ("Judas the brother of James"), he may have been the father of four."

We have no record of a previous acquaintance of Jesus on the part of Levi. We can assume the following: (1) He could have heard the preaching of vs. 13. (2) One of his brothers could have introduced Jesus to him. (3) He could have been among the other publicans who were baptized by John (Luke 3:12, 13: 7:29). (4) Peter said the apostles were followers of Jesus from the baptism—or baptizing of John (Acts 1:21,22).

We must conclude that when the words of Jesus *Follow Me* fell on his heart it was one prepared to receive them. Here was a hungry soul in the most unlikely of circumstances—but then our Lord found several of these—we think immediately of the woman at the well (John 4:7-38).

15. *Jesus (he) sat at meat in his house*—Luke tells us the feast was prepared by Matthew for Jesus (Luke 5:29). We are not to conclude this event happened immediately after the calling of Levi—no time element is indicated. We ought to mark the difference in the readings of the King James Version and the American Standard. The name "Jesus" is supplied by the translators—it is much more natural to refer this to Levi—who here in his own house is reclining at the table in the presence of Jesus and many others. Evidently Matthew wanted all publicans to hear and see what he had heard and seen. The publicans were at the feast by invitation as were undoubtedly the disciples of Jesus.

16. *The scribes and Pharisees*—a better translation would read "the scribes of the Pharisees." "This is the first mention of the Pharisees in Mark's Gospel. They were a sect of separatists. The group began in the Maccabean period, in the second century before Christ. The Pharisees were trying to withstand the rising tide of Hellenism in Palestine. They stood strongly for close adherence to the law, including strict observance of all the ceremonial requirements. But like all such groups, the sect became more and more legalistic in its emphasis." (Earle) These scribes stood outside the house to ask this question of the disciples.

17. *They that are whole (strong)*. This was used ironically by Jesus to describe the Pharisees' attitude about himself—since he felt self suffi-

cient—he need not concern himself over the work of the great physician.

They that are sick—surely even at the risk of contagion the physician must minister to the sick. If the Pharisees felt these publicans and sinners so much in need they could not object if someone attempted to help them.

not to call the righteous but sinners. Jesus plainly states His purpose—His work, His concern would be among sinners—His call—His healing would be for them—if this offended the Pharisees so be it!

FACT QUESTIONS 2:13-17

107. Who would hear Jesus by the Sea of Galilee i. e. besides a few fishermen?
108. Why did Levi have his place of toll by the Seaside? Why was he hated?
109. Who were the brothers of Matthew?
110. What are the possibilities of previous contact of Matthew with Jesus?
111. Why was Levi so ready to follow?
112. Who prepared the feast—in whose house?
113. Why did the Pharisees criticize Him?
114. How did Jesus attempt to show the Pharisees their sin?
115. Did Jesus infer there were some men who could not be helped?

7. DISPUTE ABOUT FASTING 2:18-22.

TEXT: 2:18-22

And John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and they come and say unto him, Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the sons of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then will they fast in that day. No man seweth a piece of undressed cloth on an old garment: else that which should fill it up taketh from it, the new from the old and a worse rent is made. And no man putteth new wine into old wine-skins: else the wine will burst the skins, and the wine perisheth, and the skins: but they put new wine into fresh wineskins."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 2:18-22

90. Was there something wrong about the fasting of John's disciples or of the fasting of the Pharisees? Why did they fast?
91. Was Jesus saying that He and His disciples were as happy as a bridal party? If not what did He say in vs. 19?
92. Are we living in the day when the bridegroom has been taken away? If so are we to fast? If so why do we fail to do it? Cf. Acts 13:1, 2.
93. What is represented by the undressed cloth in the figure of speech Jesus used? What was the old garment?

94. What worse rent would be made? What was the point of the parable?
 95. Was the point the same in the figure of new and old wine skins?

COMMENT

TIME—(Same as the call of Levi—Early Summer A.D. 28.)

PLACE—Many feel this conversation took place around the table in Matthew's house.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 9:14-17; Luke 5:33-39.

OUTLINE—1. The question of John's disciples, v. 18. 2. The answer of the bridegroom, vs. 19, 20. 3. The answer of the garment, v. 21. 4. The answer of the wine skins, v. 22.

ANALYSIS

- I. THE QUESTION OF JOHN'S DISCIPLES, 18.
 1. Asked during a fast by John's disciples and the Pharisees.
 2. Why do John's disciples fast and the disciples of Christ fail to fast?
- II. THE ANSWER OF THE BRIDEGROOM, 19, 20.
 1. The joy of the bridal party prevents fasting.
 2. When the bridegroom is gone there will be fasting.
- III. THE ANSWER OF THE GARMENT, 21
 1. New cloth cannot patch old clothes.
 2. The results prevent such action.
- IV. THE ANSWER OF THE WINE SKINS, 22.
 1. New wine cannot go in old skins.
 2. Results prevent such action.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. THE QUESTION OF JOHN'S DISCIPLES, 18.

18. *John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting.* Perhaps they chose the very time of the feast for a fast. This would indeed produce a contrast and conflict. We believe John's disciples were sincere in their questions and offered no criticism. We could not say the same of the disciples of the Pharisees. The law of God prescribed only one fast—the great Day of atonement—(Lev. 23:27). During the captivity of the Jewish nation fasting was practiced by many. Fasting undoubtedly was associated with the repentance John preached.

II. THE ANSWER OF THE BRIDEGROOM, 19, 20.

19. *Sons of the bride-chamber.* What a beautiful way to describe the attitude of our Lord for His work! Jesus was as happy as a bridegroom—His disciples shared His joy. How could they be sad or fast when they had just made the greatest discovery in time and eternity? It was time to rejoice, they had found the Messiah!

20. *Then they will fast in that day.* We now live in that day. We look for the coming of the bridegroom for His bride—there are many oc-

casions when we need to fast. The church in Antioch fasted (Cf. Acts 13:1, 2). This is not a legal requirement but it can be a wonderful spiritual exercise. There are mental, emotional, physical and spiritual benefits for the sons of the bride-chamber who will commit themselves to a period of prayer and fasting. The immediate reference here is probably to His crucifixion and the sorrow felt at that time. It can have a more far-reaching application as we have indicated.

III. THE ANSWER OF THE GARMENT, VS. 21

21. . . . *a piece of undressed cloth or an old garment.* This is an answer to question about fasting. Jesus is saying His mission is entirely new. It will not be added to that of the law as reflected so poorly through the Pharisees, nor even a part of the work of John—which was only a preparation for the new kingdom. The Messiah was not sent to patch up the old but to offer an entirely new garment. "The garment of praise for the worn-out garment of law."

IV. THE ANSWER OF THE WINE SKINS, VS. 22

22. *New wine in old wine-skins*—This is a Hebrewistic manner of presenting parables—two with the same point for emphasis. "The point in the use of the 'parables' is that the using of the ill-chosen patch and the unsuitable bottles defeats the purpose of him who resorts to it, and the purpose is defeated because of an unwise uniting of the new with the old. The new is the living, expanding, divinely-vigorous kingdom of Christ; the old is that which pertains to the Jewish dispensation, which was decaying and ready to vanish away (Heb. 8:13)" (W. N. Clarke)

FACT QUESTIONS 2:18-22

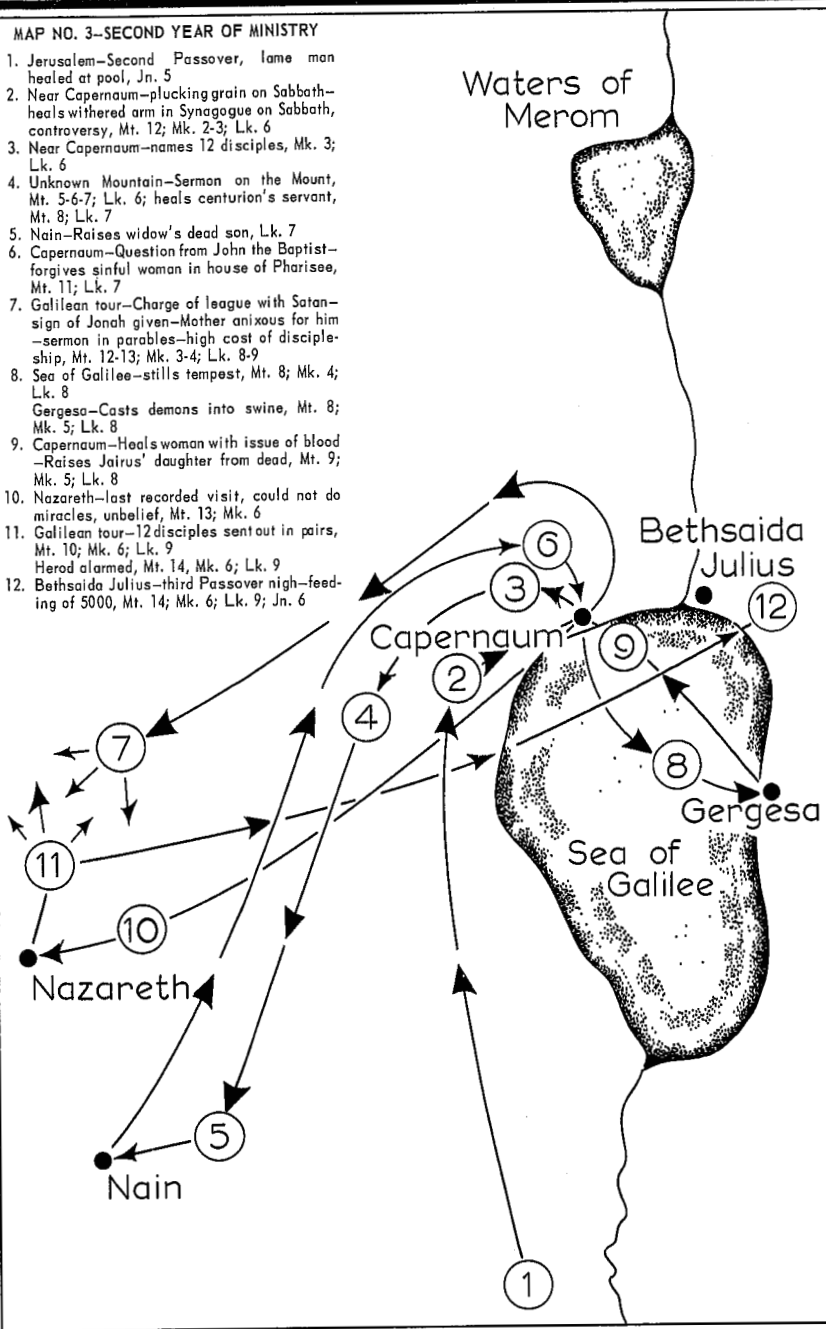
116. At what time and place did this question of fasting occur?
117. What was the probable motive behind the question?
118. Why call the disciples of Jesus "sons of the bride-chamber?"
119. In what day did Jesus promise that His followers would fast?
120. What is represented by the piece of undressed cloth? What is the garment?
121. What is represented by the new wine?

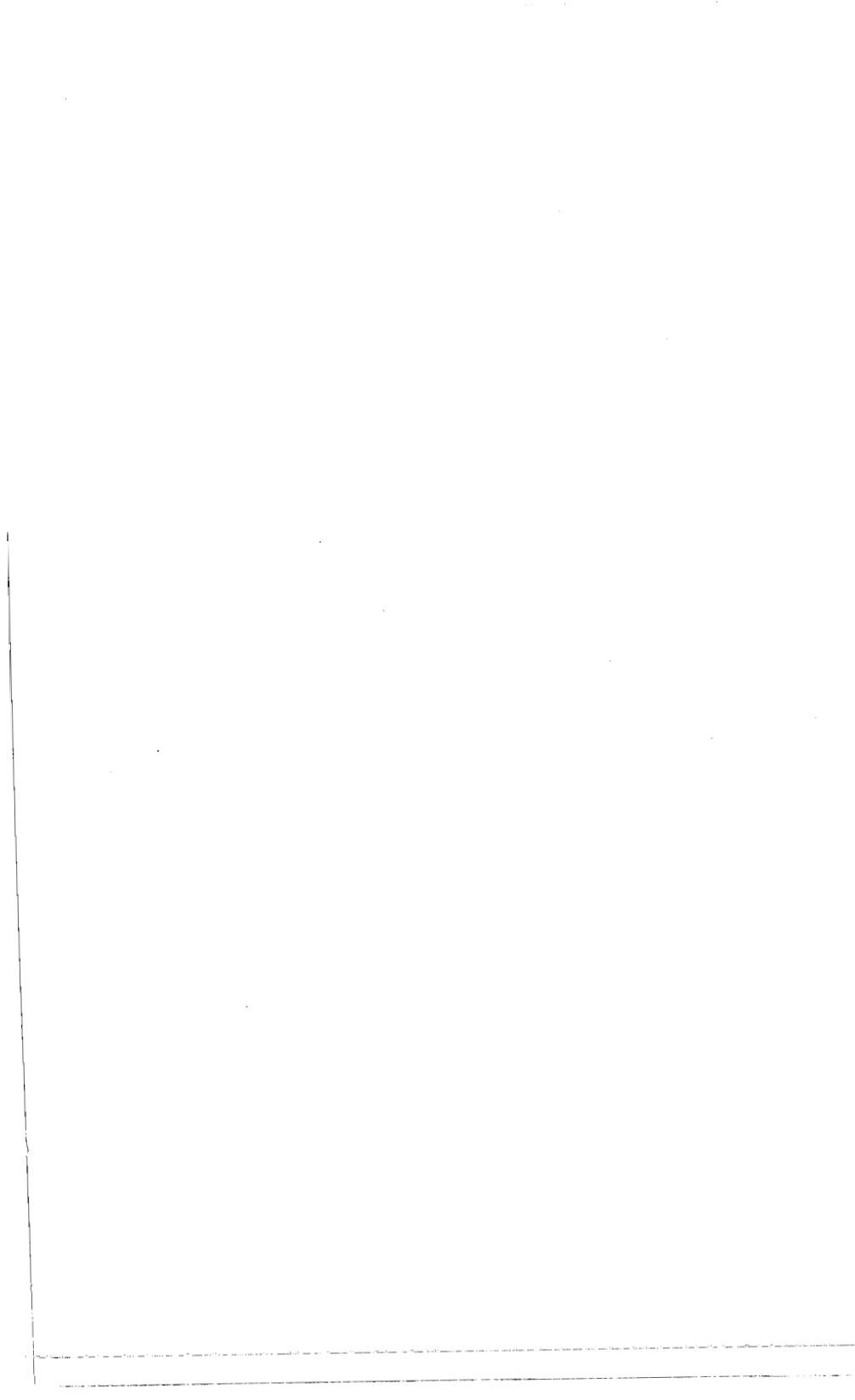
SIDELIGHTS

"Vers. 13-22.—Levi's feast: the moral questions it occasioned, 1. Vers. 13-17. *Eating with publicans and sinners.* In calling Matthew (Levi) from the receipt of custom, our Saviour made him relinquish all his old pursuits and companions, and conferred upon him an unexpected honour. The feast given by him was, therefore, partly a farewell, partly a celebration. In overstepping the boundary line of Jewish religious and social etiquette, the Lord performed an act of great significance, which was sure to call forth remark.

MAP NO. 3—SECOND YEAR OF MINISTRY

1. Jerusalem—Second Passover, lame man healed at pool, Jn. 5
2. Near Capernaum—plucking grain on Sabbath—heals withered arm in Synagogue on Sabbath, controversy, Mt. 12; Mk. 2-3; Lk. 6
3. Near Capernaum—names 12 disciples, Mk. 3; Lk. 6
4. Unknown Mountain—Sermon on the Mount, Mt. 5-6-7; Lk. 6; heals centurion's servant, Mt. 8; Lk. 7
5. Nain—Raises widow's dead son, Lk. 7
6. Capernaum—Question from John the Baptist—forgives sinful woman in house of Pharisee, Mt. 11; Lk. 7
7. Galilean tour—Charge of league with Satan—sign of Jonah given—Mother anxious for him—sermon in parables—high cost of discipleship, Mt. 12-13; Mk. 3-4; Lk. 8-9
8. Sea of Galilee—stills tempest, Mt. 8; Mk. 4; Lk. 8
Gergesa—Casts demons into swine, Mt. 8; Mk. 5; Lk. 8
9. Capernaum—Heals woman with issue of blood—Raises Jairus' daughter from dead, Mt. 9; Mk. 5; Lk. 8
10. Nazareth—last recorded visit, could not do miracles, unbelief, Mt. 13; Mk. 6
11. Galilean tour—12 disciples sent out in pairs, Mt. 10; Mk. 6; Lk. 9
Herod alarmed, Mt. 14, Mk. 6; Lk. 9
12. Bethsaida Julius—third Passover night—feeding of 5000, Mt. 14; Mk. 6; Lk. 9; Jn. 6





I. *Superficial knowledge, when linked with malice, will put the worst construction upon the best actions.* Conventional morality was invoked to condemn Christ in mingling with the publicans. No trouble was taken to ascertain the true character of the feast. By their criticism the Pharisees exposed their own hollowness and unspirituality. They condemned themselves in seeking to condemn Christ. For such judgements men are responsible. The greatest care and most spiritual view should be taken ere judgement is passed upon the actions of others, especially when their character is known to be good.

II. *It is the motive which is the true key to the nature of actions.*

1. This applies absolutely in the case of actions in themselves indifferent, or only conventionally forbidden; but in all actions it is an indispensable canon of ultimate judgment. Even where the external nature of an action is unmistakable, the utmost care should be taken in forming an opinion. Absolute and unqualified judgment is for God alone. 2. When challenged for our conduct it is well to explain the principle upon which we act. Christ at once makes known his motives, and with no anger. Yet in so doing he judged his accusers. They pretended to be whole, and so could not object to him doing good to those who required his aid. Why were they dissatisfied, if not from secret disquietude with their own condition and attitude? Irony proceeding from deepest spiritual discernment!

III. *The holiest sought out and companied with sinners that He might make them holy.* "It is only by sympathy, and by appeals to their highest nature, that sinful men can be won to God."—(Muir)

LESSONS

1. Jesus was first, last, and always a teacher. No occasion went by unimproved for teaching.
2. If we do not speak to all we meet about Christ how shall we discover the hungry hearts like Levi?
3. Could we have dinners for sinners and introduce Jesus to them at the meal? It has been done with good success.
4. We should not be surprised at criticism—much of it unfounded—this is part of the price of progress.
5. How glad we should be to take the particular prescription the Great physician gives for us.
6. We should be as happy in our labors for Christ as a bride and groom on their honeymoon.

POINTS FOR TEACHERS

The Calling of Matthew

(A wonderful lesson for every teacher—)

We know three things about him:

- (1) He was a Hebrew.
 - a. Justifiable pride.
 - b. Understandable narrowness.
- (2) He was a publican.
 - a. A consciousness of an authority under which he served.
 - b. Responsible for accuracy in keeping of records.
- (3) A profoundly religious man.
 - a. His remarkable familiarity with the Scriptures of the Hebrew people. No less than 99 references in his gospel.
 - b. He applied his knowledge.

How our Lord dealt with this man:

1. Found him in the *midst of work*.
 - a. "All the brooding of his mind lay behind the outward activity of the tax collector."
 - b. Perhaps he knew very much about Jesus since his place of work was at Capernaum.
 - c. The decisive moment—the command of Jesus.
2. Jesus asked for *submission*.
3. He promised *fellowship*.
4. He called Matthew into an *enterprise*.

The results are self-evident in the gospel he wrote. (G. Campbell Morgan)

8. THE SABBATH DISPUTE 2:23—3:6

- a. Eating on the Sabbath. 2:23-28

TEXT 2:23-28

And it came to pass, that he was going on the Sabbath day through the cornfields; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful? And he said unto them, Did ye never read what David did, when he had need and was an hungered, he and they that were with him? How he entered into the house of God when Abiathar was high priest, and did eat the shew-bread, which it is not lawful to eat save for the priests, and gave also to them that were with him? And he said unto them. The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: so that the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 2:23-28

96. To where were Jesus and His disciples going as they went through the grain fields?
97. Why were his disciples plucking the ears of grain? Wasn't this stealing?
98. Of what did the Pharisees accuse the disciples?
99. How could Jesus use the example of David when David lied to the priest in getting the shewbread?
100. In what sense was the sabbath made for man?
101. Is Jesus saying the Sabbath law was subject to man not man to the Sabbath law? Explain.
102. In what sense is the Son of man Lord of the Sabbath?
103. Wouldn't this arouse anger in the hearts of the Pharisees and therefore be wrong?

COMMENT 2:23-28

TIME—Early summer of A.D. 28.

PLACE—In a grain field near Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 12:1-8; Luke 6:1-5.

OUTLINE—1. Walking on the sabbath, 23. 2. The criticism of the Pharisees, 24. 3. Jesus' answer, 25, 26. 4. The application, 27, 28.

ANALYSIS 2:23-28

I. WALKING ON THE SABBATH 23

1. Through the grain-fields with His disciples.
2. As they went the disciples plucked the grain and ate it.

II. THE CRITICISM OF THE PHARISEES. 24.

1. Careful to watch for mistakes.
2. Objected to harvesting grain on the sabbath.

III. JESUS' ANSWER. 25, 26.

1. They were unaware of the record and meaning of the scripture.
2. David's exception would surely allow for theirs.

IV. THE APPLICATION. 27, 28.

1. The true purpose of the sabbath.
2. The claim to Divine prerogative.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. WALKING ON THE SABBATH. 23.

23. . . . *on the sabbath . . . his disciples began to pluck the ears.* Matthew mentions the hunger of the disciples as the cause for plucking the grain. Both Jesus and His disciples had been so pressed with work that they had not time for eating. Deut. 23:25 makes provision for the poor and permits eating a few ears from the neighbor's field. We do not know if this was a wheat field or a barley field.

II. THE CRITICISM OF THE PHARISEES. 24.

24. . . . *why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful?* The Pharisees were accusing the disciples of working on the sabbath—actually of harvesting on the sabbath. The law was Exodus 20:10. The infraction of the law was a matter of legalistic interpretation.

III. JESUS' ANSWER. 25, 26.

25, 26. "The reply, as given by all three evangelists, cites a violation on the ground of necessity, and one in which the necessity, as now, is that of hunger. The sanctity is not that of the Sabbath alone, but also that of the shew-bread in the tabernacle. The reference is to 1 Sam. 21:1-6: "In the days of Abiathar, the high priest;" the mention of the name is peculiar to Mark, and is not without difficulty. The high priest who is mentioned in the original narrative is not Abiathar, but Ahimelech, his father. Abiathar succeeded his father in office not long after, and was high priest during David's reign; so that his name is constantly associated with that of David in the history. Various attempts have been made to reconcile the difference, some supposing that Abiathar was already assistant to his father at the time of David's visit and was present when he came, although this can be nothing but conjecture; others, that our Lord or Mark was content with mentioning the name of the chief high priest of David's time, and the one that was chiefly associated with David's name, which is the same as to say that absolute accuracy was not aimed at; others, that the name of Abiathar stands in the text of Mark as the result of a copyist's error. The law of the shew-bread is given at Lev. 24:5-9. Our Lord's argument is again, as so often, an *argumentum ad hominem*—an appeal to the Pharisees on their own ground. The visit of David to the tabernacle was on the Sabbath, for the previous week's shew-bread was just being changed for the fresh, and this was done on the Sabbath (1 Sam. 21:6 with Lev. 24:8). So David violated the sanctity of the Sabbath (if the Pharisees were right), and at the same time the law that gave the sacred bread to the priests alone. Here was a double violation on the ground of necessity, and the Scriptures nowhere condemned it; nor would the Pharisees really condemn it. David was no Sabbath-breaker, as they all knew; neither were his disciples Sabbath-breakers for gathering and eating the ears of grain. In Matthew a second illustration is added—of the priests laboring in the temple on the Sabbath without sin; also a second citation of the Scripture quoted in verse 13—"I will have mercy, and not sacrifice"—as appropriate to this case also. The principle throughout is that higher requirements subordinate lower; the application of the principle, that necessity and mercy are of higher rank than any ceremonial or formal duties. The requirement of "mercy" was a rebuke to the spirit of the fault finders, who

were very tender of the Sabbath, but cared nothing for the supplying of the needs of their fellow-men. The principle of Paul, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10), was to them utterly unknown.—

IV. THE APPLICATION. 27, 28

27, 28. "*sabbath was made for man.*—These verses contain an argument not reported by either Matthew or Luke. That the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, implies that when the welfare of man conflicts with the observance of the Sabbath, the letter must give way. But of this, man himself is not to judge, because he can not judge with impartiality his own interests. No one is competent to judge in the case who does not know all that pertains to the welfare of man, and this is known only by the Lord. For this reason Jesus adds, "Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath;" that is, as the Son of man came to provide for man's welfare, and as the Sabbath law might need modification or even abrogation for the highest good of man, therefore lordship over the Sabbath was given to the Son of man. The passage teaches, then, not that man might violate the law of the Sabbath when their welfare seemed to them to demand it, but that Jesus could set it aside, as he afterward did, when his own judgment of man's welfare required him to do so. He made it clear on this occasion that said law was not to be so construed as to prevent men from providing necessary food on the Sabbath-day." (J. W. McGarvey)

FACT QUESTIONS 2:23-28

122. Why did the disciples eat the grain?
123. Why go through the field? Why not use the road?
124. Was it wrong to eat the grain? What law provides for this?
125. What law did the Pharisees imagine the disciples had violated?
126. Please explain the difficulty in referring to Abiathar as the high-priest—what explanation seems best?
127. What principle was involved in the action of David which was also a part of the action of the disciples?
128. In what sense was the sabbath made for man? When?
129. Explain the point in saying the Son of Man is Lord of the sabbath.

b. Healing On The Sabbath 3:1-6

TEXT 3:1-6

And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had his hand withered. And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. And he saith unto the man that had his hand withered, Stand forth. And he saith unto

them, Is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good, or to do harm? to save a life, or to kill? But they held their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth; and his hand was restored. And the Pharisees went out, and straightway with the Herodians took counsel against him, how they might destroy him.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 3:1-6

104. On what sabbath did this event occur? Please read Luke 6:6 before answering.
105. Just what is meant by "a withered hand"?
106. Who was watching Jesus to accuse Him?
107. Why call the man to stand forth in the midst?
108. Was the question of Jesus in vs. 4 based on scripture? Why ask the question?
109. In what sense was Jesus angry with the Pharisees?
110. Please explain in your own words the heart action described in vs. 5.
111. Did the willingness of the cripple relate to the healing? If so, how?
112. Why the decision to kill Him? Why made at this particular time?
113. Who were the Herodians?

COMMENT

TIME—Early Summer A.D. 28—although on a different sabbath than the one on which the disciples plucked the grain yet in the same summer.

PLACE—Capernaum—in the synagogue of this city.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 12:9-14; Luke 6:6-11.

OUTLINE—1. The place of the healing, vs. 1. 2. The critics of the healing, vs. 2. 3. The man to be healed, vs. 3. 4. The question of the purpose of healing and the sabbath, vs. 4. 5. The attitude of Jesus and the healing, vs. 5. 6. The sad reaction of the healing on those who refused to learn, vs. 6.

ANALYSIS

- I. THE PLACE OF THE HEALING, VS. 1.
 1. At Capernaum in the synagogue.
 2. In the midst of the Jewish worshippers in the synagogue.
- II. THE CRITICS OF THE HEALING, VS. 2.
 1. The Pharisees and perhaps the Herodians.
 2. They were there to spy not to worship or learn.
- III. THE MAN TO BE HEALED, VS. 3.
 1. An adult with a hand which was "dried up."
 2. He was asked to arise so he could be seen by all in the service.

IV. THE QUESTION OF THE PURPOSE OF HEALING AND THE SABBATH, V. 4.

1. Some were worried about the purpose of the sabbath—Jesus asked if they really knew what should or should not be done on this day?
2. They refused to answer the obvious question.

V. THE ATTITUDE OF JESUS AND THE HEALING, VS. 5.

1. Searching the faces and hearts Jesus was grieved at what He saw.
2. In the face of opposition and danger Jesus "does good" on the sabbath by healing.

VI. THE SAD REACTION OF THE HEALING ON THOSE WHO REFUSED TO LEARN, VS. 6.

1. Left with their minds made up.
2. Immediately agreed with their enemies to destroy Jesus.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. THE PLACE OF HEALING, VS. 1.

1. "*And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.*

Mark records another charge of Sabbath-breaking, probably to show how various were the outward occasions of such opposition; to illustrate the variety of Christ's defenses; and mark the first concerted plan for his destruction. *Again*, that is, on a different occasion from the one referred to in 2:21. The *synagogue*, most probably the one there mentioned, which was in Capernaum. Here, as in 2:23, the absence of any more specific note of time shows that exact chronological order was of small importance to the author's object. There is somewhat more precision as to this point in the parallel accounts of Luke (6:11) and Matthew (12:9). There is no ground in the text of either gospel for the conjecture of some writers, that the presence of this sufferer had been contrived in order to entrap Christ. The constant application for his healing aid precludes the necessity of such supposition, and indeed suggests that this was only one of many miracles performed at this time, and is recorded in detail on account of its important bearing on the progress of Christ's ministry. *Withered*, literally, *dried* or *dried up*, elsewhere applied to liquids (5:29. Rev. 16:12), and to plants (4:6. 11:20. James 1:11), but also to the pining away of the human body. The passive participle adds to the meaning of the adjective (dry) employed by Matthew and Luke, the idea that it was not a congenital infirmity, but the effect of disease or accident, the more calamitous because it was the right hand that was thus disabled (Luke 6:6). A similar affliction, preternaturally caused, was that of Jeroboam (1 Kings 13:4-6)."

II. THE CRITICS OF THE HEALING, VS. 2.

2. "*And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath-day; that they might accuse him.*"

We have here a striking indication that the opposition to our Saviour was becoming more inveterate and settled, so that his enemies not only censured what he did, but watched for some occasion to find fault with him. *Watched*, i. e. closely or intently, as suggested by the compound form of the Greek verb, both here and in Acts 9:24. *Whether he would*, literally, *if he will*, a form of speech which represented the scene as actually passing. The motive of their watching was not simply curiosity, but a deliberate desire to entrap him. *That they might accuse him*, not in conversation merely, but before the local judges, who were probably identical with the elders or rulers of the synagogue, or at all events present at the stated time and place of public worship. The subject of the verb is not expressed by Mark and Matthew, although easily supplied from the foregoing context (2:24. Matt. 12:2), and from the parallel account in Luke (6:7), where the scribes and Pharisees are expressly mentioned."

III. THE MAN TO BE HEALED, VS. 3.

3. "*And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth!*"

This direction to the patient is placed by Matthew (12:13) after the address to his accusers, but without asserting that it was not given sooner, as would seem to be the case from the accounts of Mark and Luke, who represent it as a sort of preparation for the subsequent discourse, which would be rendered more impressive by the sight of the man standing *in the midst*, i. e. among them, and no doubt in a conspicuous position, but not necessarily in the exact center of the house or assembly. This phrase is omitted in our version, or included in the phrase *stand forth*. The Greek verb is the same with that in 1:31. 2:9. 11:12, and strictly means to rouse another or one's self, especially from sleep. (Compare Matt. 8:25. Luke 8:24.)"

IV. THE QUESTION OF THE PURPOSE OF HEALING AND THE SABBATH, VS. 4.

4. "*And he saith unto them. Is it unlawful to do good on the sabbath-days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? but they held their peace.*"

Before proceeding to perform the miracle, he appeals to them as to the question of its lawfulness, retorting the same question which they had already put to him (Matt. 12:10), as if he had said, 'answer your own question; I will leave it to yourselves, and will abide by your decision, not however as expressed in words alone, but in your actions' (Matt. 12:11,

12). *Is it lawful*, not right in itself, but consistent with the law of Moses, and with your acknowledged obligation to obey it. *To do good* and *to do evil* may, according to etymology and usage, mean *to do right* and *to do wrong* in the general (1 Pet. 3:16, 17. 3 John 11), or *to do good* and *to injure* in particular (Acts 14:17). On the former supposition the meaning of the sentence is, 'You will surely admit that it is lawful to do right in preference to wrong on the Sabbath, as on any other day.' But as this is little more than an identical proposition, or at least an undisputed truism (namely) that what is right is lawful), most interpreters prefer the other explanation, according to which our Lord is not asserting a mere truism, which his hearers were as ready to acknowledge as himself, but pointing out their obvious mistake as to the nature of the action which they had condemned beforehand. Stripped of its interrogative form, the sentence contains two distinct but consecutive propositions. The first is that it must be lawful, even on the Sabbath, to confer a favor or to do a kindness, when the choice lies between that and the doing of an injury. Even if not absolutely lawful, it would certainly become so in the case of such an alternative. The next proposition is that this rule, which is true in general, is emphatically true when the alternative is that of life and death. To this may be added, as a tacit influence, not formally deduced, but left to be drawn by the hearers for themselves, that such a case was that before them, in which to refuse help was virtually to destroy. This is not to be strictly understood as meaning that unless the withered hand were healed at once the man would die, but as exemplifying that peculiar method of presenting extreme cases, which is one of the most marked characteristics of our Saviour's teaching. As in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere, he instructs us what we must be prepared to do in an extreme case, thus providing for all others; so here he exhibits the conclusion, to which their reasoning naturally tended, as a proof that it must be erroneous. If the rest of the Sabbath was not only a divine requisition, but an intrinsic, absolute necessity, to which all human interests must yield, this could be no less true in an extreme case than in any other, so that life itself must be sacrificed to it. This revolting conclusion could be avoided only by admitting that the obligation of the Sabbath rested on authority, and might by that authority be abrogated or suspended. This implies that such authority belonged to him, that he was not acting as a mere man, or a prophet, but as the Son of man, and as such lord of the Sabbath; so that, although his answer upon this occasion is in form quite different from that before recorded, it amounts to the same thing, and proceeds upon the same essential principle. Thus understood, the sentence may be paraphrased as follows: 'You consider me a breaker of the law, because I heal upon

the Sabbath; but you must admit that where the choice is between doing good and evil, for example, between saving life and killing upon that day, we are bound to choose the former. There is therefore some limit or exception to the obligation which you urge upon yourselves and others, not indeed to be decided by your own discretion or caprice, but by the same authority which first imposed it. Now that authority I claim to exercise, a claim abundantly attested by the very miracles on which your charge is founded, for no man can do such things unless God be with him.' (Compare John 3:2.)"

V. THE ATTITUDE OF JESUS AND THE HEALING, VS. 5.

5. *And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched (it) out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.*

We have here an instance of what some regard as characteristic of this gospel, and ascribe to Peter's influence upon it, to wit, the occasional description of our Saviour's feelings, looks and gestures, most of which details we owe exclusively to Mark. Three such particulars are here recorded, one external, two internal. *Looking round upon* (or at) *them* is an act mentioned by Luke also (6:10), with the addition of the strong word *all*. But Mark tells what feelings were expressed by this act, or at least accompanied it. One was *anger*, a passion belonging to our original constitution, and as such not sinful in itself, and therefore shared by the humanity of Christ, in whom it was a holy indignation or intense displeasure at what really deserves it, unalloyed by that excess or that malignity which renders human anger almost always sinful. The absence of the quality last named in this case is apparent from the other feeling mentioned, that of grief or sorrow. *Grieved with* is in Greek a compound verb, admitting of two explanations, one of which makes the particle in composition refer to the anger previously mentioned, *being grieved* (in conjunction or at the same time) with that anger. But the classical usage of such writers as Plato, Theophrastus, Diodorus, is in favour of referring the particle in question, not to the anger, but to those who caused it, so as to express a sympathetic sorrow. Looking round with anger and yet grieving (sympathizing) with them. In the very act of condemning their sin, he pitied the miserable state to which it had reduced them. The specific object of this sympathetic grief or pity was the *hardness of their heart*, including intellectual stupidity and insensibility of feeling. The first Greek word is less exactly rendered *blindness* in the margin of our Bible, and in the text of Rom. 11:25. Eph. 4:18. But the figure, although not suggested by the Greek word, is expressive of two things which it denotes, a state of mental and spiritual apathy.

or insensibility. There is here no mention of external contact (as in 1:31, 41), nor of any other order or command than that to stretch out the hand, which could only be obeyed when the miracle was wrought, and is therefore not required as a previous condition. This is often and justly used to illustrate the act of faith, which is performed in obedience to divine command and by the aid of the same power which requires it. *Whole* (or sound) *as the other*, though expunged in this place by the critics as a mere assimilation to Matt. 12:13 (compare Luke 6:10), may be used to illustrate Mark's laconic phrase, in which it is really implied."

VI. THE SAD REACTION OF THE HEALING ON THOSE WHO REFUSED TO LEARN, VS. 6.

6. "*And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.*"

One of the most important circumstances of this case, for the sake of which it was perhaps recorded (see v. 1), is the effect which it produced upon the Pharisees or High-Church Jewish party, whose religious tenets brought them into constant opposition to the Sadducees or latitudinarians, as their political or national exclusiveness arrayed them against the Herodians or followers of Herod, and as such defenders of the Roman domination, of which the Herods were the instruments and agents. Herod the Great, created king by the Romans, and enabled by their aid to take possession of his kingdom, was devoted to their service both from interest and inclination; and although upon his death his dominions were divided, and his eldest son Archelaus had been superseded in Judea by Roman procurators, two other sons of Herod were still reigning (Luke 3:1), Antipas in Galilee, Samaria, and Perea, and Philip in Trachonitis and Iturea. Even in Judea, the Herodian interest and party still existed, as the most extreme political antithesis to that of the Pharisees. It is therefore a clear proof of growing hatred to our Saviour, that these opposite extremes should now begin to coalesce for his destruction, an alliance which appears to have continued till its object was accomplished. *Going out* (from the synagogue) *immediately*, as soon as the miracle was wrought, and therefore in full view of the proof which it afforded of our Lord's divine legation; a conclusive confirmation of that hardness and judicial blindness which had excited his own grief and anger. *Took counsel* is a phrase peculiar to Matthew (12:14. 22:15. 27:1. 28:12), Mark's equivalent to which is *made counsel*, i.e. consultation. *How they might destroy him*, not for any past offenses, but how they might take advantage of his words or acts to rid them of so dangerous an enemy. The motives of this concerted opposition were no doubt various, religious, political, and personal, in different degrees and cases.

That it should have been deliberately organized, at this time, out of such discordant elements and in the face of such conclusive evidence, can only be ascribed to the infatuation under which they acted (Luke 6:11).” (J. A. Alexander)

FACT QUESTIONS 3:1-6.

130. What possible purposes were there in the record of Mark of the Sabbath healing?
131. Was the cripple “planted” there to entrap Christ? Prove your answer.
132. How did the man come to have a withered hand?
133. In what manner and in what attitude did the Pharisees watch Jesus?
134. How would the accusations of the enemies of Jesus be carried out?
135. At what particular time in the action did Jesus ask the man to stand forth? What is meant by “Stand forth”?
136. Why did Jesus ask the question of vs. 4? Cf. Matt. 12:10.
137. Was our Lord stating a truism?
138. If this was not a truism what two propositions were involved in the statement?
139. In what reference do some see the influence of Peter upon the writer Mark?
140. How could Jesus look upon certain persons with anger and yet not sin?
141. With whom was Jesus grieved? I thought He was angry with them? Explain.
142. What was included in the expression “hardness of heart”?
143. Was there any act of faith on the part of the man healed? Explain.
144. How does vs. 6 indicate the purpose for verses 1-6?
145. Who were the Herodians? Why did the Pharisees want their help?

SIDELIGHTS

2:23-28

“We see from these verses, what extravagant importance is attached to trifles by those who are mere formalists in religion.

The Pharisees were mere formalists, if there ever were any in the world. They seem to have thought exclusively of the outward part, the husk, the shell, and the ceremonial of religion. They even added to these externals by traditions of their own. Their godliness was made up of washings and fastings and peculiarities in dress and will-worship, while repentance and faith and holiness were comparatively overlooked.

The Pharisees would probably have found no fault if the disciples had been guilty of some offense against the moral law. They would have winked at covetousness, or perjury, or extortions, or excess, because they were sins to which they themselves were inclined.

We see, in the second place, from these verses, the value of a knowledge of Holy Scripture.

Our Lord replies to the accusation of the Pharisees by a reference to Holy Scripture. He reminds His enemies of the conduct of David, when "he had need and was an hungered." "Have ye never read what David did?" They could not deny that the writer of the book of Psalms, and the man after God's own heart, was not likely to set a bad example.

Let us observe in these verses, how our Lord Jesus Christ was watched by His enemies. We read that "they watched Him, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath Day, that they might accuse Him."

What a melancholy proof we have here of the wickedness of human nature! It was the Sabbath Day when these things happened. It was in the synagogue, where men were assembled to hear the Word and worship God. Yet even on the day of God, and at the time of worshipping God, these wretched formalists were plotting mischief against our Lord. The very men who pretended to such strictness and sanctity in little things, were full of malicious and angry thoughts in the midst of the congregation. (Prov. 5:14).

Let us observe, in the last place, the *feelings which the conduct of our Lord's enemies called forth in His heart*. We are told that "He looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts."

This expression is very remarkable, and demands special attention. It is meant to remind us that our Lord Jesus Christ was a man like ourselves in all things, sin only excepted. Whatever sinless feelings belong to the constitution of man, our Lord partook of, and knew by experience. We read that He "marvelled," that He "rejoiced," that He "wept," that He "loved," and here we read that He felt "anger."

It is plain from these words that there is an "anger" which is lawful, right, and not sinful. There is an indignation which is justifiable, and on some occasions may be properly manifested. The words of Solomon and St. Paul both seem to teach the same lesson. "The north wind driveth away rain, so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue." "Be ye angry and sin not." (Prov. 25:23; Eph. 4:26)." (J. C. Ryle)

LESSONS

1. Jesus did not remove Himself or His disciples from the ordinary

course of life—it was in the grain field and the synagogue He taught His lessons.

2. Jesus never ate the grain—whereas He defended the actions of His disciples He was above reproach—so should the teacher be.
3. The sabbath was indeed made for man—for the Jewish man in Palestine—there are numerous persons who could not observe it because of the length of the day in the area where they live—most of all because God commanded no one but the Jews to observe it. Cf. Deut. 5:15.
4. How many withered hands do we have in the church today? Jesus is commanding them to stand forth and be healed.
5. We can expect some people to intentionally misunderstand and misinterpret all the good we do. A servant is not above His Master:

POINTS FOR TEACHERS

1. How many of the Ten Commandments are reproduced in the New Testament? Give references.
2. Is there any commandment in the New Testament to observe the Lord's Day? Why do we observe it?
3. Make a contrast between the sabbath and the Lord's Day.
4. Name some things we should do on Sunday.
5. Is it right to keep drug stores and other stores open on Sunday?
6. If a man works all day on Sunday and gives what he earns on that day to the Lord's work, does that excuse him for working?
7. What are some of the things causing the American people to misuse the Lord's Day?
8. Show how the forces of evil today are united.
9. Show how the forces of good are divided.
10. What is the unpardonable sin?

9. THE FAME OF JESUS 3:7-12

TEXT 3:7-12

“And Jesus with his disciples withdrew to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed: and from Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and beyond Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, hearing what great things he did, came unto him. And he spake to his disciples, that a little boat should wait on him because of the crowd, lest they should throng him: for he had healed many; insomuch that as many as had plagues pressed upon him that they might touch him. And the unclean spirits, whensoever they beheld him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. And he charged them much that they should not make him known.”

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 3:7-12

114. Did the opposition of the Pharisees prompt the move to the beach of Galilee?
115. Where was Idumaea? What is meant by "beyond the Jordan"?
116. What number is estimated in the expression "a great multitude"?
117. Why were the crowds so interested?
118. What was Jesus going to do with "the little boat"?
119. What was physically wrong with the persons with "plagues"?
120. Did Jesus have any "failures" in healing? Specify.
121. Why the testimony of the demons?
122. Why so urgently caution the demons?

COMMENT 3:7-12

TIME—Midsummer—A.D. 28.

PLACE—The beach of the sea of Galilee, not far from Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 12:15-21.

OUTLINE—1. Jesus withdraws to the Sea, vs. 7. 2. A multitude follows, vs. 8. 3. The little boat requested, vs. 9. 4. Healing and casting out demons, vs. 10-11.

ANALYSIS

- I. JESUS WITHDRAWS TO THE SEA. VS. 7.
 1. His disciples are with Him.
 2. He is accompanied by a great multitude.
- II. A MULTITUDE FOLLOWS. VS. 8.
 1. From Jerusalem and Judea.
 2. From Idumaea and beyond Jordan.
 3. From round about Tyre and Sidon.
- III. A LITTLE BOAT REQUESTED. VS. 9.
 1. Asked disciples for the boat.
 2. Feared lest He be thronged.
- IV. HEALING AND CASTING OUT DEMONS. VS. 10-12.
 1. So many were healed others pressed toward Him for just a touch.
 2. Unclean spirits cast out and caused to acknowledge His divinity.
 3. Jesus wanted no testimony from an evil source—and most especially when it was given before He wanted it known.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- I. JESUS WITHDRAWS TO THE SEA. VS. 7.

"But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea." "His hour was not yet come; so He went with His disciples to the borders of the lake of Galilee, where, if pursued, He could the more easily take ship, and escape to some other part, out of the reach of His persecutors.

II. A MULTITUDE FOLLOWS. VS. 8.

"And a great multitude from Galilee followed him," We should put a full stop after "followed him," and read the two verses thus: "And a great multitude from Galilee followed him, And a great multitude from Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and from beyond Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon, hearing what great things He did, came unto Him." The multitude from the neighbouring Galilee, in which He had been preaching and healing, *followed* Him; the multitude from Judea, and Jerusalem, and from all the regions bordering on the Holy Land, attracted by the fame of His miracles, "came" to Him. Notice how, though He is rejected by the leaders both in Church and State, the people from all parts seem to accept Him. I say "seem," for the Evangelist is careful to inform us that they were attracted, not by His preaching, but by His miracles.

Let the reader notice how here, as before, this Evangelist loves to dwell upon the widespread popularity of the Lord."

III. A LITTLE BOAT REQUESTED. VS. 9.

"And he spake to the disciples, that a small ship should wait on him," The word "wait" does not give the full meaning of the original, which is the same word as that used in the Apostolic precept, "continue instant in prayer," of Romans 12:12. It means that the ship should be always at His beck and call, so that, by escaping the pressure of the multitude, He should not be unduly hindered in the exercise of His ministry."

IV. HEALING AND CASTING OUT DEMONS. VS. 10-12.

"For he had healed many: insomuch that they pressed upon him," "Pressed upon him" should rather be rendered "*fell upon him,*" as if there was a rush towards Him of all who had plagues—plagues (literally "scourges") describing the painfulness and distress of disease, as if it were a scourging inflicted on man as a punishment for his sin.

"To touch him." It was the Lord's will most frequently to heal men by contact with His body. He makes communication with His body the means by which virtue flows from Himself to those whom He wills to benefit. The reader will understand.

"And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him." The uniformity of action on the part of all evil spirits in the presence of the Lord, in that they should fall down and confess Him, is exceedingly remarkable (Matt. 8:29; Mark 1:23, 24). These fallen beings seem to be under a law that they should thus acknowledge the Son of God. I cannot think that this is to be explained, as so many attempt to do, on the ground of diabolical cunning. It seems as if they were compelled to fall down,

and confess their Maker, even though they had made it the one object of their existence to oppose and thwart Him.

"*And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.*" On this Bede remarks, "A sinner is forbidden to preach the Lord, lest any one listening to his preaching should follow him in his error, for the devil is an evil master, who always mingles false things with true, that the semblance of truth may cover the witness of fraud. But not only devils, but persons healed by Christ and even Apostles (Mark 8:9) are ordered to be silent concerning Him before the Passion, lest by the preaching of the majesty of His Divinity, the economy of His Passion should be retarded." (M. F. Sadler)

FACT QUESTIONS 3:7-12

146. Why did Jesus withdraw to the borders of the lake of Galilee?
147. Who *followed* Jesus and who *came* to Him?
148. What is meant by the word "wait" in reference to the boat?
149. What would be a better translation of "pressed upon him"?
150. Why did the sick want to touch him?
151. Why did the demons seem compelled to fall down before Jesus?
152. If demons told the truth why not accept it?

B. THE SECOND PERIOD 3:13-7:23

1. Friends and Foes 3:13-35

a. The appointment of the twelve 3:13-19

TEXT 3:13-19

"And he goeth up into the mountain, and calleth unto him whom he himself would: and they went unto him. And he appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have authority to cast out devils: and Simon he surnamed Peter; and James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and them he surnamed Boanerges, which is, Sons of thunder: and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alpheus, and Thaddeus, and Simon the Cananean, and Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 3:13-19

123. Please read Matt. 10:1-4 and Luke 2:12-16 as parallel accounts of this important event.
124. What did Jesus do before He went into the mountain to choose the twelve?
125. What mountain?; is it the mount of the sermon on the mount?
126. Why were the disciples so willing to go after Him?
127. What was the two-fold purpose of appointing the twelve?
128. Why the authority to cast out demons?
129. Why the surname for Peter and the two sons of Zebedee?

130. Read the list in Matthew and Luke and explain the use of the name Thaddaeus.
131. Is the term "Cananaean" the same as "Zealot"—compare accounts. (Acts 1:13)

COMMENT 3:13-19

TIME—Midsummer, A.D. 28.

PLACE—On a mount at no great distance from Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 10:1-4; Luke 6:12-16.

OUTLINE—1. The place where He called the twelve, 13a. 2. The actual call of the twelve, 13b. 3. Their appointment, 14. 4. Sent with authority, 15. 5. The names, 16-19.

ANALYSIS

- I. THE PLACE WHERE HE CALLED THE TWELVE, 13a.
1. Near Capernaum and the sea of Galilee.
 2. A place of prayer—probably the mount from which we have the sermon on the mount. Cf. Matt. 10:1-4; Luke 6:12-16.
- II. THE ACTUAL CALL OF THE TWELVE, 13b.
1. From among the multitude.
 2. Made by the power of Jesus' will.
 3. They left all to follow Him.
- III. THEIR APPOINTMENT, v. 14.
1. The word appoint sometimes translated "ordained."
 2. That they might be with Him.
 3. That He might send them out to preach.
- IV. SENT WITH AUTHORITY, v. 15.
1. Over demons.
 2. With His message.
- V. THE NAMES, 16-19.
1. The first four—Peter, James, John and Andrew.
 2. The second four—Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas.
 3. The third four—James, Thaddaeus, Simon, Judas.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- I. THE PLACE WHERE HE CALLED THE TWELVE, 13a.

"*The Chosen Twelve* (vs. 13-19a).—It is evident that the bitter opposition and plots of the rulers must, in no long time, put an end to Jesus' earthly work. He can not hope to do more than start the work, to break the ground and commence scattering the seed. Jesus had summoned to his side a few of the Baptist's disciples (John 1:35-51). Later, by the seaside, he had attached four of these more distinctly to him, to travel with him. But there was yet to be formed a compact, organized body of disciples commissioned to teach his doctrines.

But ere he did it, he withdrew into the mountain, doubtless the "Horns of Hattin," and there spent an entire night in prayer (Luke 6:12).

II. THE ACTUAL CALLING OF THE TWELVE. 13b

When dawn came, he called out of the disciples about him twelve whom he ordained (1) to "be with him"—that is, especially and continuously with him; (2) to be sent forth to preach as his special apostles, and (3) to have power to exercise his authority over demons. These, Luke informs us, he named apostles. "Apostle" means "one sent," and is very close in meaning to our words "ambassador" and "missionary." It was a necessary condition of this apostleship that the apostles should have been with Jesus, and so be qualified to tell of his words and actions, particularly of the resurrection (Acts 1:8, 21, 22; 1 Cor. 9:1; Acts 22:14, 15). The apostles can therefore have no successors.

III. THEIR APPOINTMENT, v. 14

The number twelve was evidently with purpose, for they were to be tribal judges of the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke 22:30), and were, according to Paul, ministers to the twelve tribes, or to the circumcision, rather than to Gentiles (Gal. 2:7-9).

The lists in the four gospels are different, but the first four names, the second four and the last four in each are the same in all groups. The first name in each four is the same, and the traitor, Judas Iscariot, is always last. This seems to signify that the apostles were so banded as groups of four, each with a leader.

V. THE NAMES, 16-19.

Because he was first to publicly confess Christ, and because the Lord saw in him peculiar gifts of bold, aggressive leadership, Peter was given the right to open the doors of the kingdom of heaven. But after he had done this in the two sermons to Jews and Gentiles (Acts 2:14-41; 10:34-48), there is no evidence of Peter's having any authority above that of the other apostles. Christ never so stated; Peter never so claimed; the Apostles never so owned. Jesus, on the other hand, specifically placed them on a level, with himself as their only Master (Matt. 23: 8-11). Peter claims only equal position with other officers in the church (1 Pet. 5:1; 4). Paul names James first (Gal. 2:9, 11-14). See Matt. 18:18; 19:27, 28; 20:25-27; John 20:21; Acts 1:8. Peter was but one of the apostles, one of the "pillars" of the church (Gal. 2:9).

Jesus had prophesied that Simon should be called Peter when Simon was first brought to him by Andrew (John 1:41, 42). The name signifies a piece of stone broken from mother-rock, and indicates Jesus' prophetic insight into his character. Probably because of their vigor and zealous, stormy dispositions (Luke 9: 51-56; Mark 9:38), James and

John were surnamed "Sons of thunder." James' vigorous character probably led to Herod's slaying him, and John's vigor sustained him to a ripe old age—between ninety and one-hundred. John's writings, too, reveal this vigor; he denounces sin in strong terms, such as "liar," "antichrist," "deceiver," "children of the devil" and "murderer" (1 John 1:6; 2:4, 22; 3:15; 2 John 3-11). James and John were sons of Zebedee and Salome (Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40) and perhaps cousins of Jesus (cf. John 19:25).

Philip, like the four preceding disciples, was a native of Bethsaida, and became allied to Jesus on the latter's return from temptation to Galilee (John 1:43, 44). He brought to Jesus Nathanael, who is generally identified with the Bartholomew here named, because John always names Philip and Nathanael together, while the Synoptists name Philip and Bartholomew. Philip seems to have been of practical turn of mind (John 6:5-9). Nathanael was "the Israelite in whom is no guile" (John 1:47).

Matthew is Levi, and alone of all the Synoptists, describes himself in the list of apostles as "the publican," as if recalling the depth from which grace had raised him (Mark 2:14).

Thomas is also called Didymus (John 11:16). Both words mean "twin," the first being Aramaic and the second Greek. His attachment to Jesus was deep (John 11:16), but a tendency to misgiving and despondency probably accounts for his doubting the news of Christ's resurrection, until the sight of his beloved Master brought that explosion of affection, "My Lord and my God!"

James called "son of Alphaeus" and "James the Less" (Mark 15:40), to distinguish him from James the son of Zebedee, must not be confused with James the Lord's brother, who became a leader in the Jerusalem church (Gal. 1:19; 2:9-12; 1 Cor. 15:5-7; Acts 15:6-9; 21:18), and wrote the Epistle of James.

Thaddaeus is called Judas, son of James, in the two later Gospels—Luke and John. He may have been known as Thaddaeus in the early days to distinguish him from Judas Iscariot. He is not the author of the epistle of Jude, written by the Lord's brother.

The cognomen "Cananaean" means "the Zealot" (used by Luke and John).

Judas, famed for his infamy, is called Iscariot, from his native city Kerioth, in Judea; he was the only one of the twelve not from Galilee. He was treasurer of the group. Much speculation has been wasted upon the reason for his choice as an apostle; suffice it to note that Jesus called "whom he himself would."

It is a strikingly human group, possessed in varying degrees of fear,

ambition, rivalry, impetuosity, vows, weakening faith, yet real loyalty—a group of men, and not supermen, with common virtues and common faults, to do an uncommon work with divine power and under divine guidance.” (*Standard Bible Lesson Quarterly*, Jan., Feb., March 1918.)

FACT QUESTIONS 3:13-19

153. What was the purpose in the appointment of the twelve?
154. Who were the first disciples to follow Jesus? (Cf. John 1:35-51).
155. Why spend the whole night in prayer?—please think on this question.
156. In what sense were the twelve to be “with Him”—in what special sense were they to represent Him?
157. What is the meaning of the word “apostle”?
158. What were the necessary conditions of apostleship? Why twelve apostles?
159. Why in three groups of four?
160. What right did Jesus give Peter?
161. Give three lines of evidence to indicate Peter was on a level with the other apostles. Give the meaning of the name “Peter.”
162. State indications that James and John had “stormy dispositions.”
163. Give two historical facts about each of the following: (1) Philip (2) Matthew (3) Thomas (4) James, son of Alphaeus (5) Thad-daeus (6 Judas)

B. OPPOSITION 3:20-27

- (1) From Friends 3:20,21

TEXT 3:20-21

“And he cometh into a house. And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when his friends heard it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.”

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 3:20-21

132. In whose house did this incident occur?
133. Why such a large crowd? Is Mark complaining about the inability to eat?
134. Who were the friends making this complaint?
135. What particular circumstances seemed to disturb His friends? What did they want to do?
136. Were they accusing Jesus of being insane?

(2) From enemies 3:22-27

TEXT 3:22-27

"And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and, By the prince of the devils casteth he out the devils. And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan hath risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. But no one can enter into the house of the strong man, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 3:22-27

137. What authority had the scribes to pass judgment on the miracles of Jesus?
138. Who was Beelzebub?
139. Jesus did not evade opposition i.e. on this occasion—show indications this is true.
140. What is meant by the expression "said unto them in parables"?
141. Knowing something of the deceitfulness of Satan why wouldn't Satan on some occasions "cast out Satan"?
142. Did Jesus infer there was an evil kingdom over which Satan rules? In what sense would this kingdom be divided?
143. Who is the head of the house? In what sense divided? Is there a lesson in this parable for us?
144. What is meant by the expression "hath an end" in vs. 26?
145. Who is "the house"? who "the strong man"? What are the goods "to be spoiled"—who is the one stronger than the strong man?

COMMENT 3:20-27

TIME—Midsummer and Autumn, A.D. 28.

PLACE—In the house of Jesus in the city of Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS:—Matt. 12:22-30.

OUTLINE—1. Opposition from friends, 20, 21. 2. Opposition from enemies, 22-27.

ANALYSIS 3:20-27

I. OPPOSITION FROM FRIENDS, 20, 21.

1. This occurred at home in Capernaum.
2. The occasion of opposition was the inability to eat.
3. The form of the opposition was to bodily remove Him from His labors.
4. The reason—they feared for His sanity.

II. OPPOSITION FROM ENEMIES, 22-27.

1. Jesus is accused of being in league with Satan.
2. Jesus answers in parables:
 - (1) A kingdom divided cannot stand.
 - (2) A house divided cannot stand.
 - (3) Satan casting out himself is defeating himself—this would end in his own complete loss.
 - (4) There must be someone stronger than Satan to cast out Satan.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. OPPOSITION FROM FRIENDS, 20, 21.

"20. As soon as he had returned the crowd was about him again.—the vivid description is peculiar to Mark. *So that they could not so much as eat bread.* So at chap. 6:31. The activity on our Lord's own part is left to be inferred, but it must have been an intense activity of teaching and healing, continued we know not how long.

21. *His friends* of verse 21 are "his mother and his brethren" of verse 31. Their coming and calling for him is narrated by Matthew and Luke as well as by Mark, but Mark alone tells of their setting out in search of him and of their motive. Considerably later his brethren did not believe on him (John 7:5), and probably they persuaded his mother on this occasion, playing, perhaps, upon the anxiety of maternal love. These "brethren" appear to be the "James and Joses and Juda and Simon" of Mark 6:3. The question, What was their relation to Jesus? will probably never be settled with unanimous consent. The data being insufficient to furnish a positive decision, temperament and feeling, as well as theological prepossessions, will always be elements in the formation of opinions on the subject. The theories are: (1) That they were children of Joseph and Mary, younger than Jesus; (2) That they were children of Joseph by a former marriage; (3) That they were cousins, probably orphaned, and in some way adopted into the family. The first is rejected by all Roman Catholic interpreters, by all who share their feeling as to the superior holiness of virginity, and by some besides who feel that reverence is best satisfied by regarding the Only-begotten of God as also the only offspring of his mother. Yet the scriptural argument for it is very strong (see it stated at length by Alford, on Matt. 13-55), and its adherents claim—probably correctly—that no other view would ever have been thought of but for unscriptural ideas of our Lord's mother. If the first theory is rejected, there is no choice between the second and the third.—His friends heard *of it*—of the great throng that was about him and of the busy life he was living—and *went out* from their home in Nazareth, where they were all living, mother, brothers, and sisters, a little later,

when Jesus visited the place (chap. 6:1-6). The news reached them there, and brought them down to Capernaum, a distance of perhaps twenty miles. They came *to lay hold on him*—i. e. by force, as one who was not fit to take care of himself. They said, *He is beside himself*, insane—a conclusion from the excited life that he seemed to them to be living; perhaps the more plausible from the quietness and placidity of the years that he spent with them at Nazareth. Strangers misapprehended him thus (John 10:20), but so did his nearest friends. Unbelief will misapprehend whether its opportunities be small or great. Even the "mother and brethren" cannot know Jesus except they be true "mother and brethren."

II. OPPOSITION FROM ENEMIES, 22-27.

22. Mark omits the occasion of this conversation, which is carefully given by Matthew and Luke—namely; the healing of the blind and dumb demoniac (Matt. 12:22), which caused many to inquire, "Is not this the Son of David?"—i.e. the Messiah. The scene is still "at home," and most probably in the house of Peter. "Pharisees" are present (Matthew), and so (Mark) are *the scribes which came down from Jerusalem*. This language distinctly indicates an embassy, men who had come on purpose to watch and harm him. It is not to be assumed that they were the same as the men mentioned at Luke 5:17, for some time had elapsed and meanwhile Jesus had been absent from Capernaum. But, whether the same or not, these were spies.—Indignant at the suggestion that this was the Christ, they were ready with their explanation of his mighty works, the reality of which they thus explicitly admitted. *He hath Beelzebub*, or, as the best manuscripts agree, "Beelzebub." The name has been variously interpreted. The name from which it came was Baalzebub, "lord of flies," the god of the Philistines worshipped at Ekron (2 Kings 1:2) and consulted as an oracle. The god was named, doubtless, from his supposed control over the swarms of flies and similar insects that torment the East. After a time the Jews, thinking all heathen deities to be evil spirits, adopted this name as a title of the chief of evil spirits, but changed it by one letter, making Beelzebub into Beelzebub. Some think that in this change they intentionally degraded and insulted it, even as a word, by turning it into a name which meant "lord of dung" or "of the dunghill." But others, apparently with better reason, make it mean "lord of the mansion" or "of the dwelling"—i.e. lord of the place in which evil spirits dwell, or, substantially, "head of the family of evil spirits," he who rules them as a man rules his household. This sense best corresponds to the form of the word (Meyer) and best suits the allusions in the New Testament. So here: "He hath Beelzebub" means "he is possessed by the spirit who is lord of all the rest, and who orders them in and out at his

pleasure, as a man commands his servants."—Thus the second clause of their charge is the application of the first. *By the prince of the devils casteth he out devils*, or demons. In the Greek the use of the recitative *hoti* ("that") before each of these clauses seems to indicate that two separate remarks are quoted. One says, "that he hath Beelzebul." Another, "that by the prince of the demons casteth he out demons." Luke adds that others, tempting him, asked of him a sign from heaven.

23-26. The whole twenty-third verse is peculiar to Mark. He *called them*—the scribes from Jerusalem—bespeaking their attention and bringing them face to face with himself and their own words. The wonderful calmness and self-control of this reply cannot be too distinctly noticed in connection with the fearful charge that had just been brought against him. No more terrible accusation than this was possible; it was the direct charge of a positive and practical league with infernal powers. But he, "when he was reviled, reviled not again: when he suffered, he threatened not" (1 Pet. 2:23).—*He said unto them in parables*. In illustrative comparisons. The word does not require a narrative, such as we often associate with it. The point lies in the fact of a comparison. But here the fact to be confirmed is given in the first question (verse 23); it is then confirmed and illustrated by two comparisons, of the kingdom and the household, in verses 24, 25 and it is restated directly in verse 26.—*How can Satan cast out Satan?* The principle is that no intelligent power works against itself and defeats its own purposes. Observe what is here assumed: it is assumed that the dominion of Satan is an intelligent dominion, with character and purposes; that the kingdom of evil is one intelligent kingdom, managed by one mind who knows what he is doing. The individual spirits that torment men are not identified personally with Satan, but they are identified morally with him; so that their presence is his presence, and when they are cast out he is cast out. Now, it is said that in a kingdom there must be unity of counsel, illustrated first by the case of a kingdom among men. It is notorious that divided counsels, going into action, are the ruin of a state; divided counsels or, more exactly, contradictory counsels—not between rulers and subjects, but in the government itself. How, then, if the kingdom of "the prince of the demons" be thus divided against itself and act against its own purposes? Illustrated next by the case of a household, regarded, not as made up of individuals, who may disagree, but as under the rule of a "householder," "goodman of the house," "lord of the mansion." If it acts against the character and counsels that govern it, it will be a failure. How, then, if the "lord of the mansion" be thus divided against himself, acting for the defeat of his own work? And now is made the application. If Satan were casting out demons, he would be rising up against himself. His sole purpose is to injure men. If

he brings in health, calmness, purity, reason, godly gratitude, piety, to the souls of men, and if he sets them free from the bondage by which they are held away from these blessings, he will be acting directly against his own nature. Such a work as that of Jesus cannot possibly be attributed to him, any more than demoniacal possession can be attributed to God. Judge a work by its moral affinities. If it is good, it is not of the devil, for he never delivers men from evil. If such a rising up of Satan against himself as the work of Christ would be were proved real, there would be more than danger to his kingdom. *He cannot stand, but hath an end*, would be the true word. A kingdom so broken would be no kingdom at all.

27. More than this does Christ's work mean. The verse should begin with "but"—But *no man can enter*, etc. Not only does Christ's merciful and holy work prove him to be no ally of Satan, but if Satan's kingdom is being taken away from him, the fact proves the presence of Satan's conqueror. No one can plunder the property of a strong "lord of the mansion" until he has bound the "lord of the mansion" himself; so, if Jesus is doing a great triumphant work of mercy in setting men free from the inferior agents of Satan's kingdom, he must already be master over Satan himself. The defeat of the Lord precedes the defeat of the servants; if the master were at liberty and had the power, he would not suffer his goods to be spoiled.—Perhaps there is a special touch of triumph in the closing words. *And then he will spoil his house*; as if Jesus were regarding the end as absolutely sure and the work as actually begun. Compare John 12:31: "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." Here speaks, in Jesus, the consciousness that he is absolutely the conqueror and destroyer of Satan's kingdom. Here, as a transition to the solemn words that Mark adds immediately, Matthew and Luke insert, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." There are only two sides in this conflict, and they are the side of the "strong man armed" and the side of the "stronger than he." Not to be with the conqueror of Satan is to be with Satan." (*W. N. Clarke*)

FACT QUESTIONS 3:20-27

164. In whose house was Jesus living at this time?
165. What were Jesus and His disciples doing instead of eating?
166. Just who was involved in the effort to restrain Him?
167. Why would those who knew Him best think Him fanatical in His work?
168. How could it be said the scribes came "down" from Jerusalem when they traveled north?

169. Why did Jesus call the scribes to Him to deliver His answer to their criticism?
170. Does the use of the term "parable" here fit your previous use of the form? Explain its use here. How many parables are used?
171. Discuss the king, dominion, subjects, and expansion of Satan's kingdom.
172. In what sense does Satan have a house?
173. Jesus said Satan was divided—explain.
174. I thought Satan was an immortal being—in what sense has he an "end"?
175. What glorious victory is indicated in vs. 27?

C. THE UNPARDONABLE SIN 3:28-30

TEXT 3:28-30

"Verily I say unto you, All their sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and their blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin: because they said, He hath an unclean spirit."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 3:28-30

146. What is meant by the word "blaspheme"?
147. Why use the expression "verily I say unto you"? What does it mean?
148. Is Jesus saying the sins of men *will* be forgiven them or *could* be forgiven?
149. When Jesus warned concerning it, had anyone committed the eternal sin?
150. Why is it impossible to forgive this sin? (Please attempt an answer of *your own*).

COMMENT

TIME—Autumn of 28 A.D.

PLACE—At home in Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 12:31-37.

OUTLINE—1. Forgiveness promised, vs. 28. 2. One exception, vs. 29. 3. The cause of such a severe warning, vs. 30.

ANALYSIS 3:28-30

- I. FORGIVENESS PROMISED, VS. 28.
 1. Promised with great certainty.
 2. To all the sons of men.
 3. All sins and blasphemies.

II. ONE EXCEPTION, VS. 29.

1. Applies to all.
2. The blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.
3. An eternal sin with no forgiveness.

III. THE CAUSE OF SUCH A SEVERE WARNING, VS. 30.

1. The Pharisees and scribes involved.
2. The words, "He hath an unclean spirit" caused the warning.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. FORGIVENESS PROMISED, VS. 28.

"28,29,30. "I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven . . . He hath an unclean spirit." We learn clearly from this place in what this fearful sin consists; the only one of all the evils which the sons of men commit which will not be forgiven. Those with whom the Lord was now remonstrating were in danger of committing it, "because they said, He hath an unclean spirit." This was, in point of fact, almost equivalent to their calling the Lord an Incarnation of Satan.

II. ONE EXCEPTION, VS. 29.

In order to see something of the wickedness of this sin we must realize that all our Lord's teaching was on the side of God and goodness, and all His miracles, especially that of the expulsion of evil spirits, were done to enforce such teaching, and to set forth the character of God—the God Who sent Him, as at once a holy and benevolent God, desirous to free men from the yoke of all moral and spiritual as well as of all physical evil. To call the Spirit of such an One as our Lord an evil spirit was the extremest form of that wickedness denounced by the prophet when he said: "Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness" (Is. 5:20). For a man to have a mind which could deliberately ascribe such a spirit to the Saviour is, as far as man can, to cut himself off from redemption—to make the acceptance of redemption impossible to him. This will be more clearly seen if we remember certain words said on this occasion by the Lord, which are only given in St. Matthew, "Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him." A man might, through prejudice, speak against the claims of Jesus to be the Messiah. He might not be the Messiah whom he expected. He might be led away by false hopes of an earthly temporal Messiah, to reject the true one. Such an one might continue in infidelity, but the door of repentance and faith would be open to him, because, as Saul of Tarsus, what he did in rejecting Christ he did ignorantly and in unbelief. But if such an one had an opportunity of observing the Spirit of Christ—the Spirit of goodness and love displayed in all His character and discourses, and enforced by His mighty deeds,

all on the side of benevolence and holiness, and yet deliberately called such a Spirit the Spirit of Evil, then there was nothing left in him for Redemption to take hold of. He was reprobate in the deepest sense of the word. He had first given himself over, and then he was given over by God, to a reprobate mind—that is, to his own evil, absolutely evil, self. But if a person thus ascribed the works of Christ to the power of evil, would that not be blaspheming against the Son of Man—not against the Holy Spirit? No, we are told that both the teaching and the mighty works of Christ were done by the Spirit (Acts 1:2; Matt. 12:28). Christ taught very emphatically that He did nothing of Himself. He must, consequently, act by some spiritual power not His own. Was that power Divine or diabolical? Of God, or of God's enemy? If a man deliberately said it was from God's enemy he displayed an intensity of perverse and malicious wickedness almost incredible.

III. THE CAUSE OF SUCH A SEVERE WARNING, VS. 30.

Some of the most acute observations on this difficult subject are to be found in Calvin's "Commentary on the Synoptics." "Shall any unbeliever curse God? It is as if a blind man were dashing against a wall. But no man curses the Spirit, who is not enlightened by Him, and conscious of ungodly rebellion against Him; for it is not a superfluous distinction, that all other blasphemies shall be forgiven, except that one blasphemy which is directed against the Spirit. If a man shall simply blaspheme against God, he is not declared to be beyond the hope of pardon, but of those who have offered outrage to the Spirit it is said that God will never forgive them. Why is this but because those only are *blasphemers* against the Spirit, who slander His gifts and power contrary to the conviction of their own mind?"

Two observations on all this may not be out of place:

1. It is clear that no one can have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost who desires the influence of the Holy Ghost to deliver him from sin, and make him love God, for such an one must believe that the power exhibited in Christ was on the side of God and goodness. He must believe that Christ was actuated and impelled by a holy and good spirit, which must be from God.

2. Looked at in the light of this one exception to the forgiving power of God, how exceedingly broad and large is the promise implied in the 28th verse, "Verily, I say unto you, ALL sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men." The one exception proves the universality of the rule. If any sinner has a mind to lay hold on the Divine mercy, no memory of past sin need deter him; and the state of mind which he has towards sin, and his desire of deliverance, forbids the idea that he has committed the one unpardonable sin." (*M. F. Sadler*).

FACT QUESTIONS 3:28-30

176. What was meant by saying of the Lord, "He hath an unclean spirit"?
177. What helps us to realize something of the wickedness of this sin?
178. Show how the man who would attribute the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan is "reprobate in the deepest sense of the word."
179. Would not speaking against the works of Christ be speaking "against the Son of Man" instead of against the Holy Spirit? Explain.
180. What did Calvin's comments add to your understanding of this subject?
181. When can one know he has not committed this sin? Could the sinner know he had committed this sin? Explain.

D. THE HOUSEHOLD OF CHRIST 3:31-35

TEXT 3:31-35

"And there come his mother and his brethren; and, standing without, they sent unto him, calling him. And a multitude was sitting about him; and they say unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. And he answered them, and saith, Who is my mother and my brethren? And looking round on them which sat round about him, he saith, Behold, my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 3:31-35

151. Are we to associate this incident with the one in 3:21? If so how?
152. How many half-brothers did Jesus have? (Cf. Matt. 13:56; Mark 6:3)
153. Why had His mother and brothers come?
154. Did Mary or the brothers speak to Jesus personally?
155. What was the purpose behind the reply of Jesus?
156. Did Jesus ignore the request of His mother? What impression did this make upon the multitude?; upon His mother?; upon His brothers?

COMMENT

TIME—Autumn A.D. 28.

PLACE—At home in Capernaum or on hill outside the city.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 12:46-50; Luke 8:19-21.

OUTLINE—1. The arrival from Nazareth of His mother and brothers, vs. 31. 2. The message relayed to Jesus, vs. 32. 3. The response of Jesus to the visit, vs. 33-35.

ANALYSIS 3:31-35

- I. THE ARRIVAL FROM NAZARETH OF HIS MOTHER AND BROTHERS, VS. 31.
1. They stood without the door of the house.
 2. They requested an audience with Him.
- II. THE MESSAGE RELAYED TO JESUS, VS. 32.
1. Word sent in to the house from the family to the multitude.
 2. Someone told Jesus—probably one of His apostles.
- III. THE RESPONSE OF JESUS TO THE VISIT, VS. 33-35.
1. Answered with a question.
 2. He was now speaking with His family.
 3. Their needs were met in doing the will of God.

EXPLANATORY NOTES 3:31-35

- I. THE ARRIVAL FROM NAZARETH OF HIS MOTHER AND BROTHERS, VS. 31.

"31, 32. They had come "to take him." (See note on verse 21). Mark has meanwhile described the scene in which they found him and the conversation in which he was engaged. He graphically shows them coming, standing without, and sending their message in through the crowd which they could not penetrate.

- II. THE MESSAGE RELAYED TO JESUS, VS. 32.

A multitude sat about him. Not "the multitude." Some manuscripts (and Tischendorf, not the revisers) read, "Behold, thy mother and thy brethren and thy sisters without are seeking thee." The sisters are mentioned at Mark 6:3, but we know nothing of their names or history. His mother, coming as his mother, would doubtless have been welcomed; but an intrusive coming of his kindred to interfere with his work was quite another matter. Now that he was fully "about his Father's business," it was even more necessary than at the beginning of his work (John 2:4) that his mother should leave him to his Father's guidance. The moment, too, was a solemn one; he had just been speaking of the deadly opposition between the two kingdoms, and was in a frame of mind to prize most highly those who were "with him" and were not "scattering abroad." Any attempt to "scatter abroad," to weaken his work, would then be especially painful to his soul, and the more if it came from those who ought to know him well. Yet in their coming, (at least, we may be sure, in his mother's) there was kindness, but kindness how ignorant and mistaken! With what faults of friends he had to bear, as well as with evil in enemies! Not without pain, however, can he have given to his mother this rebuff. It was necessary; but he was a genuine son, and had a son's grateful and loyal heart toward his mother. His dying act of care for her (John 19:26) was a more congenial act to his heart.

III. THE RESPONSE OF JESUS TO THE VISIT, vs. 33-35.

33-35. *Who is my mother, or my brethren?* As if he did not know any from without who might appeal to him in that name.—*He looked round about on them which sat about him.* Literally, "in a circle about him." A graphic touch of Mark, to which Matthew adds another "Stretching out his hand toward his disciples." The gesture impressed one beholder, the look another. Very full of tenderness and solemnity must the look have been, accompanying such words, for here is the adoption of the obedient.—*Behold (these are) my mother, and my brethren! for whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and my mother.* In Luke, "My mother and my brethren are these, who hear and do the word of God." Compare "Every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them" (Matt. 7:24). The center of his true kindred is not the mother, the brother, or the sisters, but the Father. This, he says, is the *only* center; there is no true unity with him except through spiritual harmony with the will of God: "Whoever would be a brother to me must be a child to him." Without this even natural kinship is as nothing. This, he also says, is the *real* center—the center of an actual unity; whoever is doing the will of God is united to Jesus by a tie stronger than any tie of flesh and blood: "Whoever is my Father's own is my own, one of my true kindred, in the closest bonds." Does he not even imply that the relation is as close and tender on one side as on the other?—toward the true brother, sister, and mother as toward the Heavenly Father? Do not God and they that do the will of God thus come into one family for Jesus, in which one and the same love reaches out in both directions? He said elsewhere, "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you;" and this is almost saying, "As I love my Father, so do I love you." Does this passage make God (or the doing of the will of God) the way to Christ, rather than Christ the way to God? Yes, in a sense. Whoever comes to Christ does the will of God in doing so, and it is in (not by the merit of) the doing of what God appoints that Christ accepts him. In all this Jesus did not disown the ties of kindred or put any slight upon them; rather did he show how highly he esteemed them. What must the natural relations be to him if he can make them the illustration of his relations both to God who sent him and to the people whom he saves?—Notice that the two mis-statements respecting Jesus, "He is beside himself" and "He hath Beelzebul," are morally very far apart. One was a misunderstanding of his work—an ignorant, mistaken misrepresentation in which there was at least room for the anxiety of affection, and in which he was regarded as unfortunate. It implied spiritual ignorance, but not malignity. The other was a malignant refusal to see good in him, and a spontaneous judgment that his highest good was highest evil. The one corresponds to "speaking

a word against the Son of man;" while the other at least approaches the unpardonable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.—It is a satisfaction to find that after the resurrection of Jesus, Mary, the mother of the Lord, and his brethren were with the apostles in the upper room, where they waited for the fulfillment of Jesus' promise (Acts 1:14).” (W. N. Clarke)

FACT QUESTIONS 3:31-35

182. Who probably instigated the visit of the family?
183. Read Mark 6:3 and John 19:26 and notice the expression "son of Mary" as in contrast to the way the brothers are mentioned.
184. Why did Jesus commit the care of his mother to John if He had brothers?
185. Is there any contradiction in the accounts concerning the message of Mary and His brothers—Cf. Matt. 12:47; Luke 8:20; Mark 3:31.
186. What type of rebuke did Jesus give to His relatives? Show how this was needed.
187. Why "look round about Him" and "stretch forth His hand"?
188. Please explain how doing the will of God makes us brothers and sisters to Christ.

SUMMARY

2:1—3:35

There are three facts set forth in the preceding section, which have an important bearing on the claims of Jesus. The first is the fact that he had authority to forgive sins. This was demonstrated in the case of the paralytic (ii. 1-12), and it is the one fact which proves Jesus adapted to the highest demands of human salvation. Sins being forgiven, all other blessings follow as a consequence.

In the second place, it is shown that his conduct as a man was irreproachable. He was attacked in reference to the company he kept (ii. 13-17); in reference to his neglect of fasting (ii. 18-22); and in reference to Sabbath-keeping (ii. 23-28; iii. 1-6); but in all these matters he vindicated his conduct, and put his accusers to shame. That they made no more serious attacks on his conduct, proves that they could not, and that in morals he was irreproachable.

In the third place, it was demonstrated by his discussion with the Jerusalem scribes, that the power by which he cast out demons, and, *a fortiori*, the power by which his other miracles were wrought, was not, as they alleged, satanic, but divine. Finally, his answer to the people, in reference to the call of his mother and his brothers, is in perfect keeping with the character and position which the text assigns him. It is a singular infatuation which has led the Roman Catholic Church to attribute to Jesus

even in heaven, a subserviency to his mother which he so expressly repudiated while on earth. (J. W. McGarvey).

2. THE PARABLES OF JESUS 4:1-34

a. The parable of the sower 4:1-9

TEXT 4:1-9

"And again he began to teach by the sea side. And there is gathered unto him a very great multitude, so that he entered into a boat, and sat in the sea; and all the multitude were by the sea on the land. And he taught them many things in parables, and said unto them in his teaching, Hearken: Behold, the sower went forth to sow; and it came to pass, as he sowed, some seed fell by the way side, and the birds came and devoured it. And other fell on the rocky ground, where it had not much earth; and straightway it sprang up, because it had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was risen, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. And other fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And others fell into the good ground, and yielded fruit, growing up and increasing; and brought forth, thirty-fold, and sixtyfold, and a hundredfold. And he said, Who hath ears, let him hear."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:1-9

157. At what other time in Mark's account had Jesus taught by the sea-side?
158. When did this teaching take place? Cf. Matt. 13.1.
159. How far out do you imagine the boat was from the shore?
160. How many in a great multitude? 10,000? 20,000? 36,000?
161. Why teach in parables?
162. What was the method of sowing to which Jesus referred? Why was the sower sowing?
163. Why was there a path in the midst of the field?
164. Why spring up soon in the rocky ground? What does this indicate about the fields of Palestine?
165. Why were there thorns in a field plowed for sowing?
166. Notice the plural word "others" in vs. 8 as contrasted with "other" in vs. 5 and vs. 7.—why?
167. What is meant by thirty-fold—sixty-fold—hundred-fold?

COMMENT

TIME—On the same day of the visit of the relatives of Jesus. Autumn A.D. 28.

PLACE—At the Sea of Galilee near Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 12:1-9; Luke 8:4-8.

OUTLINE—1. The place and the people for teaching, vs. 1. 2. The type of teaching, vs. 2. 3. The parable of the sower, vs. 3-9.

- I. THE PLACE AND PEOPLE FOR TEACHING, VS. 1.
 - 1. By the seaside.
 - 2. A very great multitude.
- II. THE TYPE OF TEACHING, VS. 2.
 - 1. In parables.
 - 2. They must give close attention to understand.
- III. THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER, VS. 3-9.
 - 1. Some seed by the wayside, its fate.
 - 2. Some seed on rocky ground, its fate.
 - 3. Others in good soil, its fate.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. THE PLACE AND PEOPLE FOR TEACHING, VS. 1.

"1. Like Luke (8:4) and Matthew (13:1), Mark records, as a sort of epoch or important juncture in his history, the beginning of our Saviour's parabolical instructions, as a part of the preparatory process by which he contributed to the reorganization of the Church, although he did not actually make the change during his personal presence upon earth, because, as we have seen, it was to rest upon his death and resurrection as its corner-stone. The other part of his preparatory work consisted in the choice and education of the men by whom the change was to be afterwards effected. *Began*, as in 1:45, 2:23, is not superfluous, but indicates the opening of some new series or process, which was to be afterwards continued. *Again*, on the other hand, suggests that this was not the commencement of his teaching ministry, but only of one form of it. He had already taught the people publicly with great effect, but now began to teach them in a peculiar manner, with a special purpose to elucidate the nature of his kingdom, for the benefit of those who were to be his subjects, but without a too explicit and precipitate disclosure of his claim to the Messiahship. *By the sea-side*, or *along the sea*, i.e. the lake of Tiberias or Galilee, not only near it, but upon the very shore. *Was gathered*, or, according to the oldest text, *is gathered* (or *assembled*), a more graphic form, exhibiting the scene as actually passing. Another emendation by the latest critics is the change of the positive (*great*) to the superlative (*greatest*), either in reference to all former gatherings, or absolutely in the sense of the *very great*. *Multitude*, or *crowd*, the Greek word indicating not mere numbers, but promiscuous assemblage. The situation is like that described in 3:9, where we read that he directed a small vessel to be ready, if the crowd should be so great as to prevent his standing on the shore with safety or convenience. Here we find him actually *entering into* (or *embarking in*) the boat, no doubt the one already mentioned as in readiness, and *sitting in the sea*, i.e. upon the sur-

face of the lake, while his vast audience was *on the land* (but) *at* (or *close to*) the sea, a stronger expression of proximity than that in the first clause. The scene thus presented must have been highly impressive to the eye, and still affords a striking subject for the pencil.

II. THE TYPE OF TEACHING, VS. 2.

2. *Taught* is in the imperfect tense, and according to Greek usage properly denotes continued or habitual action, *he was teaching* or *he used to teach*. This yields a good sense, as the writer is undoubtedly describing one of our Lord's favorite and constant modes of teaching. But the use of the aorist by Matthew (13:3) and Luke (8:4), and the specific reference by Mark himself (in v. 1) to a particular occasion, seem to forbid the wider meaning, unless it be supposed that he made use of the imperfect (as of the verb *began*) to intimate that, although this was the first instance of such teaching, it was not the last. *Many things*, of which only samples are preserved, even by Matthew, and still fewer in the book before us, showing that the writer's aim was not to furnish an exhaustive history, but to illustrate by examples the ministry of Christ. *In parables*, i.e. in the form and in the use of them. Parable is a slight modification of a Greek noun, the verbal root of which has two principal meanings, to propound (throw out or put forth), and to *compare* (throw together or lay side by side.) The sense of the noun derived from the former usage, that of any thing propounded, is too vague to be distinctive, comprehending as it does all kinds of instruction, which, from its very nature, must be put forth or imparted from one mind to another. The more specific sense of comparison, resemblance, is not only sanctioned by the usage of the best Greek writers (such as Plato, Aristotle, and Socrates), but recommended, not to say required, by the employment of a corresponding Hebrew word in precisely the same way. In its widest sense, a *parable* is any illustration from analogy, including the simile and metaphor as rhetorical figures, the allegory, apologue, fable, and some forms of proverbial expression. In a more restricted sense, the word denotes an illustration of moral or religious truth derived from the analogy of human experience. In this respect it differs from the fable, which accomplishes the same end by employing the supposed acts of inferior animals, or even those ascribed to inanimate objects, to illustrate human character and conduct. The only fables found in Scripture, those of Jotham (Judg. 9, 8-15) and Joash (2 Kings 14, 9), are given on human, not divine authority. The parable, in its more restricted sense, as just explained, is not necessarily narrative in form, much less fictitious, although this is commonly assumed in modern definitions of the term. There is good reason to believe that all the parables of Christ are founded in fact, if not entirely composed of real incidents. They are all drawn from familiar forms

of human experience, and with one exception from the present life. This creates a strong presumption that the facts are true, unless there be some positive reason for supposing them fictitious. Now the necessity of fiction to illustrate moral truth arises, not from the deficiency of real facts adapted to the purpose, but from the writer's limited acquaintance with them, and his consequent incapacity to frame the necessary combination, without calling in the aid of his imagination. But no such necessity can exist in the case of an inspired, much less of an omniscient teacher. To resort to fiction, therefore, even admitting its lawfulness on moral grounds, when real life affords in such abundance the required analogies, would be a gratuitous preference, if not of the false to the true, at least of the imaginary to the real, which seems unworthy of our Lord, or which, to say the least, we have no right to assume without necessity. In expounding the parables, interpreters have gone to very opposite extremes, but most to that of making everything significant, or giving a specific sense to every minute point of the analogy presented. This error is happily exposed by Augustine, when he says, that the whole plough is needed in the act of ploughing, though the ploughshare alone makes the furrow, and the whole frame of an instrument is useful, though the strings alone produce the music. The other extreme, that of overlooking or denying the significance of some things really significant, is much less common than the first, and for the most part found in writers of severer taste and judgment. The true mean is difficult but not impossible to find, upon the principle now commonly assumed as true, at least in theory, that the main analogy intended, like the center of a circle, must determine the position of all points in the circumference. It may also be observed, that as the same illustration may legitimately mean more to one man than to another, in proportion to the strength of their imaginative faculties, it is highly important that, in attempting to determine the essential meaning of our Saviour's parables, we should not confound what they may possibly be made to mean, with what they must mean to attain their purpose. In addition to these principles, arising from the nature of the parable itself, we have the unspeakable advantage of our Saviour's own example as a self-interpreter. *In his doctrine*, i.e. in the act of teaching, or perhaps the meaning here may be, in this peculiar mode of teaching.

III. THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER, VS. 3-9.

3. *Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow.*

Mark has preserved one introductory ejaculation, not in Luke, and one neither in Luke nor Matthew. *Hear!* implying the power and intention to communicate something particularly worthy of attention. This word, perhaps a part of Peter's vivid recollection, may be said to introduce the

whole succession of our Saviour's parables. *Behold!* (Matt. 13:3), *lo*, see, in one or two specific cases, but intended, no doubt, as a model and a guide in others, both in Hebrew and Hellenistic usage introduces something unexpected and surprising. Some take it even in its primary and strict sense, look! see there! implying that the object indicated was in sight or actually visible; in other words, that Christ was led to use this illustration by the casual appearance of a sower in a neighboring field; and this is often represented as the usual occasion of his parabolic teachings. It seems, however, to regard them as too purely accidental, and too little the result of a deliberate predetermination, such as we cannot but assume in the practice of a divine teacher. A safer form of the same proposition is the one already stated in a different connection (see above, on v. 1), namely, that our Saviour's parables, though not invariably suggested by immediate sights or passing scenes, are all derived from the analogy of human experience, and in most instances of common life. Thus the three here given by Mark are designed not only to exhibit different aspects of the same great subject, the Messiah's kingdom, but to exhibit them by means of images derived from one mode of life or occupation, that of husbandry, with which his auditors were all familiar, and in which, most probably, the greater part of them were constantly engaged. But besides these objections to the general supposition that our Saviour's parables were all suggested casually, such an assumption is forbidden in the case before us by the form of expression used by all these evangelists with striking uniformity. It is not as it naturally would be on the supposition now in question, *See, a sower goes (or going) out*, but with the article, and in the aorist or past tense, *lo, the sower went out. The sower*, like the *Fox* and the *Lion* in a fable, is generic, meaning the whole class, or an ideal individual who represents it. *Went out*, as we say in colloquial narrative, once upon a time, the precise date being an ideal one because the act is one of constant occurrence. As if he had said, 'a sower went out to sow, as you have often done and seen your neighbor do.' To *sow*, distinguishes his going out for this specific purpose from his going out on other errands. The sower went out as such, as a sower, to perform the function which the name denotes.

4. *And it came to pass as he sowed, some fell by the way-side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.*

It came to pass, or something happened, implying something not indeed uncommon, but yet not belonging as of course to the process of sowing in seed. *As he sowed*, literally, *in the* (act of) *sowing*, and therefore in the field, not merely on the way to it. *By the way* must therefore mean *along the path* trodden by the sower himself and hardened by his footsteps, not along the highway leading to his place of labor. This idea is

distinctly expressed by Luke (8,5), *and it was trodden down*, i.e. it fell upon the path where he was walking. *Some* is understood by every reader to mean some of the seed which he was sowing, the noun, although not previously mentioned as it is in Luke (8, 4), being necessarily suggested by the kindred verb, *to sow, in sowing*. The principal circumstance in this part of the parable is not the treading of the seed, which Luke only adds to specify the place, but its lying exposed upon the trodden path, and there devoured by the birds. *Fowl*, now confined to certain species of domesticated birds, is co-extensive in Old English with *bird* itself. *Of the air*, literally *of heaven*, a Hebrew idiom, according to which *heaven* (or *heavens*, see above on 1, 10), is applied, not only to the whole material universe, except the earth (Gen. 1, 1) and especially to that part of it regarded as the more immediate residence of God (Gen. 19, 24), but also to the visible expanse or firmament (Gen. 1, 14), and to our atmosphere, or rather to the whole space between us and the heavenly bodies (Gen. 1,20). The version, therefore, is substantially correct, supposing these words to be genuine; but the latest critics have expunged them as a probable assimilation to the text of Luke (8,5): Nothing more is here intended by the phrase than *birds* in general, or *the birds* which his hearers well know were accustomed to commit such depredations. The familiarity of this occurrence and of those which follow, must have brought the illustration home to the business and bosoms of the humblest hearers, and, at the same time, necessarily precludes the idea of a fiction, when real facts were so abundant and accessible. It is idle to object that this particular sower never did go forth, when the opposite assertion can as easily be made, and when the terms employed, as we have seen, may designate the whole class of sowers, including multitudes of individuals, or any of these whom any one of the hearers might select as particularly meant, perhaps himself, perhaps some neighboring husbandman. Such a use of language, when applied to incidents of every-day occurrence, is as far as possible remote from fiction.

5. *And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:*

Another (seed, or portion of the seed sown) fell upon the *stony* (or rocky soil), collective singulars equivalent to Matthew's plurals (13, 5.) The reference is not to loose or scattered stones (see below, on 5, 5), but to a thin soil overspreading a stratum or layer of concealed rock. *Immediately*, here used by Matthew also, is emphatic, the rapid germination being a material circumstance, and seemingly ascribed to the shallowness of the soil, allowing the seed no room to strike deep root, but only to spring upwards. The same idea is suggested by the verb itself, a double compound meaning to *spring up and forth*. The cause assigned by Luke

(8, 6), is not that of the speedy germination, but of the premature decay that followed it, as Mark describes more fully in the next verse.

6. *But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.*

When the sun was up (or *risen*), is the literal translation of the text adopted by the latest critics, while the common or received text, though the same in meaning, has a different construction, *the sun having risen*. There is a peculiar beauty in the Greek here, which cannot be retained in a translation, arising from the use of the same verb (but in a less emphatic form) to signify the rising of the plant and of the sun, as both are said in English to be *up*, when one is above the surface of the earth and the other above the horizon. *Scorched* (or *burnt*) and *withered* (or *dried*, see above on 3:1) are different effects ascribed to different causes. The first is the evaporation of the vital sap or vegetable juices by the solar heat; the other their spontaneous failure from the want of a tenacious root. Together they describe, in a manner at once accurate and simple, the natural and necessary fate of a plant without sufficient depth of soil, however quick and even premature its vegetation.

7. *And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.*

Another, as in v. 5. *Into the thorns*, or in the midst of them, as it is more fully expressed by Luke (8, 7). *The thorns*, which happened to be growing there, or which are usually found in such situations. *Came up*, appeared above the surface, an expression constantly employed in English to denote the same thing. *Choked*, stifled, or deprived of life by pressure. This word though strictly applicable only to the suffocation of animal or human subjects (Luke 8:42), is here by a natural and lively figure transferred to the fatal influence on vegetable life of too close contact with a different and especially a ranker growth. Matthew (13: 7) uses a still more emphatic compound of the same verb, corresponding to our own familiar phrase *choked off*. And *fruit did not give*, though implied in all, is expressed only in Mark's account, which throughout this parable exhibits no appearance of abridgment.

8. *And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up, and increased, and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.*

Another, as in vs. 5. 7. It is a minute but striking proof that the evangelists wrote independently of each other, and that their coincidence of language arose not from mutual imitation, but from sameness of original material, that in these three verses Matthew always says *upon*, Mark *into* or *among*. *Good ground*, in Greek, *the earth, the good, earth* or *soil*

properly so called in distinction from the beaten, rocky, thorny places before mentioned. *Gave fruit coming up and growing*, the fruit or ripe grain being represented as passing through the changes which are really experienced in the earlier stages of the vegetable process. *Bore*, the same idea that was before expressed by *gave*, the latter having more explicit reference to the use and wants of men, the former to production in itself considered. What the seed bore, whether reaped or not, it *yielded* only on the former supposition. *One*, i.e. one seed, the proportion stated being that of the seed sown to the ripe grain harvested. As the Greek numeral here rendered *one* is distinguished from the preposition *in* by nothing but its accent and its aspiration, which are not given in the oldest copies, one distinguished modern critic substitutes the latter, *in thirty, and in sixty*, i.e. in this ratio or proportion, and another gives as the most ancient text a different preposition, meaning *to* (i.e. to the amount of) *thirty, sixty, and a hundred*. The productiveness ascribed to the nutritious grains in this place is by no means unexampled either in ancient or in modern times. It is indeed a moderate and modest estimate compared with some recorded by Herodotus, in which the rate of increase was double or quadruple even the highest of the three here mentioned, and the recent harvest in our western states affords examples of increase still greater.

9. *And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

This idiomatic and proverbial formula, like many others of perpetual occurrence in our Lord's discourses, is never simply pleonastic or unmeaning, as the repetition often tempts us to imagine. On the contrary, such phrases are invariably solemn and emphatic warnings that the things in question are of the most momentous import, and entitled to most serious attention. They appear to have been framed or adopted by the Saviour, to be used on various occasions and in the pauses of his different discourses. There is something eminently simple and expressive in the one before us, which involves rebuke as well as exhortation. "Why should you have the sense of hearing, if you do not use it now? To what advantage can you ever listen, if you turn a deaf ear to these admonitions? Now, now, if ever, he who can hear must hear, or incur the penalty of inattention!" But besides the importance of the subject and the juncture, it is here suggested that the very form of the communication calls for close attention, in default of which it can impart no knowledge and confer no benefit. This may be understood as having reference to the parabolic method of instruction which our Saviour now began and afterwards continued to employ so freely." (Alexander)

FACT QUESTIONS 4:1-9

189. What was the pulpit and the auditorium for Jesus' teaching in parables?

190. Did Jesus give these parables in rapid succession? If not, how were they given (Cf. 4:11).
191. If this is the first parable of Jesus what are we to say of 3:23?
192. Show how this parable reveals the method of farming in Jesus' day—There are several intimations—please find them.
193. Does Mark suggest there were three groups of seeds growing by making reference to the 30, 60 and 100 yields? Explain.

B. THE EXPLANATION OF THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

4:10-20

TEXT 4:10-20

"And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parables. And he said unto them, Unto you is given the mystery of the kingdom of God; but unto them that are without, all things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest haply they should turn again, and it should be forgiven them. And he saith unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how shall ye know all the parables? The sower soweth the word. And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; and when they have heard, straightway cometh Satan, and taketh away the word which hath been sown in them. And these in like manner are they that are sown upon the rocky places, who, when they have heard the word, straightway receive it with joy; and they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, straightway they stumble. And others are they that are sown among the thorns; these are they that have heard the word, and the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. And those are they that were sown upon the good ground; such as hear the word, and accept it, and bear fruit, thirty-fold, and sixty-fold, and a hundred-fold."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:10-20

168. Why wait until there were but twelve before He told the meaning of the parable?
169. What is meant by the expression "mystery of 'the kingdom'"?
170. Please explain in your own words vs. 12.
171. Why the rebuke in vs. 13?
172. Are we to understand that Satan can actually remove the word of God from the heart? How?
173. How can we have "root in ourselves"? Cf. vs. 17.
174. Please notice that those with shallow hearts stumble "because of the word." Please explain.

175. Have the thorns of choking changed? What shall we do with them?
 176. Why do some bear only 30 while others yield 100-fold for the Master?

COMMENT 4:10-20

LESSON ANALYSIS

- I. SPEAKING IN PARABLES, VS. 10-13.
 1. Disciples Ask an Explanation. Mark 4:10; Matt. 13:10; Luke 8:9.
 2. The Reason for Parables. Mark 4:11, 12; Matt. 13:11-17; Luke 8:10.
- II. WAYSIDE AND STONY GROUND, VS. 14-17.
 1. The Good Seed. Mark 4:14; Luke 8:11.
 2. Wayside Hearers. Mark 4:15; Matt. 13:19; Luke 8:12.
 3. Stony Ground Hearers. Mark 4:16, 17; Matt. 13:20; Luke 8:13.
- III. THORNS AND GOOD GROUND, VS. 18-20.
 1. The Seed Choked Out. Mark 4:18, 19; Matt. 13:22; Luke 8:14.
 2. Good Seed in Good Ground. Mark 4:20; Matt. 13:23; Luke 8:15.

INTRODUCTION

He privately retired to the margin of the lake, desiring probably to "rest awhile;" but no sooner had he taken his seat beside the cool, still water, than he was again surrounded by the anxious crowd. At once, to escape the pressure and to command the audience better when he should again begin to speak, he stepped into one of the fishing-boats that floated at ease close by the beach, on the margin of that tideless inland sea. From the water's edge, stretching away upward on the natural gallery formed by the sloping bank, the great congregation, with every face fixed in an attitude of eager expectancy, presented to the Preacher's eye the appearance of a plowed field ready to receive the seed. As he opened his lips and cast the word of life freely abroad among them, he saw, he felt, the parallel between the sowing of Nature and the sowing of Grace. Into that word accordingly he threw the lesson of saving truth.—W. Arnot.

OUTLINE OF THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER—It will aid in understanding the lesson to have a clear outline in the mind of the application. This is the first parable the Saviour spoke as far as we have record. He spoke the parable to a vast audience in whose minds the story was lodged and left for reflection without an explanation of its meaning. He had sowed, in this illustrative way, the seed of the kingdom broadcast, and in many a heart it would live until it burst forth, full of meaning, to bear fruit. His apostles, not accustomed to this mode of teaching, come to him privately and ask the meaning. In order to understand the parable we must go with the other disciples and listen to the explanation given in verses 10-20. Christ is the great Sower, and all whom he sends

forth to preach are sowers under him. The seed sown is his Word, the Gospel of the Kingdom. The soil where the seed is cast is human hearts. Four kinds of human hearts are described: 1. The *wayside* hearer; the light flippant, indifferent hearer upon whom no impression is produced. 2. The *stony* hearer; the heart that exhibits an evanescent feeling at the appeal of the gospel, but upon whom no permanent impression is made. 3. The *thorny* soil; the heart that takes in the Word, but is so full of worldly cares that these presently gain the mastery. This describes the *world-serving hearing*. 4. The *good* soil; the good and honest heart; the heart that receives and retains the truth. In such a heart the seed will grow and the new life will be manifest. Three things, then, are needful: 1. A Sower. 2. Good Seed; the pure word of God. 3. A good and honest heart. A dishonest man cannot be converted until he casts out his dishonesty. He who cavils at and deceitfully entreats the word of God will not be profited.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. SPEAKING IN PARABLES.—10. *When he was done*. This may have occurred after the public labors of the day were over and the multitude had been dismissed. By comparing with Matthew we learn that the Lord spoke seven parables in succession, and it seems to me more probable that the explanations were given in the quiet when surrounded only by the twelve and "they that were about him with the twelve," a number of his friends and disciples. *Asked of him the parables*. This language shows that the Lord had spoken more than once before the explanation was asked for or given. Though the parable was new to his disciples it was not a new method of instruction. A number occur in the Old Testament, and it was frequently adopted by the Jewish rabbis. It differs from an allegory or fable in that its characters are real and it does not violate possibilities. It is an imaginary illustration of real truth. In this instance the Saviour stated some facts familiar to all the farming population of Palestine and made them the vehicle to carry spiritual truth. Perhaps from where the multitude was gathered a sower on the plain of Gennesaret was visible at work and pointed to by the Lord.

11. *Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom*. A "mystery" is not something obscure, but something plain to those initiated, but a secret to those without. The Greeks had what were called the "Eleusinian mysteries," unknown to all without, but fully explained to all who were initiated. The Saviour says no more than that there are matters that my disciples shall know that those without can never understand. When one makes Jesus the Master and himself a pupil (disciple), of course he has the vantage ground and will be admitted to spiritual knowledge that he could never obtain had he not entered the school of Christ. The Eng-

lish alphabet is a mystery to the savage, but is no mystery to even little children who have learned it. *To them that are without . . . parables.* The method of instruction by parables was peculiarly adapted to their state. It was interesting, and would excite attention, and many of the similes would be long remembered, and their true meaning would insensibly break forth upon their minds. It would lead them to some correct views before they were aware. At the same time the truths thus delivered were covered by a thin veil, and were not immediately apprehended; thus, while instant rejection might be the result of presenting the naked truth, attention to the truth was secured by the interesting covering under which it was couched. He spake only in parables to these Jewish cavillers, in order to take from them the means of knowing truths which they would merely abuse. He would not cast pearls before swine.

12. *That seeing they may see, and not perceive.* Did he speak in parables because he did not wish them to *know and to enjoy*? Everything shows the reverse. But he was aware, that, in consequence of the inveteracy of their prejudice, they could not, in the first instance, see "the secret of the kingdom" without being repelled in spirit, and confirmed in their dissent and dislike. He wished, therefore, that they should not "see." But, at the same time, he graciously wished that they should "look," and keep "looking," so that they might, if possible, get such a glimpse of the inner glory as might fascinate their interest and attention, and by and by disarm their prejudices, so that they might with safety be permitted to "see".—*Morison*. Though they see the truth intellectually, they shall not appreciate it spiritually; they see it as the horse sees the same prospect with his rider, without appreciation.—*Abbott*. But their position was according to their own choice. Christ forbade none; and the disciples in this case were not merely the twelve chosen by him, but all who would come. Moral inability always is the fruit of moral unwillingness. Those who cannot see, were in the first place unwilling to see. *Lest . . . they should be converted.* His meaning is not, "These things are done in parables, lest they should be converted," but, "Their eyes they closed, etc., lest at any time they should be converted." That is, men willfully close their hearts to the truth, lest they should be led to repentance and reformation. *They will not, therefore they cannot.*

13. *Know ye not this parable?* It is not a reproof, but means, "You find you cannot understand this without assistance." The next question, *and how then will ye know all parables?* extends the thought to all parables, but intimates further: "The first parable of the kingdom is the basis of all the rest. If they understand not this, they could not understand any that followed. If they had the explanation of this, they had the key for the understanding of all others." Hence our Lord gives, not rules of inter-

pretation, but examples, one of which is here preserved to be our guide in interpretation.

II. WAYSIDE AND STONY GROUND.—14. *The sower soweth the word.* The great Sower is Christ; the seed sown is the Word of God, the Gospel, whether spoken by Christ, his apostles, preachers, Sunday-school teachers, any disciple, or written in the New Testament, or upon the printed page of the book, tract or newspaper. All spiritual life depends on a divine seed sown in the heart by the divine Sower. The life of the seed depends on, first, receiving it; second, rooting it; third, cultivating it.

15. *These are they by the wayside.* The fields of Palestine were not fenced and lay in the open country while the population lived in hamlets. The roads or paths were through the fields. Thomson, in the *Land and the Book*, says: "There are neither roads, nor thorns, nor stony places in such lots. They go forth into the open country, where the path passes through the cultivated land, where there are no fences, where thorns grow in clumps all around, where rocks peep out in places through the scanty soil, and hard by are patches extremely fertile." Some of the seed fell on the hard-beaten paths where it would lie until picked up by the birds. This, said the Savior, represents the hardened, worldly hearts that never allow the seed of the kingdom to enter at all. These never allow the word to get under the surface of their thoughts. The way is the heart, beaten and dried by the passage of evil thoughts. Sin has so hardened the heart, worldliness has so deadened the feelings, sinful pleasures and desires have so dulled the conscience that God's truth makes no impression, more than a passing dream, or a pleasant song, to be heard and forgotten. *Satan . . . taketh away the word that was sown.* The object of the preaching of the word is to save souls; the aim of Satan is to destroy souls. The word lies there ready for him. It has not pierced the soil of the heart. It has found no entrance. It is all on the surface. It lies quite naked and exposed. The word has been heard, and that is all. It is snatched away at once. Guthrie says: "Wherever there is a preacher in the pulpit, there is a devil among the pews, busy watching the words that fall from the preacher's lips to catch them away." Every preacher is familiar with this class. Upon their hard, flinty hearts the most searching appeals fail to make any impression. They come out of idle curiosity, or to cavil and to scoff and go away as they came.

16. *They which are sown on stony ground.* Under the figure of the stony ground, he depicts that lively but shallow susceptibility of spirit which grasps the truth eagerly, but receives no deep impressions, and yields as quickly to the reaction of worldly temptations as it had yielded to the divine word. Those whose feelings are touched, but not their

conscience or their will. *Immediately*. The seed in such case "springs up"—all the quicker from the shallowness of the soil—"because it has no depth of earth." *Receive it with gladness*. The hearer described has not counted the cost; whatever was fair and beautiful in Christianity, as it first presents itself, had attracted him—its sweet and comfortable promises, the moral loveliness of its doctrines, but not its answer to the deepest needs of the human heart; as neither, when he received the word with gladness, had he contemplated the having to endure hardness in his warfare with sin and Satan and the world.—*Trench*.

17. *Have no root in themselves*. They make profession and begin, but do not hold out, because the good seed has not rooted deeply. These are they who are moved by emotion, not by a deep sense of conviction. *When affliction or persecution*. As the heat scorches the blade which has no deepness of earth, so the troubles and afflictions, which would have strengthened a true faith, cause a faith which was merely temporary to fail. The image has a peculiar fitness and beauty, for as the roots of a tree are out of sight, yet from them it derives its firmness and stability; so upon the hidden life of the Christian his firmness and stability depend.—*Trench*. A sneer from some leading spirit in a literary society, or a laugh raised by some gay circle of pleasure-seekers in a fashionable drawing-room, or the rude jests of scoffing artisans in a workshop, may do as much as the fagot and the stake to make a fair but false disciple deny his Lord.

III. THORNS AND GOOD GROUND.—18. *Sown among thorns*. The seed which takes root, but is stifled by the thorns that shoot up with it, figures the mind in which the elements of worldly desire develop themselves along with the higher life, and at last become strong enough to crush it, so that the received truth it utterly lost. The evil here is neither a hard nor a shallow soil—there is *softness* enough, and *depth* enough; but it is the existence in it of what draws all the moisture and richness of the soil away to itself, and so *starves the plant*.

19. *Cares of this world*. What are these thorns? First, the cares of this world—*anxious, unrelaxing attention to the business of his present life*; second, the *deceitfulness of riches*—of those riches which are the fruit of this worldly care; third, the *pleasures of this life*—the enjoyments, in themselves it may be innocent, in which worldly prosperity enables one to indulge. These "choke" or "smother" the word; drawing off so much of one's attention, absorbing so much of one's interest, and using up so much of one's time, that only the dregs of these remain for spiritual things, and a fagged, hurried and heartless formalism is at length all the religion of such persons.—*J. F. and B*. Our Savior here places riches in the midst

between cares and pleasures; for cares generally precede the gaining of riches, and, when gained, they draw men into pleasures and indulgence.—*Dodd.*

20. *Sown on good ground, etc.* A heart soft and tender, stirred to its depths on the great things of eternity, and jealously guarded from worldly engrossments, such only is the "honest and good heart" (Luke 8:15), which "keeps," i. e., "retains" the seed of the word, and bears fruit just in proportion as it is such a heart. Such "bring forth fruit with patience" (v. 15), or continuance, "enduring to the end;" in contrast with those in whom the word is "choked," and brings no fruit to perfection. The "thirty-fold" is designed to express the lowest degree of fruitfulness; the "hundred-fold," the highest, and the "sixty-fold" the intermediate degrees of fruitfulness. As a "hundred-fold," though not unexampled (Gen. 26: 12), is a rare return in the natural husbandry, so the highest degrees of spiritual fruitfulness are, too, seldom witnessed.—*J.F. and B. Some thirty-fold, some sixty and some a hundred.* Thirty-fold is now a first-rate crop, even for such plains as Esdraelon, just below Nazareth. But in the time of Christ there might be realized, in favorable circumstances, a hundred-fold. Intelligent gentlemen (in the plain of Esdraelon) maintain that they have themselves reaped more than an hundred-fold. Moreover, the different kinds of fertility may be ascribed to different kinds of grain: Barley yields more than wheat; and white maize, sown in the neighborhood, often yields several hundred-fold. An extraordinary number of stalks do actually spring from a single root. Here, on this plain of Sidon, I have seen more than a hundred, and each with a head bowing gracefully beneath the load of well-formed grains. The yield was more than a thousand-fold.—*Land and Book.* Observe the four kinds of seed: The first did not spring up at all; the second sprang up, but soon withered away; the third sprang up and grew, but yielded no fruit; the fourth sprang up, grew, and brought forth fruit. And as there are three causes of unfaithfulness, so there are three *degrees* of fruitfulness, but only one *cause* of fruitfulness.—*Maclear.*

FACT QUESTIONS 4:10-20

194. Show how the parable of the sower was appropriate to the time and place where it was given.
195. Describe briefly the four types of soils.
196. Did Jesus speak more than one parable upon this occasion? How many?
197. Was this a new method of instruction? Show the difference in a parable and an allegory.

198. Explain the expression "mystery of the kingdom."
199. Show how appropriate the use of parables was to "those without."
200. Please explain: "that seeing they may see, and not perceive."—"lest they be converted."
201. What seems to be "the key" to all the parables?
202. In what way can the seed be sown?
203. Where was "the wayside" in the fields of Palestine?
204. Why are wayside hearers so indifferent?
205. Explain how Satan takes away the word or the seed?
206. What causes such a joyful acceptance on the part of some—only to be lost later?
207. Show the difference between emotion and conviction.
208. Discuss carefully the three types of thorns and their interrelation.
209. Show the three causes of unfaithfulness, the three degrees of fruitfulness and the one cause of fruitfulness.

C. THE PARABLE OF THE LAMP 4:21-23

TEXT 4:21-23

"And he said unto them, Is the lamp brought to be put under the bushel, or under the bed, and not to be put on the stand? For there is nothing hid, save that it should be manifested; neither was anything made secret, but that it should come to light. If any man hath ears to hear, let him hear."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:21-23

177. When was this parable given? before or after the explanation of the parable of the sower?
178. Who is represented by the lamp?
179. Isn't there something humorous about the location of the lamp? Why use it?
180. Jesus states a strange purpose for hiding something—explain.
181. What is the main point of this parable?

COMMENT

TIME—Autumn A.D. 28. At the same time as the first parable.

PLACE—In a boat in the Sea of Galilee, the crowd on the shore.

PARALLEL ACCOUNT—Luke 8:16, 17.

OUTLINE—1. The purpose of the lamp, v. 21. 2. Items are hidden for the purpose of later being revealed, vs. 22, a. 3. Secrets are made to be told, vs. 22b. 4. Those who can should understand, vs. 23.

ANALYSIS

- I. THE PURPOSE OF THE LAMP. VS. 21.
 - 1. Not under the bushel.
 - 2. Not under the bed.
 - 3. On the stand.
- II. ITEMS ARE HIDDEN TO BE REVEALED. 22A.
- III. SECRETS ARE MADE TO BE TOLD. 22B.
- IV. THOSE WHO CAN SHOULD UNDERSTAND. VS. 23.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- I. THE PURPOSE OF THE LAMP, VS. 21.
 - 21. *"And he said unto them, Is a (or the) candle brought to be put under, etc.*
 - 22. *For there is nothing hid which shall not be manifested"* (or, save that it should be manifested).

These verses must be taken together, and their meaning seems to be something of this sort. The Lord had for certain wise, and, we believe, merciful reasons, adopted a new role of teaching, in which He veiled His meaning from the multitude under parables, but this was not because He intended their meaning to be permanently hidden from the world, but because He intended that it might be the better known to the world when the fitting time was come. To his end He made known the interpretation to His Apostles, not for themselves, but for the world. His truth—the truth of the Gospel—was the lamp; this lamp of truth He intended not for a corner of the world, or for a select few, but for all men of all nations, who would turn their faces towards it and receive it, and so He gave it now to the Apostles, who, after Pentecost, were to make it known to all nations for the obedience of faith.

- II. ITEMS ARE HIDDEN TO BE REVEALED. 22A.

God does not conceal any mystery, any religious truth, merely for the sake of concealing it. If He conceals any truth it is that He may ultimately make it better known. This very parable is an illustration of this. If any truth ever shone forth upon the lamp-stand of the Church it is that which is taught us by this parable, that the word of the Gospel is efficacious or not, according to the state of heart of the recipients; so that men must in very deed "take heed" as to "how" they hear and "what" they hear. This meaning is still more clearly enforced by the true reading of the first clause of verse 22. There is nothing hidden, save that it should be manifested. So we have this parable given in full in three out of the four Gospels, and we may safely say that, with the exception of that of the returning prodigal, there is none which has been more expounded and enforced by preachers in all ages. The meaning, however, of verse 21,

is much obscured by deficiency of translation. We lose much of the significance if we think of the modern candle and candlestick carried about in the hand. On the contrary, it is the lamp of the house put upon the lamp-stand, or candelabrum, which is so elevated that any lamp upon it can lighten up all the interior.

III. SECRETS ARE MADE TO BE TOLD. VS. 22B.

The reader will notice that the Lord uses this aphorism here with quite a different significance to that which He gives to it in Matt. 10:26.

IV. THOSE WHO CAN SHOULD UNDERSTAND. VS. 23

23. If any man have ears to hear, etc. If this was said not in the hearing of the multitude, but to the Apostles, or to those select ones to whom He had just expounded the parable, then it implies that there are still deeper mysteries of grace which require, for their apprehension, a more effectual opening of the soul's ears, and a deeper preparation of heart. Men have ears to hear certain fundamental, or practical truths, who still have not as yet ears to hear certain deep mysteries." (M. F. Sadler).

FACT QUESTIONS 4:21-23

- 210 Why interpret verses 21 and 22 together?
211. What is "the lamp" of the parable?
212. When was the lamp hidden? Why?
213. When was it put on "the stand"?
214. Show how this parable relates to the parable of the sower.
215. What deficiency in translation has hindered our understanding?
216. If Jesus spoke vs. 23 to the apostles, what does it mean?

D. A WARNING FOR HEARERS. 4:24, 25

TEXT 4:24, 25

"And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete it shall be measured unto you: and more shall be given unto you. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:24, 25

182. Please associate these verses with what has been said—what is "the measure" and "measuring."
183. Who would measure to the apostles?
184. How does this principle apply to today?
185. Isn't it unfair to give to the one who has and take from the one who has not?
186. Please explain in your own words the principle involved.

COMMENT

The four parables of Mark were all given at the same time and place. The parallel accounts are in Matt. 13:18-32 and Luke 8:11-19.

19. This *warning for the hearers* is also found in Luke 8:18.

OUTLINE—1. Measure determines measuring, 24a. 2. He who has, 25a. 3. He who has not, 25b.

ANALYSIS

I. MEASURE DETERMINES MEASURING, VS. 24.

1. What amount are you giving of what I have given to you?
2. What you have given determines what you shall receive.

II. HE WHO HAS, VS. 25A.

1. The one or ones to whom Jesus has given.
2. If this one gives of what he has received he shall receive more.

III. HE WHO HAS NOT, VS. 25B.

1. He refuses to give what he has.
2. What he had is lost.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. MEASURE DETERMINES MEASURING, VS. 24.

24, 25. Thus far the duty of using the truth as light has been grounded in the nature of truth and the purpose of the Teacher; now it is grounded in the law of human life itself. The words, *And he saith unto them*, repeated here, probably indicate, not a new beginning with a change of time and place, but rather the narrator's remembrance of the special emphasis with which all this was spoken, very likely after a solemn pause.—*Take heed what ye hear*. Luke, "how ye hear." Not, "Be careful what you listen to," as if he would warn against dangerous teachers, but, "Carefully consider what you are hearing; observe how important it is; remember how necessary that you make the right use of it." It is almost, "Take heed to what you hear." The reason assigned for this caution is that, according to the universal law, what one does will return to him.—The words *that hear* are to be omitted, and the omission considerably changes the structure of the sentence: "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you, and added to you."—This saying, *With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you*, proverbial in form, is applied in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 7:2) to the retribution that must come upon uncharitableness and self-willed judgment. Here our Lord gives it a quite different application; it is a law of life, and may be applied in many ways. In this case its lesson is, "You will be dealt with, as to truth, as you deal with others. Hide it, and it will be hidden from you; impart it, and it will be imparted to you." How many souls, in dealing with trust as God has given it to them, have found it even so—that concealment was loss, while giving was gain! If the apostles had kept their truth as a private trust, how their souls would have shrivelled!—*Shall more be given* is a promise of a return, which shall be not merely as the gift, but greater. So Luke 6:38. (Compare 2 Cor. 9:8-14).

II. HE WHO HAS, VS. 25A.

Verse 25 contains what was evidently more or less a proverbial saying with our Lord. *He that hath, to him shall be given*, etc. (See Matt. 25:29; Luke 19:26.) Here it fits the connection far otherwise than as in the passages referred to—another illustration of our Lord's various use of single important sayings. Here, by a very striking turn of thought, *he that hath* is identified with him who imparts his trust of truth to others, the free giver, the true apostle, messenger of grace and truth; while *he that hath not* is identified with him who keeps his trust of truth to himself, content to be ever a disciple without becoming an apostle. The giver *hath*, the miser *hath not*. How true a description of men, and how true an interpretation of the law of life!—And now it is declared that for these two classes there shall be retribution. *He that hath, to him shall be given*. So Luke 6:38—a passage that may serve as a link between this and Matt. 7:2: "Give, and it shall be given unto you." (See also Luke 12:48).

III. HE WHO HAS NOT, VS. 25B.

And he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath. How is this? He "hath not," and yet he "hath," something that he can lose. Yes; the spiritual miser possesses much in his own esteem; much truth has been entrusted to him; but if he is not a giver of truth, and so a possessor, his possession shall become no possession: what he hath shall be worthless to him. Such instruction may well have made the apostles careful what use they made of the parables. Partly to this, perhaps, it is due that they were so faithful in putting the lamp on the lampstand, not only by preaching, but also by making record of his words, especially such words as these." (W. N. Clarke).

FACT QUESTIONS 4:24, 25

217. Read Matt. 7:2 and Luke 6:38 and show the difference in the use of the same principle here.
218. Is this a warning or an encouragement? Discuss.
219. Who is the one to whom much was given?
220. How does the attitude of hearing and heeding the words of Jesus relate to this?

E. THE PARABLE OF SECRET GROWTH. 4:26-29

TEXT 4:26-29

"And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how. The earth beareth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the

ear. But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:26-29

187. Please settle in your mind a clear definition of "the kingdom of heaven." We believe it refers in every referenc to the church Jesus establishd—either in the temporal or eternal sense. Do you agree?
188. What is the seed cast upon the earth?
189. Who casts the seed?
190. Who sleeps?
191. Why mention "knoweth not how" in vs. 27b?
192. How can we tell when the grain is ripe? What is the sickle?
193. What is the main point of this parable?

COMMENT

All four parables of Jesus as recorded in Mark were given at the same time and place. Only this parable is not mentioned either by Matthew or Luke.

OUTLINE—*A picture of the kingdom of God.* (1) A man who sows seed, vs. 26. (2) He waits for the growth, vs. 27. (3) The visible growth, vs. 28. (4) The harvest, vs. 29.

ANALYSIS

A Picture Of the Kingdom of God

- I. A MAN WHO SOWS THE SEED, vs. 26.
 1. The seed must be broadcast.
 2. The seed must go into the earth.
- II. HE WAITS FOR THE GROWTH, vs. 27.
 1. In the ordinary course of living.
 2. The growth occurs he knows not how.
- III. THE VISIBLE GROWTH, vs. 28.
 1. First the blade of grass.
 2. Then the ear.
 3. Then the grain in the ear.
- IV. THE HARVEST, vs. 29.
 1. When the grain is ripe.
 2. Sickle thrust in for the reaping.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- I. THE MAN WHO SOWS THE SEED, vs. 26.

"26, 27. *he knoweth not how.*—To some extent he knoweth how; it is by the process described in the next verse: "the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

- II. HE WAITS FOR THE GROWTH, vs. 27.

He may know still further, that it grows by the chemical action of light,

warmth, and moisture; but still there is a part of the process that he does not know.

III. THE VISIBLE GROWTH, VS. 28.

28, 29. *But when the fruit.*—Although the sower knows not how the seed grows, and remains not to see its growth, still it grows. From sowing time till harvest the man has nothing to do: no intermediate cultivation is required. This is true of the "corn" (wheat and barley) referred to, though not of our Indian corn.

IV. THE HARVEST, VS. 29.

The kingdom of heaven is like this (verse 26), in that the seed of the kingdom, which is the word of God, when sown in a community, even though the sower go away and neglect it, will spring up of itself and bear fruit, and will be ready at a future day for the harvest. This is often exemplified in the labors of the evangelist. He preaches in a community faithfully, and apparently without success, for a length of time, and then, after a lapse of months or years, returns to the same place, and with comparatively little exertion reaps an abundant harvest. The parable teaches what observation abundantly confirms, that such an adaptation exists between the human soul and the word of God, that when the latter is once implanted a future harvest will usually be the result." (*J. W. McGarvey*).

FACT QUESTIONS 4:26-29

221. Does this parable relate to the fourth type of hearers in the production of fruit?
222. Who is the sower?
223. Why mention the period of time in this parable?
224. Why describe the growth of the grain?
225. Are ministers of the word also reapers? Please discuss.

F. THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED. 4:30-32.

TEXT 4:30-32

"An he said, How shall we liken the kingdom of God? or in what parable shall we set it forth? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown upon the earth, though it be less than all the seeds upon the earth, yet when it is sown, groweth up, and becometh greater than all the herbs, and putteth out great branches; so that the birds of the heaven can lodge under the shadow thereof."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:30-32

194. Once again settle in your mind just what is represented by the expression "kingdom of God." Can you see the fulfillment of this expression in the church? We refer to the church described in the book of Acts.

195. Why select the mustard seed for comparison? Is it the smallest seed on the earth?
 196. Who are the birds and what are the branches?
 197. What is the principle point of this parable?

COMMENT

This is the fourth and last parable here recorded by Mark. Like the previous three it was given in the autumn of A.D. 28 while Jesus sat in a little boat in the Sea of Galilee,

A Picture of the Kingdom

OUTLINE—1. Like a grain of mustard seed, vs. 30, 31. 2. When grown is greater than all the herbs, vs. 32a. 3. A place for the birds of the heaven, vs. 32b.

ANALYSIS

- I. A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED, vs. 30, 31.
 1. Just like the kingdom of God.
 2. Sown upon the earth.
 3. Less than all the seeds.
 II. WHEN IT IS GROWN, 32A.
 1. Greater than all the herbs.
 2. Putteth out branches.
 III. A PLACE FOR BIRDS, 32B.
 1. In branches.
 2. Under the shadow.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED, vs. 30, 31.

Whereunto (or how) *shall we liken the kingdom of God?* or *with what comparison* (or parable) *shall we compare it?* In using the plural, *we*, our Lord seems to conceive of his disciples as deliberating with him in the choice of a comparison; not that he was in doubt as to how the gospel could be illustrated—comparisons thronged upon him—but because he would have them also watch for comparisons. The world was full of them, and they, the teachers of men in higher things, must learn, as well as their Master, to find them. Yet possibly he may sometimes, like any one of them, have had to feel after an illustration in nature that was suited to his thought.—*A grain of mustard-seed*. There seems to be no good reason for looking elsewhere than to the ordinary mustard of the East. Thomson (*The Land and the Book*) has seen it as high as a horse and rider. (See also the beautiful incident in Dr. Hackett's *Illustrations of Scripture*, p. 124.—A.H.) This is the *Sinapis nigra*; but some have thought that the *Salvadora Persica* was more probably the herb that Jesus had in mind. The former, however, meets all the real requirements of the case, and was the more familiar plant to his hearers. "It (the *Sinapis nigra*) is a

small grain producing a large result; the least of the husbandman's seeds, becoming the greatest of the husbandman's herbs. This is the point of the parable, and gives the only sense in which the kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard-seed" (*The Bible Educator*, 1. 121).—*Less than* and *greater than* are not to be pressed to the point of minute precision. There may be smaller seeds in existence without giving us reason to stumble at our Saviour's words. The mustard-seed was commonly spoken of as the smallest of seeds, and that is enough.

II. WHEN IT IS GROWN, VS. 32 A.

Becometh greater than all the herbs. Matthew, "is greater than the herbs, and becometh a tree"—i. e., of course, a tree in appearance, not botanically. The *great branches* are such as one would think impossible upon an herb that sprang from so small a seed.—The comparison calls for very little explanation, the lesson—small beginnings and great results—being very plain. Such is the kingdom, begun obscurely, with no human prospect of greatness, no seeming possibility of success. It began among the Jews, a disappointed people chafing under foreign masters; it was the smallest of sects among them; it contradicted their ideas, and was rejected by them; it seemed to be powerless at home, and without opportunities abroad; and its founder died on the cross. Even after the day of Pentecost it seemed but a feeble sect. Yet compare the strong language of Paul in Rom. 16:26; Col. 1:23 as to the wide extension of the gospel within the apostolic times.

III. A PLACE FOR BIRDS, VS. 32 B.

Consider also the power of the name and principles of Jesus in the world today, and the ever-widening circle of Christian influence. The kingdom has grown out of all resemblance to its humble beginning. Such is the kingdom; and the same rule is to be observed in its agencies. They are often obscure and yet mighty. A single act of a quiet person often seems possessed of a germinant power of usefulness that brings most unexpected fruit to the glory of God. Christian history is full of illustrations. Notice that this comparison does not set forth the greatness of the kingdom absolutely, as destined to fill the earth, but only relatively, in contrast with the insignificance of its apparent promise." (W. N. Clarke).

FACT QUESTIONS 4:30-32

226. Who does the planting of the mustard seed? Where?
227. Does it help us in our work for Christ to know the mustard seed is the smallest of all seeds? How?
228. When was the seed of mustard first planted?
229. Show how this parable has been fulfilled—is being fulfilled and can be fulfilled.

G. LAST WORDS ON PARABLES 4:33-34

TEXT 4:33, 34

"And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it: and without a parable spake he not unto them: but privately to his own disciples he expounded all things."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:33, 34

198. How many parables did Jesus use? Ans. "The total number of parables is a matter of difference of opinion. Fahling, in his *Harmony*, lists 56: *A. T. Robertson*, 52. *Trench*, 30." (Earle).
199. What is meant by the expression "as they were able to hear"?
200. Is it indeed true that "without a parable He spoke not unto them"? Explain.
201. At this time who were "His own disciples"?

COMMENT

At the conclusion of the record of the parables we have these concluding words of the writer Mark. No outline or analysis is needed here.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 13:34, 35.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

"33. *And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear* (it.)

These are mere samples of the parables by which our Lord elucidated or disguised the doctrine of his kingdom to the different classes of his hearers in proportion to their previous knowledge and their present receptivity of such instruction. *As they were able to hear*, i.e. as some understand it, to hear intelligently or with patience. It may however have the stricter and more simple sense, as they had opportunity and leisure to attend on his instructions.

34. *But without a parable spake he not unto them; and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.*

This cannot mean that he never taught them in any other form, which would be contradicted by the whole course of the history, but only that whatever he did teach in parables he did not also teach in other forms, but, as the last clause more explicitly asserts, reserved the explanation for a private interview with his disciples. This closes Mark's account of our Lord's parables, including, as we have now seen, a full report of one with its author's own interpretation (vs. 1-20), an explanation of his purpose in employing this mode of instruction and direction to his followers how to profit by it (21-25); two additional parables, without a formal explanation (26-32); and a general statement of his practice in relation to this matter (33-34.)" (J. A. Alexander)

FACT QUESTIONS 4:33, 34

230. Please explain: "as they were able to hear."

231. Please explain: "without a parable He spake not unto them."

3. THE FIRST WITHDRAWAL 4:35—5:20

a. The Stilling of the Tempest
4:35-41

TEXT 4:35-41

"And on that day, when even was come, he saith unto them, Let us go over unto the other side. And leaving the multitude, they take him with them, even as he was, in the boat. And other boats were with him. And there ariseth a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the boat, insomuch that the boat was now filling. And he himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he awoke, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye fearful? have ye not yet faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:35-41

202. On what day (or night) did this incident occur?
203. What is meant by the expression "unto the other side"? Where was it? vs. 35.
204. Explain the expression "even as He was." vs. 36.
205. How far was it "to the other side"?
206. Describe in your own words "the storm."
207. Why was Jesus asleep?
208. What did the disciples imagine Jesus could do about the storm? Did they lack faith?
209. Could this power here exercised by Jesus be compared with the creation of the world? How?
210. There are two uses of the word fear: vs. 40, 41. Explain each.

COMMENT

TIME—Immediately after the telling of the last parable—on the same day—sometime in the autumn of A.D. 28.

PLACE—In the midst of the Sea of Galilee somewhere between Capernaum and Gerasa.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 8:23-27; Luke 8:22-25.

OUTLINE—1. The day of the miracle, vs. 35. 2. The voyage to the other side, vs. 36. 3. The storm, vs. 37. 4. Jesus asleep, the fear of the disciples, vs. 38. 5. Jesus stills the storm, vs. 39. 6. The calm of Jesus—the reverence of the disciples, vs. 40, 41.

ANALYSIS

I. THE DAY OF THE MIRACLE, vs. 35.

1. The same day as the parables.
 2. At eventide.
- II. THE VOYAGE TO THE OTHER SIDE, VS. 36.
1. Left multitude.
 2. Jesus taken in the little boat from which He taught the parables.
- III. THE STORM, VS. 37.
1. The great wind.
 2. Waves into the boat.
 3. Boat filling up.
- IV. JESUS SLEEPS, THE DISCIPLES FEAR, V. 38.
1. Jesus in the stern on a cushion.
 2. Awaked and asked for help.
- V. JESUS STILLS THE STORM, VS. 39.
1. Rebuked the wind.
 2. Stilled the sea.
- VI. THE CALM OF JESUS—THE REVERENCE OF THE DISCIPLES, VS. 40, 41.
1. No need of fear when there is faith.
 2. What manner of man is this?

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. THE DAY OF THE MIRACLE, VS. 35.

"These verses describe a storm on the Sea of Galilee, when our Lord and His disciples were crossing it, and a miracle performed by our Lord in calming the storm in a moment. Few miracles recorded in the Gospel were so likely to strike the minds of the disciples as this. Four of them at least were fishermen. Peter, Andrew, James and John, had probably known the Sea of Galilee, and its storms, from their youth. Few events in our Lord's journeyings to and fro upon earth, contain more rich instruction than the one related in this passage.

II. THE VOYAGE TO THE OTHER SIDE, VS. 36.

Let us learn, in the first place, that *Christ's service does not exempt His servants from storms*. Here were the twelve disciples in the path of duty. They were obediently following Jesus, wherever He went. They were daily attending on His ministry, and hearkening to His word. They were daily testifying to the world, that, whatever Scribes and Pharisees might think, they believed on Jesus, loved Jesus, and were not ashamed to give up all for His sake. Yet here we see these men in trouble, tossed up and down by a tempest, and in danger of being drowned.

III. THE STORM, VS. 37.

Let us mark well this lesson. If we are true Christians, we must not expect everything smooth in our journey to heaven. We must count it no strange thing, if we have to endure sicknesses, losses, bereavements, and disappointments, just like other men. Free pardon and full forgiveness, grace by the way, and glory at the end,—all this our Saviour has promised to give. But He has never promised that we shall have no afflictions. He loves us too well to promise that. By affliction He teaches us many precious lessons, which without we should never learn. By affliction He shows us our emptiness and weakness, draws us to the throne of grace, purifies our affections, weans us from the world, makes us long for heaven. In the resurrection morning we shall all say, "It is good for me that I was afflicted." We shall thank God for every storm.

IV. JESUS SLEEPS, THE DISCIPLES FEAR, V. 38.

Let us learn, in the second place, *that our Lord Jesus Christ was really and truly man*. We are told in these verses, that when the storm began, and the waves beat over the ship, he was in the hinder part "asleep." He had a body exactly like our own,—a body that could hunger, and thirst, and feel pain, and be weary, and need rest. No wonder that His body needed repose at this time. He had been diligent in His Father's business all the day. He had been preaching to a great multitude in the open air. No wonder that "when the even was come," and His work finished, He fell "asleep."

Let us mark this lesson also attentively. The Saviour in whom we are bid to trust, is as really man as He is God. He knows the trials of a man, for He has experienced them. He knows the bodily infirmities of a man for He has felt them. He can well understand what we mean, when we cry to Him for help in this world of need. He is just the very Saviour that men and women, with weary frames and aching heads, in a weary world, require for their comfort every morning and night. "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." (Heb. 4:15.)

V. JESUS STILLS THE STORM, VS. 39.

Let us learn, in the third place, *that our Lord Jesus Christ as God, has almighty power*. We see Him in these verses doing that which is proverbially impossible. He speaks to the winds, and they obey Him. He speaks to the waves, and they submit to His command. He turns the raging storm into a calm with a few words,—*"Peace, be still."* Those words were the words of Him who first created all things. The elements knew the voice of their Master, and like obedient servants, were quiet at once.

Let us mark this lesson also, and lay it up in our minds. With the Lord Jesus Christ nothing is impossible. No stormy passions are so strong but He can tame them. No temper is so rough and violent but He can change it. No conscience is so disquieted, but He can speak peace to it, and make it calm. No man ever need despair, if he will only bow down his pride, and come as a humbled sinner to Christ. Christ can do miracles upon his heart.—No man ever need despair of reaching his journey's end, if he has once committed his soul to Christ's keeping. Christ will carry him through every danger. Christ will make him conqueror over every foe.—What though our relations oppose us? What though our neighbors laugh us to scorn? What though our place be hard? What though our temptations be great? It is all nothing, if Christ is on our side, and we are in the ship with Him. Greater is He that is for us, than all they that are against us.

VI. THE CALM OF JESUS—THE REVERENCE OF THE DISCIPLES, vs. 40, 41.

Finally, we learn from this passage, *that our Lord Jesus Christ is exceedingly patient and pitiful in dealing with His own people.* We see the disciples on this occasion showing great want of faith, and giving way to most unseemly fears. They forgot their Master's miracles and care for them in days gone by. They thought of nothing but their present peril. They awoke our Lord hastily, and cried, "Carest thou not that we perish?" We see our Lord dealing most gently and tenderly with them. He gives them no sharp reproof. He makes no threat of casting them off, because of their unbelief. He simply asks the touching question, "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?"

Let us mark well this lesson. The Lord Jesus is very pitiful and of tender mercy. "As a father pitieth his children, even so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." (Psalm 103:13). He does not deal with believers according to their sins, nor reward them according to their iniquities. He sees their weakness. He is aware of their short-comings. He knows all the defects of their faith, and hope, and love, and courage. And yet He will not cast them off. He bears with them continually. He loves them even to the end. He raises them when they fall. He restores them when they err. His patience, like His love, is a patience that passeth knowledge. When he sees a heart right, it is His glory to pass over many a short-coming.

Let us leave these verses with the comfortable recollection that Jesus is not changed. His heart is still the same that it was when He crossed the sea of Galilee and stilled the storm. High in heaven at the right hand of God, Jesus is still sympathizing—still almighty,—still pitiful and patient towards His people.—Let us be more charitable and patient towards our brethren in the faith. They may err in many things, but if

Jesus has received them and can bear with them, surely we may bear with them too.—Let us be more hopeful about ourselves. We may be very weak, and frail, and unstable; but if we can truly say that we do come to Christ and believe on Him, we may take comfort. The question for conscience to answer is not, "Are we like the angels? are we perfect as we shall be in heaven?" The question is, "Are we real and true in our approaches to Christ? Do we truly repent and believe?" (*J. C. Ryle*)

FACT QUESTIONS 4:35-41

232. Who shared in this storm and calm? Cf. 4:36.
 233. Try to approximate the activity of Jesus during the day to understand how weary He was at the close of the day.
 234. Be specific in the reason for the rebuke of Jesus in vs. 40.
 235. Do you believe this storm was planned?
 236. What is the greatest lesson in the incident?

SUMMARY

4:1-34

In the parables of this section, especially in those of the sower, the seed and the mustard seed, the prophetic power of Jesus is clearly exhibited. Without superhuman foresight he could not have so accurately traced out the manner in which different classes of men throughout all time would deal with the word of God, as he describes it in the parable of the sower; nor could he have known in advance of experiment, that the seed of the kingdom would grow from its planting until the time for harvest, as described in the next parable; nor that, as declared in the third, the kingdom would ever attain to the prodigious growth which our eyes have witnessed. His divinity is attested by his unflinching foresight into the distant future.—*J. W. McGarvey*.

B. THE FIERCE DEMONIAK. 5:1-20.

TEXT 5:1-20

"And they came to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gerasenes. And when he was come out of the boat, straightway there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling in the tombs: and no man could any more bind him, no, not with a chain; because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been rent, asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: and no man had strength to tame him. And always, night and day, in the tombs and in the mountains, he was crying out, and cutting himself with stones. And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshipped him; and crying out with a loud voice, he saith, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God? I adjure thee by God, tor-

ment me not. For he said unto him, Come forth, thou unclean spirit, out of the man. And he asked him, What is thy name? And he saith unto him, My name is Legion; for we are many. And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. Now there was there on the mountain side a great herd of swine feeding. And they besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And he gave them leave. And the unclean spirits came out, and entered into the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep into the sea, in number about two thousand; and they were choked in the sea. And they that fed them fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they came to see what it was that had come to pass. And they come to Jesus, and behold him that was possessed with devils sitting, clothed and in his right mind, even him that had the legion: and they were afraid. And they that saw it declared unto them how it befell him that was possessed with devils, and concerning the swine. And they began to beseech him to depart from their borders. And as he was entering into the boat, he that had been possessed with devils besought him that he might be with him. And he suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go to thy house unto thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and how he had mercy on thee. And he went his way, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 5:1-20

211. Please locate on a map the "country of Gerasenes."
212. It would seem the demons would run from Jesus—not to Him—explain.
213. What is a demon? Why are they called "unclean."
214. State five facts about the demoniac?
215. What distinction is there in fetters and chains.
216. Was there more than one demon in the man? How many?
217. Why ask his name?
218. What torment did the demon expect from Jesus?
219. Why did not the demon wish to leave the country?
220. Why would demons wish to enter swine?
221. Wasn't it wrong to destroy the property of another?
222. Why ask Jesus to depart?
223. Why did the man who was healed wish to be with Jesus? Why did Jesus refuse?
224. Give two facts added by Matthew and Luke.

COMMENT

TIME—Autumn, A.D. 28. The morning after the stilling of the tempest on the Sea of Galilee, which followed the parables.

PLACE—The country of the Gadarenes, on the southeastern shores of the Sea of Galilee. It was in the country of the Gergesenes (so named from Gergesa, the modern Gersa, directly across the lake from Tiberias), which was a portion of the larger region of the Gadarenes (so named from their capital, Gadara, a large city seven or eight miles southwest of the southern point of the lake). The demoniac may have belonged to Gadara, but have met Jesus in the vicinity of Gergesa. Gadara was one of the ten confederated Gentile cities which, with the district in which they were located, were called Decapolis (The Ten Cities). Though they were located in Palestine, yet in the time of Christ they had a Gentile instead of Jewish population. Matthew speaks in the parallel passage of the Gergesenes. The Gadarenes and Gergesenes were simply two different names for the same people. Gadara and Gergesa were in the same district. Mark and Luke, in this account, speak of the Gadarenes, while Matthew calls the people the Gergesenes. This difference for a long time caused a difficulty to biblical students and caused rationalists to throw a doubt over the whole narrative. Gadara is three hours' journey south of the lake and it is not likely that the miracle was wrought there. The discovery of Gergesa, now called Gersa, on the eastern shore of the lake and on the borders of the district of Gadara, has made all plain. This discovery, made by Dr. Thompson (*Land and Book*, Vol. II, pp. 34, 35), reconciles every difficulty. Two of the writers, writing for Gentiles, mention Gadara, one of the best known Gentile cities of Palestine, in the territories of which it occurred, while Matthew, a tax-gatherer on the shores of the lake and familiar with every locality upon its borders, mentions the obscure village, right on the shores, where it took place. The modern Gersa, or Chersa, is within a few rods of the shore. A mountain rises immediately above it, so near the shore that the swine rushing madly down could not stop, but would be inevitably driven into the sea and drowned; the ruins of ancient tombs are still found on this mountain side, and Capernaum was in full view "over against it" (Luke 8:26) on the other side. See map of Sea of Galilee.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 8:28-33; Luke 8:26-39.

OUTLINE—1. The Gadarene Demoniac. 2. The Legion and the Swine. 3. Christ and the Gadarenes.

ANALYSIS

I. THE GADARENE DEMONIAIC. VS. 1-8.

1. The Lord Crosses to Gergesa. Mark 5:1; Matt. 8:30; Luke 8:26.
2. The Fierce Demoniacs. Mark 5:2-5; Matt. 8:30; Luke 8:27.
3. Runs and Appeals to Christ. Mark 5:6, 7; Matt. 8:29; Luke 8:28.

II. THE LEGION AND THE SWINE, VS. 9-13.

1. The Name Legion. Mark 5:9; Luke 8:30.
2. The Appeal of the Demons. Mark 5:10, 11; Matt. 8:31; Luke 8:32.
3. The Maddened Swine. Mark 5:13; Matt. 8:32; Luke 8:33.

III. CHRIST AND THE GADARENES, VS. 14-20.

1. The Gadarenes Hear and See. Mark 5:14-16; Matt. 8:33; Luke 8:35.
2. Desire Christ to Depart. Mark 5:17; Matt. 8:34; Luke 8:37.
3. A Home Missionary. Mark 5:20; Luke 8:39.

INTRODUCTION

After the discourse in parables, in the evening the Savior with his apostles embarked to the other side of the lake. On the way a great storm arose, which filled the disciples with terror, but was quieted at the voice of the Lord. Crossing over to the southeastern shore of the lake they disembarked in the country of the Gadarenes. On the voyage the Lord quelled the storm of winds and waves; across the sea he quelled a fiercer storm in a human soul. There is something very striking in the connection in which this miracle stands with that other which went immediately before. Our Lord has just shown himself as the pacifier of the tumults and the discords in the outward world. But there is something wilder and more fearful than the winds and the waves in their fiercest moods—even the spirit of man, when it has broken loose from all restraints, and yielded itself to be the organ, not of God, but of him who brings uttermost confusion wheresoever his dominion reaches. And Christ will do here a mightier work than that which he accomplished there: he will speak, and at his potent word this madder strife, this blinder rage, which is in the heart of man, will allay itself; and here also there shall be a great calm.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. THE GADARENE DEMONIC.—1. *In the country of the Gadarenes.* See remarks above on the PLACES. Gadara was a great city which gave name to all the people in the district, while Gergesa was a small village on the shores of the Sea of Galilee.

2. *There met him out of the tombs.* Matthew mentions two demoniacs, while Mark and Luke speak only of one, probably the fiercer of the two. When the Savior and his disciples landed, the demoniac, with his companion, starting from the tombs, which were their ordinary dwelling-place, rushed down to encounter the intruders that had dared to set foot

on their domain. Or it may have been that they were at once drawn to Christ by the secret instinctive feeling that he was their helper, and driven from him by the sense of the awful gulf that divided them from him, the Holy One of God. The tombs were caves formed by nature, or cut in the rocks, with cells at the sides for the reception of the dead. They were ceremonially unclean (Num. 19:11, 16; Matt. 23:27; Luke 11:44), and dwelling in them was of itself a sign of degradation. *With an unclean spirit*. A demon; called unclean because it produced uncleanness of body and of soul; the exact opposite of pure. It is not easy to answer the question, What was this demoniacal possession? But we may gather from the gospel narrative some important ingredients for our description. The demoniac was one whose being was strangely interpenetrated by one or more of those fallen spirits, who are constantly asserted in Scripture (under the name of demons, evil spirits, unclean spirits, their chief being the devil, or Satan) to be the enemies and tempters of the souls of men. He stood in a totally different position from the abandoned, wicked man, who morally is given over to the devil. This latter would be a subject for punishment, but the demoniac for deepest compassion. There appears to have been in him a double will and double consciousness—sometimes the cruel spirit thinking and speaking in him, sometimes his poor crushed self crying out to the Savior of men for mercy; a terrible advantage taken, and a personal realization, by the malignant powers of evil, of the fierce struggle between sense and conscience in the man of morally divided life. It has been not improbably supposed that some of these demoniacs may have arrived at their dreadful state through various progressive degrees of guilt and sensual abandonment. Lavish sin, and especially indulgence in sensual lusts, superinducing, as it would often, a weakness in the nervous system, which is the especial bond between body and soul, may have laid open these unhappy ones to the fearful incursions of the powers of darkness.—*Alford*. To the frequent inquiry, How comes it that similar possessions do not occur at the present day? it may be answered: (1) It cannot be proved that they do not sometimes occur even now. It cannot be said that in many cases of insanity, and in some cases of spiritualism, the malady may not be traced to the direct agency of demons. (2) But, admitting that such possessions are not common, yet there was a reason in our Savior's day for the external manifestation of Satan's power. The crisis of the moral history of the world was at hand. The devil was allowed to exercise unusual power in temptation on the souls and bodies of men, in order that Christ might meet him openly and manifest his power in his victory over him. When God was manifested in the flesh, then demons may have been permitted to manifest themselves specially among men.—*Clark*.

3. *Had his dwelling among the tombs.* This implies habitual residence, and long absence from the homes of the living. Evil or unclean spirits are generally represented as haunting waste, desolate places and tombs. The tombs are not infrequently used in Palestine by certain of the poorer classes as dwelling-places. Their character (caves cut in the rock) makes them a perfect shelter. *No man could bind him.* The better MSS. give, "no man could any longer bind him." The attempt had been so often made and baffled that it had been given up in despair.

4. *Bound with fetters and chains.* The case was probably one of long standing, and repeated efforts had been made to confine him (Luke 8:29). Fetters were for the feet, chains for any other part of the body.—*Schaff.* Luke says (8:29), that "oftentimes it (the unclean spirit) had caught him;" and, after mentioning how they had vainly tried to bind him with chains and fetters, because "he brake the bands," he adds, "and was driven of the devil (or demon) into the wilderness." The dark tyrant-power by which he was held clothed him with superhuman strength, and made him scorn restraint. Matthew (8:28) says he was "exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way." He was the terror of the whole locality.—*J. F. and B. Chains had been plucked asunder.* This is nowise incredible; for there are still some forms of mania in which the sufferer, notwithstanding the constant exhaustion of mind and body, gains a daily increase of muscular strength, and is able to break the strongest bonds and even chains.—*Kitto.*

5. *Night and day . . . in the tombs.* It is a sad story that is told of the unfortunate. He wandered about night and day in the solitudes, like a spectre, but crying aloud like a ravenous beast. *Cutting himself with stones.* There is sometimes a strong propensity in maniacs to wound and even maim themselves. V. Swieten says that he himself "saw a maniac who lacerated all the integuments of his body, and who, during the inclemency of a severe winter, lay naked on straw for weeks, in a place rough with stones."

6. *Ran and worshipped him.* Probably when he saw him land he ran from his lurking place among the tombs on the mountain side. There seems to be a kind of double life in the man; one his own, and the other the overpowering influence of the spirit that possessed him. *Olsbhausen* refers the act of going to Jesus, and bowing down before him, to the *man* in contradistinction to the *demon*. The man wanted help, and sought it in Jesus; and the will of the demon trying to overpower him made the terrible paroxysms of conflict. *Godet* says: "He felt himself at once attracted and repelled by Jesus; this led to a violent crisis in him, which revealed itself first of all in a cry. Then, like some ferocious beast submitting to the power of his subduer, he runs and kneels, pro-

testing all the time, in the name of the spirit of which he is still the organ, against the power which is exerted over him."

7. *Cried with a loud voice.* It was the man's voice that cried out, but it was the controlling spirit that dictated the words. He had not the control of his own organs, just as I have seen those under hypnotic influence who could not control their words or thoughts. It is no uncommon thing in our time for a person to be absolutely under the influence of another will. *What have I to do with thee?* What have we in common? Why interferest thou with us? Why wilt thou not let us alone? *Son of the most high God.* The spirits, who had possession of the poor man's body, wielded his organism of speech as if it were their own. These demons knew the Lord and confessed him. "The demons believe and tremble." *I adjure thee by God.* To adjure is to entreat solemnly, as if under oath, or the penalty of a curse. This is the language of the demon, not of the man; not a mere blasphemy, but a plausible argument. Nothing is more common than swearing by God, on the part of the ungodly, the infidel, and even the atheistic. *Torment me not.* In Matthew, "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" i.e.; we implore thee to deal with us as God himself does; not to precipitate our final doom, but to prolong the respite we now enjoy.—*Alexander.*

8. *Come out of the man.* Leave him; no more control him.

II. THE LEGION AND THE SWINE.—9. *What is thy name?* The Lord asks this question of the afflicted man. For what purpose? There is nothing so suitable as a calm and simple question to bring a madman to himself. There is no more natural way of awakening in a man who is beside himself the consciousness of his own personality than to make him tell his own name. A man's name becomes the expression of his character, and a summary of the history of his life. The first condition of any cure of this afflicted man was a return to the distinct feeling of his own personality. *And he answered.* The man was asked, but the demon answered, showing his entire mastery over him. *My name is Legion,* the unclean spirit answers. The Roman legion consisted of about six thousand. The word had come to signify any large number, with the ideas of order and subordination. It is about equivalent to *host*, and explained by the unclean spirit himself: *For we are many.* One chief, superior one, with inferior ones under him.

10. *He besought him . . . not send them out of the country.* "He" is used in the singular because the man speaks, but he speaks under the influence of the spirits, and pleads for them. The petition of the devils may be regarded as equivalent to, "Send us anywhere, anywhere but to perdition; send us to the most shattered man; send us to the lowest creature, into man or beast, bird or reptile, anywhere but to hell!" The

demons knew well that Christ had come to destroy the power of the devil, and had already (v. 7) implored, "Torment me not."

11. *There was there nigh unto the mountains.* The Revision says: "Now there was there on the mountain side a great herd of swine feeding." The mountain rises a short distance from the lake. *A great herd of swine feeding.* They were the property either of Gentiles, or of Jews engaged in a traffic which was unclean according to the Mosaic law.

12. *The devils besought him . . . Send us,* etc. How could there it is asked, be such a desire on the part of the demons? Why should there not? we would answer. The wish might, on their part, be a mere outburst of wantonness. Or there might be eagerness for anything on which to wreak their evil energy. They might be wishing, as *Richard Baxter* has it, "to play a small game, rather than none." Or there might be cunning malice in their intent—malice toward Christ and toward all the other parties concerned.—*Morison.* They aimed at this, that they might move the owners of the herd, and the rest of the people of the country, to be discontented at our Savior.—*Petter.*

13. *Forthwith Jesus gave them leave.* The fact is stated, but why he should have granted their request is in part conjecture. The following reasons have been suggested: (1) To show the disciples Christ's control over the movements of the spirits. (2) To test the Gergesenes. (3) To make the miracle more notorious, and thus to enhance the effect of the cured demoniac's preaching. (4) The owners, if Jews, drove an illegal trade; if heathens, they insulted the national religion; in either case the permission was just. *Ran violently down a steep place.* Not a cliff, but a steep beach. The declivity at the base of the mountain at Gersa is said to be almost perpendicular. "The bluff behind is so steep, and the shore so narrow, that a herd of swine, rushing frantically down, must certainly have been overwhelmed in the sea before they could recover themselves." *Tristram's Land of Israel. About two thousand.* Immense herds of swine were kept in many provinces of the Roman Empire specially for the provisionment of the Army. A heavy loss was certainly recognized by the people of the city.—*Cook.* Why should they have destroyed the herd of swine, and so deprived themselves, so to speak, of a terrestrial abode? Perhaps the act of the swine was the result of panic, and in spite of the evil spirits. It is the very nature of evil thus to outwit itself.

III. CHRIST AND THE GADARENES.—14. *They that fed the swine.* The herdsmen, fled affrighted, in consternation at the loss and the marvel, to the city, to Gergesa or Gadara.

15. *They come to Jesus.* Matthew says (8:34), "Behold, the whole

city came out to meet Jesus." Note the present *come*. The Evangelist begins to depict the scene as if he and we were present in the midst of it and looking on. *See him that was possessed*. "And (they) behold the demoniac sitting clothed and in sound mind." Note the word *behold*. It is more than *see*. They gaze upon the man. *Sitting and clothed*. There is a fine harmony between the statement that the demoniac was now *clothed*, and the statement in Luke that formerly he "ware no clothes" (8:27). The contrast of the man's former condition sets off to advantage the marvel of his present state. *They were afraid*. They felt in the presence of a power which inspired them with awe and alarm. It might, for aught that they could comprehend, be something weird or "uncanny." There was, moreover, the terror of a guilty conscience.

16. *And also concerning the swine*. A notable climax. The people who had witnessed the transaction tell the citizens what had been done for the demoniac and about the swine—their swine: that settled their minds. They cared far more for the swine, than for the man who had been healed. They would rather have swine than Christ.

17. *They began to pray him to depart*. Jesus had overcome the rage of the storm that met him when approaching their coast. He had cast out the legion of devils that opposed his entrance into their country. The only thing which could effectually turn away the Savior was the will of man. Christ appears never to have visited the country of the Gadarenes again. He does not abide where he is not wanted.

18. *Prayed . . . that he might be with him*. Was it that he feared, lest in the absence of his deliverer the powers of hell should regain their dominion over him, and only felt safe in immediate nearness to him? or merely that out of the depth of his gratitude he desired henceforth to be a follower of him to whom he owed this mighty benefit?—*Trench*.

19. *Jesus suffered him not*. To be a missionary for Christ, in the region where he was so well known and so long dreaded, was a far nobler calling than to follow him where nobody had ever heard of him, and where other trophies, not less illustrious, could be raised by the same power and grace. *Go home to thy friends*. The first act God requires of a convert is, "Be fruitful." The good man's goodness lies not hidden in himself alone: he is still strengthening his weaker brother. All are not called on to be foreign missionaries. The Lord called upon this man to become a home missionary.

20. *In Decapolis* (ten cities). The region (of ten cities east of the Jordan) of which this immediate district formed a part. The healed man became a preacher, not only where Christ had been rejected, but where he had not gone. His message was his own experience. How much his

preaching effected history does not record, but we know that near forty years later this district of Decapolis became the refuge of the church of Jerusalem when that city was destroyed.

FACT QUESTIONS 5:1-20

237. "Gadara was a great ——— . . . while Gergesa was a small ——— on the shores of the Sea of Galilee."
238. Was there only one demoniac? Explain the reference in Matthew to two.
239. Why dwell in the tombs?
240. Why call a demon an "unclean spirit"?
241. In what sense did a demon possessed man stand in totally different position from the abandoned, wicked man, who morally is given over to the devil?
242. How have some imagined that men became demon possessed?
243. Give two answers to the question, "do we have demon possession today"?
244. What had been done to bind this wild one?
245. Isn't it incredible that this one would have such superhuman strength?
246. Why did he cut himself?
247. Show how the man was both attracted and repelled by Jesus.
248. What is meant by "I adjure thee by God"?
249. Why ask the man his name?
250. What is meant by the name "Legion"?
251. What is the thought of "send us not out of the country"?
252. Why ask to go into the swine?
253. Show three possible answers as to why Jesus gave permission for the demons to enter the swine.
254. Show how the traffic in swine was wrong i.e. the raising and selling swine was wrong for both Gentiles and Jews.
255. Just where did they enter the Sea?
256. What caused the whole city to come out to see Jesus?
257. What was the response of the crowd when they saw the former demon possessed man?
258. What is the only thing that can effectually turn the Savior away?
259. What was the "far nobler calling" of the man who was healed?
260. Where and what was Decapolis?

4. THE RAISING OF JAIRUS' DAUGHTER 5:21-43.

a. The urgent request of Jairus. 5:21-24

TEXT 5:21-24

"And when Jesus had crossed over again in the boat unto the other side, a great multitude was gathered unto him: and he was by the sea. And there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and seeing him, he falleth at his feet, and beseecheth him much, saying, My little daughter is at the point of death: I pray thee, that thou come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be made whole, and live. And he went with him; and a great multitude followed him, and they thronged him."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 5:21-24

225. Where did the boat land in which Jesus crossed the Sea? Who was there to meet Him?
226. What is meant by the expression "rulers of the synagogue."
227. Show the humility and sincerity of Jairus.
228. Why call his daughter "My little daughter"?
229. Why was the multitude so interested?

COMMENT

TIME—Autumn, A.D. 28. Probably in the afternoon of the same day He healed the demoniac.

PLACE—Capernaum—at the house of Matthew.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 9:18, 19; Luke 8:40-42.

OUTLINE—1. Jesus comes back to Capernaum, vs. 21. 2. Jairus—his need—his request, vs. 22, 23. 3. Jesus goes with him, vs. 24.

ANALYSIS

Since this is but the beginning of the incident we will offer an analysis in the later section.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

"21. The miracle on the eastern side of the lake took place in the early morning, and later in the day Jesus and his company were back on the western side, but not in the town of Capernaum. *He was nigh unto the sea*, and there the crowd gathered to him, having been waiting (Luke) for his return. Possibly the change in his mode of teaching and the introduction of parables had for the time quickened the popular curiosity.

22-24. *One of the rulers of the synagogue*. Presumably the synagogue in Capernaum, though nothing positively determines the place.—The name

Jairus is the Greek form of the Hebrew "Jair;" it is the name of one who was a great man at the conquest of Canaan (Deut. 3:14), and later of one of the Judges of Israel (Judges 10:3-5). Of *Jairus* nothing is known except what is recorded here. If, as is probably the case, he was a ruler of the synagogue in Capernaum, he would naturally be one of those who were sent by the centurion who had "built a synagogue" to intercede for him when his servant was sick (Luke 7:3). In that case he would be no stranger to the healing power of Jesus, and his confidence would be fully explained.—His eagerness appears in his falling down at Jesus' feet and his entreating him *greatly*, "much"—i.e. earnestly and persistently.—*My little daughter lieth at the point of death.* The phrase *eschatos echei*, paraphrased *at the point of death*, is late Greek, and is said to have been condemned by the grammarians as bad Greek. Luke says that "he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying," not "lay a dying." Thus Mark and Luke agree perfectly in their statement; but, in Matthew, *Jairus* says, "My daughter just now died." The Greek verb is in the aorist, and "is even now dead" is not a good translation of it: that she has died already is distinctly affirmed. But the discrepancy is much less than one might think. Matthew tells the story compendiously; he omits all reference to the subsequent message from the house, in which the tidings of her death are brought; and he groups the two communications in one, making *Jairus* tell the whole in a single sentence. He gathers into this first request all the information about the case that was brought to Jesus before he reached the house. In Luke the request is only that he will come to the house; in Mark and Matthew the request is added that he will lay his hands upon her, with the full expression of confidence that that will be the means of restoration—according to the story as it is in Mark, of restoration from the verge of death; according to Matthew, of restoration from death itself. A beautiful example of confident resorting to the grace and power of the Saviour. It was not in vain; no refusal awaited such an appeal. The request was brought to the lake-shore, where Jesus arrived in the boat. What he was doing we are not told; perhaps he had not had time to begin; or *Jairus* may even have been among those who were "waiting for him" when he came.—The crowd heard the request, and *followed*, as *Jesus went with him*, up from the lakeside into the town. He let them follow for a part of the way, not turning them back until his own time had come. He was not helpless in the matter; he did escape from the crowd when he was ready to insist upon it. Both in Mark and in Luke the words that describe the pressure of the throng are very strong words; in Luke, "crowd to suffocation" well represents it. Not much rest for our Saviour after the overpowering weariness of the previous evening—only the sleep on the boat. The healing and the repulse

across the lake, a crowd waiting for him on his return, and now a call to go and give life to a dying child! But his compassion never failed, and he never considered himself. We have no reason to imagine that any consideration of himself ever held him back from a deed of love. He was the one perfectly unselfish Being, never false to this divine character. God is the unselfish One, and Christ is the manifestation of God." (*W. N. Clarke*).

FACT QUESTIONS 5:21-24

261. Are we to understand that Jesus came back on the same day He delivered the two demoniacs? Did He use the same boat?
262. Please read Matt. 9:18, 19 and get the connection of the feast of Matthew. Just when did Jairus come to Jesus?
263. Why did Jairus fall at Jesus feet? There could have been at least two reasons; discover them.
264. Why ask Jesus to place His hands upon the girl?
265. If she was "made whole" wouldn't she live? Why the two expressions?
266. Why mention the press of the crowd?

b. THE TIMID WOMAN'S TOUCH 5:25-34

TEXT 5:25-34

"And a woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, having heard the things concerning Jesus, came in the crowd behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I touch but his garments, I shall be made whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her plague. And straightway Jesus, perceiving in himself that the power proceeding from him had gone forth, turned him about in the crowd, and said, Who touched my garments? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what had been done to her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 5:25-34

230. What is "an issue of blood"?
231. Why mention the fact she had suffered from the physicians?
232. What had it cost this woman to find out she could not be helped?

233. What had she heard about Jesus?
234. Show the determination and faith of this woman.
235. What was it that healed the woman?
236. How can we explain the perception of Jesus in this case?—; was this true everytime He healed someone?
237. Did Jesus know who touched Him before He asked the question?
238. Hadn't others touched Him?; why no effect?
239. Did Jesus see the woman when He looked about the crowd?
240. Why did the woman make the confession she did?
241. Why refer to the woman as "daughter"?
242. How is the word "whole" or "saved" used in this connection?

COMMENT

TIME—Autumn, A. D. 28. Probably in the afternoon of the same day that Christ healed the demoniac of Gadara, or on a day or two after.

PLACE.—Capernaum. At the house of Matthew; on the way to the house of Jairus; at the house of Jairus—all within or near the city. A comparison of the three accounts makes it probable that the Lord was at the house of Matthew, at a feast, when Jairus sent for him to save the life of his daughter, and that the woman was healed while he was on the way.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Matt. 9:18-26; Luke 8:41-56. See also Matt. 9:10-17, for intervening incidents.

OUTLINE.—1. The Woman's Faith. 2. The Woman Healed. 3. The Woman's Confession.

ANALYSIS

I. THE WOMAN'S FAITH. VS. 25-28.

1. The Suffering Woman. Mark 5:25, 26; Matt. 9:20; Luke 8:43.
2. She Touches Christ. Mark 5:27; Matt. 9:20; Luke 8:44.
3. Moved by Faith. Mark 5:28; Matt. 9:21.

II. THE WOMAN HEALED. VS. 29-31.

1. Saved by Faith. Mark 5:29; Matt. 9:22; Luke 8:44.
2. The Secret Made Manifest. Mark 5:30; Luke 8:46.

III. THE WOMAN'S CONFESSION. VS. 32-34.

1. The Woman at the Feet of Christ. Mark 5:33; Luke 8:47.
2. The Sympathy of Christ. Mark 5:34; Matt. 9:22; Luke 8:48.

INTERVENING HISTORY.—Having been besought by the Gadarenes to leave their country, Christ passes over the lake again to the western side, to Capernaum, where he was immediately surrounded by the multitude, who had been waiting for him. Being invited by Matthew to a

feast at his house, he there held conversation with some Pharisees, and afterwards with some disciples of John (Matt. 9:10-17). While yet speaking with them, Jairus, a ruler of the Capernaum synagogue, came to him, praying him to heal his daughter. While on his way the woman with the issue of blood, timidly pressed through the throng, touched him and was healed.

INTRODUCTION

The following from Farrar's *Life of Christ* gives a bird's eye view of the whole incident and its meaning. Among the throng there was one who had not been attracted by curiosity to witness what would be done for the ruler of the synagogue. It was a woman who had suffered for twelve years from a distressing malady, which unfitted her for all of the relationships of life, and which was peculiarly afflicting, because, in the popular mind it was the direct result of sinful habits. In vain had she wasted her substance, and done fresh injury to her health in the direct effort to procure relief from many different physicians, and now, as a last desperate resource, she would try what could be gained without money and without price from the great Physician. Perhaps, in her ignorance, it was because she no longer had any reward to offer; perhaps because she was ashamed in her feminine modesty to reveal the malady from which she was suffering; but from whatever cause, she determined, as it were, to steal from him, unknown, the blessing for which she longed. And so, with the strength and pertinacity of despair, she struggled in that dense throng until she was near enough to touch him; and then, perhaps all the more violently from her extreme nervousness, she grasped the white fringe of his robe. It was probably the tassel that she touched, and then feeling instantly that she had gained her desire and was healed, she shrank back unnoticed into the throng. Unnoticed by others but not Christ, who stopped and asked, "Who touched me? * * * She perceiving that she erred in trying to filch a blessing that would have been graciously bestowed, came forward fearing and trembling, and, flinging herself at his feet, told him all the truth. All her feminine shame and fear were forgotten in her desire to atone for her fault. Doubtless she dreaded his anger, for the law expressly ordained that the touch of one afflicted as she was, caused ceremonial uncleanness until the evening. But his touch had cleansed her, not hers polluted him.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. THE WOMAN'S FAITH.—25. *And a certain woman.* Like many of the New Testament characters this woman appears once and then disappears to be seen no more. Tradition has been busy weaving a fiction to supply the lack of facts. *Eusebius* records a tradition that she was a Gen-

tile, a resident of Cesarea Philippi (or Banias). It is reported that she caused to be erected in front of her residence a bronze monument in commemoration of her cure. It consisted of two statues, one representing herself in the attitude of supplication; the other, her Deliverer. Elsewhere she appears under the name Veronica, who, in the presence of Pilate, proclaimed the innocence of Jesus, and on the way to Golgotha wiped his face with her handkerchief. Dismissing these fables the suggestion of *Dr. W. Thompson* is more to the point: "I think the circumstances of the New Testament narrative render the inference almost certain that this account was meant for the consolation of those multitudes of stricken women in all ages who seem to be afflicted with sorrows in very unequal measure, compared with the stronger, and so generally, also, the more depraved sex." *An issue of blood*. A hemorrhage either from the bowels or the womb, probably the latter. The precise nature of the malady is of no importance. Instead of dwelling upon this point the evangelists direct attention to its long continuance and hopeless state. Perhaps the reason she turned to Jesus was that she had spent all and had nothing left to tempt the cupidity of the quack doctors. Had they not secured all she had, they would still have some way to excite her hopes. It is when our earthly resources are at an end, and human helps are powerless, that we are ready to go to the great Physician with the ailments of the soul. How sad her condition! Impoverished, sick, growing worse, helpless!

27. *When she had heard of Jesus*. She had never met him, did not it is probable live at Capernaum, but she had heard of the wonderful teacher, and of his divine power over disease. She had, it would appear, made herself acquainted with his character and conduct, with the facts of his career, and had thence come to believe that he was full of a divine and gracious energy. *Came in the press behind and touched his garment* (Matthew and Luke give it, "hem or border of his garment"); or rather, "approaching from behind, touched the tassel of his outer robe." The word which we translate by "the hem of the garment" denotes one of the four tassels or tufts of woollen cord attached to the four corners of the outer robe. The ordinary outer Jewish garment was a square or oblong piece of cloth (worn something like an Indian blanket, or with a hole in the center for the neck) with tassels at each corner, and a fringe along the two edges. A conspicuous deep blue thread was required to be in the tassels (Num. 15:38-40. Deut. 22:12). One of the four tassels hung over the shoulder at the back, and this was the one which the woman touched.

28. *For she said*. Matthew says, "within herself;" but it is possible that she may have murmured it again and again as she tried to get through the crowd.—*Schaff*. *If I may touch but his clothes*. She was timid, not doubtful. It is implied that she wished only to touch some part of his clothes,

no matter which. She may have looked for some magical influence, but twelve years in the hands of physicians in those days would certainly excuse such a thought. *If I but touch his clothes.* This woman's faith was real, notwithstanding many errors. *Trench* says; it would appear as though she imagined a certain magical influence and virtue diffused through his person and round about him, with which if she could put herself in relation, she would obtain that which she desired. And it is probable that she touched the hem of his garment, not merely as the extremest part most easily reached, but attributing to it a peculiar virtue. "The error of her view was overborne, and her weakness of apprehension of truth covered, by the strength of her faith. And this is a most encouraging miracle for us to recollect when we are disposed to think despondingly of the ignorance or superstition of much of the Christian world: that He who accepted this woman for her faith, even in error and weakness, may accept them.—*Alford.*

II. THE WOMAN HEALED.—29. *She felt in her body that she was healed.* Literally, "knew (i.e., by feeling) in the body." The first clause tells of the cessation of the ordinary symptom of her disease: this points to a new sense of health. The cure was effected by an exercise of Jesus' will, which responds to the woman's faith in his miraculous power, not through the mere touching of the garment. The result was instantaneous and complete. Sharing the superstition, and imagining that Christ healed by a sort of magic, this woman touched it in hope of cure. An ordinary teacher would have rebuked her superstition; Christ used it to teach her better, but Christ, full of compassion, overlooking the errors of her ignorance, put forth his power and healed her. She had faith, even if not intelligent and clear. She believed that she was to *receive* something, a real blessing from Christ. This was that in her which was not in the crowd around her. They all traveled on in the highway together, talked about Christ, were interested in him in various ways, discussed his origin and nature, hoped that some good would come of him to the nation. But the woman believed that she should personally receive new life from him.

30. *Knowing . . . that virtue (healing power) had gone out of him.* Within that nature there was the inherent power to cure diseases, and a knowledge of all that was going on. He permitted power to go forth for the healing of the woman when her faith was properly exercised.—*George W. Clark.* His healing was an overflow, not an effort—a work so unconscious and so utterly passive that it seems like a miracle spilt over from the fullness of his divine life, rather than a miracle put forth.—*Gordon.* *Who touched my clothes?* Not because he was ignorant, for his searching glance showed to the woman that she was not hid from him (Luke 8:47), but to draw out her confession of her faith. For illustration

of similar questions, see Gen. 3:9; 4:9; 2 Kings 5:25; Luke: Luke 24:19. —*Abbott*. If she had been allowed to carry away her blessing in secret as she purposed, it would not have been at all the blessing to her, and to her whole after spiritual life, that it now was, when she was obliged by this repeated question of the Lord to own that she had come to seek, and had found health from him.—*Trench*. Christ demands that every soul that is healed should openly confess him. He will not permit that men claim him in secret who refuse to acknowledge him.

31. *And his disciples said*. "Peter and they that were with him" (Luke 8:45). It was much like Peter thus to speak, both for himself and as spokesman for the disciples. But Jesus affirmed that someone had touched him, implying a touch of intention and faith, and not a mere thoughtless and accidental pressing of the multitude.—*George W. Clark*.

III. THE WOMAN'S CONFESSION.—32. *He looked round to see her*. He required no one to point out the one who had pressed upon him the touch of faith, for it cannot be doubted that he was conscious all the time of what was in the woman's heart. His glance, therefore, at once singled her out in the crowd, and fell upon her with a searching glance that showed that all was known.

33. *But the woman fearing and trembling*. The timid woman felt that she had stolen a cure, was amazed at the sudden change wrought within her and knowing little of the tender compassion of Christ was filled with dread of the wonderful being who had wrought her cure. Perhaps, too, she expected to be rebuked for touching him without his permission; perhaps, also, the woman feared Christ's anger and his rebuke for polluting him by her touch; or, possibly, the indignation of others in the crowd, in which she had joined without in any way indicating her uncleanness. *Knowing what was done in her*. A sense of her cure brought her forward to testify to and for Christ. So, always, the sense of pardon and acceptance will lead the trembling believer to full confession and to an open testimony for Christ. It will embolden the timid to speak of the gospel, even before crowds. *Told him all the truth*. This, though it tried the modesty of the believing woman, was just what Christ wanted, her public testimony to the facts of her case—the disease with her abortive efforts at a cure, and the instantaneous and perfect relief which her touching the great Healer had brought her.

34. *And he said unto her, Daughter*. A term of affection, but, no doubt, as employed by our Savior, implying all that was spiritually distinctive in her character had been derived from himself. *Thy faith hath made thee whole*. Literally, *thy faith hath saved thee*. In the higher and in the lower sense, soul and body. Her faith, of course, had not been the efficient cause of her cure. Christ's power had been that. And behind his

power was his person, the real healer. But her faith was the condition on her part, that rendered it fitting on his part to put forth his curative efficiency. Hence it might be represented as having in a certain subordinate respect "made her whole."—*Morison*. The student should observe that hers was not a passive faith, but it led to action. A passive faith is a dead faith. The cure was effected by an exercise of Jesus' will, which responds to the woman's faith in his miraculous power, not through the mere touching of the garment. The result was instantaneous and complete.—*Meyer*.

FACT QUESTIONS 5:25-34

261. What social as well as physical difficulty did this woman suffer because of her illness?
262. Wasn't the woman rather superstitious in her approach to healing? Explain why, and why excusable.
263. What has tradition said about this woman—give three traditional facts.
264. How is she a grand example for us today?
265. Discuss the portion of the robe of Christ touched by the woman.
266. To whom had she said "If I may touch but His clothes . . ."? When?
267. Did Jesus accept the woman's error and weakness?—what did He accept?
268. How did the woman know she was healed—who told her? Was it complete, final and unchangeable? How does this compare with some present day healings?
269. Attempt an explanation of how Jesus could heal almost accidentally through someone else's desire and faith and yet be aware of it?
270. Who answered the question of Jesus?
271. What evidence do we have that Jesus knew what was in the heart of the woman even before she touched Him?
272. What filled the woman with fear and trembling?
273. Did Jesus want a public confession from this woman? Explain.
274. In what sense was the woman a daughter?
275. Please discuss the wonderful "wholeness" of this woman.

c. THE RAISING OF JAIRUS' DAUGHTER 5:35-43

TEXT 5:35-43

"While he yet spake, they come from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? But Jesus, not heeding the word spoken, saith unto the ruler of

the synagogue, Fear not, only believe. And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. And they come to the house of the ruler of the synagogue; and he beholdeth a tumult, and many weeping and wailing greatly. And when he was entered in, he saith unto them, Why make ye a tumult, and weep? the child is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But he, having put them all forth, taketh the father of the child and her mother and them that were with him, and goeth in where the child was. And taking the child by the hand, he saith unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise. And straightway the damsel rose up, and walked; for she was twelve years old. And they were amazed straightway with a great amazement. And he charged them much that no man should know this: and he commanded that something should be given her to eat."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 5:35-43

243. What was the attitude of Jairus while Jesus stopped to speak to the woman who touched?
244. In what tone of voice do you imagine the message of the death of the daughter was given?
245. In what sense did they feel they were troubling Jesus?
246. What was Jairus to believe? Cf. vs. 36.
247. Why send the crowd away?
248. On what other occasions did Peter, James & John accompany Jesus?
249. What was the point in the demonstration of grief?
250. Did Jesus know some would misunderstand his words about sleeping? Why mention it?
251. In what sense was the girl asleep?
252. Upon what was the laugh of scorn based?
253. Try to understand the feelings of the mother as Jesus spoke to the girl. What were they?
254. Why mention that she was twelve years old?
255. Why ask that she be fed?

COMMENT

TIME—Just a few minutes after the preceding incident of the timid woman.

PLACE—In the home of Jairus—probably in the city of Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 9:23-26; Luke 8:49-56.

OUTLINE—1. The Message of death, vs. 35, 36. 2. To the house of Jairus,

vs. 37, 38. 3. The place of death, vs. 39, 40. 4. The resurrection, vs. 41-43.

ANALYSIS

- I. THE MESSAGE OF DEATH, vs. 35, 36.
 1. Given while Jesus yet spoke to the woman.
 2. No need to try further, your daughter is dead.
 3. Jesus heard man but believed God—this He wanted Jairus to do.
- II. TO THE HOUSE OF JAIRUS, vs. 37, 38.
 1. Just Peter, James and John were to accompany Him.
 2. A great tumult of weeping.
- III. THE PLACE OF DEATH, vs. 39, 40.
 1. No need to weep—she sleeps.
 2. Scorn—all are asked to leave except the parents.
- IV. THE RESURRECTION, vs. 41-43.
 1. He taketh her by the hand and calls her by name.—“arise”
 2. She immediately arose from the dead.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

“35. *“While he yet spake, there came . . . why troublest thou the Master any further?”* Hitherto He had not shown His power over death, and so there may be an excuse for the message, but surely there might be some consolation in the words of such a Master! His presence need not be out of place in the house of mourning. There is a curtness and abruptness in this message which savors of unbelief.

36. *“As soon as Jesus heard (or not heeding) the word . . . Be not afraid, only believe.”* Jesus, perceiving the mischief which the message might work, at once put in a comforting and hope-inspiring word, “Be not afraid, only believe.”

Belief is in one sense the only thing needful, because it is the one condition on which we can receive salvation and grace from the Lord. But what does the Lord here mean by “only believe?” Only believe what? Why, evidently, that “I have power after death, that My might reaches beyond the grave.” If the man believed that his daughter was dead, and the Lord bid him “fear not,” it must mean “fear not, but that I will give her to you again.” If He added to this “fear not” the words “only believe,” it must mean, “Believe that I am life to the dead. You may not know how, but let not your faith in Me fail, and you shall see.”

If it be said that this was too much to require of this ruler, we can only answer that the Lord thought otherwise. The man had known of the healing of the centurion’s servant, and of the woman with the issue, most

probably also of the casting out of the devils out of the Gergesenes; and we know not how many more mighty works performed in Capernaum, and around the borders of the lake, and now he was asked to go one step further in the same road, i.e., to believe that death was not the termination of the Lord's power.

37. "*And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John,*" etc. The three who were to be witnesses of His Transfiguration, and of His agony.

38. "*And he cometh to the house . . . wept and wailed greatly.*" From the parallel words in St. Matthew, "Saw the minstrels and the people making a noise," there is no doubt that these were hired mourners, such as are described in Jeremiah 9:17, 18: "Consider ye, and call for the mourning women that they may come; and send for cunning women, that they may come, and let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters."

Dr. Thomson, in "*The Land and the Book*", says: "Every particular here alluded to is observed on funeral occasions at the present day. There are in every city and community women exceedingly cunning in this business. These are always sent for and kept in readiness. When a fresh company of sympathizers comes in, these women 'make haste' to take up a wailing, that the newly come may the more easily unite their tears with the mourners. They know the domestic history of every person, and immediately strike up an impromptu lamentation, in which they introduce the names of their relations who have recently died, touching some tender chord of every heart, and thus each weeps for his own dead."

39. "*And when he was come in, he saith . . . sleepeth.*" There can be little doubt but that the Saviour here employs the same way of speaking as when He says, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep;" and immediately afterwards He told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead." Some have said that the maiden had fallen into the death-like swoon which often precedes, and then passes into actual death; but those watching her must have been conscious that so far as the help of man was concerned, all was over, or they would not have sent the message to the ruler which they did.

40. "*And they laughed him to scorn.*" This ridicule would be stimulated by their interests, for their wages as mourners depended on the death having actually taken place.

"Them that were with him." Only Peter, James and John.

41, 42. "*And he took the damsel by the hand . . . Talitha cumi . . . astonishment.*" The very Syriac or Aramaic words which the Lord used

are here preserved by the Evangelist, doubtless from the recollection of St. Peter. The words properly translated are, "Girl, arise." *Quesnel's* remarks on this are well worth reproducing: "The sacred Humanity is, as it were, the hand and instrument of the Divinity, to which it is united in the person of the Word. It is from this Humanity that our life proceeds, because it was in this that Christ died and rose again, and completed His Sacrifice. He is man, since He takes the dead person by the hand; He is God since He commands her to live, and to arise, and is immediately obeyed."

43. "*And he charged them straitly . . . given her to eat.*" It is to be noticed that in the case of the Gergesene demoniac, after healing He bade him make known what God had done for Him, and He Himself compelled the woman, in the last miracle, to confess her healing before the crowd. How is it that here He forbids the parents to make it known? Very probably He foresees how in some cases the fame of some mighty deed might be an hindrance to, as in other cases it might forward His real work.

Or in each He might have had regard to the spiritual temperament of those whom He charged. *Canon Farrar* has a good remark: "If He added His customary warning, that they should not speak of what had happened, it was not evidently in the intention that the entire fact should remain unknown, for that would have been impossible, when all the circumstances had been witnessed by so many, but because those who had received from God's hand unbounded mercy are more likely to reverence that mercy with adoring gratitude, if it be kept like a hidden treasure in the inmost heart."

"*And commanded that something should be given her to eat.*" There must be some reason why this is specifically mentioned. It may have been to show the completeness of the recovery, in that one, a short time before so utterly prostrated and weak, should be able to take ordinary nourishment. It may be mentioned for a mystical significance, that those to whom God has given spiritual life, require spiritual food for its continuance." (M. F. Sadler) *FACT QUESTIONS* 5:35-43

276. Who do you suppose brought the news to Jairus of the death of his daughter?
277. Why ask the question, "Why dost thou trouble the teacher further"?
278. Please read Isa. 42:3 and show how it is fulfilled in the dealing of Jesus with Jairus.
279. Why send the crowd away?
280. Why take the three?

281. What do Matthew and Luke add to the description of the mourning?
282. Why did Jesus say the girl was only asleep?
283. Just what did Jesus say to the little girl?
284. How do we know for certainty the girl was dead?
285. Besides the physical restoration what was the purpose of this miracle? Was it accomplished?

SUMMARY

4:34—5:43

The argument of this section is the same as that of the corresponding section in Matthew. (See Matt. viii. 1-ix. 35.) It proves the divine power of Jesus by showing that he could control by a word the winds and the waves of the sea; could direct and compel the movements of demons; could by his touch remove incurable diseases; and could instantly raise the dead. In other words, it proves the sufficiency of his power to save to the uttermost all who come to him, by proving that all the dangers to which we are exposed, whether from the forces of the physical world, the malice of evil spirits, the power of disease, or the hand of death, may be averted at his command, and that they will be in behalf of all who put themselves under his protection.

A very marked distinction is observable between Mark's treatment of this argument, and that adopted by Matthew. The latter presents an array of ten miracles without much elaboration of any one of them; the former selects four out of the ten, and devotes almost as much space to these as Matthew does to the ten. The one writer depends more on the number of miracles reported, and the other on the character of those selected and on the minuteness with which they are described. Each mode of treatment has its advantages, and the wisdom of God is displayed in giving us both.
—*McGarvey*.

5. THE GREAT TEACHER AND THE TWELVE. 6:1-13

TEXT 6:1-13

"And he went out from thence; and he cometh into his own country; and his disciples follow him. And when the sabbath was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, Whence hath this man these things? and, What is the wisdom that is given unto this man, and what mean such mighty works wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended in him. And Jesus said unto them, A prophet is

not without honour, save in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages teaching. And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and he gave them authority over the unclean spirits; and he charged them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no bread, no wallet, no money in their purse; but to go shod with sandals: and, said he, put not on two coats. And he said unto them, Wheresoever ye enter into a house, there abide till ye depart thence. And whatsoever place shall not receive you, and they hear you not, as ye go forth thence, shake off the dust that is under your feet for a testimony unto them. And they went out, and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 6:1-13

256. "He went out from thence;"—from the house of Jairus or the city of Capernaum or the Lake of Galilee or what?
257. How shall we designate or name "His own country"?
258. Why enter the synagogue in Nazareth if He was once rejected? Cf. Luke 4:14-29.
259. Specify just what caused the astonishment of those who heard Jesus.
260. Was Jesus a carpenter or the son of a carpenter?
261. How many children did the mother of Jesus bear?
262. Show how unreasonable was the offence of those in Nazareth.
263. Why did Jesus quote the familiar proverb?
264. Why was Jesus unable to do any mighty works in Nazareth?
265. What caused Jesus to marvel? Why?
266. At what place did Jesus call His apostles and send them out?
267. Why send them out "two by two"?
268. Was the Holy Spirit involved in the authority exercised by the twelve? Prove your answer.
269. Why the instructions concerning the physical needs of the journey?
270. Why the instructions in vs. 10?
271. What was the message of the twelve?
272. Why anoint with oil?

COMMENT

TIME.—Autumn of A.D. 28, and early winter of A.D. 29. This second rejection of Christ at Nazareth (vs. 1-5) was soon after the healing of Jairus' daughter, autumn, A.D. 28. The sending out of the twelve followed very soon, and their labors extended through several weeks of the autumn of 28, and early winter of 29.

PLACES.—From Capernaum the Savior went to "his own country," to Nazareth, where he had been reared, not far from twenty miles to the southwest of Capernaum. Being there rejected a second time, he went into the villages "round about" in the vicinity of Nazareth, teaching. From one of these, what one is unknown, he sent the apostles out on their mission.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Jesus at Nazareth (vs. 1-5) with Matt. 13:54-58, and Luke 4:16-30. Sending out of the disciples (vs. 6-13) with Matt. 9:35-38; 10:1-42; 11:1; Luke 9:1-6.

LESSON OUTLINE.—1. Christ Rejected again at Nazareth. 2. The Apostles Sent Forth.

ANALYSIS

I. CHRIST REJECTED AGAIN AT NAZARETH. VS. 1-6.

1. Comes to Nazareth. Mark 6:1; Matt. 13:54; Luke 4:16.
2. Teaches on the Sabbath. Mark 6:2; Matt. 13:54; Luke 4:17.
3. The People Offended. Mark 6:3; Matt. 13:57; Luke 4:28.
4. A Prophet Not Honored at Home. Mark 6:4; Matt. 13:57; Luke 4:24.
5. Their Unbelief. Isa. 53:1; Mark 6:5,6; Matt. 13:58.

II. THE APOSTLES SENT FORTH. VS. 7-13.

1. The Twelve Called. Mark 3:14-19; Matt. 10:1-4; Luke 6:13-16.
2. The Twelve Sent Forth. Mark 6:7; Matt. 10:5-15; Luke 9:1-5.
3. The Twelve Charged. Mark 6:8-11; Matt. 10:5-15; Luke 9:1-5.
4. The Twelve on Their Mission. Mark 6:12, 13; Luke 9:6.

INTRODUCTION

After the healing of the woman, the Lord raised from the dead the daughter of Jairus, the account of which is given in Mark 5:35-43. Immediately after this, on his return home (Capernaum) from the house of Jairus, Christ heals two blind men and a dumb possessed, giving the Pharisees new occasion to say that he cast out devils, through Satan. Matthew alone (9:27-34) mentions these incidents. Jesus, then, accompanied

by his disciples, goes into Lower Galilee, again visiting Nazareth, where he is the second time rejected, the account given in Luke 4:14-29, being held to describe an earlier incident of the Lord's ministry. If that be correct, the Savior gave them a second opportunity to accept the gospel after his fame as a great Teacher had been established, and when they rejected him a second time he returned no more.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. CHRIST REJECTED AGAIN AT NAZARETH.—1. *And he went out from thence.* From Capernaum, where he made his home. *Came to his own country.* To Nazareth, the town where he had been reared from childhood and had lived until he was thirty years of age. Whether his mother still lived in Nazareth is a matter of conjecture. *Cook* says: "The works wrought in the interval (since his first rejection, nine months before, April, A.D. 28), the effects of his personal influence, the progress made in spite of all opposition, might be expected to work upon the minds of the Nazarenes so far as to prepare them for listening to him, notwithstanding their former rejection. Natural sympathy would draw him thither. His sisters, probably married to Nazarenes still dwelt there." *His disciples follow Him.* The twelve apostles are meant. They now constantly attended his footsteps. The presence of the Lord and his companions at Nazareth would, no doubt, produce a strong effect. His fame had extended over all Israel.

2. *When the sabbath day was come.* The seventh day of the week, Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, always observed by the Savior as a part of the Jewish law which remained in force until he died upon the cross. The language implies that one day or more elapsed between his arrival and his public teaching. It had been the practice of Jesus, from early childhood, to attend all the synagogue services; and he was still suffered to do so, in spite of the opposition he had excited. When Sabbath came, therefore, he went to morning worship. *He began to teach in the synagogue.* The synagogues of the Jews were the town and village churches, where they worshipped in their various quarters for ordinary occasions when they need not go up to Jerusalem. Most probably there would be only one in so small a place. But in all the Jewish synagogues there was a freedom of speech allowed; and there would be no objection, therefore, to one like Jesus, who had already achieved for himself a name as a remarkable rabbi, addressing the assembled congregation. *Many hearing, were astonished.* The usual effect upon those who heard the wonderful Teacher was produced. The sentiments which follow were probably expressed while he was teaching. A Jewish audience was not as decorous as the modern congregation in the United States or Great Britain. Some

uttered one thing and some another. *From whence hath this man these things?* The things, namely, that he was saying. The simple people marvelled at his facility and power of utterance, and at the weighty character of the thoughts that were conveyed by the utterances. *What wisdom is this?* They admitted the existence of great intellectual and rhetorical superiority; but they stood in doubt in reference to the origin of such superiority; was it from above, or from beneath? *Such mighty works.* As the evangelist notes in verse 5, that no mighty work had been done in Nazareth, these must refer to what had been reported there. They do not venture to deny his wisdom or his miracles, but, by wondering at them, really bear witness to them. This admission left them inexcusable, both intellectually and morally, for not receiving Jesus as the true Messiah.

3. *Is not this the carpenter?* This, and the Jewish custom which required every father to teach his son a trade, whatever pursuit in life he might eventually follow, indicate that Christ worked in his earlier years at the carpenter's trade with his father. St. Mark's is the only gospel which gives this name as applied to our Lord himself. In Matt. 13:55, it is said that they called him the "carpenter's son." There is no contradiction; some called him one, some the other name. The word translated *carpenter* here is of wider meaning than our word "carpenter." It includes all workers in wood, our cabinet-maker as well as carpenter. *Son of Mary.* Though neither of the evangelists speak of Joseph's death, yet it may be plainly inferred that Christ was now called "the son of Mary" (Mark 6:3), because of her being a widow. See Luke 8:19; John 2:12, and 19:25-27. *Brother of James, etc., . . . sisters here with us.* These four were either (1) own brothers and sisters of Jesus, children of Joseph and Mary; or (2) children of Joseph by a former marriage; or, (3) cousins (brothers taken in the wider sense of near *relatives*), children of Clopas and Mary, sister of Mary the mother of Jesus (John 19:25, with Mark 15:40). The weight of Protestant authority, on the whole, favors the idea that they were own brothers of Jesus. For a discussion of this subject, see my *Commentary on John*, pp. 48, 49. Of the four brethren here named, James came to have authority hardly, if any, less than that of an apostle, as the leading figure in the church at Jerusalem. He was called by early writers "James the Just," and wrote the Epistle of James. He must not be confounded with the apostle James, who was the brother of John. Of Joses and Simon nothing more is known. Judas was probably the author of the Epistle of Jude. *They were offended.* That is, they stumbled, and fell into error. That Jesus was a carpenter, had grown up in their midst, and that they knew all about his family, proved to them that he could not be the Messiah, whom they expected to be a temporal prince surrounded with earthly splendor. His pure life for thirty years in their

midst, his surpassing wisdom and mighty works counted nothing with them.

4. *A prophet is not without honor.* This was a common proverb that Christ applied to his case, showing that he was rejected on these natural principles, not because they had not evidence in his works, but because they had prejudice against his lowly origin among men. The proverb is founded on human experience. There is a kind of natural jealousy among the companions and neighbors of a man who rises from their level until he is far above them.

5. *And he could there do no mighty work.* His power was not changed. His miracles were not feats of magic, but required two conditions to call them forth—an opportunity, and a sufficient moral purpose. "Unbelief" prevented both. The unbelieving would not come for healing; to heal such would be contrary to his purpose in the miracles, the demonstration of his spiritual power. Hence he "could not." When men do not believe, they do not give him the opportunity to save them, and to save the unbelieving is contrary to his purpose, and impossible.—*Schaff.* He "could not," not from a lack of power, but because the conditions that he always required before he would exercise his power were absent. Those who expect his blessing must come for it in faith.

6. *He marvelled.* Our Lord does not marvel at other human things generally; but he does marvel, on the one hand, at faith, when, as in the case of the centurion, it overcomes in its grandeur all human hindrances, and, on the other, all unbelief, when it can, in the face of numerous divine manifestations, harden itself into a willful rejection on himself. See Matt. 8:10. *And he went.* He now seems to have left Nazareth, never to return to it, or preach in its synagogue, or revisit the home where he had so long toiled as the village carpenter. *Went round about the villages.* On the evening of the day of his rejection at Nazareth, or more probably on the morrow, our Lord appears to have commenced a short circuit in Galilee, in the direction of Capernaum.

II. THE APOSTLES SENT FORTH.—7. *And he called unto him the twelve.* The apostles. After long wanderings and continuous trials, the twelve were now, in their Master's opinion, in a measure prepared to work by themselves in spreading the new kingdom. Matthew gives a touching reason for the mission of the twelve. It was because he pitied the multitude, who were like harassed panting sheep without a shepherd, and like a harvest left unreaped for want of laborers (Matt. 9:36-38). Another reason was that the Master wished to train them for their great work under his direction. *Two by two.* They were sent out in pairs that they might counsel, help and encourage one another, an example that might still be followed with profit. *Gave them power over unclean spirits.* Their

work was to cast out unclean spirits in the world and the divine authority was given to cast them out of the men who were possessed of demons. This power was needful that they might be able to demonstrate that they were the Lord's messengers.

8. *Commanded them.* There follows now the charge that he gave them. Matt. 10:5-42, gives this charge at much greater length, *Nothing for their journey.* Make no preparation, such as is ordinarily made on the eve of a journey; set out just as you are. God will provide for all your wants. The open hospitality of the East, so often used as the basis for dissemination of new thoughts, would be ample for their maintenance. *A staff only.* A walkingstick as used in journeys upon foot to support and ease the traveler. Matthew (10:10) gives "neither staves;" i.e., they were to take one only. *Scrip.* A "wallet" or "small bag" (compare 1 Sam. 17:40). It was so called, perhaps, because it was designed to hold scraps, trifling articles, scraped off, as it were, from something larger. It was part of the pilgrim's or traveler's equipage. *Money.* Literally, brass, or rather copper, said to be the first ore that was wrought. Copper having been early used for money, the word has sometimes that meaning.

9. *Be shod with sandals.* Such as they had on at the time, without waiting for shoes especially adapted for the journey. In Matthew, they are directed not to wear *shoes*; here, to be shod with sandals. The shoe of the ancients resembled the modern shoe; the sandal was simply a sole of leather, felt, cloth, or wood, bound upon the feet by thongs. *Not put on two coats.* Literally, tunics. The tunic (Greek) was the inner garment, worn next the skin, usually with sleeves, and reaching to the knees. It answered rather to our shirt than to our coat. The entire outfit shows that they were plain men, to whom there was no extraordinary self-denial in the matter or the mode of their mission. They were going to their brethren (Matt. 10:5), and the best way was to throw themselves on their hospitality. They were accustomed to live in about this way.

10. *In what place soever ye enter into a house.* On their arrival at a city, they were to settle down in the first house to which they obtained access, which, however, was not to exclude prudence and well ascertained information (Matthew); and, once settled in a house, they were to keep to it, and try to make it the center of a divine work in that place. This injunction was meant to exclude fastidious and restless changes.

11. *Shake off the dust . . . testimony against them.* By this symbolical action they vividly shook themselves from all connection with such, and all responsibility for the guilt of rejecting them and their message. Such symbolical actions were common in ancient times, even among others than the Jews. *More tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah.* See Gen. 13:13; chaps. 18, 19. The cities that stood out in the history of the world, as

most conspicuous for their infamy, were yet less guilty (as sinning less against light and knowledge) than those who rejected the messengers of the King.

12. *They went out, and preached that men should repent.* This is one-half of the brief, unambitious narrative of the first apostolic tour of the apostles. Going out from the Lord's presence, or the place where he delivered these instructions, they proceeded to fulfill them, not at random or confusedly, but on a systematic method, going about or through the country and among the villages, or from town to town. *Men should repent.* The same message which had been already brought by John the Baptist and by Christ himself. The time had come for preaching the cross of Christ.

13. *They cast out many devils.* In this verse we have the other half of the evangelist's report of the first apostolic tour. *Anointed with oil.* To suppose that the oil was used medicinally, is contrary to the whole tenor of the narratives. It was "the vehicle of healing power committed to them" an external sign such as our Lord sometimes used to connect himself and the person cured. It was probably also a symbol of anointing by the Holy Spirit.—*Schaff.* The Jews were in the habit of anointing their faces and hair with oil every day when they went among their fellows. This was omitted when sick or fasting. The apostles anointed a sick man when about to heal him with a word and send him forth. It meant that the patient was able to go out among his fellow-men.

FACT QUESTIONS 6:1-13

286. How far from Capernaum to Nazareth?
287. What other incidents occur after the raising of the daughter of Jairus *before* he arrives at Nazareth? (Cf. Matt. 9:27-34)
288. What of the mother of Jesus—where was she living?—where were his sisters? Were they married?
289. Was Jesus keeping the law by worshipping in the synagogue?
290. How did those of Nazareth express their astonishment?
291. If Jesus did no mighty works in Nazareth which mighty works are meant in vs. 2?
292. What Jewish custom was observed in the fact that Jesus was a carpenter?
293. What is inferred in the expression "Son of Mary"?
294. Give the three opinions as to who were the four of vs. 3.
295. Why is a prophet without honor in his own country?—Please do not give a superficial answer—relate this to our blessed Lord and answer accordingly.
296. What were the two conditions upon which Jesus could perform His mighty works?
297. What are the two things that cause our Lord to marvel?

298. What was the reason for the mission of the twelve? Cf. Matt. 9:36-38.
299. What was the purpose of the mission?
300. Read Matt. 10:10 and Mark 6:8 and explain the apparent contradiction.
301. What was a "scrip"? What kind of "money"? Why "sandals"? What is meant by "two coats"?
302. In what way did Jesus prevent fastidiousness and restless change?
303. Why shake the dust from their feet?
304. Please explain the purpose in anointing with oil.

6. THE DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST 6:14-29

TEXT 6:14-29

"And king Herod heard thereof; for his name had become known; and he said, John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore do these powers work in him. But others said, It is Elijah. And others said, It is a prophet, even as one of the prophets. But Herod, when he heard thereof, said, John, whom I beheaded, he is risen. For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. For John said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. And Herodias set herself against him, and desired to kill him; and she could not; for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous man and a holy, and kept him safe. And when he heard him, he was much perplexed; and he heard him gladly. And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, and the high captains, and the chief men of Galilee; and when the daughter of Herodias herself came in and danced, she pleased Herod and them that sat at meat with him; and the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went out, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou forthwith give me in a charger the head of John the Baptist. And the king was exceeding sorry; but for the sake of his oaths, and of them that sat at meat, he would not reject her. And straightway the king sent forth a soldier of his guard, and commanded to bring his head: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel; and the damsel gave it to her mother. And when his disciples heard thereof, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 6:14-29

273. Just who was this Herod? i.e. who was his father?—brother?—wife? etc.
274. Why did Herod associate the words of Jesus with John the Baptist?
275. Was Jesus like Elijah or one of the Old Testament prophets? In what way?
276. Why did Herod want to see Jesus?
277. Who was Herod Philip? Who was Herodias?
278. If Herod's sin was so plainly and publicly condemned by John why did Herod want to see him and hear him?
279. Was the fear of the popularity of John a factor in Herod's respect for John? Cf. Matt. 14:5.
280. Who attended the birthday banquet?
281. Why make such a rash offer?—was the dance professional?
282. Was Herodias behind the dance and its purpose? Why?
283. Why the urgency in the request for the head of John?
284. Who beheaded John?
285. Where did this incident take place?
286. What do you imagine Salome and Herodias did with the head after it was brought to them?

COMMENT

TIME—Winter of A.D. 29.

PLACES—At Herod's Palace and capital, *Tiberias* on the Lake of Galilee—*or at Machaerus* the palace-fortress east of the Dead Sea.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 14:1-12.

OUTLINE—1. The fear of Herod and of others, vs. 14-16. 2. The imprisonment and its reason, vs. 17-18. 3. The hatred of Herodias, vs. 19-20. 4. The dance and the death, vs. 21-29.

ANALYSIS

- I. THE FEAR OF HEROD AND OF OTHERS, 14-16.
 1. Fear based on what he heard of the miracles of Jesus.
 2. His conscience said, "this is John risen from the dead."
 3. Others said—"this is Elijah, or a prophet like the prophets of our fathers."
- II. THE IMPRISONMENT AND ITS REASON, 17-18.
 1. John in prison because of the hatred of Herodias.
 2. John had rebuked Herod for his marriage to his brother's wife.
- III. THE HATRED OF HERODIAS, 19-20.
 1. A continual desire to kill in the heart of Herodias.
 2. Prevented by the respect of her husband for John.
- IV. THE DANCE AND THE DEATH, 21-29.
 1. The time of the dance—a birthday supper.

2. The reward of the dance—promised by an oath.
3. The mother of death.
4. A sad departure.
5. The trophy of lust and hate.

EXPLANATORY NOTES 6:14-29

"14. King Herod: "King" by courtesy only, since Herod was but a Tetrarch, that is, a governor of the fourth part of a kingdom or province. Jesus warned His disciples to beware of Herod, saying: "*Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the leaven of Herod*" (8:15).

beard: of the fame of Jesus, which the Apostles by their miracles and preaching had helped to spread.

John the Baptist is risen again from the dead. He must have suffered martyrdom during or after the Apostles' first mission, and before the fourth Passover after our Lord's baptism.

is risen again. Evidently Herod was no Sadducee, who said *there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit* (Acts 23:8), or his guilty conscience and superstitious fears had obscured his religious belief.

mighty works: miracles. John the Baptist had worked no miracles during his lifetime. *And many resorted to him, and they said: John indeed did no sign* (John 10:41). Herod seems to have imagined that John the Baptist having risen would necessarily do *mighty works*.

14, 15. In these verses three opinions are given concerning our Lord. He is John the Baptist risen from the dead, or Elijah or another prophet.

It is Elijah. According to the prophecy, *Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord* (Mal. 4:5). Elijah had not died, but had been taken up to heaven while conversing with Elisha. *And as they went on, walking and talking together, behold a fiery chariot, and fiery horses parted them both asunder: and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven* (2 Kings 2:11). There was therefore an expectation among the Jews that Elijah should return to earth as the forerunner of the Messiah. Moses had said, a Prophet should be raised up by God (Deut. 18:15), but this refers to Christ Himself.

16. *John whom I beheaded*. Herod fears to meet his victim again.

17. *Herod . . . had apprehended John*; etc. Mark here refers to a preceding event. Herod had had John the Baptist bound and then imprisoned him, probably in Machaerus (*the Black Fortress*), which Herod the Great had built, and which was situated east of the Dead Sea.

This castle had been in the possession of Aretas, father-in-law to Herod Antipas, and Emir of Arabia Petraea. Probably Herod had seized this castle when his lawful wife, hearing of his approaching marriage with

Herodias, had fled to her father at Petra. Machaerus was both a palace and a prison. At this period Herod was probably living there with an armed retinue, on account of the war with Aretas in which he was engaged. Herod lost the day, and the Jews considered this defeat a punishment for the beheading of John the Baptist.

for the sake of Herodias. Herod's sister-in-law and niece.

he had married her. This was unlawful for four reasons:

- (1) Herodias' first husband, Herod Philip I. (not the Tetrarch) was still living.
- (2) The daughter of Aretas, Herod's wife was also alive.
- (3) Herodias was niece to Herod, being the daughter of Aristobulus, his eldest half-brother.
- (4) Herod Antipas was a convert to Judaism, and hence bound to observe the Jewish law. This distinctly forbade marriage with a deceased brother's wife (Lev. 20:21) unless that brother died without issue which was not the case, since Salome was the child of Herodias and Herod Philip I.

18. *to have*,—i.e. to marry.

it is not lawful for thee, etc. John boldly rebuked vice even in the great. As our Lord said, when speaking of him, John was no *reed shaken with the wind*; he was a prophet and *more than a prophet*, and spoke with a prophet's fearlessness. Luke tells us that John also reproved all the evils which Herod had done (Luke 3:19).

19. *Herodias laid snares.* Naturally his boldness in rebuking Herod would arouse her anger and resentment, which was all the keener because she perceived that John had a great influence of Herod, *who feared John*.

20. kept him. Preserved him from Herodias' vengeance, at least for a time.

when he heard him, did many things. Herod was awed by John's virtue. He feared and esteemed him, and did many things to please the Precursor, but not the one thing against which John's rebukes were chiefly directed. Herod would not put away Herodias.

heard him willingly. Herod had his better moments, but he had not the courage to conquer his vices and to amend. It was easier to listen than to yield, and the many things evidently did not cost him so much as the one necessary sacrifice would have done. They were matters of less moment than his sinful marriage. *In like manner, Felix coming with Drusilla* (a daughter of Herodias), *his wife who was a Jew, sent for Paul, and heard of him the faith that is in Christ Jesus* (Acts 24:24).

21. *a convenient day*,—i.e. for the vengeance of Herodias, that she might win by stratagem, where she had failed by direct petition.

made a supper. Probably at the castle of Machaerus.

for his birthday. Herod, like the Roman emperors, made a great banquet on his birthday. The Jews disliked the observance of birthdays, as being connected with idolatry and favouring it, since at these banquets libations and sacrifices were frequently offered to the gods.

princes. High civil or military officials.

tribunes. Doubtless here military tribunes are referred to, of whom there were four or six in each legion. Ten Roman *civil* tribunes were chosen by the people to protect them from the oppression of the senate and nobles. These tribunes would hardly be living in Palestine.

chief men of Galilee. The local authorities, the great landowners.

22. *when the daughter . . . had danced.* Salome here dishonors herself and family by performing the part of a hired scenic dancer. Moreover these oriental dances were generally immodest. It was customary to give some such entertainment at the close of the banquet. Herod and his guests, from their couches, would have a full view of the performers.

Ask me what thou wilt. It would seem as though Salome hesitated as to what request to proffer, since Herod reiterates his offer, and enforces it with oaths, as the original expression indicates.

23. *though it be the half,* etc. Not to be taken literally, but meaning that Herod was willing to bestow great gifts on her. It was a boastful assertion made in presence of his flatterers; possibly he was not sober when he made it. Assuerus had promised Esther the half of his kingdom, but at least it was his to give (Esther 5:3).

24. *What shall I ask?* Herodias does not hesitate as to her reply; she had long since decided what she wished to obtain.

25. *Immediately with haste.* Herodias feared delay, lest she should ultimately meet with a refusal. When Herod was sober, he might again refuse to accede to the request of Salome.

26. *struck sad.* Mark's graphic expression for denoting Herod's consternation. The original Greek word indicates great sorrow and grief. Herod feared to keep his rash oath, yet had not the manliness to break it, by refusing to commit a crime. To keep a rash oath is a sin against the Second Commandment. Herod, by keeping his oath, broke the fifth Commandment also.

27. *an executioner,* literally a *spiculator* which signifies either (1) a scout, (2) a special adjutant, (3) a soldier of the guard. The spiculators formed a special division of the legion, and each emperor had a body of them to guard his person and execute his orders. They were often employed as instruments to execute the emperor's private vengeance. As Herod was at war with Aretas, these spiculators would be in attendance.

28. *the damsel gave it to her mother.*

The crime is now accomplished. Jerome says that Herodias glutted her vengeance by piercing the saint's tongue with needles (as Fulvia did to her enemy Cicero). Nicephorus states that Salome met with a terrible death as a punishment for her share in the sacrilegious crime. When crossing the ice it broke under her, and the fragments drifting together severed her head from her body.

29. *his disciples . . . took his body.* Jerome tells us they buried their master in Sebaste (Samaria). Herod allowed them to perform this act of respect. They buried the headless corpse only. Matthew adds that these disciples "*came and told Jesus.*" Possibly some of John's disciples now attached themselves to Christ, while others in outlying districts entered the Church later, through the ministry of the Apostles (see Acts 19:1-7). In this narrative four details are given by Mark alone:

- (1) Herodias was John the Baptist's enemy rather than Herod, who esteemed him.
- (2) Herod "kept him" for a time at least from her vengeance.
- (3) Salome consulted her mother regarding the request.
- (4) Herod sent a special executioner to behead John." (*Cecilia*)

FACT QUESTIONS 6:14-29

305. In what sense was the title "king" used for Herod?
306. Was Herod a Sadducee? Discuss.
307. Why associate mighty works with John when John did no mighty works?
308. Show how Mal. 4:5 related to the opinion of some.
309. In what place had Herod imprisoned John? Who was Aretas?
310. Give the four reasons it was unlawful for Herod to marry Herodias.
311. Show how the description of John given by our Lord fit him.
312. John's imprisonment was actually a protection—show how.
313. What respect did Herod show for John the Baptist?
314. Who attended the birthday banquet?
315. Why offer a reward for the dance?
316. Was the dance and the request prepared ahead of time?
317. Why was Herod so sad?—why carry out the rash vow?
318. What does Jerome add to the story?
319. What does Matthew add?
320. State the four details given by Mark not included in the other gospels.

7. THE FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND 6:30-44.

TEXT 6:30-44

"And the apostles gather themselves together unto Jesus; and they told him all things, whatsoever they had done, and whatsoever they had taught. And he saith unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert

place, and rest a while. For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they went away in the boat to a desert place apart. And the people saw them going, and many knew them, and they ran there together on foot from all the cities, and outwent them. And he came forth and saw a great multitude, and he had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things. And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, The place is desert, and the day is now far spent: send them away, that they may go into the country and villages round about, and buy themselves somewhat to eat. But he answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? And he saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew they say, Five, and two fishes. And he commanded them that all should sit down by companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties. And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake the loaves; and he gave to the disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. And they did all eat, and were filled. And they took up broken pieces, twelve basketfuls, and also of the fishes. And they that ate the loaves were five thousand men."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 6:30-44

287. Where had the apostles been? What had they been doing? Into how many villages and towns do you imagine they went?
288. What reaction would their success have on Herod?
289. There was more than one reason for suggesting they "go apart to a lonely place"—can you discover them?
290. Please attempt to locate the area into which Jesus and His apostles were going.
291. How did the crowds know where they were going?
292. Read John 6:4 and discover why there was such a large crowd.
293. Wasn't Jesus tired?—How is it He was not filled with irritation instead of compassion when He saw the crowd?
294. What two things did Jesus do for the crowds? Does this set some kind of example for medical and preaching work? Discuss.
295. Why ask how many loaves they had?
296. Why were they to sit in companies?
297. At what time of the year was it when this miracle was performed?
298. What particular type of miracle was here performed?
299. How much did the people eat?

COMMENT

TIME.—Spring of A.D. 29.

PLACES.—Capernaum, Bethsaida.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 14:13-21; Luke 9:12-17; John 6.

OUTLINE—1. The occasion for the miracle, 30-37. 2. The miracle, 38-44.

ANALYSIS

I. THE OCCASION FOR THE MIRACLE, VS. 30-37.

1. The return and report of the apostles, vs. 30.
2. The need for retirement, vs. 31.
3. The unsuccessful attempt to seek solitude, vs. 32-33.
4. The compassion and teaching of Jesus, vs. 34.
5. The concern of the disciples and the answer of Jesus, vs. 35-37.

II. THE MIRACLE, VS. 38-44.

1. Give what you have—five barley loaves and two fish, v. 38.
2. Sit in ranks of fifty and hundreds on the green grass, v. 39-40.
3. Blessing and multiplying the bread and fish He distributed to the apostles, v. 41.
4. They ate their fill, v. 42.
5. They gathered twelve baskets of fragments, v. 43.
6. There were 5,000 men who ate, v. 44.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

"30-44. THE APOSTLES HAVING RETURNED, JESUS CROSSES THE LAKE WITH THEM IN SEARCH OF REST, AND THERE FEEDS FIVE THOUSAND. Here, and here alone between the beginning of the Galilean ministry and the week of the Passion, we have four parallel reports. John comes into parallelism with the synoptists at this crossing of the lake, and continues parallel through the record of the return, when Jesus walks on the water, though here we lose our four-fold record by the silence of Luke. John contributes a valuable note of time in the remark that the passover was at hand. The death of the Baptist occurred, therefore, in the spring, and there remained just a year of the ministry of Jesus after the death of the forerunner.

30. The tidings of the death of John would seem to have reached Jesus while he was still alone; but about the same time his company was again gathered around him by the return of the apostles. Of the tone of the report they brought to him nothing is said—whether cheerful or sad—nor is there anywhere any glimpse of them in the work of this mission. *They reported what they had done*; Mark adds, *and what they had taught*. In their teaching he would certainly see defects, but his response to their report would be nothing else than cheering: he was training them, and he would not fail to encourage them.

31, 32. The invitation was addressed to the twelve alone. *Come ye*

yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while—i.e. a little while. *A while* is by no means an adequate translation of *oligon*, "a little." He did not expect long rest, but he did hope for a little.—The place was probably Capernaum. After the reunion of the company of Jesus the crowd had returned, and those who were *coming and going* gave them *no leisure so much as to eat*. The whole of verse 31 is peculiar to Mark, and both parts of it are intensely characteristic—the representation of our Lord's feeling and the graphic description of the circumstances.—For the invitation two motives appear, one in Mark and one in Matthew. From Mark we should attribute it to tender care of the apostles, weary from their work, and to his desire to be alone with them for a little. This is one of the touching illustrations of his thoughtfulness toward them. In Matthew it is when Jesus heard of the death of the Baptist that he withdrew privately to the desert place. Joined with the other motive was the desire to be in quiet, that he might have leisure for the thoughts that the death of John suggested. The death of such a man must have been a heavy blow to him, more especially since it was such a death. His personal love for John would make him now a mourner; and the event must also have awakened the thought of Matt. 17:12—"Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them"—and have brought the certainty of his own death freshly before him. It may also have led him to think of modifying his method thenceforth and giving himself more fully, as he did, to the training of his apostles. Thus the two motives were one in effect, driving him away from the shifting, intruding, exacting crowd to be alone with his own.—They went away, not *by ship, but* "in the boat"—the boat that they were wont to use. They must have gone in the early morning.

33. They succeeded in getting away, but not unobserved. Luke says they went to Bethsaida; John, that Jesus "went up into the mountain;" Matthew and Mark, merely that the place was *desert*.—i.e. uninhabited. The fact seems to be that they went to Bethsaida, which stood at the extreme north of the lake, where the Jordan enters it (see chap. 8:22), and thence proceeded a little to the south-east, to some convenient point in the hills that rise from the shore of the lake, where they might hope to be alone. It may be that at Bethsaida itself they did not touch at all, and that Luke's mention of it is meant only for a general designation of the locality. The distance from Capernaum to the vicinity of Bethsaida would not be more than six or eight miles, and could be traversed on foot about as quickly as by boat; if the boat was in no haste, more quickly. In the journey for rest there would be no haste, and the pursuing crowd arrived first. The people were *out of all cities*—i.e. from many towns in that region, especially from those that must be passed on the way. The crowd

grew in going. John speaks of Jesus already seated in the mountain, lifting up his eyes and seeing the crowd approaching, which may be a reminiscence of the fact that they came, not all at once, but kept streaming in. John also connects the mention of the coming throng with the fact that the passover was at hand. It may be that some part of the multitude was made up of pilgrims to Jerusalem, who turned aside to see the Prophet of Galilee.

34. *He came out.* From the boat. The disciples may have been impatient that the ever-present throng was even here; with the Master, however, it was not impatience, but compassion.—The activity of the day was rich and various. The motive, pity for the spiritual state of the multitude, which seems to have been often affecting him with a sad surprise. The shepherd-impulse was strong in his heart and the sight of sheep unsheltered always drew it forth. So *he began to teach them many things*, or, as in Luke, he “spoke to them of the kingdom of God,” into which as a fold he would gather the unsheltered (Luke 15:4-6; 19:10; John 10:16). He also “healed their sick” (Matthew), or, as in Luke, “healed them that had need of healing.” Such was the rest that he found, and such the opportunity for quiet meditation. He had had no leisure to eat; but, while he became a shepherd to the shepherdless, no doubt his heart was full of the sentiment of John 4:32-34: “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”

35-44. In this paragraph the synoptists are quite closely parallel, save that Matthew condenses a little, as usual, and Mark adds his fresh touches of description. John diverges at the beginning in attributing the inquiry about the possibility of feeding the multitude, not to the amazed disciples when Jesus has proposed that they shall do it, but to Jesus himself, as a question intended to test the faith of Philip. If it were necessary, no doubt the two conversations could be woven in together and harmonized with a tolerable degree of plausibility; but it is more satisfactory to leave them as two independent reports of the same event. Perhaps the independence is worth more to us than an unquestionable harmony would be. (This is true, for the value of several narratives, instead of one, must be due to their independence. Yet harmony is compatible with independence. Nay, if several accounts of the same events are true, they must be in real harmony with one another, though we are sometimes unable to show this. The omission from the narratives of a single connecting act or remark may render it forever impossible for us to see the exact connections or point out the exact sequence of the things reported. But it is desirable to show the harmony of the different narratives wherever this can be done, or at least to show that the several accounts, though

independent, need not be supposed to contradict one another at any point. Compare notes on John 6:5).

The suggestion of the apostles (verses 35, 36) seemed not only rational, but the only rational one: the people must not be kept away from the necessary comforts, and the disciples thought that even for Jesus to keep them longer would be no kindness. A startling proposal, *Give ye them to eat*. The words are identical in Matthew, Mark and Luke, showing how sharply the incisive and startling command entered the minds of the hearers. Matthew introduces it with equally astonishing remark, "They need not depart." He proposed that which is impossible to men; but he himself was there. There had been as yet no multiplication of food by his hands, so far as we know, except as the turning of water into wine (John 2:1-11) might be called such. The belief of the apostles in his miraculous power ought by this time to have been perfect; but it is to be remembered that he did not propose himself to feed the multitude: he said, *Give ye them to eat*. After that proposal it was only natural that they should think first of their own resources, and inquire how the thing could be done. It was not altogether unbelief that made them speak of buying bread for the people; he had compelled them to look at the matter from that side. They knew that they had nothing adequate, and were equally sure that it was impracticable to buy.—*Two hundred penny-worth of bread*. The proposal to buy is omitted by Matthew, and the quantity by Luke. This quantity is mentioned in Mark without comment, and in John as insufficient. The denarius ("penny" is a very poor translation, or rather, not a translation at all) was equal actually to about fifteen cents, but relatively to considerably more. In Matt. 20:2 it appears as a suitable return for a day's labor.—In Mark alone are the disciples sent to find how many loaves they have. Their investigation and report are represented in the words *when they knew, they say*. Literally, "knowing, they say." One of Mark's telling brevities. The loaves were thin and brittle; from Luke 11:5, 6 it appears that three would be required for a meal for a single person. The fishes are called in John (not elsewhere) *opsaria*, a word that denotes a condiment, something eaten with bread or other staple food. Hence the idea of "small fishes;" but that idea cannot be insisted on, as the word had come to be used of fish generally. After the report of a hopeless quantity, Matthew adds the reply of Jesus: "Bring them hither to me"—the one hope of making the small supply sufficient. This is the one hopeful thing to do with Christian gifts and resources of every kind—offer them to him in whose hands a handful can feed a multitude.

The proposal thus to feed the people was another suggestion of the Shepherd's heart. Bodily wants were not beneath his notice, and yet this

act had predominantly a spiritual purpose. Brief though the record is, that had been a great day of power and teaching, and such a day might well close with a climax of convincing might. The people must sit down in order to secure orderly and impartial distribution. Heavenly things must be handled with earthly wisdom; bread produced by miracle must be distributed in the best human order. The description of the sitting down is peculiar to Mark, and is unlike anything else in the New Testament. *He commanded them to make all sit down by companies—symposia symposia, company by company”—upon the green grass. And they sat down prasiai prasiai—not exactly in ranks, but rather in blocks like garden-beds, some in blocks of a hundred and some by fifties. The repetition or doubling of the descriptive words is in the Hebrew style. The change of word from the general symposia, “company,” to the purely descriptive prasiai, “garden-beds,” shows how the scene arose pictorially in the memory of the narrator, and he again saw the people arranged in squares and looking, in their vari-colored clothing, like flower-beds on the grass.—The grass is mentioned by Matthew and John. John says that there was “much;” Mark alone calls it green grass—a part, again of the pictorial memory of the scene. The word corresponds, too, to the season, the passover-time, in spring.*

He looked up to heaven, and blessed. So Matthew and Mark—i.e. he blessed God, praised God in thanksgiving; Luke, “he blessed them,” the loaves and fishes—invoked the blessing of God upon them; John, “he gave thanks.” It was simply the grateful prayer before eating, “grace before meat,” offered by the host or head of the family. (So Luke 24:30; see notes on Mark 14:22, 23.) Distribution was made by the hands of the disciples; so expressly in all but John. The separate mention of the giving out of the fishes is a slight link between Mark and John.—In Mark’s addition to what Matthew and Luke tell, *and the two fishes divided he among them all*, we see distinctly recorded the deep sense of wonder, and yet the keen observation of an observer close at hand. This story, as told in Mark, can be nothing else than the report of an eye-witness; the evidences are of the plainest and most irresistible kind.—As to the process of the miracle, speculations seem to be in vain. Theories of the acceleration of natural processes have been proposed for such occasions, but they were useless, and when closely examined are absurd. If this work was performed at all, it was done by creative power; and that is enough to say of it. It was no insufficient or halfway work: they were all satisfied.—In John the command to gather the fragments is mentioned; in the others, only the gathering. The word for *baskets* here is not the same as in the record of the similar miracle in chap. 8:8. The word here is *cophinus*, the source of our words “coffer” and “coffin.” This, ap-

parently, was the wicker provision-basket that was in common use. The collecting of the fragments shows again, like the order in the distribution of the food, the Saviour's purpose that miracles shall never displace prudence. Though divine power can produce a super-abundant supply, still it is right "that nothing be lost."—A fresh sign of the independence of the four narratives is found in the manner of recording the number of the multitude. That "there were about five thousand men" is mentioned by Luke in connection with the hint of the disciples that it was impossible to buy bread for so many; by John, in connection with their sitting down, when their number was ascertained; Mark says at the very end, just after mentioning the great store of fragments that was left, that *they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men* (*about*, however, is omitted in the best text); Matthew, at the same point, says that here were "about five thousand men, besides women and children." The women and children would be arranged, according to Jewish custom, separately from the men, and in such a multitude would be less in number. Thus there are three different ways of connecting the number with the story, all natural—a striking proof of independence.

The immediate effect of the great work is reported by John alone (6:14): "Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth the prophet that should come into the world." Conviction of his greatness, but conviction of what kind the next section shows." (*W. N. Clarke*).

FACT QUESTIONS 6:30-44

321. Here in vs. 30 is the first use of the term "apostles"—show how appropriate it is just here.
322. What was the possible multiple purpose in withdrawing to a lonely place? Cf. Matt. 14:13.
323. What prevented their eating?
324. Is there any reason to believe there was an excessively large crowd in the district?
325. Did Jesus and His apostles go to the city of Bethsaida? If not why mention it?
326. How far from Capernaum to Bethsaida?
327. Did Jesus have any time for rest or prayer? Was Jesus unhappy about this?
328. In what way is "the independence of two accounts worth more to us than an unquestionable harmony"?
329. Show how the words of Jesus "Give ye them to eat" entered the minds of the hearers.
330. Why mention the amount of "two hundred shillings worth"?

331. What is wonderfully encouraging about the words of Jesus "Bring them hither to me."
332. Show the difference in the use of the two words "symposia" and "prasiai."
333. Why bless the loaves and fish?
334. What are the evidences of an eyewitness in the description?
335. What particular type of miracle was this?
336. Show the striking proof of accurate independent report on the counting of the 5,000.
337. What kind of baskets were used?
338. What was the reaction of the miracle on the multitude?

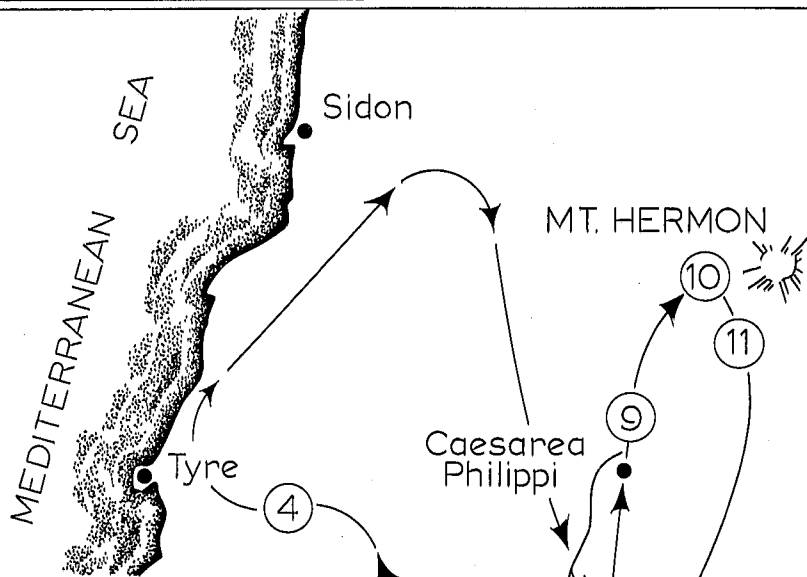
8. JESUS WALKING ON THE WATER 6:45-52

TEXT 6:45-52

"And straightway he constrained his disciples to enter into the boat, and to go before him unto the other side to Bethsaida, while he himself sendeth the multitude away. And after he had taken leave of them, he departed into the mountain to pray. And when even was come, the boat was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. And seeing them distressed in rowing, for the wind was contrary unto them, about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking on the sea; and he would have passed by them: but they, when they saw him walking on the sea, supposed that it was an apparition, and cried out: for they all saw him, and were troubled. But he straightway spake with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. And he went up unto them into the boat; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves; for they understood not concerning the loaves, but their heart was hardened."

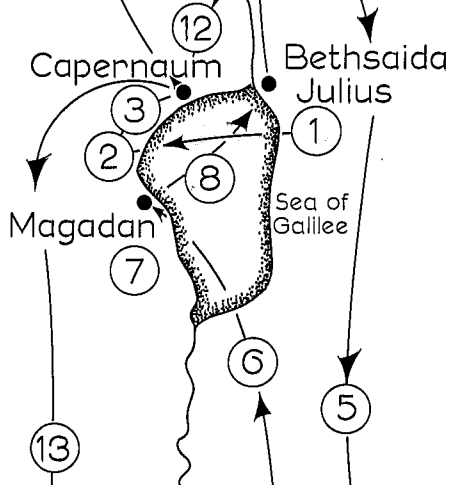
THOUGHT QUESTIONS 6:45-52

300. If they were at Bethsaida when they landed how is it they now came to Bethsaida as recorded in vs. 45?
301. Why the urgency of Jesus in asking His disciples to go over the sea to Bethsaida?
302. Was there some special burden on the heart of Jesus that He wanted to be alone with God in prayer? Cf. John 6:15.
303. Did Jesus know there was to be a storm at sea?
304. How could He see them in the sea if it was at night?
305. What is meant by "distressed in rowing."
306. Why say "and would have passed by them"? (vs. 48b.) What purpose was there in this?
307. Did the disciples believe in ghosts? Why their fear?
308. Show how appropriate were the words of Jesus to them.
309. When and why did the wind cease?



MAP NO. 4-LATER GALILEAN MINISTRY
THIRD YEAR

1. Bethsaida Julius-walks on water of Sea-stills tempest, Mt. 14; Mk. 6; Jn. 6
2. Plain of Genesaret-many miracles, Mt. 14; Mk. 6
3. Capernaum-Sermon on Bread of Life-questions on washings, Mt. 15; Mk. 7; Jn. 6
4. Phoenicia-Retires-heals Syro-Phoenician woman's daughter, Mt. 15; Mk. 7
5. Decapolis-preaches and heals, Mt. 15; Mk. 7
6. Near Sea of Galilee-feeding of 4000, Mt. 15; Mk. 8
7. Magadan-Jews demand sign-no sign given but of Jonah, Mt. 15; Mk. 8
8. Crossing Sea-warns against leaven of Jewish leaders, Mt. 16; Mk. 8
9. Caesarea Philippi-Jesus's identity, Peter's confession, Jesus predicts His death, Mt. 16; Mk. 8; Lk. 9
10. High Mountain (Hermon?)-The Transfiguration, Mt. 17; Mk. 9; Lk. 9
11. Heals epileptic boy, Mt. 17; Mk. 9; Lk. 9
12. Capernaum-Peter & temple tax, Mt. 17; Discussion as to who is greatest, Mt. 18; Mk. 9; Lk. 9
13. Samaria-on way to Feast of Tabernacles Samaritans reject Jesus-Sons of Thunder would call down fire from heaven, Lk. 9



310. In what manner could it be said "their heart was hardened"? Vs. 52?

COMMENT

TIME—Spring of A.D. 29.

PLACE—The sea of Galilee—near Bethsaida.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 14:22-36; John 6:15-21.

OUTLINE—1. Jesus urged His disciples to get into the boat and go before Him to Bethsaida, vs. 45. 2. Prayer in the mountain, vs. 46. 3. The boat was in the midst of the sea—The disciples rowing for their life—Jesus came to them walking on the water, vs. 47, 48. 4. They saw Him and were afraid. He calms their fears and the sea, vs. 49-51. 5. They should have understood His powers—but they did not, vs. 52.

ANALYSIS

- I. JESUS URGED HIS DISCIPLES TO GET INTO THE BOAT AND GO BEFORE HIM TO BETHSAIDA, vs. 45.
 1. He remained alone.
 2. He sent the multitude away.
- II. PRAYER IN THE MOUNTAIN, vs. 46.
 1. Said farewell to disciples.
 2. Alone in prayer.
- III. THE DISCIPLES IN THE MIDST OF THE SEA ROWING FOR THEIR LIFE—JESUS CAME TO THEM WALKING ON THE WATER, vs. 47, 48.
 - 1. At night.
 2. Came to them three hours before daylight.
 3. Wanted to pass by—(so they could see him).
- IV. THEY SAW HIM AND WERE AFRAID—HE CALMS THEIR FEARS AND THE SEA, vs. 49-51.
 1. They cried out in fear because they thought He was a ghost.
 2. He comforts them with "Be not afraid it is I."
 3. When He stepped into the boat, the wind ceased—astonishment.
- V. THEY SHOULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD HIS POWER, BUT THEY DID NOT, vs. 52.
 1. The loaves and fishes should have taught them of His power.
 2. Their hearts were dull.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

"The effect of this miracle upon the minds of those present was very great. So mighty and wonderful an exhibition of power, reminding them, perhaps, of the feeding of their fathers in the wilderness by Moses, led them to say, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world." We can scarce doubt from the context that they meant the Messiah, for so great was their enthusiasm that they proposed among themselves to take Him by force and make Him king (John 6:14, 15). It is said by *Pressense*; "The multitudes are ravished, enthusiastic; now,

indeed, they believe that they have found the Messiah after their own heart." Thus, the effect of the miracle was to confirm them in their false Messianic hopes, for they interpreted it as a sign and pledge of the highest temporal prosperity under His rule, who could not only heal the sick of all their diseases, but feed five thousand men with five loaves of barley bread. Hence, He must immediately dismiss them. It appears from Matthew and Mark that He sent away the disciples first, perhaps that the excitement of the multitude might not seize upon them. That they were unwilling to leave Him, and that He was obliged to "constrain" them to depart, is not strange, if we remember that they knew no way by which He would rejoin them but by a long walk along the shore; and this in the solitude and darkness of the night, for it was evening when they left the place. (compare Matt. 14:15, 23, where both evenings, the early and late, are distinguished.) Aside from their reluctance to leave Him alone at such an hour, there may also have been fear upon their own part of crossing the lake in the night, remembering their great peril from which He had a little while before delivered them (Matt. 8:24) and perhaps also, seeing signs of an approaching storm.

After His disciples had departed, the Lord proceeded to dismiss the multitude, perhaps now more willing to leave Him that they saw His special attendants had gone. So soon as all had left Him, He went up into the mountain alone to pray—the second instance mentioned of a night so spent; the first being the night prior to the choice of Apostles (Luke 6:12, 13), and both marking important points in His life.

We assume that the place where the people were fed was the southern angle of the plain of Butaiha, where the mountains meet the lake. From this point the Apostles, to reach Capernaum, would pass near Bethsaida at the mouth of the Jordan; and as Jesus proceeding along the shore must necessarily pass through it, we find no difficulty in supposing that they directed their course toward it with the design of stopping there, and taking Him with them into the boat when He should arrive. This is plainly intimated by Mark 6:45, and is wholly consistent with John 6:17. This latter passage is thus translated by *Alford*. "They were making for the other side of the sea in the direction of Capernaum." He adds: "It would appear as if the disciples were lingering along shore, with the expectation of taking in Jesus; but night had fallen and He had not yet come to them, and the sea began to be stormy." "The great wind that blew" and the tossing waves made all their efforts to reach Bethsaida useless. Nor could they even make Capernaum. In spite of all their endeavors, they were driven out into the middle of the lake and southerly, down opposite the plain of Gennesaret.

Thomson (ii. 32), referring to this night voyage of the disciples,

says: "My experience in this region enables me to sympathize with the disciples in their long night's contest with the wind. I spent a night in that Wady Shukaiyif, some three miles up it, to the left of us. The sun had scarcely set, when the wind began to rush down toward the lake, and it continued all night long with constantly increasing violence, so that when we reached the shore next morning, the face of the lake was like a huge boiling caldron. The wind howled down every wady, from the northeast and east, with such fury that no efforts of rowers could have brought a boat to shore at any point along that coast. In a wind like that, the disciples must have been driven quite across to Gennesaret, as we know they were. We subsequently pitched our tents at the shore, and remained for three days and nights exposed to this tremendous wind. No wonder the disciples toiled and rowed hard all night, and how natural their amazement and terror at the sight of Jesus walking on the waves. The whole lake, as we had it, was lashed into fury; the waves repeatedly rolled up to our tent door, tumbling on the ropes with such violence as to carry away the tent pins." The width of the sea opposite the plain of Gennesaret is about six miles, and the disciples, who "had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs" when Jesus met them, were thus something more than half-the-way over. As this was "about the fourth watch of the night" (Mark 6:48), or from 3-6 A.M., the disciples must have been struggling against the wind and waves some eight or ten hours.

The incident respecting Peter's attempt to walk on the water to meet Jesus is mentioned only by Matthew. That after he had been rescued they entered the ship, is expressly said: "And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased" (Matt. 14:32). In like manner Mark (6:51): "And He went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased." But with this John's narrative has been thought by some to be in contradiction (6:21): "Then they willingly received Him into the ship, and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went" (R.V., "They were willing therefore to receive Him into the boat"). It is said that the disciples willed or desired to take Him into the ship with them, but did not, because the ship immediately came to the shore. *Tholuck*, however, defends the translation of Beza, "they received Him with willingness," which is the same as our English version. "John mentions the will only, assuming that every reader would understand that the will was carried into effect" (M. and M.) Some deny that the ship came to the shore by miracle, but suppose that it came rapidly in comparison with the earlier part of the voyage, the wind having subsided and the sea become smooth. On the other hand, *Luthardt* and most rightly regard it as supernatural." (*Samuel J. Andrews*)

FACT QUESTIONS 6:45-52

339. What false hopes did the multitude obtain from the feeding of the five thousand?
340. How account for the reluctance of the disciples to leave Jesus?
341. Jesus spent a night in prayer once before—when?
342. Read Mark 6:45 and John 6:17 and harmonize them.
343. How does Thomson help us appreciate the plight of the disciples?
344. When Jesus came to them on the water how far and how long had they rowed?
345. Why was the incident of Peter's walking on the water omitted by Mark?
346. Harmonize the following accounts: Matt. 14:32; Mark 6:51; John 6:21.

9. HEALING ON THE PLAIN OF GENNESARET. 6:53-56

TEXT 6:53-56

"And when they had crossed over, they came to the land unto Gennesaret, and moored to the shore. And when they were come out of the boat, straightway the people knew him, and ran round about that whole region, and began to carry about on their beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. And wheresoever he entered, into villages, or into cities, or into the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 6:53-56

311. Who was with Jesus at this time? Could thirteen men all get into one small boat? Explain.
312. Please locate Gennesaret on the map—how large a district was this?
313. Does the expression "moored to the shore" suggest there was no town here?
314. How did the people know Jesus?
315. Are we to conclude from vs. 55 that many people followed Jesus carrying their sick from place to place? Explain.
316. Why lay the sick in the "market places"? i.e. why select such a place?
317. Wasn't it rather superstitious to desire to touch His garment? Why did Jesus permit it? Why was the touch effective?

COMMENT

TIME—Spring A.D. 29.

PLACE—The plain of Gennesaret and the adjacent villages and cities.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 14:34-36.

OUTLINE—1. The Landing at the plain of Gennesaret, vs. 53. 2. The gathering of many people, upon recognizing Him, to seek help, vs. 54, 55.

3. The superstitious desire of many people to heal the sick, vs. 56.

ANALYSIS 6:53-56

I. THE LANDING AT THE PLAIN OF GENNESARET, VS. 53.

1. Occurred just after the feeding of the five thousand.
2. The boat was moored—or fastened to the shore.

II. THE GATHERING OF MANY PEOPLE FOR HELP, VS. 54-55.

1. This happened immediately after disembarking.
2. Prompted by their knowledge of Him.
3. The whole region turned out to bring their sick wherever they found Him.

III. THE SUPERSTITIOUS DESIRE OF MANY TO HEAL THE SICK, VS. 56.

1. Occured in villages or cities or in the country.
2. Sick laid in marketplaces—that they might at least touch His garment.
3. Those who did touch were healed.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

"53. *And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore.*

And having crossed (the lake, from east to west) *they came to* (or upon) *the land of Gennesaret*, a small district four miles long and two or three wide, on the west side of the sea of Galilee, or lake of Tiberias, to which it gave one of its names. *Josephus* describes this district as the garden of the whole land and possessing a fertility and loveliness almost unparalleled. Capernaum appears to have been in or very near this delightful region, so that *John* (6:17) describes this same voyage as a voyage to Capernaum. *Drew to the shore*, or *came to anchor near it*, or retaining the passive form of the original, were brought to anchor (or to land.)

54. *And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him.*

And they going out (or as they went out) *from the ship*, the men of that place (*Matt.* 14:35), *straightway knowing* (or immediately recognizing) *him*, whom they had often seen before, as they lived so near his home and the centre of his operation. It is an interesting thought, very often incidentally suggested in the gospels, that during the three years of our Saviour's public ministry, his person must have become perfectly familiar to the great mass of the population, at least in Galilee. This, with the certainty that he retains his human body, and is to appear in it hereafter upon earth as he already does in heaven, should preserve us from a tendency to look upon all sensible and bodily associations with the person of our Lord as superstitious and irreverent, an error into which some devout believers are betrayed by their aversion to the oppo-

site extreme of gross familiarity and levity in speaking of his glorified humanity.

55. *And ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.*

Running about that whole surrounding country, they began, i.e. at once without delay, and afterwards continued, upon beds (or pallets,) to carry about those having (themselves) ill wherever they heard that he was (literally, is, the graphic present) there. The construction of the last clause is ambiguous, being understood by some as an example of the Hebrew idiom which combines the relative pronoun with the adverb *there*, to express our relative adverb *where*; but this would require a pronoun in the first place. Others refer the first of the two particles to the place where they heard of him, and the last to the place where he actually was. But most interpreters prefer the simpler and more obvious construction which refers both particles to one and the same object, 'of whatever place they heard that he was there.' *The running about and carrying about* may refer to the same act, or the former to the spreading of the news and the latter to the actual bringing of the sick. The meaning is not that each one was carried from place to place in search of him, but that some were carried one way, some another, so as to fall in with him in some part of his circuit.

56. *And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment; and as many as touched him were made whole.*

Country, literally, *fields*, as in v. 36 and in such English names as St. Giles's or St. Martin's in the Fields, i.e. outside of old London. *Streets*, or more exactly, *markets* or *marketplaces*, as in every other case where it occurs, but with greater latitude meaning than we now give to the English word. The Greek one according to its etymology and usage, means a place of meeting, especially for business, whether commercial or political, and therefore corresponding both to *forum* and *market*. The *agora* of ancient cities was an open place or square, sometimes immediately within the gates, but usually near the centre of the town. As denoting thoroughfares or public places, *streets* is therefore a substantially correct translation. *The sick*, or more exactly, *the infirm*, a synonymous express with the one in v. 5. If it were but, literally, even, only. This desire was only superstitious so far as it ascribed a magical effect to the mere touch, or regarded contact as essential to the healing power of the Saviour's word. It may have been his purpose to reach greater numbers in a given time without destroying all perceptible connection between the subject and the worker of the miracle. (Compare Acts 5:15; 19:12). This is not a mere

repetition of the statement in 1:32-34, but designed to show that throughout the course as well as at the opening of our Saviour's ministry, his miracles were many, those recorded in detail being only a few selected samples, and also that his constant practice was to heal all who needed and desired it." (*J. A. Alexander*)

FACT QUESTIONS 6:53-56

347. In which direction had the crossing been made? How large was the plain?
348. How can we explain the fact that John 6:17 describes this same voyage as going to Capernaum?
349. Why would the people of this district perhaps know Jesus better than some others?
350. What incidental lesson can we learn from the reference to the human appearance or recognition of Jesus?
351. There is no meaning in vs. 55 of "each one carried from place to place in search of Him"—what is the meaning?
352. What is the literal meaning of the word "country"?
353. Show the patience and love of Jesus in healing the sick.

10. *CONFLICT WITH PHARISEES* 7:1-23.

a. *Conflict over washings* 7:1-8

TEXT 7:1-8

"And there are gathered together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which had come from Jerusalem, and had seen that some of his disciples ate their bread with defiled, that is, unwashen, hands. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands diligently, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders: and when they come from the marketplace, except they wash themselves, they eat not: and many other things there be, which they have received to hold, washings of cups, and pots, and brasen vessels. And the Pharisees and the scribes ask him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with defiled hands? And he said unto them, Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

This people honoureth me with their lips,

But their heart is far from me.

But in vain do they worship me,

Teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men.

Ye leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the tradition of men."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 7:1-8

318. Did these Pharisees and scribes make a special trip from Jerusalem just to criticize Jesus? Discuss.
319. What is meant by "unwashen," or "defiled" hands?

320. Are we to understand from vs. 3 that "all the Jews" observed the tradition of the elders?
321. Who were the elders? What is meant by tradition?
322. Why bathe after going to the marketplace?
323. Is the word baptize here used i.e. in vs. 4 the same as used in reference to baptizing people? If so how could it be applied to couches?
324. In what sense were the hands of the disciples "common"?
325. Wasn't it unkind for Jesus to call these men hypocrites?
326. In what sense had the Pharisees honored God with their lips?
327. Just what is "vain worship"?
328. Please show just how such persons left the command of God.
329. Is Jesus saying such persons prefer the precepts of men to the commandments of God? Why?

COMMENT 7:1-8

TIME—Summer A.D. 29.

PLACE—In or near Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 15:1, 2; 7-9.

OUTLINE—1. Gathering for criticism, vs. 1, 2. 2. The ceremonial carefulness of the Pharisees, vs. 3, 4. 3. Criticism offered and answered, vs. 5-8.

ANALYSIS 7:1-8

- I. GATHERING FOR CRITICISM, VS. 1, 2.
1. Composed of Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem.
 2. They were there to criticize the lack of ceremonial washing.
- II. THE CEREMONIAL CAREFULNESS OF THE PHARISEES, VS. 3, 4.
1. Never ate until they were ceremonially clean—i. e. according to tradition—no law of God required it.
 2. Never returned from the marketplace or used cups, pots, pans without ceremonial washings.
- III. CRITICISM OFFERED AND ANSWERED, VS. 5-8.
1. Why do your disciples fail to keep the tradition of the elders?
 2. You are fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy of the hypocrites who speak one thing and do another.
 3. Your worship is vain.
 4. You neglect the command of God for the traditions of men.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

"1-4. The place is still Capernaum. *Which came from Jerusalem.* Literally, "having come." The scribes and Pharisees who are mentioned here are probably Galileans who had been at Jerusalem and had just returned thence. The definite article is wanting before the participle. Its presence would indicate that they were a delegation from the capital; but probably these were Galilean religionists, who, returning from

Jerusalem, perhaps after consultation there, made it their first work to "come together to Jesus" and see what he was doing.—*They saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled*—literally, with common—*hands*. With hands in the ordinary state. Not "with dirty hands"—that was not the point of objection—but with hands *unwashed*, not ceremonially purified according to their ideas of necessity.—*Some of his disciples* were doing thus, not all of them—an indication that he had given them teaching that would render them indifferent to the practice of the Pharisees in this matter, but that only a part of them had yet been freed from their scruples on the subject.—Verses 3, 4 are parenthetical, and the best manuscripts insert an "and" at the beginning of verse 5, which disturbs the grammatical construction and makes a broken sentence. This led copyists to add *they found fault* in verse 2, to complete the structure; but the addition is cancelled by all the chief editors of the text.

The parenthetical passage (verses 3, 4) is wholly peculiar to Mark and is devoted to the explanation, for the benefit of Gentile readers, of the custom of the Pharisees, shared by the Jews in general, about ceremonial cleansings. *The Pharisees, and all the Jews*. A loose popular expression to show that this custom of the Pharisees was widely received; not to be pressed, as if it declared absolute unanimity. Many, of course, had no time for these practices, and the Pharisees despised all who neglected them for that reason or for any other, and thought there was scarcely a hope for them. (See John 7:49 for an utterance of this feeling.)—*Except they wash their hands oft, or diligently, pugme*. Literally, "with the fist." Probably descriptive of the washing of one hand by rubbing it with the other. The Sinaitic Manuscript alone has *pukna*, "frequently," which *Tischendorf* alone among editors adopts.—*And when they come from the market*, where in the crowd defilement might most easily be contracted.—*Except they wash, they eat not*. The word is *baptizo, ean me baptisontai*. So in Luke 11:38 the Pharisee wondered that Jesus had not first bathed himself (*ebaptisthe*) before dinner. It is not the baptizing of their hands, but of themselves, or, strictly, the being baptized or bathed, that was thus insisted upon. The word "baptize" is used precisely as in 2 Kings 5:14, where it is said of Naaman, "He dipped himself seven times in Jordan." From the strict literal signification, to "immerse" or "submerge," it comes naturally in certain connections to acquire the sense "to wash by immersing," "to cleanse," of course only in cases where the dipping is into clean water. So *Grimm, N. T. Lexicon*.) "Bathe" is an admissible translation in this connection, and any difficulties about giving the word its proper meaning here are purely imaginary. In verse 4 the word for "washings," in *washings of cups*, etc., is from the same root, *baptismous*, a derivative of *baptizo*. But it is not the word that is

used to denote the Christian rite, which is a neuter word, *baptisma*, while this is masculine, a form that is found only here and in Heb. 6:2; 9:10. Its signification is properly given by *Liddel* and *Scott* in their *Greek and English Lexicon*, "a dipping in water." It indicates sometimes, in certain connections, a thorough cleansing by water, which would naturally be made, in the case of the objects here mentioned, by dipping, according to the literal signification of the word. The *cups* (*poteria*) were drinking-cups.—As for the *pots*, the Greek word *xestai* is a corruption of the Latin *sextarius*, a pot that held about a pint. These were ordinarily wooden vessels.—The *brasen*—or properly bronze—*vessels* were for similar purposes with the wooden. The law provided, at least in certain cases of defilement, that earthen vessels should be broken, and that wooden ones should be rinsed in water (Lev. 15:12).—The word translated *tables* (*klinon*) cannot possibly mean that; it is "beds" or "couches," and may refer to the platforms on which they reclined around the table, which must often be thoroughly washed for fear of defilement, or to the cushions, which would need washing quite as much, and very likely would be washed oftener. But the words *and of tables* are omitted by some good manuscripts, by *Tischendorf*, and by the revisers.

The greater part of these minute requirements lay outside of the Mosaic law. These things, Mark says, *they have received to hold*; and they do them *holding the tradition of the elders*, the interpretations and supplements of the law, brought down orally from the men of an earlier time. Tradition was the ecclesiastical version of the law—the law as it came out of the hands of the great teachers. It was regarded as equally authoritative with the written law itself, and, by some, more so. It was the very life and mission of the Pharisees to keep the traditional interpretations in full force. (See *Farrar, Life of Christ*, 2. 471.) Whoever reads such descriptions as are given by *Farrar* and *Geikie* of the ingenious wickedness with which this was attempted will not wonder at the denunciations of our Lord or be surprised that the Pharisees were his natural enemies. This was a part of the bondage from which he came to set men free.

5-7. Of course they must call him to account, and not the disciples—the rabbi, not the pupils. He and they were reprovèd oftener for neglecting the traditions than for departing from the genuine law. His quotation in reply is almost verbally exact from Isa. 29:13 in the LXX., the sole variation—*teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*, instead of "teaching doctrines and commandments of men"—being identical in Matthew and Mark. Traditionalism has met him in its extreme form, and he does not miss his opportunity to scorch it with the fire of his wrath.—Perhaps the tone of indignation is even stronger in Matthew

than in Mark. *Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites*—i.e. concerning such hypocrites as you, in his own age or in any other. He condemned outward worship without heart, the profession of the lips with no inward devotion or obedience.—Isaiah was full of such denunciations (as chap. 1:11-20), and so were all the prophets. Often, as here, they declared that it was *in vain*; it was empty, fruitless work; it went for nothing. Besides the heartlessness, and as another reason for rejecting such worship, God condemns the foisting upon his religion of human traditions and commandments. His worship must be upon the basis of his own requirements, and no human arrangement may take its place beside what he has appointed. The introduction of human tradition was the point in which the passage from Isaiah was directly applicable to the Pharisees.

8. *For* should be omitted at the beginning of this verse, and so should *as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do*, at the end. So this strong statement stands alone: *laying aside* (or leaving) *the commandment of God, ye hold the traditions of men*. He charges them, not with addition, but with substitution. They have forsaken command for tradition, God for men. The elders are their chief authority, not Moses or Jehovah; they are not serving God. So, in spirit, Jer. 2:12, 13. The rebuke is there for idolatry; but in the sight of God the sin of the Pharisees was as heinous as that." (*W. N. Clarke*)

FACT QUESTIONS 7:1-8

354. What record does Luke give that is very much like this?
355. Who were these scribes and Pharisees?
356. Why conclude this was not an official delegation?
357. Did the disciples have dirty hands?
358. What has been said earlier about the lack of time for eating?
359. For whose benefit were verses 3 and 4 placed in the text?
360. Read John 7:49 and show how it relates.
361. What is the literal meaning of "wash their hands oft."?
362. Is there some connection with what Naaman the leper did (2 Kings 5:14) and what these Pharisees did? Explain.
363. How is the word "washing" or "baptismous" different than the word used for the action of Christian baptism?
364. Show how immersion is a perfectly natural thought in the "washings" here described.—particularly with "the tables" or "couches."
365. How did the bondage of tradition become a yoke too heavy to bear?
366. Why speak to Jesus and not to His disciples?
367. Do you imagine the Jews who heard the rebuke of Jesus believed it? Did it make them angry? Was it fair? Was it loving?

368. Jesus did not charge them with addition to the law of God but with what? Read Jer. 2:12, 13.

B. CONFLICT OVER PARENTAL CARE. 7:9-13

TEXT 7:9-13

"And he said unto them, Full well do ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, He that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death: but ye say, If a man shall say to his father or his mother, That wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me is Corban, that is to say, Given to God; ye no longer suffer him to do ought for his father or his mother; making void the word of God by your tradition, which ye have delivered; and many such like things ye do."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 7:9-13

330. What is meant by the expression "full well" as in vs. 9?
 331. Did these Jews accept the fact that they had rejected the commandment of God? Does this carry any warning for us today?
 332. What were the two areas of respect for parents? i.e. what is involved in the word "honor"—and "speaking evil"?
 333. Was there a death penalty for speaking evil of father or mother?
 334. Explain in your own words the use of the expression "Corban."
 335. What possible advantage was there in the use of Corban?
 336. If any belief or practice today makes void or meaningless the word of God can we expect the same rebuke? Cite examples.

COMMENT

TIME—Summer A.D. 29.

PLACE—In or near Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 15:3-6.

OUTLINE—1. Jesus' accusation:—"you reject the commandment of God, vs. 9. 2. The fourth commandment is a specific example, vs. 10-12. 3. The word of God is made void by your tradition, vs. 13.

ANALYSIS

- I. JESUS' ACCUSATION:—"YOU REJECT THE COMMANDMENT OF GOD, vs 9.
1. In a fine, beautiful, admirable sense you reject the commandment of God.
 2. You prefer your tradition to the commandments of God.
- II. THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT IS A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE, VS. 10-12.
1. Moses was very plain (Exodus 20:12; 21:17) about the honor to parents.
 2. You have set aside the law of God by your tradition—what belongs to the parents is supposedly given to the temple (or the priests).

3. Your mother and father can starve while you justify your selfishness and disobedience by tradition.

III. THE WORD OF GOD IS MADE VOID BY YOUR TRADITION. VS. 13.

1. The authority of God's word is set aside by your tradition.
2. There are many other examples that could be cited.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. JESUS' ACCUSATION:—"YOU REJECT THE COMMANDMENT OF GOD."

"9. *And he said unto them* probably indicates a break in the discourse; caused, perhaps, by indignant interruptions, or by a call for particulars to illustrate so broad and fearful a charge. So their ancestors asked, "Wherein have we despised thy name?" (Mal. 1:6, 3:8, 13).—Whether called for or not, he was ready with particulars to illustrate the substitution of tradition for command. *Full well*—i. e. finely, beautifully, admirably—*ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition*. The adverb is the same as in verse 6: "Well hath Isaiah prophesied of you." The repetition is intentional, and the word this time is scathingly ironical: "Admirably do you fulfill the word that Isaiah so admirably spoke concerning you." The holy indignation is thoroughly aroused, and he cares not how heavily he lays on the lash." (*W. N. Clarke*)

II. THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT IS A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE.

"10-12. Yet his first illustration is not the one that called out the question. Instead of beginning with the traditions respecting defilements by contact and the necessary cleansings, he goes at once to the Decalogue, and convicts them of setting aside the fundamental law of God to Israel. *Moses said, Honor thy father and thy mother*. An exact quotation from the LXX. of Ex. 20:12.—He adds a second extract, giving the same law as expounded and applied in the legislation of Moses. *Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death*. Emphatic way of saying, "Let him die." Ex. 21:17 quoted almost exactly from the LXX. Both passages are quoted from what *Moses said*, but both are adduced as *the commandment of God* (verse 9) and *the word of God* (verse 13). Thus, Jesus recognizes the Mosaic legislation as the law of his Father; and not merely the milder parts of it, but even the provision for the execution of the disobedient and insulting child. This he brings forward as a part of that law that he has come "not to destroy, but to fulfill"—i.e. to exhibit and establish in the fullness of its spiritual meaning. The principle of honor to parents he recognizes as of perpetual and universal force, and he intends to set up for universal obedience and reverence the truth that was honored by the Mosaic provision of death for the disobedient. Incidentally, his mode of citing the second passage is itself exegetical. Viewed in the light of the context, that passage must

mean that the spirit of the prohibition can be violated without a profane or blasphemous word, and that not to bless parents by such care as a child can give is to curse them, according to the true intent of this law. Such, then, is the "commandment of God" respecting parents: they must be treated with honor, and no one is at liberty to withhold from them what blessing he can give.—But now for the *tradition of men* respecting parents which the Pharisees are diligently keeping. Translate verses 11, 12, "But ye say, If a man say to his father or mother, Whatever thou mightest receive in aid from me is Corban, that is, a gift (to God), ye no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother." *Corban* is a Hebrew word meaning *gift*, but appropriated to use with reference to sacred gifts, acts of devotion to the service of God. The simple uttering of the word *Corban*—"Sacred gift"—over a thing that was supposed to set that thing apart from all ordinary uses and give it the character of a consecrated thing. (See *Ewald, Antiquities of Israel*, p. 81.) Now, Jesus affirms that they apply this mode of consecration to the unholy purpose of escaping duty to parents. If a man utters the magical word "Corban" over his relation to his parents, and so declares that it is devoted to God, he is no longer held under obligation to them. The "Corban" carries no real consecration to God in such a case; it gives no new character to the man's life: it is only a fictitious arrangement for releasing him from a duty that has become irksome. Thus the tradition of men enables them to annul or virtually repeal the commandment of God. The liberty which the tradition gives them is more agreeable to their selfish hearts than the duty to which the commandment binds them; and so they set aside the commandment, in order that they may keep the tradition. To accept such a tradition was to dethrone Jehovah. (See Prov. 28:24.) One is reminded here of Luther's sore conflict as to whether the monastic vow which was urged upon him was consistent with his duty to his aged father, and of innumerable similar cases in the long history of monasticism. True consecration is not the escaping from obligations, but the reacceptance of all genuine duty from the hands of God. Consecration to God never releases from duty to man. He who consents to an obligation to God thereby consents to all obligations that God has placed upon him. To suppose the contrary, as these men did, is to trifle with all obligation."

III. THE WORD OF GOD IS MADE VOID BY YOUR TRADITION.

"13. *Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition.* The word translated *making of none effect* (*akourountes*) is found in the New Testament only in this discourse and at Gal. 3:17: it means "to deprive of authority or lordship," and so, of a law, "to annul." It implies more than neglect: it tells of actual nullification.—*And many such like*

things do ye, which is not genuine in verse 8, is genuine here, and may possibly be the reporter's summary of a further discourse, in which other abuses of a similar kind were treated as sharply as the intrusion of "Corban" to the family. The subsequent discourse seems to imply that something had been said at this very time of the distinction between clean and unclean food. There were abuses enough within reach to justify a long and terrible discourse." (*W. N. Clarke*)

FACT QUESTIONS 7:9-13

369. Do you imagine someone called for specific examples for the general principle laid down in the "fearful charge."?
370. Is Jesus being ironic or sarcastic in the way in which He speaks of Isaiah's prophecy and its fulfillment? Discuss.
371. Jesus does not deal with traditions respecting defilement first—why?
372. Did Jesus recognize the law of Moses as the law of God? Specify.
373. Did Jesus quote from the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures? i.e. from the Septuagint?
374. Jesus gives an exegesis of Ex. 21:7 in the manner of citing the passage—what is it?
375. Explain in your own words the tradition invented by the Pharisees called "Corban."
376. What was the problem Luther had with the monastic vow?
377. Can you cite an example in your own experience?
378. What does the expression—"making the word of God of none effect" mean? Cf. Gal. 3:17.
379. Can we make the word of God of none effect by our busy schedule of living?

C. CONFLICT OVER THE SOURCE OF DEFILEMENT. 7:14-23

TEXT 7:14-23

"And he called to him the multitude again, and said unto them, Hear me all of you, and understand: there is nothing from without the man, that going into him can defile him: but the things which proceed out of the man are those that defile the man. And when he was entered into the house from the multitude, his disciples asked of him the parable. And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Perceive ye not, that whatsoever from without goeth into the man, it cannot defile him; because it goeth not into his heart, but into his belly, and goeth out into the draught? This he said, making all meats clean. And he said, That which proceedeth out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, evil thoughts proceed, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, covetings, wickednesses, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, railing, pride, foolishness: all these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 7:14-23

337. Why now address His words to the multitude?
338. Is Jesus using the same meaning for "defilement" in vs. 15 as used by the Pharisees in vs. 5? Explain.
339. Just what is included in the word "nothing" as in reference to that which goeth into a man? Surely some things would be excluded such as poisons of various kinds—how are we to understand this?
340. There is a change in the figure from food to thought—from physical to mental—why?
341. Give your own understanding of vs. 16.
342. Did Jesus expect the multitude to understand His words?
343. What did the disciples mean by referring to His words as "a parable"?
344. Was Jesus abrogating the law of clean and unclean meats by what He said in verse 18 and 19? Discuss.
345. In what sense is the word "defile" used by Jesus?
346. Define in your own words the twelve things that defile men.

COMMENT

TIME—Summer A.D. 29.

PLACE—In or near Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 15:10-20.

OUTLINE—1. His message to the multitude, vs. 14-16. 2. His message to His disciples, vs. 17-23.

ANALYSIS

- I. HIS MESSAGE TO THE MULTITUDE, VS. 14-16.
1. The multitude called together.
 2. Nothing going into man defiles—only that which cometh out.
 3. Those who will can understand.
- II. HIS MESSAGE TO HIS DISCIPLES, VS. 17-23.
1. Message request by disciples.
 2. They should have understood His message to the multitude.
 3. Man cannot be morally or spiritually defiled by food because it goes to the belly not the heart—what is left is removed by the body.
 4. This He said to indicate all meats are clean.
 5. What proceeds from the evil heart out of the mouth defiles man.—such as: fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, etc.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. HIS MESSAGE TO THE MULTITUDE. V. 14-16

"When Jesus had exposed the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, He took a bold and significant step. Calling the multitude to Him, He publicly announced that no diet can really pollute the soul; only its own actions and

desires can do that: not that which entereth into the man can defile him, but the things which proceed out of the man.

He does not as yet proclaim the abolition of the law, but He surely declares that it is only temporary, because it is conventional, not rooted in the eternal distinctions between right and wrong, but artificial. And He shows that its time is short indeed, by charging the multitude to understand how limited is its reach, how poor are its effects.

Such teaching, addressed with marked emphasis to the public, the masses, whom the Pharisees despised as ignorant of the law, and cursed, was a defiance indeed. And the natural consequence was an opposition so fierce that He was driven to betake Himself, for the only time, and like Elijah in his extremity, to a Gentile land. And yet there was abundant evidence in the Old Testament itself that the precepts of the law were not the life of souls. David ate the shewbread. The priests profaned the sabbath. Isaiah spiritualized fasting. Zechariah foretold the consecration of the Philistines. Whenever the spiritual energies of the ancient saints received a fresh access, they were seen to strive against and shake off some of the trammels of a literal and servile legalism. The doctrine of Jesus explained and justified what already was felt by the foremost spirits in Israel."

II. HIS MESSAGE TO HIS DISCIPLES, 15, 17-23

When they were alone, "the disciples asked of Him the parable," that is, in other words, the saying which they felt to be deeper than they understood, and full of far-reaching issues. But Jesus rebuked them for not understanding what uncleanness really meant. For Him, defilement was badness, a condition of the soul. And therefore meats could not defile a man, because they did not reach the heart, but only the bodily organs. In so doing, as Mark plainly adds, He made all meats clean, and thus pronounced the doom of Judaism, and the new dispensation of the Spirit. In truth, Paul did little more than expand this memorable saying. "Nothing that goeth into a man can defile him," here is the germ of all the decision about idol meats—"neither if 'one' eat is he the better, neither if he eat not is he the worse." "The things which proceed out of the man are those which defile the man," here is the germ of all the demonstration that love fulfills the law, and that our true need is to be renewed inwardly, so that we may bring forth fruit unto God.

But the true pollution of the man comes from within; and the life is stained because the heart is impure. For from within, out of the heart of men, evil thoughts proceed, like the uncharitable and bitter judgments of His accusers—and thence come also the sensual indulgences which men ascribe to the flesh, but which depraved imaginations excite, and love of God and their neighbour would restrain—and thence are the

sins of violence which men excuse by pleading sudden provocation, whereas the spark led to a conflagration only because the heart was a dry fuel—and thence, plainly enough, come deceit and railing, pride and folly.

It is a hard saying, but our conscience acknowledges the truth of it. We are not the toy of circumstances, but such as we have made ourselves; and our lives would have been pure if the stream had flowed from a pure fountain. However modern sentiment may rejoice in highly coloured pictures of the noble profligate and his pure minded and elegant victim; of the brigand or the border ruffian full of kindness, with a heart as gentle as his hands are red; and however true we may feel it to be that the worst heart may never have betrayed itself by the worst actions, but many that are first shall be last, it still continues to be the fact, and undeniable when we do not sophisticate our judgment, that "all these evil things proceed from within."

It is also true that they "further defile the man." The corruption which already existed in the heart is made worse by passing into action; shame and fear are weakened; the will is confirmed in evil; a gap is opened or widened between the man who commits a new sin, and the virtue on which he has turned his back. Few, alas! are ignorant of the defiling power of a bad action, or even of a sinful thought deliberately harboured, and the harbouring of which is really an action, a decision of the will.

We must remember that it leaves untouched the question, what restrictions may be necessary for men who have depraved and debased their own appetites, until innocent indulgence does reach the heart and pervert it. Hand and foot are innocent, but men there are who cannot enter into life otherwise than halt or maimed. Also it leaves untouched the question, as long as such men exist, how far may I be privileged to share and so to lighten the burden imposed on them by past transgressions? It is surely a noble sign of religious life in our day, that many thousands can say, as the Apostle said, of innocent joys, "Have we not a right? . . . Nevertheless we did not use this right, but we bear all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ."

Nevertheless the rule is absolute: "Whatsoever from without goeth into the man, it cannot defile him." And the Church of Christ is bound to maintain, uncompromised and absolute, the liberty of Christian souls.

Let us not fail to contrast such teaching as this of Jesus with that of our modern materialism.

"The value of meat and drink is perfectly transcendental," says one. "Man is what he eats," says another. But it is enough to make us tremble, to ask what will issue from such teaching if it ever grasps firmly the mind of a single generation. What will become of honesty, when the value of

what may be had by theft is transcendental? How shall armies be persuaded to suffer hardness, and populations to famish within beleaguered walls, when they learn that "man is what he eats," so that his very essence is visibly enfeebled, his personality starved out, as he grows pale and wasted underneath his country's flag? In vain shall such a question strive to keep alive the flame of generous self-devotion. Self-devotion seemed to their fathers to be the noblest attainment; to them it can be only a worn-out form of speech to say that the soul can overcome the flesh. For to them the man is the flesh; he is the resultant of his nourishment; what enters into the mouth makes his character, for it makes him all.

There is that within us all which knows better; which sets against the aphorism, "Man is what he eats;" the text "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he;" which will always spurn the doctrine of the brute, when it is boldly confronted with the doctrine of the Crucified." (*Expositor's Bible, G. A. Chadwick*)

FACT QUESTIONS 7:14-23

380. What was the bold step of Jesus?
381. Did Jesus proclaim the abolition of the law? What did He do?
382. What are some of the evidences that the precepts of the law were not the life of souls?
383. How did Paul use the same principle Jesus laid down?
384. Show how "love fulfills the law."
385. What men attribute to the flesh Jesus attributed to what?
386. How has "modern sentiment" colored the picture of sin?
387. Show how the harbouring of a sinful thought is really an action.
388. There are some who have so debased their own appetites until "innocent indulgence" does reach the heart—what shall be done with them?
389. Contrast the teaching of Jesus here with modern materialism.

SUMMARY

6:1—7:23

The testimony for Jesus furnished by the preceding section, is based chiefly on the opinions which men formed concerning him. The disciples, though slow and hard of heart to realize his true nature, were constrained by the continued demonstration to acknowledge his inherent divine power. The masses of the people who had witnessed his miracles were wild with excitement wherever he went, and they brought to him their sick from every quarter, a practice which could not possibly have been kept up had not his cures been real and unfailling. His enemies, though they differed in opinion as to the source of his miraculous power, with one consent acknowledged its reality, and none of them counted him less than a prophet. The strange conceit that he was John the Baptist, or that he was

one of the old prophets raised to life again, attests the struggle of unbelieving minds in trying to solve the problem of his power and of his being. Even the Nazarenes, who, of all his enemies, knew him most intimately and rejected him most scornfully, were constrained to wonder whence he obtained his wisdom and his mighty works. There was only one solution of the problem which was satisfying to the mind, and those alone were satisfied with their own conclusion and rested in it, who believed him to be the Christ and the Son of God. And to this day the men who have rejected this conclusion and have tried to account for the career of Jesus in some other way, have been driven to conceits as baseless and as unreasonable as any of those adopted by the Jews.—*McGarvey*.

C. THE THIRD PERIOD 7:24-9:50

1. THE SYROPHOENICIAN WOMAN. 7:24-30

TEXT 7:24-30

"And from thence he arose, and went away into the borders of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered into a house, and would have no man know it: and he could not be hid. But straightway a woman, whose little daughter had an unclean spirit, having heard of him, came and fell down at his feet. Now the woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by race. And she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. And he said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs. But she answered and saith unto him, Yea, Lord: even the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs. And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter. And she went away unto her house, and found the child laid upon the bed, and the devil gone out."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 7:24-30

347. From where was Jesus going to Tyre and Sidon?
348. Why did Jesus want to be unknown?
349. Give three facts about the woman who came to Jesus at this time.
350. Who are "the children" in vs. 27—who are "the dogs"?
351. Explain the eating the crumbs under the table.
352. What admirable qualities are seen in this woman?
353. What other miracle did Jesus perform at a distance? Cf. Matt. 8:5-13.

COMMENT

TIME—Summer A.D. 29.

PLACE—In the district of Tyre and Sidon.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 15:21-28.

OUTLINE—1. Jesus and His disciples seeks seclusion, vs. 24. 2. A distraught woman seeks help, vs. 25-26. 3. Jesus tests her faith, vs. 27. 4. She answers in faith and humility, vs. 28. 5. Her request is granted, vs. 29, 30.

ANALYSIS

- I. JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES SEEKS SECLUSION, vs. 24.
 1. Leaves Capernaum or near area.
 2. Into the district of Tyre and Sidon.
 3. Into a house to hide from the multitudes.
- II. A DISTRAUGHT WOMAN SEEKS, HELP, vs. 25, 26.
 1. Came immediately upon their entrance into the house.
 2. Came seeking help for her demon-possessed daughter.
 3. Fell at his feet with continual requests.
 4. She was a Greek, a Syrophoenician by race.
- III. JESUS TESTS HER FAITH, vs. 27.
 1. The children (Jews) must first be fed.
 2. It is not right to give the children's bread to dogs. (Gentiles)
- IV. SHE ANSWERS IN FAITH AND HUMILITY, vs. 28.
 1. I agree—you are right.
 2. But even dogs eat crumbs from the children's table.
- V. HER REQUEST IS GRANTED, vs. 29, 30.
 1. Because of your faith and humility your request is granted—your daughter is free.
 2. She went home to find it as He had said.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES SEEK SECLUSION, vs. 24

"*Thence*, i.e. from the place where the foregoing words were uttered. But where was this? The last particular place mentioned was Gennesaret (6,53), but followed by a notice of his visiting "that whole surrounding country" (55), and entering into "villages, cities, and fields" (56.) This may seem to cut off the connection and prevent our ascertaining the locality referred to here. But as *thence* implies a definite place previously mentioned, and as the general statement in 6, 53-56 is incidentally and parenthetically introduced, and relates not so much to what occurred at any one time as to the general and constant practice, as appears from the use of the imperfect tense, it is still most probable that the reference is here to the land (or district) of Gennesaret, or to the neighboring city of Capernaum. *Arising*, standing up, an idiomatic phrase of frequent occurrence in the Greek of the New Testament, and often denoting nothing more than what we mean by starting, setting out, putting one's self in motion, especially though not exclusively in reference to journeys. *Went*, or more exactly *went away*, i.e. withdrew, retreated (Matt. 15, 21), from the malice of his enemies, as some suppose, or as others, from the crowd and bustle even of his friends and followers. It is probable, however, that a higher and more important motive led to this retreat, to wit,

the purpose to evince by one act of his public life that, though his personal ministry was to the Jews (see below, on v. 27, and compare Matt. 15:24. Rom. 15, 8), his saving benefits were also for the Gentiles. It is important to remember that these movements were not made at random or fortuitously brought about, as infidel interpreters delight to represent, and some of their believing admirers do not venture to deny, but deliberately ordered in accordance with a definite design, the reality of which is not affected by our being able or unable everywhere to trace it in the history. *Into* (not merely *to* or *towards*, which would be otherwise expressed) *the borders*, a compounded form of the word used twice in v. 31 below, and not applied like it to all contained within the bounds, but to the bounds themselves, in which specific sense it is employed by Xenophon, Thucydides, and Plato, who speaks of the bounds (or limits) of the philosopher and politician. The Greek word is properly an adjective, and means bordering or frontier parts (Matt. 15, 21.) *Tyre and Sidon*, the two great seaports of Phenicia, put for the whole country, which apart from them had no importance. The whole phrase does not mean the region between Tyre and Sidon, but the boundary or frontier between Galilee and Phenicia. *Would* and *could*, as in so many other cases, are not mere auxiliary tenses, but distinct and independent verbs; *he wished* and *he was able*. The construction *he was willing to know no one* (i. e. to make no acquaintance or receive no visit), though grammatically possible, is not so natural or obvious as the common one, *he wished no one to know* (him), or *to know* (it), i. e. his arrival or his presence. To *be hid*, or lie concealed, the Greek verb being active in its form."

II. A DISTRAUGHT WOMAN SEEKS HELP. VS. 25, 26

"The reason that he could not be concealed is now recorded. *For a woman, having heard of him*, i. e. of his arrival now, or of his miracles before; but even in the latter case, the other fact must be supplied. *Whose little daughter* (an affectionate diminutive, used also in 5, 23) *had an unclean spirit*, in the sense repeatedly explained already. It appears from this case, that these demoniacal possessions were not confined to Jews, or to any age or sex. *Coming* (into the house where he was) *and falling at his feet*, the full phrase which occurs in a contracted form above, the act denoting not religious adoration but importunate entreaty.

26. The remarkable circumstance in this case, which in part accounts for its insertion in the history, is that the woman here described was a Gentile, not only by residence but by extraction. A Greek, not in the strict sense, but in the wider one arising from the Macedonian conquests, which diffused the Greek civilization through the whole of western Asia, so that in the later Jewish dialect, Greek was substantially synonymous

with Gentile, even where the language was not actually spoken, as it may have been in this case. A *Syrophenician*, so called either in distinction from the Libyophenicians in Africa, or because Phenicia, as well as Palestine, belonged to the great Roman province of Syria. Both countries also had been peopled by the sons of Canaan, so that this woman was at once a Greek, a Syrophenician, and a Canaanite (Matt. 15:22.) By *nation*, race, extraction, birth. (Compare Acts 4, 36. 13, 26. 18, 24, Phil. 3, 5.) *Asked*, in the secondary sense of *begged*, and therefore followed by *that*, and not by *whether*. (Compare Luke 4, 38.) *Cast forth the devil, or expel the demon.*" (J. A. Alexander)

III. JESUS TESTS HER FAITH, VS. 27

"Another singularity of this case, which suggests a further reason for its being so minutely stated, is our Lord's refusal to perform the miracle, of which this is the first and only instance upon record. Even here, however, it was not an absolute and permanent refusal, but a relative and temporary one, designed to answer an important purpose, both in its occurrence and in the historical account of it. *Let*, or more emphatically, *let alone* (implying an untimely interference), suffer or permit, the same verb which we have already had in different applications. *Filled*, sated, satisfied, the same verb as in 6, 42, and there explained. *Meet*, i.e. suitable, becoming, handsome, which approaches nearest to the strict sense of the Greek word, namely, *fair* or *beautiful*, though commonly applied in Scripture to excellence or beauty of a moral kind. *To take*, not pleonastic, as it often is in vulgar English, but *to take away* from them and bestow it upon others. *The children's bread*, the bread intended and provided for them, and when actually given belonging to them. *Dogs*, a diminutive supposed by some to be contemptuous, like *whelps*, or *puppies*, but by others an expression of affectionate familiarity, like *little daughter* (A Greek word of the same form) in vs. 25. This question is connected with another, as to the sense in which dogs are mentioned here at all, whether simply in allusion to the wild gregarious oriental dog, regarded as an impure and ferocious beast, or to the classical and modern European notion of the dog as a domesticated animal, the humble companion and faithful friend of man. The objection to the former explanation is not only its revolting harshness and the ease with which the same idea might have been expressed in a less unusual manner, but the obvious relation here supposed between the children and the dogs, as at and under the same table, and belonging as it were to the same household. John, it is true, uses dogs in the offensive sense first mentioned; but his language is "without are dogs" (Rev. 22, 15), apparently referring to the homeless dogs which prowl through the streets of eastern cities (compare Ps. 22, 20. 59, 6. Matt. 7, 6. Phil. 3, 2); but here the dogs are

represented as within, and fed beneath their master's table. The beauty of our Saviour's figure would be therefore marred by understanding what he says of savage animals, without relation or attachment to mankind. *Cast*, throw away, a term implying waste of the material as well as some contempt of the recipient. Like most of our Lord's parables or illustrations from analogy, this exquisite similitude is drawn from the most familiar habits of domestic life, and still comes home to the experience of thousands."

IV. SHE ANSWERS IN FAITH AND HUMILITY. VS. 28

"28. There is no dispute as to the meaning of this admirable answer, which might almost be applauded for its wit, if Christ himself had not ascribed to it a higher merit, as an evidence of signal faith, combined with a humility no less remarkable. There is, however, some dispute as to its form, particularly that of the first clause, which some explain as a denial of what he had said, and others more correctly as a partial affirmation or assent, but followed by a partial contradiction, as in our translation. The best philological interpreters are now agreed that *yet* is not a correct version of the Greek phrase, which can only mean agreeably to usage, *for* or *for even*. The meaning of the answer then will be, 'Yes, Lord (or Sir), it is true that it would not be becoming to deprive the children of their food, in order to supply the dogs; for these are not to eat the children's bread, but the crumbs (or fragments) falling from the table.' The whole is therefore an assent to what our Lord had said, including his description of the Gentiles (Matt. 15, 24) as the dogs beneath the table, and a thankful consent to occupy that place and to partake of that inferior provision. *Of* (literally *from*) *the crumbs* is not here a partitive expression, as it sometimes is, but simply indicates the source from which the nourishment is drawn. The idea suggested by an ancient and adopted by a modern writer, that the word translated *crumbs* here means the pieces of bread which the ancients used as napkins, is not only a gratuitous refinement, but a needless variation from the usage of the word, which is a regular diminutive of one itself denoting a crumb, bit, or morsel, especially of bread. *Children* is also a diminutive, the same with that in 5, 39-41, and entirely distinct in form, though not in meaning, from the one here used in the preceding verse."

V. HER REQUEST IS GRANTED. VS. 29, 30

"29. *For* (the sake of, on account of) *this word* (saying, speech, or answer), *go thy way* (i.e. in modern English, *go away*, depart), perhaps to be taken as an abbreviation of the full phrase, *go in peace* (or into peace) employed above in 5, 34, and there explained. The merit of her answer was its faith (Matt. 15, 28), to which her whole request was granted instantaneously, the demon having actually left her child when

these gracious words were uttered. Now as this faith was the gift of Christ himself, there could neither be surprise on his part, nor legal merit upon hers, but only a benignant recognition of his own work in her heart, which his discouraging reception of her prayer at first had served both to strengthen and illustrate, and was therefore no more unkind than the similar processes continually going on in true believers, though of course unknown to the experience of those skeptical interpreters, who either sneer at this as cruel treatment of a distressed mother, or assume a real change of purpose wrought in Christ by her persistent importunity.

30. This is merely a distinct historical statement of the fact that she found the Saviour's declaration verified on reaching home, *the demon* (actually) *gone out and the daughter laid upon the bed*, or rather *thrown* there (as the Greek word strictly means) by the fiend at his departure, so that her mother found her just as he had left her. This removes all appearance of departure from the general rule previously laid down, and derived by induction from the history at large, that in cases of miraculous restoration there was no protracted convalescence, but an instantaneous return to ordinary occupations. Had this been a case of mere corporeal healing or resuscitation, the effect would probably have been the same as in the cases just referred to. But the miracle was here one of dispossession, and this was no doubt sudden and complete; for the bodily exhaustion which ensued was not a remnant of the previous disease, or even a transition from an abnormal to a normal state, but rather a decisive indication that the latter had been reinstated as the preternatural excitement which accompanied possession, and was usually symptomatic of it (see above, on 5, 5), would not have allowed her to lie quietly upon her bed, the sight of which recumbent posture must have satisfied the mother instantly, not that her daughter was recovering, but that she was recovered, from her fearful preternatural disorder. In recording this most interesting miracle, Mark treats it as an instance of extraordinary faith, without making prominent its bearing on our Lord's relation to the Jews and Gentiles, which belongs therefore rather to the exposition of the parallel account in Matthew (15, 21-28.)" (*J. A. Alexander*)

FACT QUESTIONS 7:24-30

390. "From thence" refers to what place?
391. How were the movements of the Saviour decided?
392. What is meant by the word "borders" of Tyre and Sidon?
393. What was the probable purpose in Jesus' desire to be hid?
394. Just what did the woman do when she came into the house where Jesus was staying?
395. In what sense was this woman a "Greek"? In what sense a "Canaanite"?

396. How is the word "take" used in reference to the children's bread?
 397. In what sense was the word "dogs" used by our Lord?
 398. Did the woman agree with Jesus in the evaluation of children and dogs? What were the crumbs?
 399. When did the demon leave the daughter?
 400. Did Jesus change His purpose with the woman because of her begging?
 401. Was the child laid out on the bed by friends or the demon—explain.
 402. Was there ever any period of convalescence in the healings of Jesus?

2. HEALING A DEAF MUTE 7:31-37

TEXT 7:31-37

"And again he went out from the borders of Tyre, and came through Sidon unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the borders of Decapolis. And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to lay his hand upon him. And he took him aside from the multitude privately, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat, and touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And his ears were opened, and the bond of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it. And they were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh even the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 7:31-37

354. Please trace on the map the route of Jesus on this occasion.
 355. What is the meaning of the word "Decapolis"? How used here?
 356. Who brought the deaf mute to Jesus?
 357. Why did Jesus take him away from the multitude—please attempt an answer.
 358. How would this deaf-mute feel as Jesus took Him to Himself?
 359. Into whose ears does Jesus place His fingers?—into His own or into the deaf-mute? Why do this? Was this sign language?
 360. Please notice the actions of Jesus and remember they were given for the benefit of the deaf-mute—the deaf-mute was intently watching the actions and expressions of Jesus—each action spoke to him—what did they say?
 361. Did the deaf-mute hear the word—"Ephphatha"?
 362. Why charge them that they should tell no man?
 363. Who gave voice to the thought "He hath done all things well"?

COMMENT

TIME—Summer A.D. 29.

PLACE—Tyre—Sidon—Decapolis.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Only Mark records this incident.

OUTLINE—1. The place of the healing, vs. 31. 2. The man to be healed, vs. 32. 3. Preparations for healing, vs. 33, 34a. 4. The healing and results, 34b-37.

ANALYSIS

I. THE PLACE OF HEALING, VS. 31.

1. Journeyed from the borders of Tyre and Sidon.
2. Through Sidon to the shore of Galilee.
3. Into the midst of the district of Decapolis.

II. THE MAN TO BE HEALED, VS. 32.

1. Brought by his friends.
2. Deaf with a serious speech impediment.
3. Begged Jesus to lay His hands upon him.

III. PREPARATIONS FOR HEALING, 33-34a.

1. Jesus took him aside from the multitude unto himself.
2. Jesus placed His fingers in the ears of the man.
3. Spat on the ground and touched the man's tongue.
4. Looked up to heaven and sighed.

IV. THE HEALING AND RESULTS, 34b-37.

1. He was healed when Jesus said "Ephphatha" or "Be opened."
2. Ears were opened—tongue was loosened—he spoke plainly.
3. Jesus strongly urged them to tell no man about this—the more He urged them the more they did publish it.
4. They were beyond measure astonished and said, "He hath done all things well."

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. THE PLACE OF HEALING.

"31. According to the text adopted by the revisers, the course of the journey is here quite definitely marked out: "And again he went out from the borders" (region) "of Tyre, and came through Sidon unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the borders" (region) "of Decapolis." That he visited the city of Tyre itself is not affirmed, but from the course of the journey it seems probable. He did pass through Sidon, which lay, like Tyre, on the shore of the Mediterranean. From Capernaum to Tyre may have been thirty English miles, and from Tyre to Sidon twenty more. Between the two cities were Zarephath (called Sarepta in Luke 4:26), where Elijah was preserved alive in famine and restored the widow's son to life (1 Kings 17). His alluding to the event in the synagogue at Nazareth is enough to assure us that our Lord did not pass the spot without remembering again how it was a Gentile widow to whom the prophet was sent. From Sidon he turned south-eastward, and crossed the upper Jordan, and came down on the eastern side. But he did not

merely make the journey downward along the river; he appears to have extended his tour still eastward—we cannot tell how far—through some part of the region known as Decapolis, probably visiting some of the cities from which that region took its name. The reasons that determined the route, of course, cannot be ascertained. Thus he made his way down to the Sea of Galilee, reaching it somewhere on the eastern side. The limits of Decapolis are somewhat uncertain, but its extent was such that his journey may have taken him farther south than his destination; so that it is impossible to tell from what direction he approached the lake or what point of its shore he probably first touched. Of course the length of the journey cannot be measured; but it can scarcely have been, from Capernaum back to the lake, less than one hundred and fifty English miles, and it may have been more. On the east as well as on the north this was a tour into heathen territory, but in no part, so far as we can judge, was it a tour of missionary activity. It was rather an episode in his ministry when he was alone with his disciples. By comparison with Matthew it appears that this miracle was wrought, most probably, on some "mountain" near the lake, where many were gathered about him."

II. THE MAN TO BE HEALED.

"32. *They bring unto him one that was deaf.* The adjective literally means "stricken," or "smitten" (*kophos*, from the verb *kopto*, "to strike"); the thought is that the person has been smitten in some of the organs of sensation, so as to be deprived of power. Sometimes it is the organs of speech that are thus conceived of as smitten, and the word then means "dumb;" sometimes it is the organs of hearing, and it then means "deaf," as here. The other descriptive word (*mogilalos*) means "speaking with difficulty;" not "speechless" (*alalos*), as in verse 37. It is used here alone in the New Testament. It cannot be smoothly rendered without paraphrase, and *had an impediment in his speech* represents it well. Yet the word is used broadly for "dumb" in the LXX. (Isa. 35:6).—The great healer was asked to put his hand on the man; so Matt. 9:18: "But come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live." But now, as then, the great Healer had a way of his own."

III. PREPARATIONS FOR HEALING.

"33, 34. Three peculiarities appear in this act of healing—the privacy of the transaction, the use of signs and physical media, and the unusual vocal utterances of the Healer. These peculiarities all appear again in the other miracle in chap. 8:22-26, already alluded to. In studying them in this case it is to be remembered that this is the only detailed report that we possess of the healing of a deaf man; and, although we may not be justified in inferring that all healings of the deaf resembled this, we may find in the peculiar method now adopted a special significance in con-

nection with the nature of the affliction that was to be removed. In healing the blind, Jesus, so far as we know, always made some appeal to the senses and powers of which the afflicted ones were possessed, drawing out their faith by word or touch or by requiring the performance of some act. (See Matt. 9:29; Mark 8:23; 10:49; John 9:6). So, usually, in healing the lame and helpless. (See John 5:6-8; Mark 3:3; Luke 17:14.) In the case of a deaf man words would be of no avail; and if any such appeal was to be made, it must be done by signs. In the present case Jesus probably saw in the man himself some reason for judging it best that the cure should be private. The withdrawal from the crowd would impress him, though he could not hear its tumult, with a sense of solemnity. Perhaps Jesus saw in him a vanity that would render anything like a public act of healing hurtful to him. In any case, it was a solemn and touching experience to be alone, or almost alone, with Jesus to be healed.—As for the signs and the physical media, they were such as he could well understand. Jesus *put his fingers into his ears*. Not a mere touch, but an insertion—a sign of the impartation or transference of something from one person to the other, with reference now to the powerless organs of hearing. This was the laying on of his hand that had been asked for, made definite, appropriate, and instructive by his wisdom. Then *he spit, and touched his tongue*—i.e. touched the man's tongue with a finger perhaps moistened with his own saliva—another sign of the transference of something from himself to the afflicted man, this time with reference to his injured organs of speech. Then he stood *looking up to heaven*, to indicate that this was an act that depended upon a heavenly power—an act, indeed, of Heaven upon the earth. Of course there had been no opportunity, because no possibility, of preaching to the man, and in his ignorance he may easily have supposed that this was some influence of a magical kind. He may not have known to what power he was submitting himself, and the reverent heavenward look of Jesus may have been intended silently to lift his heart and faith to God. How better could he show a deaf man that he was receiving a gift from above? Then *he sighed*, or rather, "groaned." The word is not used elsewhere of him, but it is found in Rom. 8:23 and 2 Cor. 5:2, where evidently no less a word than "groan" is needed to represent its meaning. This was no artificial utterance intended for effect: it was a spontaneous utterance of genuine sorrow in sympathy with human suffering. It came from the same source as the tears at the grave of Lazarus. Although the man could not hear the groan, he might be aware of it, for doubtless his eyes were busy in observing what his Benefactor was doing; and if he was aware of it, he must have felt, however dimly, that there was a deep and genuine sympathy in the Healer's heart. This could be no magician's performance to him: this was a deed of love. And then

at last he spoke; and, though the man might not hear the word he may have known, as before, that it was spoken."

IV. THE HEALING AND RESULTS.

"34b. *Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.* Here, as in chap. 5:41, Mark has preserved the very word in the Aramaic tongue that fell from the lips of Jesus. No other evangelist has done this, except in the case of the utterance on the cross, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani." In the other case (chap. 5:41) the Aramaic words that Mark preserves were spoken when of the disciples only Peter, James, and John were present; and it is not unlikely that the same special three were the only auditors at this time also. Whether others were present or not, this must certainly have come down to us from one who heard it. The *Ephphatha, Be opened*, was addressed to the man with reference to his organs of sense, which are conceived of as closed.

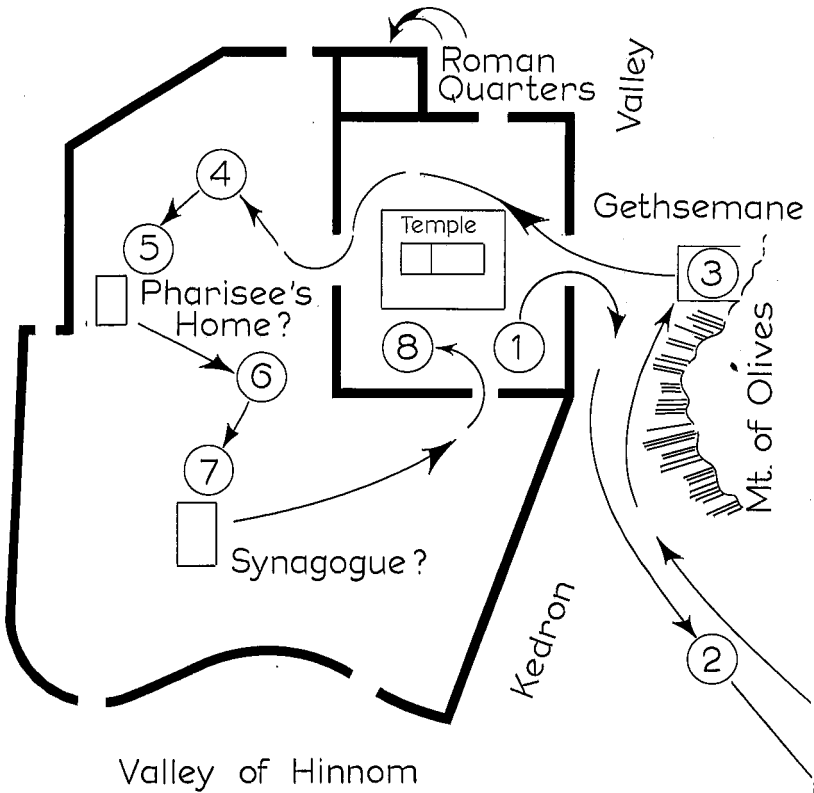
35. It would seem that the moment of the *Ephphatha* was the moment of the change. Of course we know that the preceding parts of the transaction were in no sense necessary to the cure, and were introduced for the sake of the man himself; and we may judge that he received no new power of speech or hearing until the symbolic or pictorial part was finished and the word was spoken.—The cure itself is detailed in Mark's peculiar way. The revisers omit *straightway*, and thus represent the result: "And his ears were opened, and the bond of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain," or rightly, normally.—*The string of his tongue* is an unfortunate phrase, from which a reader might suppose that the man was in some way tongue-tied. But the reference is merely to the bond or restraint that was upon his powers of speech, and there is no indication as to the nature of that restraint.—But now the organs of sense were *opened*, and henceforth all was done (*orthos*) in the natural or normal way.

It is worth while to look back at this act and observe how beautifully our Lord brought to light all that was essential in a work of healing. Perhaps the symbolic action was all the more beautiful, because it must be made to do the whole work of words. Two signs of the transferring of power from himself to the afflicted—the upward look to heaven, to indicate the source of power; the deep sigh or groan of genuine sympathy with the suffering that is to be removed—and the word of power by which the deed is done, and the bond is broken. A beautiful story for deaf-mutes.

36, 37. He charged them. Not merely the man himself, but the people who were around. Of course they would quickly know what had been done, and must be included in his prohibition. Often did he thus plead for silence about his works (as in chap. 3:12 and 5:43), and now, while

MAP NO. 5—THIRD YEAR, LATER JUDEAN MINISTRY (about 3 months)

1. Temple; Feast of Tabernacles; Sermons on Light of World; Freedom; Abraham's Children; Man born blind healed; Good Shepherd; 70 sent out to evangelize, Jn. 7-8-9-10 & Lk. 10
2. Bethany; Jesus, Mary & Martha, Lk. 10
3. Place of Prayer; Discourse on Prayer, Lk. 11
4. Place unknown; charged with being in league with Satan, Lk. 11
5. Dining in Pharisee's home; denounces Pharisaism, Lk. 11
6. Before multitudes of 1000's Great evangelistic appeals on Hypocrisy, Anxiety, Covetousness, Lk. 12-13
7. In a Synagogue; heals woman bowed double; controversy over healing on the Sabbath, Lk. 13
8. Feast of Dedication (December); Jews seek to kill Jesus, Jn. 10



he was in search of retirement and quietness, the request was especially to be expected. But, as usual, it was all in vain: the gratitude of the healed and the wonder of the spectators were too strong, and the story must be told. It seems probable that this miracle was the means of bringing on the great period of thronging that is described in Matt. 15:30, 31. Mark's expressions in description of the abundant proclamation and the excessive amazement are of the very strongest character.—The final testimony of praise seems to have been called out by the many healings that took place, though first suggested by the one. *He hath done all things well* (perfect tense)—he has been gracious everywhere and successful in everything—*he maketh* (present tense) *both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.*—*The dumb.* A stronger word than in verse 32." (*W. N. Clarke*)

FACT QUESTIONS 7:31-37

403. Read Matt. 15:29-31 and relate it to this record in Mark.
404. Show how Mark 8:22-26 compares with this incident.
405. How far from Capernaum to Tyre?; from Tyre to Sidon? What place was between the two cities?
406. What was the total distance traveled from Capernaum to the place of the healing?
407. They bring to him one that was "stricken"—explain the word "stricken" as here used.
408. The man to be healed could speak—but how?
409. Jesus never healed without a genuine personal concern for the one to be healed (if they were present)—show how he adapted His words and actions to the one to be healed—with the blind; the lame; the deaf.
410. What did the deaf-mute think when Jesus looked to heaven?
411. What is a better word than "sigh" in reference to Jesus? Why?
412. Why preserve the very word Jesus spoke?
413. The man was in no way "tongue-tied"—how do we know?
414. This is a beautiful story for deaf-mutes—show how.
415. Why would His request for quietness about His work be especially expected at this time and place?
416. Read Matt. 15:30, 31 and show the relation to this incident.

3. FEEDING THE FOUR THOUSAND. 8:1-10

TEXT 8:1-10

"In those days, when there was again a great multitude, and they had nothing to eat, he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and if I send them away fasting to their home, they will faint in the way; and some of them are come from far. And his disciples answered him, Whence shall one be able to fill

these men with bread here in a desert place? And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? and they said, Seven, And he commandeth the multitude to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and having given thanks, he brake, and gave to his disciples, to set before them; and they set them before the multitude. And they had a few small fishes: and having blessed them, he commanded to set these also before them. And they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of broken pieces that remained over, seven baskets. And they were about four thousand: and he sent them away. And straightway he entered into the boat with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 8:1-10

364. Where did the feeding of the four thousand take place?
365. For how many days had some in the multitude been without food? What does this indicate as to interest in what Jesus was teaching?
366. Please read the record of the feeding of the five thousand and show at least three contrasts in the comparison of the two incidents.
367. Note the use of the term fasting in vs. 3. Why worry about them?
368. Why refer to the district of Decapolis as a "desert place."
369. Does the reply of the disciples in vs. 4 indicate any knowledge of a previous multiplying of loaves? Please read the context carefully.
370. Did the apostles know what Jesus was going to do before He did it? i.e. with the loaves and the people?
371. Just what type of bread did they have?
372. What order did Jesus give to the multitude?
373. Was it the prayer of thanks for the loaves and fish that resulted in the multiplying of them in the hands of Jesus?
374. Just how many small flat loaves would it take to feed 4,000? How many small fish?—please estimate.
375. Consider the fact that all ate until they were "filled" not just a little, but until they were filled. What does this mean to you?
376. Why gather up the fragments?
377. Were there actually more than 4,000 fed? Explain.
378. Had Jesus arrived in a boat? Where was the miracle performed? Cf. 7:31; Matt. 15:32-38.

COMMENT

TIME—Summer A.D. 29.

PLACE—In Decapolis.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 15:32-38.

OUTLINE—1. The occasion for the miracle, vs. 1. 2. The need for the miracle, vs. 2, 3. 3. The disciples and the miracle, vs. 4, 5. 4. Preparation for the miracle, vs. 6a. 5. The miracle, vs. 6b, 7. 6. The results of the miracle, vs. 8-10.

ANALYSIS

- I. THE OCCASION FOR THE MIRACLE, vs. 1.
 - 1. In the days of Jesus' time in Decapolis.
 - 2. A great multitude had gathered.
 - 3. They had nothing to eat.
- II. THE NEED FOR THE MIRACLE, vs. 2, 3.
 - 1. Three days without food.
 - 2. If sent home they would faint on the way.
- III. THE DISCIPLES AND THE MIRACLE, vs. 4, 5.
 - 1. How shall such a multitude be filled?
 - 2. We have seven loaves.
- IV. PREPARATION FOR THE MIRACLE, vs. 6a.
 - 1. Sit down in anticipation of eating.
 - 2. Gave thanks for the loaves.
- V. THE MIRACLE, 6b, 7.
 - 1. By power of His own will he created enough loaves for the multitude.
 - 2. The apostles were the waiters.
 - 3. Also blessed and created fish for the multitude.
- VI. THE RESULTS OF THE MIRACLE, vs. 8-10.
 - 1. They ate and were filled.
 - 2. Seven large baskets of fragments gathered.
 - 3. They were dismissed.
 - 4. Jesus and His disciples departed in a boat for Dalmanutha.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. THE OCCASION FOR THE MIRACLE.

"1. "In those days the multitude being very great," etc. We now come to what is called "The Second Miracle of the loaves." From the fact that we have two miracles performed almost under the same circumstances, and in the same manner, and the accompanying details very much resembling one another in both cases, we cannot but gather that we have here a peculiar phase of Christ's love and power presented to us, and by its repetition commended very urgently to our notice, so that we should be very anxious to realize all that is taught us in these two accounts. It would seem at first sight impossible to do more than repeat what has been before remarked on the two miracles, as related in St. Matthew, and on the first one which has already been fully described in Mark, but it is not so. We have yet many fragments to gather up if nothing is to be lost. In the first place, then, the Lord here takes the initiative."

II. THE NEED FOR THE MIRACLE.

"2, 3. 'I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days,' etc. In the former miracle He felt equal compassion

for the multitude, but did not express it. The disciples urge upon Him to send them away, and then He, as it were, invites them to suggest some exercise of the mighty power which they had so repeatedly seen put forth by Him. But they can suggest nothing except what is natural, that they should be dismissed to take care of themselves. Now the Lord Himself begins: "I have compassion on the multitude, they have been with me three days. If I send them to their own houses, they will faint by the way," etc. Here was the hint given that they should ask Him to do as He had done just before, but apparently not a thought of the former mighty work presented itself. They seem to have altogether forgotten it."

III. THE DISCIPLES AND THE MIRACLE.

"4. 'And his disciples answered him, From whence,' etc. We marvel at (must not the word be said?) this stupidity, but is it not natural? This surprise arises out of our ignorance of man's heart, of our own hearts, and of the deep root of unbelief therein. "It is ever more thus in times of difficulty and distress. All former deliverances are in danger of being forgotten, the mighty interpositions of God's hand in former passages of men's lives fall out of their memories. Each new difficulty appears insurmountable, as one from which there is no extrication; at each recurring necessity it seems as though the wonders of God's grace are exhausted, and have come to an end. God may have diverted the Red Sea for Israel, yet no sooner are they on the other side than, because there are no waters to drink, they murmur against Moses, and count that they must perish through thirst (Exod. xvii. 1-7), crying 'Is the Lord amongst us or not?' Or, to adduce a still nearer parallel, once already the Lord had covered the camp with quails (Exod. xvi. 13), yet for all this, even Moses himself cannot believe that He will provide flesh for all that multitude." (*Trench*)

But the backwardness of the Apostles to believe in Christ's readiness to feed the multitudes miraculously, is in strong contrast with their readiness to believe in His powers of healing. They had but a short time before urged the Lord to grant the request of the Syrophenician woman, when He seemed unwilling. May it not, in part, have arisen from the infrequency of this sort of miracle? As *Theophylact* says, "He did not always work miracles for the feeding of the multitude, lest they should follow Him for the sake of food."

And may there not be also something typical, something prophetic, about it? Do not many true disciples of the Lord in these days, who thankfully acknowledge the Lord's power to cleanse and heal, seem to have their eyes closed to the supernatural or eucharistic feeding, of which this miracle is so remarkable an adumbration?

Again, do we not learn from this miracle how Christ will exercise acts of special providence to help and succour those who are following

Him? Is there any life of a poor humble Christian which does not contain some account of interpositions almost supernatural in favour of those who have given up all to follow Him? *Dean Hook*, in a lecture on this very miracle, gives a striking one: "There was an individual who gave up a profitable employment, acting under advice, and not from the mere caprice of his own judgment, because he thought, taking his temptations into account, he could not follow it without peril to his soul. And after many reverses he was reduced to such a state of distress, that the last morsel in the house had been consumed, and he had not bread to give his children. His faith did not, however, forsake him; and when his distress was at the height, he received a visit from one who called to pay him a debt he had never hoped to recover, but the payment of which enabled him to support his family until he again obtained employment." And he adds, "Many a similar tale can our poorer brethren tell."

5. 'And he asked them, How many loaves have ye?' etc. This question was not for information. He knew well how many they had, but he asked it that there should be no mistake about the miraculous nature of the feeding. There were two more loaves and a somewhat smaller multitude than on the former occasion, but this does not, in the smallest degree, affect the character of the mighty work."

IV. PREPARATION FOR THE MIRACLE.

"6. 'And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground,' etc. From the fact that it is expressly mentioned in the account of the former miracle, that there was much grass in the place, and that they sat by companies on the green grass, it has been argued with much probability that this second miracle took place at a much later time in the year, when the grass had been dried up by the scorching rays of the sun.

'And gave thanks.' We have before noticed the symbolical character of this "giving thanks" as foreshadowing the Eucharistic Benediction; but we learn also from it a more homely lesson, how that for all food, whenever received, thanks should be rendered, and we also learn how we ought to be thankful for all means and opportunities of doing good. The thanks of the Lord would be tendered to His father not only in anticipation of the actual food soon to be so marvellously provided, but for the opportunity of showing forth the Divine glory and power, and also of relieving the wants of so many who were following Him for a good purpose.

'And gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples,' etc. From the circumstantiality with which these details are given in each of the four accounts, it is clear that there is some particular lesson which the Lord and His Spirit would have us draw from this. That lesson seems to be that the true feeding in the Church of Christ is not that each man should

take for himself, but that all that can be called food is to be given through ministerial intervention."

V. THE MIRACLE.

"7. And they had a few small fishes . . . seven baskets . . . sent them away. From the mention of a few small fishes, it seems evident that the disciples gave all their provisions of every kind for the sustenance of the multitude; but notwithstanding this they were not in want, for a much larger quantity of fragments or broken pieces was taken up than in the case of the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand: the word here used signifying hampers or panniers, rather than baskets. The same word is used to denote the basket in which St. Paul was let down from the walls of Damascus (2 Cor. 11:33)."

VI. THE RESULTS OF THE MIRACLE.

"10. 'And straightway he entered into a ship . . . parts of Dalmanutha.' *Dr. Thomson*, in "The Land and the Book," thinks that he can identify this place with a certain Dalhamia, about half-way down on the western side of the Lake. It is about two miles south of El Medjet, which has been supposed to be the site of the ancient Magdala (or Magadan) (Matt. 15:39)." (*M. F. Sadler*)

FACT QUESTIONS 8:1-10

417. What difference would it make if we did feel the two accounts of feeding the multitudes were actually two versions of the same event?
418. Please show at least three distinct differences in the two records.
419. Why did the disciples ask the question of vs. 4? Please attempt an answer.
420. Jesus did not ask the disciples to give them to eat, (as he did before)—What does this mean?
421. At what point in the events did the miracle occur?
422. Which baskets were the largest—the ones here or the ones in the feeding of the 5,000?
423. What type of miracle occurred here?
424. Locate Dalmanutha on the map.

4. THE DEMAND FOR A SIGN 8:11-13

TEXT 8:11-13

"And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation. And he left them, and again entering into the boat departed to the other side."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 8:11-13

379. What type of sign did the Pharisees want?

380. What test or trial was this to Jesus?
 381. What emotion filled the Saviour's heart as He "sighed deeply"?
 382. Read Matt. 16:1-4 for a little more complete account of this.
 383. Show how unreasonable was this request for a sign.
 384. Was Jesus disappointed as He turned to get in the boat to go across the lake? Discuss.

COMMENT

TIME—Summer A.D. 29.

PLACE—Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 15:39—16:4.

OUTLINE—1. The dispute and question, vs. 11. 2. The disappointment and refusal, vs. 12. 3. The departure, vs. 13.

ANALYSIS

- I. THE DISPUTE AND QUESTION, VS. 11.
 1. The Pharisees sought Him out.
 2. Disputed and sought a sign from heaven.
 3. This was only to justify themselves.
- II. THE DISAPPOINTMENT AND REFUSAL, VS. 12.
 1. Sighed deeply from the bottom of His heart.
 2. Why seek a sign when it is here.
 3. No sign such as you seek will be given.
- III. THE DEPARTURE, VS. 13.
 1. Left them.
 2. Once again sought seclusion to instruct His apostles.
 3. Sailed from Capernaum eastward.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. THE DISPUTE AND QUESTION.

"11. *The Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him.*—i.e. came out from their homes when they heard that he was there. By some it is assumed that he went beyond Dalmanutha to Capernaum, and that this interview took place there; but the intension of both evangelists apparently was to tell what happened almost as he had landed. Hence these were in all probability Pharisees of Dalmanutha. Matthew associates Sadducees with them.—*Seeking of him a sign from heaven.* See similar requests in John 2:18; Matt. 12:38; John 6:30, all previous to this. What they asked for was something like the manna (so, expressly, in John 6:31), or thunder from a clear sky (1 Sam. 12:18), or fire from heaven, such as came to Elijah (1 Kings 18), or the signs of Joel 2:30, 31. There was a popular impression that, although miracles upon the earth might be spurious and deceptive, signs from heaven could not be counterfeited. It was expected that they would accompany the coming of the Messiah, and therefore Jesus was repeatedly asked to fulfill this expectation. If he

was the Christ, they thought he would certainly be able and willing, and even anxious, to give this proof of his claim.—But they were *tempting him*, nevertheless—i.e., as in Matt. 19:3 and Mark 12:13, they were trying to entangle him, to his own injury with the people. They knew well enough that he would not give them a sign from heaven; all the Pharisees in Galilee must have known the great refusal recorded in Matt. 12:39 and the more recent one of John 6. He would not give them the sign, but by repeatedly calling for it they might discredit his claims with the people, who expected it of the Messiah. Since they themselves hated him, they must take all measures to prevent Israel from supposing its hopes to be fulfilled in him; so they would play upon false hopes and studiously repress all spiritual expectations. This was his welcome when he landed again on the soil of Galilee. He had been absent long enough to allow calm thought about him, and had now returned after a few days of gracious working just across the lake. This was his reception—the old wearisome demand of spiritual blindness: *Give us a sign from heaven.*”

II. THE DISAPPOINTMENT AND REFUSAL.

“12. At human misery he sighed (chap. 7:34); at human sin amounting to criminal inability to discern the truth he *sighed deeply in his spirit*.—a touch of personal remembrance peculiar to Mark. This deep sigh, or groan, was the sign of the chafing of his spirit against spiritual barriers. To the physically deaf he could say “Ephphatha,” but not to these spiritually hardened and self-imprisoned Pharisees. What voice could reach them? When the rich young man departed sorrowful, he pointed his disciples to the brighter side, saying, “With God all things are possible.” But in the case of these proud and hardened men he could only sigh, for the gates of spiritual possibility seemed closed.—*Why doth this generation seek after a sign? This generation*, the men of his time, who had the opportunity to know him—why should they ask for a sign? If there was no spiritual recognition of him, the case was hopeless; signs would teach them nothing. He himself was the true Sign from heaven, the living Witness to the present God. If they did not see that he was in the Father and the Father in him, their blindness must remain. Therefore he told them, with his emphatic *verily I say unto you*, that no sign should be given them.—In Matthew three additions are placed here, all exceedingly significant: (1) He contrasts their quickness in detecting signs of coming changes of weather with their slowness in discerning spiritual signs. (2) He traces their lack of perception of a present God to spiritual adultery. The prophets represent Israel as the wife of Jehovah, and often as the unfaithful and adulterous wife. This generation, says Jesus, is thus adulterous; it has broken faith with God, and has become carnal and

unloving. Therefore it has lost all spiritual sense and consciousness of him, and, instead of discerning his holy presence in him whom he hath sent, must be asking for visible signs and portents to certify his nearness. But for the spiritual adultery there would be felt no need of signs. (3) "There shall be no sign given but the sign of the prophet Jonah," of which he had before spoken (Matt. 12:39,40), and which he seems to have wished to keep in their sight as a suggestive lesson, which might possibly awaken some right questionings in their hearts."

III. THE DEPARTURE.

"13. Disheartened and repelled by this reception in "his own country," he abruptly turned back, without going on, as it appears, to Capernaum, and re-embarked to return to the eastern shore. It is little to say that he must have gone in sadness. "He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." We should greatly misread his life if we interpreted such language almost entirely in the light of his latest sufferings. He felt the grief of rejection, not merely as a personal wrong, but more as the rejection of God and goodness and of saving love. Bringing the message of infinite mercy, he must have longed to be accepted; and it could not be other than a constant grief to him that "he came to his own, and his own received him not."

Not more than a few hours at the most does he appear to have remained on the western shore, and now he is again afloat on the lake with his disciples, setting out on another journey alone with them, not to return until they have visited the region of Caesarea Philippi." (*W. N. Clarke*)

FACT QUESTIONS 8:11-13

425. From where did the Pharisees (and Saducees) come?—how soon did they come?
426. Explain just what kind of sign these Pharisees wanted.
427. Did they actually expect a sign? Why ask?
428. How was their spiritual blindness indicated?
429. What two things caused Jesus to sigh?
430. Show how the rich young ruler had more promise than these men.
431. What was the true sign they failed to recognize?
432. What three additional facts are given by Matthew?
433. Show how this incident fulfills John 1:10.

SUMMARY

7:24—8:13

This section contains an account of three more remarkable miracles—the expulsion of a demon from the Gentile woman's daughter; the restoration of speech and hearing to the deaf stammerer; and the feeding of four thousand men with seven barley loaves and a few small fishes. By

these the divine power of Jesus is once more exhibited. The section also exhibits the tenderness of his compassion in his dealing with the Gentile woman and the hungry multitude, and his judicial indignation against hypocrisy in his conversation with the Pharisees. These are attributes of character which, though they do not prove their possessor to have been superhuman, are necessary to that perfection of character which must be found in the Son of God.—*McGarvey*.

5. WARNING AGAINST THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES.

8:14-21

TEXT 8:14-21

“And they forgot to take bread; and they had not in the boat with them more than one loaf. And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. And they reasoned one with another, saying, We have no bread. And Jesus perceiving it saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? do you not perceive, neither understand? have ye your heart hardened? Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? When I brake the five loaves among the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. And when the seven among the four thousand, how many basketfuls of broken pieces took ye up? And they say unto him, Seven. And he said unto them, Do ye not yet understand?”

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 8:14-21

358. Why does Mark mention the fact that they had forgotten to take bread?
386. Why mention at this time “the leaven of the Pharisees”?
387. Define in your own words: The leaven of the Pharisees—the leaven of Herod.
388. Why connect the word leaven with the subject of bread?
389. How did Jesus know of the reasoning of their hearts?
390. Note please the three questions of Jesus in vs. 17—discuss each one as they relate to the apostles—as they relate to us today.
391. Distinguish between the use of the eyes—ears—memory in the process of understanding.
392. Why refer to the feeding of the 5,000 and the 4,000?
393. Do you believe the apostles did understand after Jesus rebuked them?

COMMENT

TIME—Summer A.D. 29.

PLACE—On the lake of Galilee.

PARALLEL ACCOUNT—Matt. 16:5-12.

OUTLINE—1. Forgot to take bread on their trip, vs. 14. 2. Jesus said:

"beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Herod," vs. 15. 3. The disciples thought He referred to their supply of bread, vs. 16. 4. Jesus rebuked them for their lack of spiritual perception, vs. 17, 18. 5. "Why worry about physical bread when I fed 5,000 & 4,000 with a few loaves"? vs. 19, 20. 6. Do you now see *I* refer to something more important than physical bread?, vs. 21.

ANALYSIS

- I. FORGOT TO TAKE BREAD ON THEIR TRIP, VS. 14.
 1. Left in haste.
 2. Had with them in the boat only one loaf.
- II. JESUS SAID: "BEWARE OF THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES AND HEROD," VS. 15.
 1. This was given as an order.
 2. This was given as a warning.
- III. THE DISCIPLES THOUGHT HE REFERRED TO THEIR SUPPLY OF BREAD, VS. 16.
 1. They reasoned or conversed among themselves as to what He meant.
 2. They agreed He must have reference to buying bread from their enemies.
 3. But then this is no danger because we have no bread.
- IV. JESUS REBUKED THEM FOR THEIR LACK OF SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION, VS. 17, 18.
 1. He read their minds.
 2. Why are you worried about your bread supply?; what I have said does not refer to your bread.
 3. Are you still void of depth?
 4. Are you yet without understanding?
 5. Is your heart stone?
 6. What has happened to the eyes, ears, and memory of your heart?
- V. WHY WORRY ABOUT PHYSICAL BREAD WHEN I FED 5,000 AND 4,000 WITH A FEW LOAVES? VS. 19, 20.
 1. When I fed the 5,000 how many baskets were left over?—12.
 2. And how many for the 4,000?—7.
- VI. DO YOU NOW SEE I REFER TO SOMETHING MORE IMPORTANT THAN PHYSICAL BREAD? VS. 21.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. FORGOT TO TAKE BREAD ON THEIR TRIP.

"14. The neglect to take a supply of bread was doubtless the result of their haste in again setting out; and, in that view of the matter, Jesus himself was responsible for it, since he had hurried them away."

understand him well enough to escape such an idea. Here was indeed the unspiritual heart, upon which the spiritual thought seemed almost wasted. More than in the case of his townsmen at Nazareth, he "marvelled because of their unbelief." If Christian teachers find even their brethren slow of perception in spiritual things, they may hear their Master saying to them, in the spirit of John 15:18, "Ye know that they misunderstood me before they misunderstood you."

VI. DO YOU NOW SEE I REFER TO SOMETHING MORE IMPORTANT THAN PHYSICAL BREAD?

"21. In Matthew the final question, "Do ye not yet understand?" is expanded into a direct intimation that the warning did not refer to bread. Matthew adds also that they did at last perceive that he was warning them against the teaching or the principles of the Pharisees and Sadducees. But it is quite certain that they did not take in his full meaning, and that when the subject was dropped he knew that his utterance had not reached its aim. He had had to expend the energy that might have been given to the work of enforcing an idea in the vain effort to get it apprehended, and then to withdraw baffled by the unreceptiveness of his hearers. It was not his method to urge truth upon them faster than they were able to receive it. John 16:12 illustrates his real method: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."—Observe, again, the distinct reference in these questions to the two separate miracles of feeding—a reference which cannot possibly be removed from the passage without utterly destroying one of the most vivid and self-witnessing scenes in the whole Gospel narrative. Observe, again, too, that in referring here to the first miracle Jesus employs the word *cophinus* in mentioning the baskets, and in referring to the second the word *spuris*, preserving the very distinction that has been made in the two narratives of Mark." (W. N. Clarke)

FACT QUESTIONS 8:14-21

434. Who was responsible for the lack of food?
435. What definite indications of an eye-witness do we have in this section?
436. Are we to conclude that Herod was a Sadducee from Matthew's reference to the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees? What are we to conclude?
437. Please explain the distinctive influence of each of these groups; (1) Pharisees (2) Sadducees (3) Herodians.
438. How does the request for a sign from heaven relate to this warning of Jesus?
439. As they reasoned among themselves what conclusion did they form?

440. What is it that testifies to the "absolute originality and truthfulness of the record"?
441. Why was Jesus so sharp with the disciples?
442. What particular attitude in the hearts of the disciples disappointed Jesus the most?
443. When the subject was dropped was Jesus satisfied that His teaching was understood? Discuss.
444. How is the use of the two words for "baskets" as used in this record an indication of two incidents of feeding the multitudes?
6. HEALING THE BLIND MAN OF BETHSAIDA 8:22-26

TEXT 8:22-26

"And they come unto Bethsaida. And they bring to him a blind man, and beseech him to touch him. And they took hold of the blind man by the hand, and brought him out of the village; and when he had spit on his eyes, and laid his hands upon him, he asked him, Seest thou aught? And he looked up, and said, I see men; for I behold them as trees, walking. Then again he laid his hands upon his eyes; and he looked stedfastly, and was restored, and saw all things clearly. And he sent him away to his home, saying, Do not even enter into the village."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 8:22-26

394. Please locate Bethsaida on the map.
395. Who brought the blind man to Jesus?
396. What is meant by the word "beseech"?
397. Why lead the blind man out of the village?
398. Did Jesus actually spit upon the eyes of the blind man? for what purpose?
399. Is this an example of a progressive healing? Discuss.
400. There must have been some purpose in the two stages of the healing—what was it?
401. Did the blind man have faith in order to be healed?
402. Why send the man who was healed away?

COMMENT

TIME—Summer A.D. 29.

PLACE—Bethsaida Julias, on the east bank of the Jordan River where it flows into the Lake of Galilee.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—only in Mark.

OUTLINE—1. A blind man brought to Jesus, vs. 22. 2. The blind man led out of the city for healing, vs. 23a. 3. Two stages of healing, 23b-25. 4. Sent home, vs. 26.

ANALYSIS

- I. A BLIND MAN BROUGHT TO JESUS, VS. 22.
1. They were in Bethsaida Julias.

2. An urgent request made for healing.

II. THE BLIND MAN LED OUT OF THE CITY FOR HEALING, VS. 23A.

1. Jesus led him by the hand.

2. Away from the multitude so the healing would teach the lesson intended.

III. TWO STAGES OF HEALING, 23B-25.

1. Spat on his eyes and laid his hands upon him.

2. Asked: "Do you see anything"?

3. He looked up and saw the disciples in an indistinct manner.

4. Jesus laid his hands upon his eyes—he looked intently and saw clearly.

IV. SENT HOME, VS. 26.

1. He was not from Bethsaida.

2. He was refused permission to return to Bethsaida—sent directly home.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. A BLIND MAN BROUGHT TO JESUS.

"22. Mark here records a miracle not given in the other gospels, one of the very few passages entirely peculiar to him. His reason for inserting it cannot be merely that it followed the dialogue above recorded (vs. 14-21); for he often omits multitudes of miracles in writing of the periods to which they belong. So far as his design can be conjectured, it was probably to illustrate and exemplify still further our Lord's variety of method in the working of his cures, by stating a case (perhaps the only one) in which the cure was gradual. *He cometh*, or, according to the older manuscripts, *they come*, *i.e.* Jesus and his company, the twelve apostles and perhaps some others who attended him from place to place. *To* (or into) *Bethsaida*, or, as a few copies have it, *Bethany*, an obvious error of transcription, probably occasioned by the resemblance of the names, both which are compounded with the Hebrew *beth* (a house or place.) *Bethsaida* is supposed by some to be the town so called in Galilee, the birthplace of Andrew and Peter (John 1, 44); but the best interpreters and highest geographical authorities understand it of Bethsaida in Perea, on the north-east shore of the lake in a solitude near which (or belonging to it) the five thousand were fed. This Bethsaida was distinguished from the other by its Greek or Roman name, *Julias*, which it bore in honour of a daughter of Augustus. *They*, indefinitely, some men, certain persons, otherwise unknown; or more specifically, the man's relatives, friends, neighbours. A *blind (man)*, not one born blind (as in John 9:1), for he knew the shape of trees (see below, on v. 24), but blinded by disease or accident. *Besought*, in Greek *beseech*, the graphic or descriptive present being still continued. *To touch him*, literally, *that*

he would (or still more closely, so that, in order that, he might) *touch him*. These words in the original rather state the motive than the substance of the prayer, a nicety of form without effect upon the meaning yet entitled to attention as an illustration of the difference of idiom. This specific prayer is not a sign of strong but rather of deficient or contracted faith, assuming contact to be necessary to the cure, an error which our Saviour did not think it necessary in the present instance either to reprove or correct."

II. THE BLIND MAN LED OUT OF THE CITY FOR HEALING.

"23b. *And taking, laying hold upon, the hand of the blind (man)*, which in the order of the words in the original, although the construction in the version is grammatical and justified by usage; the sense of course remains the same in either case. *He led him forth out (or outside) of the village*, a term applied with considerable latitude to towns of every size. Out is twice expressed in Greek, once by the compound verb, and once by the adverbial preposition. The reason of this movement has been variously conjectured; some supposing an intention to express displeasure towards the people of the town for reasons now unknown; others a desire to be uninterrupted in the process which was more than commonly protracted. But these and other explanations, which need not be stated, assume that Mark intended to describe this and the following proceedings on our Lord's part as having a distinct significance, whereas he rather means to show how far he was from following a fixed routine, or countenancing the idea that a certain outward form was necessary to the curative effect. Against this error he provided by sometimes doing more, sometimes less, sometimes nothing, in the way of gesture or manipulation, and of all these methods we have instances recorded in the book before us."

III. TWO STAGES OF HEALING.

"23b-25. *Having spit on (or rather into) his eyes*, which some regard as a medicinal appliance, healing virtue being ascribed to the human saliva by *Tacitus, Suetonius, Pliny*, and in various dicta of the Talmud. Others find a symbolical meaning in the transfer of something from the person of the healer to the person of the healed. But the necessity of these conjectures is precluded by the view of the matter just suggested. *And putting (laying or imposing) hands upon him*, as had been requested by his friends (vs. 22). *Asked*; interrogated, questioned. *If he saw* (literally, *sees*, another instance of the graphic present) *ought*, an old word, not yet wholly obsolete, for anything. This pause, as it were, in the midst of the cure, to ask him as to its effect, is so unlike the usual immediate restoration, that it may be confidently reckoned as at least one reason for Mark's giving a detailed account of this case.

And looking up, raising his eyes, trying to use them. The particle with which the Greek verb is compounded sometimes denotes upward motion, sometimes repetition. Hence the verb itself may either mean to *look up* or to *see again*, but the latter, though preferred by some interpreters, is a less natural anticipation of what follows in the next verse. The sensations of the blind man, on his first attempt to see again, are strangely but expressively described in his own language, the peculiarity of which, however, is exaggerated to the English reader by an equivocal construction, quite unknown to the original, and only partially removed by careful punctuation in the version. It is probably one of the most common and inveterate misapprehensions of a scriptural expression, that the participle *walking* here agrees with trees, and that the blind man intended to describe his partially restored sight by saying that the men around him were like walking trees. But in Greek there is and can be no such ambiguity, the concord being there determined, not by the position of the words, which is far more free and discretionary than with us, but by their form or termination, which distinguishes their gender and requires *walking* to agree with *men*, and *trees* to be taken by itself without any qualifying epithet. The word *men* also has the article which shows it to mean not men in general, but *the men* who were passing or at hand, perhaps the twelve apostles; for although he led him out of town, it is not said that they were unaccompanied, or that the place to which he brought him was a solitude. This meaning therefore of the clause, according to the common or received text, is, *I see the men walking about as trees*, i.e. undefined in form and figure. Except by their motions, which were those of men, he could not distinguish them from trees. It is remarkable however that the oldest manuscripts almost without exception have another reading, which appears to give the patient's words more fully. *I behold men because as trees I see (them) walking*. This is an awkward sentence, it is true, but not on that account less likely to have been pronounced on this occasion, while its very awkwardness may possibly have led to its abbreviation in the later copies. The weight of manuscript authority in favour of this reading is confirmed by its internal fitness, as a broken expression of surprise and joy, beginning with a sudden exclamation, *I see the men!* then qualifying or explaining it by adding, *because* (that is, at least), *as trees I see (them) walking*.

Then, afterwards, or in the next place, a Greek particle often employed to separate the items in an enumeration, and intended here to mark distinctly the successive stages of the healing process, an effect secured still further by the word *again*, which is the next in the original though not in the translation. As if he had said, having gone thus far and partially restored the man's sight, he proceeded in the next place to

impose his hands upon the eyes themselves, as he had previously done upon some other part, perhaps the head. It is possible indeed that even in the former instance he had laid his hands upon his eyes, but this is a less natural construction of the language, *spitting in his eyes and laying his hands on him*, where the mention of the eyes in one clause and of the person in the other, favours, though it may not peremptorily require, the former explanation. *Made him*, caused him, i.e. in this case both required and enabled him. *Look up, or see again*, the same two sense of the verb that are admissible in the verse preceeding. If the latter be adopted here, the meaning of the phrase is, that he *caused him to receive his sight*; if the former, that he *caused him to look up*, or try to see, on which he found his sight restored completely. The only objection to the first construction is that the restoration of his sight is then distinctly stated three times, whereas on the other supposition, it is only stated once, the other two expressions being then descriptive of the effort or experiment by which the patient was assured first of partial then of total restoration. He looked up once and saw men like trees; he looked up again and saw them clearly. *Was restored to* (reinstated in) his sound or normal state, another term implying that he was not born blind. *Every (man) or all (things)*, as the Greek may be either masculine and singular, or neuter and plural. Another reading, found in some editions, removes the ambiguity by making it both masculine and plural, (*all men*), which may then be understood to mean specifically all those whom he saw before *as trees* (but) *walking*. Clearly, an expressive Greek word which originally means *farsightedly*, in opposition to near (or short) sight, although here, as in the classics it may have the wider secondary sense expressed in the translation and opposed to the dimness of his sight when only partially recovered."

IV. SENT HOME.

"26. *And he sent him away into his house* (or *to his house*), which was not in the town or village, as appears from the ensuing prohibition. The modern philologists deny that the Greek particle repeated here ever corresponds to *neither . . . nor* in English, as expressing an alternative originally present to the speaker's mind; and one of them explains the first to mean *not even*, and the last *nor even*. 'Do not even go into the village, nor so much as speak to any (person) in the village.' The supposed inconsistency of these two precepts, or at least the superfluosity of the last, as he could not tell it in the town unless he went there, has produced no less than ten variations in the text of this clause, all intended to remove the incongruity, and therefore all to be rejected as mere glosses. This may serve to show by a remarkable example the extraordinary principle, on which the ancient copyists frequently pro-

ceeded, of deciding what the writer should have said, instead of simply telling what he did say. To this single error may be traced a large proportion of existing variations in the text of the New Testament, most of which happily have never become current, but are found exclusively in certain copies or at most in certain families or classes of manuscripts. This erroneous principle or practice is the more to be condemned as the necessity of emendation is in almost every case imaginary. In the one before us, for example, the supposed incongruity arises from the strict fidelity with which the very words of Christ (or their equivalents) are here reported just as he pronounced them, not in a rhetorical or rounded period, but in short successive clauses, the natural form of a peremptory order. The man having just been brought out of the town, though not residing there, would naturally think of going back to tell and show what had been done to him. But this our Lord, for reasons which have often been explained before, is determined to prevent by pointed positive directions, which, without a change of meaning, may be paraphrased as follows: 'Go home—go directly home—no, not into the town, but home—not even for an hour or a moment—do not go into the town at all—not even to tell what I have done—do not so much as speak to any person in the town—but go directly home.' (J. A. Alexander)

FACT QUESTIONS 8:22-26

445. Since Mark is the only gospel writer to record this miracle what is his purpose in giving it?
446. There is some question as to which Bethsaida is involved here—why?
447. Who brought the blind man?
448. Do you believe the blind man had partial sight before Jesus touched him? Discuss.
449. What conclusion do you have for the reason of leading the blind man out of the city?
450. Why spit into the eyes of the blind man?
451. Why did Jesus ask the blind man if he could see?
452. Just what did the blind man say?—what did he see?
453. After Jesus place His hands upon the blind man the second time did He make him look up or did the blind man do this of his own will?
454. Verse 26 is a remarkable example of the mistake of copyist—explain.

7. JESUS THE MESSIAH 8:27—9:1

TEXT 8:27—9:1

"And Jesus went forth, and his disciples, into the villages of Caesarea Philippi: and in the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am? And they told him, saying, John the Baptist: and others, Elijah; but others, One of the prophets. And he asked them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou

art the Christ. And he charged them that they should tell no man of him. And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spake the saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. But he turning about, and seeing his disciples, rebuked Peter, and saith, Get thee behind me Satan: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men. And he called unto him the multitude with his disciples, and said unto them, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it. For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? For what should a man give in exchange for his life? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also shall be ashamed of him, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There be some here of them that stand by, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 8:27—9:1

403. How far from Bethsaida to Caesarea Philippi? Please locate on the map.
404. Why ask the disciples of the opinion of others? What meaning is there in the name Jesus applied to Himself? Cf. Matt. 16:13, 14?
405. How would Jesus meet the designations given concerning Him—i.e. in what way was He like John the Baptist?; like Elijah?; like one of the prophets?
406. Who thought Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead?
407. Show how appropriate this question was at this particular time in the life of Jesus.
408. What did Peter mean in his use of the name "Christ"?
409. Why doesn't Mark record the blessing pronounced by Christ upon Peter?
410. Define each of the three classes of persons referred to in vs. 31.
411. What is meant by the expression "He spake the saying openly"?
412. Please attempt an explanation of the attitude of Peter when he rebuked the Lord.
413. Why look at all the disciples and rebuke Peter? In what sense was Jesus *not* speaking to Peter?
414. Show the connection of denying self with the rebuke of Peter.
415. Define in your own words what it means to "take up his cross and follow . . ."

416. How do we attempt to save our life and in the process lose it?
 417. Specifically how can we lose our life for His sake? Please be personal and practical.
 418. How is the word "soul" or "life" used in vs. 36?
 419. Is Jesus saying a man has no real life or is not really living unless he is giving himself to His service?
 420. How does being ashamed of Jesus fit into this context?

COMMENT

TIME—Summer of A.D. 29. From six to eight months before the Lord's Crucifixion.

PLACE—In the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi, about thirty miles northeast of Capernaum and the Sea of Galilee. It was upon the upper sources of the Jordan, the largest of the three streams that unite to form the river springing from a fountain near Caesarea Philippi. *Professor McGarvey* says: The city of Caesarea Philippi stood at the northeastern curve of the upper Jordan valley, and about twenty-six miles north of the lake of Galilee. Mountains 2,000 feet high rise abruptly from the eastern side of it, while the snow covered summit of Mt. Hermon, 9,000 feet high, swells heavenward but a few miles north of it. Its earliest name known to us was Paneas, so called in honor of the god Pan, and on or near its side Herod the Great erected a temple in honor of Augustus Caesar. Afterward Philip the Tetrarch, to whom Herod gave the district at his death, rebuilt the old town, and called it Caesarea Philippi in honor of himself and Tiberius Caesar. The city is now in ruins, but the wall can be traced on every side, and in some points on the east and south sides it is standing at almost its original height. Just outside the northeastern angle of the wall is the famous spring which is one of the three principal sources of the Jordan.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 16:13-28; Luke 9:18-27.

LESSON OUTLINE—1. The Good Confession. 2. The Cross of Christ. 3. Losing and Finding Life.

ANALYSIS

I. THE GOOD CONFESSION, vs. 27-30.

1. Christ at Caesarea Philippi. Mark 8:27; Matt. 16:13; Luke 9:18.
2. Opinions of Christ. Mark 8:28; Matt. 16:14; Luke 9:19; John 6:69.
3. Peter's Confession. Mark 8:29; Matt. 16:16.

II. THE CROSS OF CHRIST, vs. 31-34.

1. The Prophecy of the Cross. Mark 8:31; Matt. 16:21; 17:22; Luke 9:22.
2. Peter Rebuked. Mark 8:32, 33; Matt. 16:22, 23.
3. Bearing the Cross. Mark 8:24; Matt. 16:24; Luke 9:23.

III. LOSING AND FINDING LIFE, VS. 35 TO 9:1.

1. The Way to Save Life. Mark 8:35; Matt. 16:25; Luke 9:24.
2. Gain or Loss. Mark 8:36, 37; Matt. 16:26; Luke 9:25.
3. Ashamed of the Cross. Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; Rom. 1:16.
4. Coming in the Kingdom. Mark 9:1; Matt. 16:28; Luke 9:27.

INTRODUCTION

It was after our Lord had closed his public ministry in Galilee, and while he was seeking retirement in order to communicate special instruction in the principles of his kingdom to the apostles, who were to succeed in his work, that he gave the great lesson concerning the foundation on which he would found his church, and the lesson on consecration and self-denial that its extension in the world requires. Here begins the second great division of the Savior's ministry, a period that leads directly to his sufferings and death. The first period culminated in the confession of Peter; the second in the cross and resurrection.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. THE GOOD CONFESSION.—27. *Jesus went out, and his disciples. Went out* is the word regularly used in this gospel when a departure from one scene of work to another is notified. In this case, our Lord, leaving the district in which he had hitherto been chiefly working, proceeded in a northeasterly direction along the valley of the Upper Jordan. *And his disciples.* Their presence is here mentioned expressly, calling attention to the object of a journey through a district to a great extent heathen, and lately traversed, viz., their special instruction (Mark 9:31). *Into the towns.* Away from the populous cities The solitude of the beautiful district, wither the Savior now journeyed, is illustrated by the fact that it is the only district in Palestine where a recent traveller found the pelican of the wilderness (Ps. 102:6). *Caesarea Philippi.* A city at the northeast extremity of Palestine and at the foot of Mount Lebanon, anciently called Paneas, and now Baniyas. It has now about fifty houses, many ruins of columns, towers, temples, a bridge, and a remarkable castle. *And by the way.* His conversation by the way: (1) The turn it often took when the disciples were left to themselves—disputes concerning greatness, etc. (2) The turn Christ gave to it—inquirings concerning his mission and person. Learn: (1), Avoid foolish and worldly talk; (2), Improve passing opportunities; (3), Let your talk be often about the Savior.—*Biblical Museum. Whom do men say that I am?* The following conversation refers to three points: (1) The Christ. (2) The suffering Christ. (3) The disciples of the suffering Christ. The object of this first question is evidently to prepare the way for the next. The inquiry was not concerning the opinions of the Scribes and Rabbis, but concerning the opinions of the people.

28. *And they answered.* As Jesus had not openly declared that he was the Messiah, but had allowed men to hear his surpassing wisdom and see his life and works and draw their own conclusions, there would naturally be various opinions. *John the Baptist.* Who had been killed by Herod a few months before, now restored to life. That was one popular notion regarding him, circulating, no doubt, chiefly among those who had never seen him. Herod Antipas entertained it (chap. 6:16). *Elias.* The great ideal of a prophet and spiritual reformer. It was very generally expected that he was to return to the earth in connection with the Messiah's advent (Mal. 4, 5).—*Morison. One of the prophets.* The Jews believed that at the coming of the Messiah the prophets were to rise again. They did not declare their belief in him as the Messiah himself, doubtless for this reason, that the whole ministry of Christ appeared to them to stand in contradiction to their Messianic expectations.

29. *Whom say ye that I am?* He had never openly spoken of his Messiahship. It was his will that the revelation should dawn gradually on the minds of his children; that it should spring more from the truths he spake, and the life he lived, than from the wonders which he wrought. It was *in the Son of man* that they were to recognize *the Son of God.*—*Farrar.* The time was come when it was of the greatest moment that they should have a settled conception of his real character and mission. *And Peter answereth.* With that honest readiness and impulsiveness which were so characteristic of his nature, and which fitted him for being a leader of the little circle.—*Morison. Thou art the Christ;* Matthew adds, *the Son of the living God.* This confession not only sees in Jesus the promised Messiah, but in the Messiah recognizes the divine nature.—*Cambridge Bible.* The confession of Peter is the first fundamental Christian confession of faith, and the germ of the Apostles' Creed.—*Lange.* It was a decisive answer, and given as out of a higher inspiration. The Lord himself, as we learn from Matt. 16:17, traced the thought to its divine source. And yet it was, no doubt, founded on evidence which the disciple had diligently studied, and logically construed to his own inner satisfaction. The Lord in the passage in Matthew declares that the grand truth confessed by Peter is the rock on which his church shall be built. By faith in this truth men become disciples of Christ and members of his church.

30. *Charged them that they should tell no man.* The time had not yet come to proclaim that he was the Christ. To do so prematurely would result in harm rather than good. He must first demonstrate his Messiahship by his resurrection.

II. THE CROSS OF CHRIST.—31. *He began to teach them . . . must suffer many things.* The great lesson of our two years of his ministry

was that he was the Christ; after this had been learned by his apostles they were ready to be taught he must die a violent death. So from this time onward we find him speaking more and more plainly of the "decease which he must accomplish." The supreme purpose of his advent was not to teach truth, nor to work miracles, nor to illustrate the perfection of manly character, but to die, to die for sinners, to bear their sins in his own body on the tree. *Rejected of the elders, chief priests and scribes.* The three constituents of the Sanhedrim. The elders (leading men) would be chosen because of their material and political influence; the high priests, because of their elevated ecclesiastical position; the scribes, because of their literary and rabbinical qualifications. Now, for the first time, the disciples received full and clear information of the sufferings and death of Christ.

32. *And he spake that saying openly.* Without reserve, publicly. The previous statements respecting this subject, made by our Lord, were expressed in figurative language.—*Godwin.* *And Peter began to rebuke him.* The same Peter who but just now had made so noble and spiritual a confession, and received so high a blessing, now shows the weak and carnal side of his character. This world has many Peters, who wish to be wiser than Christ, and to prescribe to him what it is needful to do.

33. *Turned about and looked on his disciples.* A sudden movement is indicated. Looking at all, he singles out Peter for special warning. *Rebuked Peter, saying Get thee behind me, Satan.* Christ saw, with the lightning glance of his spirit, in the words of Peter a suggestion not so much of his as of Satan's. This is the very temptation that fell from the lips of Satan in the wilderness when he offered to surrender the kingdoms of this world to Jesus without his suffering on the cross. The Lord when he says, with sudden vehemence, "Get thee behind me Satan!" was not speaking directly to Peter but to the prince of darkness, who had for a moment taken possession of Peter's mind and lips. Peter had been greatly elated over the Messiahship of Jesus, but still expected an earthly king Messiah after the type of David, in whose kingdom he would have a great place. To hear the Lord talk of the cross was a cruel disappointment to his ambitious hopes.

III. LOSING AND FINDING LIFE.—34. *When he had called the people unto him.* The great lesson of his Christhood and death on the cross had been given to the apostles alone. Now the throng and his disciples are united and the Lord teaches a grand truth that springs directly from what had occurred just before. *Will come after me.* Will become my disciple. There was an eagerness among many of the people to "come after him." The wistfulness of a considerable proportion of the northern population had been awakened. They were ruminating anxiously on Old Testament

predictions, and filled with vague expectancy. *Let him deny himself.* The word is strong in the original—"let him deny himself off, let him entirely renounce himself." Let him be prepared to say "no" to many of the strongest cravings of his nature, in the direction more particularly of earthly ease, comfort, dignity and glory. Our common thoughts of "self-denial," i.e., the denial to ourselves of some pleasure or profit, fall far short of the meaning of the Greek. The man is to deny his whole self, all his natural motives and impulses, so far as they come into conflict with the claims of Christ. *And take up his cross.* Even as the Lord would take up his cross at Jerusalem. So every disciple must "crucify the old man," his selfish nature (Rom. 6:6), give up his old life, and become dead to it. The cross is the pain of the self-denial required in the preceding words. The cross is the "symbol of doing our duty, even at the cost of the most painful death." Christ obeyed God, and carried out his work for the salvation of men, though it required him to die upon the cross in order to do it. And ever since, the cross has stood as the emblem, not of suffering, but of suffering for the sake of Christ and his gospel as the highest ideal of obedience to God at any and every cost. *Follow me.* Obey and imitate Christ.

35. *Whosoever will save his life.* Whoever makes this the end will lose life. A great principle is stated. All self-seeking is self-losing. Even in spiritual things, he who is perpetually studying how to secure joy and peace for himself loses it. A certain measure of self-forgetfulness is the condition of the highest success, even in Christian grace. *But whosoever shall lose his life.* In the sphere of the present. *For my sake, and the gospel's.* It is only loss for the sake of Christ that has this promise. Multitudes of people lose their lives for gain, for pleasure, for fashion. Each of these has more martyrs than the cross ever required; but the loss was without compensation or hope. But whosoever loses for the love of Christ, for the sake of preaching and advancing the gospel *shall save it*—shall have a blessedness and glory which will a thousand times compensate for every loss.

36. *What shall it profit a man?* This is one of the searching questions that the Scriptures are wont to throw out to arouse reflection. Let each student try to conscientiously answer this question and the one which follows.

37. *What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* What would a man not give? If he had the whole world, would he not willingly give it, provided he really knew, believed, or felt, that otherwise he would be utterly lost? The Saviour has gone forward in thought, and taken his standpoint in eternity. It is from that standpoint that he puts the question.

38. *Shall be ashamed of me and of my words.* As many would be

prone to be. The temptation to *shame*, in reference to the Savior and the Savior's sayings or doctrines, continues to the present day, and is pervading society to the core, even in countries called Christian. It is one of the severest temptations which young converts have to encounter. The anticipation of it is one of the mightiest motives to keep men away from conversion, and on the other side of Christian faith and fealty. *This adulterous and sinful generation*. Adulterous here, as in the Old Testament, means "unfaithful to God." *When he cometh*, etc. The glorious coming to judge the world when all nations shall appear before him.

9:1 *Some of them that stand here, etc.* The allusion to the final coming of the kingdom of Christ in power which took place on the day of Pentecost. The day of Pentecost, when the descent of the Spirit took place, marks the beginning of "the dispensation of the Spirit," "the new economy," or the kingdom of righteousness. Its consummation will be seen when all souls shall be converted to righteousness and Jesus shall come.

FACT QUESTIONS 8:27—9:1

455. Give three facts about Caesarea Philippi.
456. The verses before us begin what great division in our Lord's ministry?
457. What area of public ministry concludes with the eighth chapter?
458. What was the purpose of our Lord in going into the district of Caesarea Philippi?
459. Give three lessons we can learn in the example of our Lord.
460. Did Jesus want the opinions of the scribes and rabbis? Why not?
461. Show how Mal. 4:5 helped form the opinion of some.
462. Show how "the whole ministry of Christ appeared to them to stand in contradiction to their Messianic expectation?"
463. "It was in the Son of man that they were to recognize the _____ of _____."
464. The confession of Peter sees in Jesus the Messiah but even more—what was it?
465. The confession of Peter had both a human and divine origin—explain.
466. How was Jesus going to demonstrate His Messiahship?
467. It took two years to teach one great truth—what was it? What was the second great truth to be taught in the next few months?
468. What was the supreme purpose of His advent?
469. Why choose the three classes mentioned in vs. 31? Do we have their counterpart today? Discuss.
470. What hurt Peter the most—the words that Jesus would be killed or being called Satan? Discuss.

471. Satan repeated his temptation to Jesus through the words of Peter—explain.
472. Were there many who wanted to follow Him? Who? Why? How?
473. Explain the strong meaning of "deny himself."
474. Discuss in your own words the meaning of "the cross" as here ascribed to every disciple.
475. Even in spiritual matters "he who would save his life shall lose it"—please apply.
476. Multitudes lose their lives—discuss two or three areas where this loss takes place—with no gain—only loss!
477. In what way do we save our life?
478. Isn't the use of the word "soul" in vs. 37 an unfortunate one?—it has a wider use than the eternal nature of man—Discuss.
479. How is the temptation to be ashamed overcome?
480. What is the fundamental error in being ashamed?

9. THE TRANSFIGURATION 9:2-8

TEXT 9:2-8

"And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them: and his garments became glistening, exceeding white; so as no fuller on earth can whiten them. And there appeared unto them Elijah with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answereth and saith to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. For he wist not what to answer; for they became sore afraid. And there came a cloud overshadowing them: and there came a voice out of the cloud. This is my beloved Son: hear ye him. And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 9:2-8

421. Six days after what?
422. Was there some particular reason for taking three men? For taking these particular three?
423. What mountain? Please locate the previous events on the map.
424. Please attempt a definition of the word "transfiguration."
425. What caused his garments to become so bright?
426. In what form did Moses and Elijah appear? How did Peter, James and John know Moses and Elijah?
427. Read Matt. 17:1-8; Luke 9:28-36 and tell of the topic of their conversation.
428. What was the immediate reaction on Peter, James & John, to the appearance of Moses and Elijah? Why?

429. Why did Peter make the suggestion of building booths? Please notice that Mark gives the reason.
430. When did the cloud overshadow them? What type of a cloud was it? (Read the parallel accounts)
431. Who spoke out of the cloud? Cf. II Peter 1:16.
432. Why was this declaration concerning the Son made at this particular time? What did it mean to those who heard it?
433. Where were Peter, James & John when Moses and Elijah disappeared i.e. where were they physically? Cf. parallel accounts.
434. What prompted Peter, James and John to look around? Cf. Parallel accounts.

COMMENT

TIME—Summer A.D. 29.

PLACE—Uncertain—in the vicinity of Caesarea Philippi or Mt. Tabor—some think Mt. Hermon.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 17:1-8; Luke 9:28-36.

OUTLINE—1. The time and the participants, vs. 2. 2. The event, vs. 3. 3. The appearance of Moses and Elijah, vs. 4. 4. Peter's unthinking suggestion, vs. 5, 6. 5. The voice of God, vs. 7. 6. They saw no one save Jesus, vs. 8.

ANALYSIS

- I. THE TIME AND THE PARTICIPANTS, VS. 2.
1. Six days after the events in Caesarea Philippi.
 2. Peter, James and John by themselves.
 3. Into a high mountain.
- II. THE EVENT, VS. 3.
1. His garments became exceedingly white and glistening.
 2. This is called a transfiguration or a "metamorphosis" (vs. 25)
- III. THE APPEARANCE OF MOSES AND ELIJAH, VS. 4.
1. Sudden, unexpected appearance.
 2. Moses and Elijah recognized.
 3. Talked with Jesus (about his coming death).
- IV. PETER'S UNTHINKING SUGGESTION, VS. 5, 6.
1. Peter was greatly impressed.
 2. Let us build three memorials.
 3. He was so filled with awe he did not know what to say.
- V. THE VOICE OF GOD, VS. 7.
1. A bright cloud covered them.
 2. The voice spoke out of the cloud—"This is my beloved Son: hear ye him."
- VI. THEY SAW NO ONE SAVE JESUS, VS. 8.
1. The disappearance was sudden.

2. Jesus touched them as they were prostrate only then did they know Moses and Elijah had disappeared.

EXPANATORY NOTES

I. THE TIME AND THE PARTICIPANTS.

"2. *after six days.*) In the note on Matt. 17:1, it has been observed that these days were probably passed in the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi. To the reasons there given, it may be added (1) There is no indication of a change of place: but Mark never omits to notice our Lord's arrival at, or departure from, any place; he has a regular formula for both "He came to," "He went forth," cf. chh. 1:14, 21, 35; 2:1, 13; 3:7; 4:35; 5:1; 6:1, 32, 53; 7:24, 31; 8:10, 13, 22, 27. The beginning of the journey to this district is distinctly marked in ch. 8:27, the termination in ch. 9:30. (2) The space of six days for the sojourn is not more than might be expected, considering the special object of our Lord's journey and the novelty and paramount importance of the truths which He there prepared the minds of His disciples to receive.

There is, therefore, little room for doubt as to the scene of the Transfiguration: Tabor being out of the question, it must have been some considerable height in the immediate vicinity. Not, however, as Dr. Thomson supposes, Mount Panium, a lower spur of the chain of heights, of which the summit would be within sight of the followers of Jesus. We read, "*He leadeth them up* (words which denote a steep and difficult ascent, such as Dr. Tristram describes in his visit to Lake Phiala) *to a high mountain.*" Which height cannot, of course, be determined; but, considering the special relation of Mount Hermon to Palestine, commanding a prospect over its whole extent, visible in its snowy splendour from every district, and bearing in mind the last view of Moses from a corresponding height over the promised land, we can scarcely resist the conclusion, to which late travellers and critics have been led, that the supernatural transaction took place on one of its loftiest peaks.

transfigured.) Literally, "He was changed in form." This may be illustrated by Phil. 2:6, "being in the form of God;" for the radiant form of the Transfiguration was an effulgence of the Divine glory."

II. THE EVENT

"3. *exceeding, white.*) St. Matthew, more forcibly, "as the light;" the pure, essential light of the Godhead.

as snow.) Possibly, as Dean Stanley suggests, a reference to the snow of Hermon; but the words are not found in the oldest MSS, and are properly omitted in late critical editions.

no fuller on earth.) The comparison may seem to modern ears some-

what strange; but it is just one which would have been used by Dante, who, like Mark, always endeavours to make his readers vividly realize objective facts. Mark, however, has a still higher aim; he would mark the difference between earthly and heavenly brightness. The "fuller on earth" restores material clothing to its natural whiteness; the heavenly Fuller gives perfect purity. Cf. Mal. 3:2."

III. THE APPEARANCE OF MOSES AND ELIJAH.

IV. PETER'S UNTHINKING SUGGESTION.

"6. *For he wist not.*) Luke has, "not knowing what he said." Our Evangelist adds the explanation; the words were spoken in bewilderment and great terror. Critics, therefore, are not justified in imputing to the apostle a weak or superstitious feeling, as though he held it fortunate that he and the other apostles were there to prepare tabernacles for the heavenly visitants, or that he expressed a desire to remain there, devoting his life to monastic contemplation, much less, as some have suggested, as though he were shrinking from the Cross. We have, at the most, a touch of nature: Peter then, as usual, seeking to give expression to his feelings in hasty outward action."

V. THE VOICE OF GOD.

"7. *that overshadowed.*) The cloud, as Matthew remarks, was bright; but brightness is the Divine veil. "His brightness was as the light; there was the hiding of His power."

my beloved Son.) Matthew adds, "in whom I am well pleased." So also Peter, in his second Epistle, ch. 1:17. It is not easy to account for the omission here."

VI. THEY SAW NO ONE SAVE JESUS.

"8. Here Mark omits to notice the coming and touch of Jesus, recorded by Matthew; but he has characteristic and graphic expressions, which may suggest both. *Suddenly*, as though startled by the touch of Jesus, *they looked round about*—a word almost peculiar to Mark, implying searching or curious look; and at the end of the verse Mark adds the touching words, "with themselves:" a preparation for His great promise, "I am with you always"—not, as then, for a season only, but to the end of time." (*F. C. Cook*)

FACT QUESTIONS 9:2-8

481. Give two reasons for concluding the six days were spent in the district or neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi.
482. Why does Mr. Cook seem to favor Mt. Hermon as the place of the transfiguration?

483. In what sense are we to understand Jesus was changed in form?
Cf. Phil. 2:6.
484. Why the detailed and repeated reference to the appearance of His clothes?
485. Why do some critics feel Peter was weak or superstitious? Explain.
486. Why mention the brightness of the cloud?
487. Isn't the pleasure of the Father inferred even though not stated?
i.e. in the omission of the words "In whom I am well pleased"?
488. What does the word used by Mark—translated "looked round about" suggest?

10. THE DISCIPLES ASK ABOUT ELIJAH. 9:9-13.

TEXT 9:9-13

"And as they were coming down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, save when the Son of man should have risen again from the dead. And they kept the saying, questioning among themselves what the rising again from the dead should mean. And they asked him, saying, The scribes say that Elijah must first come. And he said unto them, Elijah indeed cometh first, and restoreth all things: and how is it written of the Son of man, that he should suffer many things and be set at nought? But I say unto you, that Elijah is come, and they have also done unto him whatsoever they would, even as it is written of him."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 9:9-13

435. Why would the transfiguration mean more after the resurrection?
436. Had the three disciples heard of the approaching death of Jesus?—had any word of His resurrection been given?
437. Why inquire at this particular time about Elijah? Cf. Mal. 4:5, 6.
438. Who were the scribes mentioned in vs. 11?
439. In what sense had Elijah already come?
440. What was to be restored by Elijah?
441. In what way did Jesus associate His death with the coming of Elijah?
442. To whom did Jesus refer when He said Elijah had come?
443. Where was it written concerning the death of John the Baptist—Cf. 1 Kings 19:2, 10.

COMMENT

TIME—Summer A.D. 29 immediately after the transfiguration.

PLACE—Coming down from the mount of transfiguration.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 17:9-13.

OUTLINE—1. The command for silence, vs. 9. 2. The thought of resurrection was strange to the disciples, vs. 10. 3. They ask about the coming of Elijah, vs. 11. 4. Jesus answers, vs. 12, 13.

ANALYSIS

I. THE COMMAND FOR SILENCE, VS. 9.

1. As they came down from the mount.
2. Tell no man what you have seen.
3. Wait to tell until I have been raised from the dead.

II. THE THOUGHT OF THE RESURRECTION WAS STRANGE TO THE DISCIPLES, VS. 10.

1. They thought on what Jesus said.
2. They asked among themselves what He might mean by "rising from the dead."

III. THEY ASKED ABOUT THE COMING OF ELIJAH, VS. 11.

1. If you are the Messiah (as we believe you are);
2. In light of your prediction of death and resurrection how is it said Elijah must come first?

IV. JESUS ANSWERS, VS. 12, 13.

1. It is true—Elijah must come first and restore all things.
2. It is also true that the Son of man must suffer and be rejected.
3. Elijah in the person of John the Baptist has come and they have treated him as predicted.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

THE DESCENT FROM THE MOUNT

"In what state of mind did the apostles return from beholding the glory of the Lord, and His ministers from another world? They seem to have been excited, demonstrative, ready to blaze abroad the wonderful event which ought to put an end to all men's doubts.

They would have been bitterly disappointed, if they had prematurely exposed their experience to ridicule, cross-examination, conjectural theories and all the controversy which reduces facts to logical form, but strips them of their freshness and vitality. In the first age as in the nineteenth,

it was possible to be witnesses for the Lord without exposing to coarse and irreverent handling all the delicate and secret experiences of the soul with Christ.

Therefore Jesus charged them that they should tell no man. Silence would force back the impression upon the depths of their own spirits, and spread its roots under the surface there.

Nor was it right to make such a startling demand upon the faith of others before public evidence had been given, enough to make scepticism blameworthy. His resurrection from the dead would suffice to unseal their lips. And the experience of all the Church has justified that decision. The resurrection is, in fact, the centre of all the miraculous narratives, the sun which keeps them in their orbit. Some of them, as isolated events, might have failed to challenge credence. But authority and sanction are given to all the rest by this great and publicly attested marvel, which has modified history, and the denial of which makes history at once untrustworthy and incoherent. When Jesus rose from the dead, the whole significance of His life and its events was deepened.

This mention of the resurrection called them away from pleasant day-dreams, by reminding them that their Master was to die. For Him there was no illusion. Coming back from the light and voices of heaven, the cross before Him was as visible as ever to His undazzled eyes, and He was still the sober and vigilant friend to warn them against false hopes. They however found means of explaining the unwelcome truth away. Various theories were discussed among them, what the rising from the dead should mean, what should be in fact the limit to their silence. This very perplexity, and the chill upon their hopes, aided them to keep the matter close.

One hope was too strong not to be at least hinted to Jesus. They had just seen Elias. Surely they were right in expecting his interference, as the scribes had taught. Instead of a lonely road pursued by the Messiah to a painful death, should not that great prophet come as a fore-runner and restore all things? How then was murderous opposition possible?

And Jesus answered that one day this should come to pass. The herald should indeed reconcile all hearts, before the great and notable day of the Lord come. But for the present time there was another question. That promise to which they clung, was it their only light upon futurity? Was not the assertion quite as plain that the Son of Man should suffer many things and be set at nought? So far was Jesus from that state of mind in which men buoy themselves up with false hope. No apparent prophecy,

no splendid vision, deceived His unerring insight. And yet no despair arrested His energies for one hour.

But, He added, Elias had already been offered to this generation in vain; they had done to him as they listed. They had re-enacted what history recorded of his life on earth.

Then a veil dropped from the disciples' eyes. They recognized the dweller in lonely places, the man of hairy garment and ascetic life, persecuted by a feeble tyrant who cowered before his rebuke, and by the deadlier hatred of an adulterous queen. They saw how the very name of Elias raised a probability that the second prophet should be treated "as it is written of" the first.

If then they had so strangely misjudged the preparation of His way, what might they not apprehend of the issue? So should also the Son of man suffer of them.

Do we wonder that they had not hitherto recognized the prophet? Perhaps, when all is made clear at last, we shall wonder more at our own refusals of reverence, our blindness to the meaning of noble lives, our moderate and qualified respect for men of whom the world is not worthy.

How much solid greatness would some of us overlook, if it went with an unpolished and unattractive exterior? Now the Baptist was a rude and abrupt person, of little culture, unwelcome in king's houses. Yet no greater had been born of woman." (*G. A. Chadwick*)

FACT QUESTIONED 9:9-13

489. In what state of mind did the apostles return from beholding the glory of the Lord, and His ministers from another world?
490. What would have happened if they had told prematurely the events of the mount?
491. How would silence help the disciples?
492. Show how all other miracles relate to the resurrection.
493. Why was it that Jesus was thinking about His death upon coming down from the mount?
494. What Malachi 4:5, 6 said—what the scribes had said did not agree with what Jesus said—at least in the minds of the disciples—explain.
495. Are we to yet expect the return of Elijah? i.e. before the second coming of Christ?
496. When did the veil drop from the eyes of the disciples?
497. In what sense are we in danger of doing the same thing the three apostles did?

11. HEALING THE EPILEPTIC BOY 9:14-29

TEXT 9:14-29

"And when they came to the disciples, they saw a great multitude about them, and scribes questioning with them. And straight-way all the multitude, when they saw him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him. And he asked them, What question ye with them? And one of the multitude answered him, Master, I brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever it taketh him, it dasheth him down: and he foameth, and grindeth his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast it out: and they were not able. And he answereth them and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I bear with you? bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straight-way the spirit tare him grievously; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long time is it since this hath come unto him? And he said, From a child. And oft-times it hath cast him both into the fire and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us. And Jesus said unto him, if thou canst! All things are possible to him that believeth. Straightway the father of the child cried out, and said, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. And when Jesus saw that a multitude came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I command thee, come out of him and enter no more into him. And having cried out and torn him much, he came out: and the child became as one dead: insomuch that the more part said, He is dead, But Jesus took him by the hand and raised him up; and he arose, And when he was come into the house his disciples asked him privately saying, We could not cast it out. And he said unto them This kind can come out by nothing, save by prayer."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 9:14-29

444. Where had Jesus and the three apostles left the other apostles?
445. What was it that caused the excitement and amazement when the people saw Jesus?
446. For what purpose had the scribes followed the disciples? About what were they disputing? Show the futility of such a dispute.
447. To whom is the question of vs. 16 addressed?
448. What is meant by the words of the father who said his son: "had a dumb Spirit"?

449. How do we know this boy was suffering from epilepsy? Cf. Matt. 17:15—Are we to conclude that epilepsy is caused by demon possession? Explain.
450. What is meant by the expression "pineth away"?
451. Discuss the inability of the disciples as related to casting out this demon.
452. Who was the "faithless generation" of vs. 19?
453. Why the reaction of the evil spirit upon seeing Jesus?
454. Did Jesus know all about the boy? Why ask the father the question of vs. 21?
455. Did the father have some doubt as to whether Jesus could help him?
456. Jesus picked up the words of the father and made a special appeal—what was it?
457. How did the father interpret the words of Jesus? In what sense did he believe? In what sense didn't he believe?
458. Jesus hastened to perform the miracle—why?
459. Note how Jesus addressed the demon—what significance is there as to the power—nature and work of demons?
460. If the boy was dumb how could he cry out?
461. What is meant by the phrase "torn him"?
462. Was the boy dead when Jesus raised him?
463. What rebuke and lesson for the disciples were in the words of Jesus in vs. 29?

COMMENT

TIME—Summer A.D. 29.

PLACE—At the foot of the mount of transfiguration—in the district of Caesarea Philippi.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 17:14-20; Luke 9:37-43.

OUTLINE—1. The place and the people of the healing, vs. 14, 15. 2. The occasion of the healing, vs. 16-18. 3. The healing, vs. 19-27. 4. The question of the disciples, vs. 28,29.

ANALYSIS

- I. THE PLACE AND THE PEOPLE OF THE HEALING, VS. 14, 15.
1. The nine disciples at the base of the mount questioning with the scribes; a great multitude gathered.
 2. Many were shocked to see Jesus—ran to him and greeted him.
- II. THE OCCASION OF THE HEALING, VS. 16-18.
1. Jesus asked about the point of the discussion.
 2. The father with his possessed son said he had asked for help from the disciples but could not get it.

III. THE HEALING, vs. 19-27.

1. The grief of Jesus because of their unbelief, vs. 19.
2. The son brought to Jesus—the demon convulsed him, vs. 20.
3. The sympathy of Jesus—the desperation of the father, vs. 21, 22.
4. All things are possible to him who believes—do you believe?—“Yea Lord, I believe—help thou my unbelief.” vs. 23, 24.
5. Because the multitude was about to make a scene Jesus delayed no longer in the healing, vs. 25.
6. The final attempt of the demon to destroy the boy, vs. 26.

IV. THE QUESTION OF THE DISCIPLES, vs. 28, 29.

1. In someone's house the disciples asked—“why couldn't we do it”?
2. Jesus said, “you lacked the proper attitude to exercise healing power.”

EXPLANATORY NOTES. 9:14-29.

I. THE PLACE AND THE PEOPLE OF THE HEALING.

“14-15. The time was the day after the Transfiguration (Luke), and the place was the foot of the mountain. Early in the day, probably, Jesus and the three came down, the three burdened and uplifted by their glorious secret; thinking, perhaps how Moses with shining face, and Joshua, came down Mount Sinai. It is to Peter, who was one of them, that we owe the mention of what *he saw* in coming down. (Instead of *he*, the revisers, on manuscript authority, read “they.”) It was an excited throng listening eagerly to the discussion of “scribes” (not *the scribes*) with the nine apostles and any other disciples who may have been present. How vivid is the picture of the effect of Jesus' approach!—the excitement, the amazement, the instantaneous turning away from the one object of interest to him.—*Greatly amazed*, or awestruck; not, so far as we can judge, from any peculiarity in his appearance, as if some light of the glory were still shining in his face, as when Moses drew near to Israel at the foot of the mountain (Ex. 34:29-35), for, if that had been the case, we should certainly have heard of it; and such a shining, too, would have defeated the purpose of concealment. Rather was it because he was the person of whom they were talking, and they were at once delighted and impressed by a certain sense of solemnity by the appearing of him who had never failed in a work of miraculous healing.—The eager interest with which they all turned from futile discussion and failure to the Mighty One appears in their running to meet him.”

II, THE OCCASION OF THE HEALING.

"16-18. But he cared for his own and came down like a father to his children in trouble, asking the crowd, and especially the scribes, what they were discussing with his friends. He knew their weakness, and saw that they were perplexed and defeated. They were saluting him with welcome after his absence—not the nine only, but the multitude—when he broke in with his question.

The answer came from the most interested, and the one who had the best right to tell the story. *One of the multitude*. Matthew says that he "came kneeling," and Luke that he "cried out" with his request.—*I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit*—i.e. a spirit that makes its victim dumb; so in Matt. 9:32, and 12:22. When Jesus addressed the spirit (verse 25), he spoke to it as *dumb and deaf*, perhaps because of what he had observed in addition to what the father told him.—The additional symptoms described in verse 18 are those of violent convulsions, and plainly they are those of epilepsy, which in this case was complicated with insanity. Luke uses the word *sparassein*, "to convulse," and Mark, at verse 20, the stronger compound word *susparassein*. Matthew says that the child was "lunatic," or epileptic; but he adds that the lunacy was the work of a demon. More particularly, when the demon seized the boy he tore or convulsed him, or, as some explain it, threw him to the ground; and then he foamed and gnashed his teeth, and the consequence was that he pined away or was steadily wasting. These are the symptoms of epilepsy, which was well known among the ancients, and was regarded by the Greeks and Romans as a sacred disease, brought on directly by supernatural power and of evil omen. The word "lunatic," or "moonstruck," is applied to the victim in this case, as often, probably because the attacks were associated with the recurrence of the full moon. The questions, both physiological and psychological, that are connected with the subject of demoniacal possession are full of difficulty; but nothing is more certain than that our Lord on many occasions, and most emphatically on this, recognized the presence of a personality distinct from that of the victim and commanded it away.

The man said, I have brought unto thee my son.—i.e. to the place where he supposed that Jesus was, because his company was there; brought him, apparently, half in hope and half in despair; this was the last resort, and he came to it without much faith.—But Jesus was not there; probably the man came in the cool of the morning, when Jesus and the three were about coming down from the mountain. *And I spake to thy disciples, that they should cast him out; and they could not.* In Luke, "I

entreated thy disciples." Their inability is often explained by the fact that Jesus was not with them, but they had cast out many demons in his absence when he sent them forth for such work (chap. 6:13). Then, however, they were sent; and perhaps the lack of the consciousness of mission now embarrassed them. The three leading apostles, too, were absent, and perhaps the company at the foot of the mountain felt itself to be really the less, though actually the larger. No doubt, also, the severity of the case gave them pause. Their confidence was not strong enough to bear the sense of publicity and of being tested that came with the challenge; for the scribes at once followed up their failure; plying them with questions that must have made them most uncomfortable. The penalty of unbelieving fear is confusion. (See Jer. 1:17.) Nor was there much to help them in the faith of the father."

III. THE HEALING.

"19. *He answereth him, and saith.* The revisers' text, more correctly, "He answereth them and saith." Not to the afflicted father, but to the inefficient disciples.—*O faithless generation!* Not now "of little faith;" in Matthew and Luke, "Faithless and perverse generation." Here expressly, as in chap. 8:18 implicitly, he ranks his own disciples with the generation to which they belong, since he finds in them the ordinary unbelief. They ought, he implies, to have been able to cast out the evil spirit. Perception of the sadness of the case probably repressed their faith; but it ought to have aroused their compassion, and their compassion ought to have increased their sense of the possibility of healing through the grace of Christ. Our Saviour is exacting in the expectation that his friends will be in possession of the spiritual gifts and graces that he offers them. His almost impatient question means, "How long shall this generation, whose unbelief I am learning so thoroughly, vex me so? How long must I live among the faithless?"—But he ends with *Bring him unto me.* The Mighty One now takes hold where the weak have failed.

20. The sufferer was brought, but the sight of the great Healer maddened the malign spirit; so that the boy went into a violent convulsion and *wallowed foaming* on the ground. Was it the dumbness of the victim that prevented such confession as that of chap. 1:34; 3:11; 5:7? There was no confession, and no vocal objection or entreaty on the part of the spirit.

21, 22. The sad sight arrested even the Healer's mind in the midst of his act of mercy. Compassion was prompting the act, and one would think compassion would urge him on to finish it. But nowhere does the true human thoughtfulness of Jesus appear more plainly; he looked on

pityingly while the boy suffered, and compassion even stopped him for a moment while he tenderly inquired how long the infliction had been upon him.—The naturalness of this pause is inimitable; and not less so is the father's answer. We can hear in it the tones of anxiety and despair, and of eagerness for the utmost that can be done. *Of*—or from—*a child*. Then, apparently, the boy had passed beyond early childhood, though in verse 24 he is called by the diminutive name *paidion*, "a young or little child."—*And oftentimes it bath cast him into the fire, and into the waters to destroy him*. But it has been baffled thus far. This demoniac had more watchful friends than the one at Gergesa (chap. 5:3), who had no home but in the tombs. It was but too common in ancient times so to turn maniacs loose, and this boy was fortunate above many in having care and protection.—For healing at the hand of Jesus the father had strong desire, but very little faith. *If thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us*, counting himself in with the child as calling for the gift, but looking upon this as a kind of forlorn hope, concerning which he had as much despair as confidence. The disciples had failed; it was supposed that the Master had more power, but who could tell? *If thou canst do any thing* was much as he could say. Was not this one of the faithless generation? But there was more excuse for him than for the disciples, who had seen so much.

23. As by the revisers, the word *believe* should be omitted. It was doubtless added by copyists, though very early, to complete an imperfect construction and explain a sentence which without some help they could not understand. With the word omitted, Jesus took up the father's words, "If thou canst do any thing for us," or rather, merely, *If thou canst*, indicates, moreover, that the quoted words form grammatically a part of his sentence. We have not an indignant exclamation, as if he had said in amazement, "If thou canst!" and we have not a question, as if he had asked, "Do you say, If thou canst?" rather did he mean, "As for that if thou canst of thine, that *ei dune*, all things are possible (*dunata*) to him that believeth." The play upon the words (*dune, dunata*) cannot be reproduced in English, except very imperfectly, but it is something like, "As for that if thou canst of thine, all things can be to him that believeth." By this he means, "You have inquired about ability and whether any help is possible, but you have misplaced the question. The question of ability is in you, not in me. Faith is the secret of ability and of possibility. The power is sufficient on my part; is it on yours? I can give, but can you receive?" Yet the thought is expressed, not so much reprovingly as cheeringly; for the conclusion is not a severe one, but rather the hopeful announcement of the boundless breadth of the possibilities

of faith. This is another way of saying, "Believest thou that I am able to do this?" but with a gracious hint that the man will do well to believe. So does the great Object of faith love to encourage faith. He loves to be trusted.

24. The father's answer was a cry strong and eager, but the words *with tears* are of doubtful manuscript authority. *Lord* should quite certainly be omitted, and the insertion of *thou*, which in the Greek is unexpressed, misrepresents the rapidity of the man's utterance in the eagerness of his impassioned prayer. "I believe, help my unbelief." The saying is commonly, perhaps, taken to mean, "I believe, but I desire to believe more worthily; increase my faith." This makes help to mean "remove" or "abolish"—a sense for which no good support can be found. If the man had meant to ask that his faith might be rendered equal to the occasion, one would not expect him to ask it in this ambiguous way; and especially is it certain that he would not use the same word, *help*, that he had just employed in quite another sense.—This word is repeated from the former prayer, *have compassion on us, and help us*, and naturally means, as there, "heal my son." So the thought is, "I believe, and yet my faith is scarcely worthy of the name; I hardly dare to call it faith or to plead by it as a believing man. Yet do not wait for something better, but grant my prayer, even to this faith which is no faith. I do believe; but if my belief is no better than unbelief, still heal my son. Do not sternly judge my faith, but help me as I am." There is no contradiction here, and scarcely even paradox, but only deep sincerity in the beginnings of faith, joined with the eagerness of strong desire for a special gift. This is an early "Just as I am," and a very rich and suggestive one. If the man had paused to study his own faith and to make it sufficient, and withheld his prayer till he could make it satisfactory, would he more have injured himself or grieved the Master? He was pleasing Jesus best when he ventured wholly on him, trusting all the defects of his faith to the mercy from which he was imploring help. "Just as I am" is the word most acceptable to him.

25-27. The excitement was rising, and it was time that the scene should be brought to an end, more especially as the father was now ready in heart to receive the gift for which he prayed. The form of exorcism employed in this case was the most elaborate and solemn of all that are recorded in the Gospels. *Thou dumb and deaf spirit*. So addressed with reference to its work upon the child, the effects of its agency.—*I charge thee*. I is emphatic in the Greek—"I, thou knowest who," as the spirit knew at chap. 1:24. The emphasis upon the pronoun is our Lord's solemn self-assertion in the spiritual realm.—*Come out of him*. The customary com-

mand; but the addition, *and enter no more into him*, is found here alone. It is pleasant to think that this exceptional command sprang from our Lord's perception of the exceptional severity of the case, and the more than usual interest that he seems to have taken in it.—The rage of a hostile will when compelled to yield vented itself in the final cry and convulsion; for here also the word is "convulsed," rather than *rent*.—How intensely vivid is the narrative in verses 26, 27—the prostration of the child, the whisperings of the spectators, the kindness of the Healer! *He took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose*. Luke, and he alone, notes the amazement of the beholders at the mighty power or majesty of God. The same word is used in 2 Pet. 1:16 of the glory or majesty which the three disciples had seen in Jesus on the very night before this healing.—This is one of the many cases in which we would be thankful to see what has been hidden, and know the subsequent relations of this father and child to Jesus. Did the child appreciate the Healer and grow up into a holy Christian manhood? Were all the demons exorcised in his soul? Did the father grow in faith, as one ought after such a beginning?"

IV. THE QUESTION OF THE DISCIPLES.

"28, 29. This final reference to the failure of the disciples is omitted by Luke and given more fully by Matthew who adds here a saying about the power of faith similar to that which followed the blighting of the fruitless tree (Mark 11:23). *When he was come into the house*, or "home," to the temporary home that the company had in that region.—*Why could not we cast him*—rather, "it"—*out*? The question had already been answered by the exclamation, *O faithless generation!* in verse 19, but they were not quick to take reproof, and this inquiry was one of the many illustrations of their slowness, with which he had to be patient. Yet perhaps unbelief never fully understands its own failures, but supposes there must be some reason for them to be sought.—*This kind* (of demons) *can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting* (some manuscripts omit *and fasting*)—i.e. This is an extreme case, one that can be made to yield only to faith nourished by the earnest use of all the means of strength. Prayer is recognized as the first great spiritual agency; and if the reference to fasting is genuine, our Lord associates with prayer self-denial, regarded, evidently, as the fitting means of attaining a holy self-command. Fasting in itself, considered as an end, would certainly command his instantaneous and unutterable contempt, as did the many performances of a similar kind that came under his notice; and fasting in general received from him such comments as showed that he esteemed it not very highly. But prayer and self-control

go harmoniously together as the means by which an efficient faith may best be sought." (W. N. Clarke).

FACT QUESTIONS 9:14-29

498. What is the peculiar value of Mark's narrative of the healing of this demoniac?
499. How is the genuineness of this record observed? Why is this important?
500. How would any shining or glow on the face of Jesus have defeated the purpose of concealment?
501. Why were the people so eager and happy about the appearance of Jesus?
502. Who was best qualified to answer the question of Jesus as of vs. 16?
503. Specifically describe the illness of the boy.
504. In what sense was the boy "moonstruck"?
505. Describe the characteristics of epilepsy.
506. Our Lord on many occasions, and most emphatically recognized one fact about demon possession—what was it?
507. In what sense had the father brought his boy to Jesus? Hadn't the disciples cast out demons before? (6:13) Why not here?
508. Jesus classified His apostles with others in calling them a "faithless generation." Why? Cf. 8:18.
509. Why didn't the evil spirit confess the diety of Jesus? Cf. 1:34; 3:11; 5:7.
510. What caused Jesus to pause in the midst of healing the boy to ask a question of the father?
511. If the demon cast the boy into water how is it he did not drown?
512. Show how there was more excuse for the faithlessness of the father than for the disciples.
513. Explain just how Jesus used the words of the father—: "If thou canst."
514. The answer of the father is commonly understood to mean—: "I believe, but I desire to believe more worthily; increase my faith."—but this is not the true or whole meaning—what is the meaning?
515. Show how the expression "Just as I am" fits the father.
516. What word was emphasized in the charge of Jesus to the evil spirit? Why?
517. Why did Jesus use the words—"and enter no more into him."?
518. Show how intensely vivid the narrative is in vs. 26, 27.
519. What was the reaction of the healing—i.e. on the beholders?

520. Why did the apostles ask about their inability—? didn't they already know it was because of unbelief?
 521. What are the efficient means by which faith may best be exercised?

12. THE RETURN TO GALILEE, AND THE RENEWED
 PREDICTION OF THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION

9:30-32

TEXT 9:30-32

"And they went forth from thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it. For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered up into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and when he is killed, after three days he shall rise again. But they understood not the saying, and were afraid to ask him."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 9:30-32

464. Please trace on the map the movement of the Lord.
 465. What did Jesus want no man to know? i.e. in vs. 30.
 466. In what sense was Jesus already being delivered up into the hands of men?
 467. Why didn't the apostles understand the very plain words of Jesus about His death and resurrection? Show an example where we have been just as dull of hearing.
 468. Why were they afraid to ask Him?

COMMENT

TIME—Autumn of 29 A.D.

PLACE—Turning southward from the district of Caesarea Philippi and Mount Hermon Jesus and His company return to their old home in Capernaum.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 17:22, 23; Luke 9:43-45.

OUTLINE—1. Jesus departs the area—travels as secretly as possible, vs. 30.
 2. He wants to have as much time as possible to teach His apostles of His coming passion, vs. 31. 3. Even when He plainly told them they did not understand, vs. 32.

ANALYSIS

- I. JESUS DEPARTS THE AREA—TRAVELS AS SECRETLY AS POSSIBLE, VS. 30.
1. The twelve apostles and Jesus leave the district of the transfiguration and healing.
 2. They travel through the province of Galilee (—upper and lower Galilee).
 3. Their movements were unannounced and sudden so as to enable Jesus to be alone with His apostles.

II. HE WANTED TO HAVE AS MUCH TIME AS POSSIBLE TO TEACH HIS APOSTLES OF HIS COMING PASSION, VS. 31.

1. He taught them personally.
2. He said, "The Son of Man is being delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him; after His death He will rise from the dead on the third day."

III. EVEN WHEN HE HAD PLAINLY TOLD THEM THEY DID NOT UNDERSTAND HIM, VS. 32.

1. They heard but did not understand.
2. They were ashamed of their ignorance and therefore did not ask Him for an explanation.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. JESUS DEPARTS THE AREA—TRAVELS AS SECRETLY AS POSSIBLE.

"30. *and passed through Galilee.*) Or, "and were passing along through Galilee." The meaning is, that our Lord, with His disciples, then left the district of Caesarea Philippi, and on their journey passed through Upper Galilee. They probably crossed the Upper Jordan by the bridge or ford called Binat Jacob, below Lake Huleh, and thence followed the route to Capernaum.

and he would not.) The reason is given in the next verse. Our Lord would prevent a concourse of people—not, as some hold, because He was now in the territory of Herod Antipas, but because the disciples needed further instruction, specially concerning His death. St. Matthew's account is less full, but agrees with this. He says, "while they abode in Galilee," i.e. were no longer in the district of Caesarea Philippi."

II. HE WANTED TO HAVE AS MUCH TIME AS POSSIBLE TO TEACH HIS APOSTLES OF HIS COMING PASSION.

III. EVEN WHEN HE HAD PLAINLY TOLD THEM THEY DID NOT UNDERSTAND HIM.

"32. This verse gives additional information. St. Matthew notices the deep sorrow of the disciples; St. Mark says that they still failed to understand the saying. He uses the imperfect tense throughout denoting the continued or repeated result of His teaching. If the disciples understood what was meant by suffering and death, they could not reconcile it with what they knew of His Person, and were probably at an utter loss as to the sense in which He was to rise again: whether it implied entrance into a higher state, or restoration to common life. The narrator evidently feels that the fear to inquire, through natural and evincing reverence, was detrimental to them, showing an imperfect appreciation of His character and of their duty." (F. C. Cook)

FACT QUESTIONS 9:30-32

522. Trace the route of our Lord from Caesarea Philippi to Capernaum.
 523. Why do some hold that since Jesus was in the territory of Herod Antipas He wanted to remain in secret?
 524. Why were His Words concerning His death hard to reconcile to what they knew of His life?

13. THE CHILDLIKE SPIRIT 9:33-43

TEXT 9:33-43

"And they came to Capernaum: and when he was in the house he asked them, What were ye reasoning in the way? But they held their peace: for they had disputed one with another in the way, who was the greatest. And he sat down, and called the twelve; and he saith unto them, If any man would be first, he shall be last of all, and minister of all. And he took a little child, and set him in the midst of them: and taking him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such little children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever receiveth me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

John said unto him, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name: and we forbade him, because he followed not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a mighty work in my name, and be able quickly to speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is for us. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink, because ye are Christ's, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. And whosoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it were better for him if a great millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. And if thy hand cause thee to stumble, cut it off: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed, rather than having thy two hands to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 9:33-43

469. Didn't Jesus know of what they reasoned on the way? Why ask them?
 470. Had anything happened in the experience of the apostles which would suggest the topic of greatness in the kingdom? Discuss.
 471. What confession was made by the silence of the apostles?
 472. Why call the twelve to come close to Him?
 473. Show how the very nature of the desire to be first would place such a person last in the kingdom of Christ?
 474. What principle is at work in the one who wants to serve all that makes him first of all?
 475. Name two qualities of a child to be much desired by the citizen of Christ's kingdom.

476. Please explain how receiving a child relates to receiving Christ?
477. Discuss the meaning of the word "receive" as here used.
478. What possible connection do the words of John in vs. 38 have to do with what Jesus said in vs. 37?
479. These disciples fell into the terrible sin of sectarianism—show how.
480. When and where had the apostles seen such a man?
481. How was such a one enabled to cast out demons?
482. Was it wrong for this unknown disciple to cast out demons? Why did John think it was wrong?
483. What principle is involved in the words of Jesus in vs. 39-41 which is applicable to us today?
484. "For he that is not against us is for us." is this always absolutely true? Discuss.
485. Why the illustration of the cup of cold water?
486. Is there any connection between offending the little ones and forbidding one to cast out demons or giving a cup of water in the name of Christ? Please *think* on this question.
487. Who are the "little ones" of vs. 42?
488. What is the meaning of "stumble" as here used?
489. Show how mention of sinking into the water of the sea fits the place where it was said.
490. In what sense could the hand be the cause of sin? What basic lesson is taught here?
491. Isn't Jesus suggesting rather drastic action to avoid sinning? Is it practiced today? Discuss.
492. What is the meaning of "life" and "hell" as used in vs. 43-47.
493. Give your own meaning of vs. 48, 49.
494. Show how vs. 50 relates to what has preceded.

COMMENT

TIME.—The autumn of A.D. 29; probably five or six weeks after the last incident.

PLACE.—The place of this event is Capernaum, "the Lord's own city," on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, to which he had now returned from the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi, on the head waters of the Jordan.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Matt. 18:1-14; Luke 9:46-50.

LESSON OUTLINE—1. Who shall be Greatest? 2. Bigotry in the Kingdom. 3. Christ's Care of the Little Ones.

ANALYSIS

- I. WHO SHALL BE GREATEST? vs. 33-37.
1. Disputing about Pre-eminence. Mark 9:1, 2; Matt. 18:1; Luke 9:46; 22:24.
 2. The Path to True Greatness. Mark 9:35; 10:35-40; Matt. 20:26-27.
 3. The Child as a Text. Mark 9:36, 37; 10:13-16; Matt. 18:2.
- II. BIGOTRY IN THE KINGDOM. vs. 38-41.
1. A confession of Bigotry. Mark 9:38; Luke 9:49, 50; Num. 11:26-29.
 2. Bigotry Rebuked. Mark 9:39, 40; 1 Cor. 12:3; Num. 11:29.
 3. No Good Deed Lost. Mark 9:41; Matt. 10:42.
- III. CHRIST'S CARE OF THE LITTLE ONES. vs. 42, 43, 44-50.
1. Offending the Little Ones. Mark 9:42; Matt. 18:6; Luke 17:1.
 2. Cutting off Offenses. Mark 9:43; Matt. 5:29; 18:8; Deut. 13:6.
 3. Punishment for offenders. 44-50.

INTRODUCTION

The great revelations of Caesarea Philippi, considered last were followed by the manifestation of the glory of the Savior on the Mount of Transfiguration, related in Mark 9:2-13, and parallel passages, and this wonderful event was evidently succeeded by a few weeks of partial retirement, during which the Lord sought to impress upon his apostles the great truths that had been so recently revealed. Shortly after the Transfiguration he healed a lunatic child (Mark 9:14-32), somewhere among the foot-hills of Mt. Hermon; and then, probably crossing the Jordan near its sources, he would enter the northern parts of Galilee, and thus journey towards Capernaum. Matthew's language (Matt. 17:22), "And they abode in Galilee," implies that some time was spent there instructing the disciples in the truths he had just opened to them. During these journeyings, and probably just before their arrival at Capernaum the dispute referred to in the lesson had arisen among the disciples.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. WHO SHALL BE GREATEST?

33. *And he came to Capernaum.* On his return from his journey to Northern Galilee, from the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi and the Mount of Transfiguration. During his absence he had been confessed and had acknowledged himself as the Christ. Though this was followed by his declaration that he must be crucified, yet his disciples had so little conception of the true nature of his kingdom that they expected a speedy establishment of a royal Messianic throne on the earth with the various accompaniments of earthly royalty. Not free from earthly ambition, a strife

had arisen among them as to which of them should be the great ministers of the Messianic King. This had occurred on the way back to Capernaum. The Lord had taken no part in it; they no doubt sought to conceal their dispute from him, but after their return and they had entered into the house where he was abiding he suddenly startled them by demanding the cause of their dispute. He asked, not for information, but as an introduction to the lesson he sought to impress.

34. *But they held their peace.* Deep shame kept them silent, and that silence was the most eloquent confession of their sinful ambitions. *Who should be the greatest.* Who should occupy the chief position under the King—the position of prime minister, as it were, in the kingdom that they thought he was about to inaugurate.—*Morison.* What seductive dreams lay for Galilean fishermen in their being commissioned by the Messiah, as his confidential friends, and the first dignitaries of his kingdom! They had as yet no other notion of the kingdom that was shortly to appear than that it would be a temporal one; that their Master was to become a powerful prince, with places, honors, wealth, at his command.

35. *And he sat down.* As teachers did while teaching. The lesson, which touched the fundamental principle of the Christian life, was impressed formally and with all solemnity. *And called the twelve.* To come close to him. He wanted all of them to hear him. *If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all.* Simply because the desire to be first, self-seeking, is exactly opposite to the spirit which is the law of Christ's kingdom, the spirit of love, of self-denial, of helpfulness of others, of humility. Therefore the more any one has of the desire to be first, the less he has of Christ's kingdom. So that the very desire to be first makes him last by the very nature of things. *And servant of all.* Despotism, self-seeking, ambition, ever make a man a slave. No one is so much a slave as he who desires to be first of all. He is a slave to his ambition, to the whims and opinions of other people, to circumstances. But voluntary service in the kingdom of love, and under the impulse of humility and self-denial, makes a man a spiritual power, gives him an unconscious and blessed greatness. To be truly great one must (1) forget himself in his work, (2) be humble instead of conceited, and (3) be a helper of his race, or the servant of all. Paul, Luther, Washington and Lincoln were the servants of humanity.

36. *And he took a child.* Matthew's account indicates that the disciples asked him a question concerning who should be greatest, or the grounds of greatness in his kingdom. The Lord answers by an object lesson. He called a child (Matthew) and first placed the child in the midst, and then took it in his arms, possibly drawing a lesson for his disciples from its

ready submission and trustfulness. *Set him in the midst.* As an illustration; as a living parable. Matthew says that he went on to say, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." They not only should not be *first*, but they should not enter at all, if they indulged their present spirit. Chrysostom says: "For such a little child is free from pride, and the mad desire of glory, and envy, and contentiousness, and all such passions, and having many virtues—simplicity, humility, unworldliness—prides itself on none of them; having a two-fold severity of goodness—to have these things and not to be puffed up about them."

37. *Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me.* There is scarcely a better test of a Christian's character than his bearing toward children and the childlike. Our Lord sets a little child in the midst of his disciples everywhere—in the family, in the Sunday-school, in the congregation, in the community; that child is our Lord's representative, and the object of his watchful care. Just in proportion as there would be a readiness to receive our Lord as he is, if he were visibly present in person, is that child welcomed in heartiness and cared for tenderly. How does that father treat his children, and his neighbor's children? How does that pastor minister to the children of his flock? How does that church provide for the children of its congregation and membership? How are those Christian citizens looking after the children of their community? These are questions which we may suppose our Lord to be asking as he searches the fidelity of his professed followers.—*Trumbull. In my name.* Receiving in my name is serving with Christian love, and as belonging to Christ. Influenced by regard to my name. We should lay emphasis on this expression. *Receiveth me.* Observe that the true way to receive Christ is to receive into our hearts, for Christ's sake, those who need the hospitality of our sympathies, as the way to serve Christ is by serving the needy and suffering (Matt. 25:40).—*Abbott. Receiveth . . . him that sent me.* When we love or receive him who was one with the Father, we enter into fellowship with him who is the Supreme and Eternal Love. Compare John 14:10, 23.

II. BIGOTRY IN THE KINGDOM

38. *And John answered him.* The words were so far an "answer" to what our Lord had said, that they were suggested by it. The disciple desired to show, as in self-vindication, that he not only "received" his Master, but that he was unwilling to "receive" any who did not openly follow him as a disciple.—*Ellicott.* The expression, "in my name," seems to have suggested to John a sudden question. They had

seen, he said, a man who was casting out devils in Christ's name; but since the man was not one of them, they had forbidden him. Had they done right?—*Farrar. We saw one.* The disciples had shortly before returned to Christ from their first missionary tour, in which they were empowered to cast out devils (Matt. 10:8). The man here referred to they probably met during this tour. He must have been a disciple of Christ, who was enabled by his faith, yet without a commission, to cure the possessed.—*Abbott. Casting out devils in thy name.* Really, and not in a wrong spirit, as did the Jewish exorcists (Acts 19:13, 14); for it was done *in thy name*. Such workers as this man believed in him, or they would not have used his name. *And he followeth not us.* What perplexed John was, that one not belonging to the apostolic band should have wrought precisely the miracle which stood foremost among the signs of apostleship; that which the disciples themselves had so lately attempted, but failed to work. See Mark 9:18, 23. Nor are we able to explain the case because we know nothing more of the man or circumstances than is here stated. *And we forbade him.* Hindered him, so far as blaming him, and insisted on the abandonment of the exercise of his gift.

39. *Forbid him not.* He neither praises nor blames him for following an independent course, and not working with his disciples. He simply declares that he must not be forbidden, and that those who work the same kind of work that we do should be regarded not as enemies, but allies. Thousands, in every period of church history, have spent their lives in copying John's mistake. They have labored to stop every man who will not work for Christ in their way from working for Christ at all.—*Ryle. No man which shall do a miracle in my name.* He who does a mighty work in the name of Christ cannot be an enemy of the Lord. The principle inculcated forbids discouraging any work, by whomsoever undertaken, minister or layman, man or woman, which is really accomplishing spiritual results.—*Abbott.* If we see any one really accomplishing results that are for Christ it is wrong to hinder his work.

40. *For he that is not against us is on our part.* Note the social *us*. The Savior graciously associates the disciples with himself. On another occasion (Matt. 12:30) he said, "He that is not with me is against me." There is no belt or border-land between right and wrong. He who is not good is bad; he who is not bad is good. In the highest sphere Christianity and goodness are identical. Christ is impersonated goodness.—*Morison.*

III. CHRIST'S CARE FOR HIS LITTLE ONES.

41. *For whosoever shall give.* The idea is, that, if so small a service as is here referred to goes not unrewarded, much more will the ejection of a demon in his name be approved and rewarded of him. *A cup of water.* Here mentioned as the cheapest of all bodily refreshments, and therefore suitable to represent the smallest act of kindness done by man to man. *In my name.* With this motive, because he belongs to Christ; with the desire to serve Christ, and honor him, and express his love to him. *He shall not lose his reward.* He shall be treated as if it were done to Christ himself. It will be accepted as an expression of love and honor to his Master.

42. *Whosoever shall offend* (cause to stumble) *one of these little ones that believe in me.* The weakest and feeblest of God's flock, not merely the children, but the little ones, in intellectual and spiritual power and in ecclesiastical position and earthly honor. The child yet nestling in his arms, and furnishing the text for his remarks, he warned them of the awful guilt and peril of offending, of tempting, of misleading, of seducing from the paths of innocence and righteousness, of teaching any wicked thing, or suggesting any wicked thought to one of those little ones. *Better that a millstone were hanged about his neck.* We are taken, in imagination, into the presence of a certain dreadful scene. We see a millstone attached to a man's neck. The fastening, passing through the central perforation of the stone is made secure. It is a sad sight. Yet, turning from another scene, we say, "This is better." It is better than that the same man should act the part of a seducer, and entrap a childlike follower of Jesus. *And were cast into the sea.* Which was within sight. Death is a less evil than sinning—much less than causing others to sin; for one kills the body, the other the soul. No language or figures could more powerfully portray the deep interest of the Master in the little children. How terrible to lead them astray!

43. *If thy hand offend.* Cause you to sin or stumble; ensnare you into evil. Are we to understand these passages literally? No, certainly not. The meaning is, if an object dear as the right eye, and useful as the right hand, stand between you and your progress to heaven, and your complete surrender to Christ, that object, however dear, you are to part with.—*Cumming. Hand.* The temptation to do what is wrong—forgery, stealing, murder. *Eye.* Lusting, coveting. *Foot.* Going into forbidden ways. He goes on to warn them that no sacrifice could be too great if it enabled them to escape any possible temptations to put such stumbling-blocks in the way of their own souls or the souls of others.—*Farrar. Into life maimed.* The meaning is, not that any man is in such a case that he hath

no better way to avoid sin and hell; but, if he had no better, he should choose this. Nor doth it mean that maimed persons are maimed in heaven; but, if it were so, it were a less evil.—*Richard Baxter. Into hell.* Not *Hades* but *Gehenna*, the place of eternal punishment. The name was derived from the valley of Hinnom near Jerusalem where refuse was burned.

"48. *where their worm dieth not.* Yet another strong figure, again in terms of Isa. 66:24, and expressing a future penalty that does not exhaust itself.

49. *every one shall be salted with fire.* Once more the connection hangs on a phrase, here 'fire'; but in this case the continuity of thought between 48 and 49 is deep and strong, far more so than in the next case, that of the 'salting' in 49 and the 'salt' in 50. The clause added by the A. V., 'and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt' (cf. Lev. 2:13), is no part of the original . . . The addition was originally an interpretation of the genuine text (which falls out in some early MSS.): then it was added to it. The genuine saying, a very striking one, seems connected with the preceding mention of a fire that is not quenched, thus: 'Yes, the fire, I say, is not quenched; for with fire—of one sort or another—all must, sooner or later, be salted.'

The key to its meaning is found probably in the Levitical regulation which provided that with all oblations salt was to be offered (Lev. 2:13), as the glossing addition rightly suggests. Salt was used in connection with the making of covenants (Lev. 2:13; Num. 18:19; 2 Chron. 13:5); and the sacrificial salt of the Levitical offerings was the symbol of the covenant-relation between God and Israel. It was interpreted by this time, at least, with reference to the properties of salt as a preservative against corruption in things apt to putrify, a preservative, however, with a stinging, painful effect on sentient life. In this respect it is like 'fire,' which also causes pain, yet it may be, wholesome and purifying pain; hence the combination of the two metaphors in the one idea 'salted with (purifying) fire.' To this discipline of suffering in one form or another, Jesus says, all men must submit, whether freely or by constraint. The form he here sets before his disciples, for their good, is that of discipline; voluntarily accepted for the sake of the true life, to be safeguarded thereby from corruption; and illustrations of this positive or cleansing function of moral fire have just been given in 43-47. But these are only special cases of the general principle of suffering as integral to the path of his disciples, as of their Master, which Jesus had set himself to bring home to them ever since he had hinted, while near Caesarea Philippi, at the Cross looming before him (see 9:31 f).

The best commentary on the whole saying is another equally striking, in Luke 12:49: 'I came to cast fire (of testing) upon the earth: and what will I, if it is already kindled?' There he adds that he has himself to be 'baptized' with this kind of searching 'baptism' (cf. Matt. 3:11, for the metaphor, 'He shall baptize you with holy spirit and fire'), and is sore pressed or 'straitened' in spirit 'til it be fulfilled.' The context which precedes this in Luke (12:47 f.) makes the parallel most illuminative, teaching as it does that 'stripes' for servants will be 'few' or 'many,' according as their unreadiness for the Lord's arrival is accompanied by knowledge or ignorance of his declared purpose to return ere long, so that they should be ready for Him. The broad moral for all ('every one') is the necessity for practice of the sacrifice of self, that 'life' may be gained and loss escaped.

50. *Salt is good, lost its saltiness.* The sweeping out of salt that has lost its virtue, and become useless or hurtful, is still, travellers tell us, a common sight in Palestine.

wherewith will ye season it? Salt once spoilt can never have its saltiness restored. So if the qualities which make up the 'saltiness' of the true disciple—fidelity at all costs of pain, self-abnegation, and the like—are turned to faithlessness and selfishness, what becomes of the discipleship which should save others from the corruption of worldliness and selfhood? There is no human source of 'saltiness' capable of renewing it.

Have salt in yourselves. Keep the purifying sacrificial fire alive in your souls, and in particular let it burn up the egoism that destroys unity.

and be at peace one with another. Let the saving salt of fidelity to your Divine calling fulfill itself in brotherly relations with one another. So the words seem to bring us back to the disputing of the disciples (9:33) with which the conversation started. Selfish claims for the chief places destroy peace among men, and are not of the spirit of Jesus' disciples." (J. Vernon Bartlet).

FACT QUESTIONS 9:33-50

525. State two very important things that had happened during Jesus' absence from Capernaum.
526. What was the basic misconception of the disciples as it related to the Messianic kingdom?
527. What did the disciples mean by the use of the term "greatest"?
Greatest what?
528. Was there any significance in the fact that He sat down?
529. The more one has a desire to be first the less he has of what?
530. State the two things the truly great one must do.
531. A little child is free from what undesirable qualities?

532. Why is it true that there is scarcely a better test of a Christian's character than his bearing toward children or the childlike?
533. In what sense was John in his comment of vs. 38 showing his self-vindication?
534. How was it possible to cast out demons without being one of the twelve or one of the seventy?
535. What does the principle laid down by Christ in vs. 39 inculcate?
536. In what sense is Christ "impersonated goodness"?
537. How does giving a cup of cold water relate to forbidding the casting out of a demon?
538. Relate the offending or stumbling of the little ones to the context.
539. Is death better than sin? Is this literally true?
540. If we are not to understand the passages of vs. 43, 44 literally how are we to understand them?
541. Explain the "hell" or "Gehenna" here mentioned by Christ.
542. In what sense does "the worm die not" in the place of eternal punishment?
543. Give your exegesis of vs. 49.
544. There seems to be two or three uses of the word "salt" in vs. 49, 50—discuss them.

SUMMARY 8:14-9:50

The two miracles recorded in the preceding section—the cure of the blind man at Bethsaida (viii. 22-26), and the casting out of the obstinate demon (ix. 14-29)—are additional demonstrations of the divine power of Jesus. They are not mere repetitions of former proofs, but they possess peculiar force in that the blind man was cured by progressive steps, each one of which was a miracle in itself, and in that the demon in question was one of peculiar power and obstinacy.

The foreknowledge of Jesus is again displayed in his two predictions concerning his own death (viii. 31-33; ix. 30-32), and with his foreknowledge, his predetermined purpose to submit to death at the hands of his enemies.

But the crowning argument of the section is contained in the account of the transfiguration. If the testimony of those who witnessed his scene is not false testimony, his divine majesty and his God-given right to be heard in all that he chooses to speak, are established beyond all possibility of a mistake.

End of Part First.

We have now reached the close of the first general division of Mark's narrative. Hitherto, after a few introductory statements in the first chapter (i. 1-13), all the incidents which he records occurred in Galilee, or in

the regions immediately adjoining. Now the writer leaves Galilee, and returns to it no more. (*McGarvey*)

III. THE PEREAN MINISTRY 10:1-52

Jesus Leaves Galilee, 10:1 (on His way to Jerusalem)

TEXT 10:1

"And he arose from thence, and cometh into the borders of Judea and beyond Jordan: and multitudes come together unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again."

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 10:1

495. Please note the expression: "he arose from thence" has more meaning than just a move from one place to another. What significance is there here?
496. Please locate this move on the map—just what is involved in "the borders of Judea"? Where is "beyond the Jordan"?
497. Refer to the parallel passage in Luke. Explain the harmony—or lack of it.
498. What was the purpose in the gathering of the multitude?
499. Do the gospel writers indicate that teaching was the major work of Christ? Discuss.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

"1. *And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judea by the farther,*" etc. It will be necessary to say a word or two respecting the sequence of events. Gresswell, with whose "Harmony" most commentators substantially agree, having inserted as the continuation of this discourse, as given in Matt. 18:10-35, the dealing with an offending brother, and St. Peter's question respecting how often he ought to forgive, and the parable of the Unmerciful Servant, then puts down the events from Jesus' going up to Jerusalem at the Feast of the Tabernacles in John 7:2, to the departure of the Lord, after His discourse respecting the Good Shepherd, to Bethany, beyond Jordan, where John first baptized (John 10:40). Either during this stay at Jerusalem, or at its conclusion, the Lord enters into a certain village, no doubt Bethany, near Jerusalem, where He is entertained by the sisters Martha and Mary (Luke 10:38). After this when in Bethany, beyond Jordan, he hears of the sickness of Lazarus, and returns to Jerusalem and raises him from the dead, then He again retires, but now into the "city called Ephraim" (John 11:54). Between this retirement and the final entry into Jerusalem occur most of the events recorded between Luke 10:1 and Luke 18:14, and at the account of the Lord's taking up and blessing the little children the three Synoptics again coincide (Matt. 19:13; Mark 10:13; Luke 18:15) and substantially continue to do so to the end.