

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

LESSON VIII, FIRST QUARTER, INTERNATIONAL SERIES, FEB. 19.

Text of the Lesson, John v, 1-15. Memory Verses, 8, 9—Golden Text, John vi, 2—Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

[Copyright, 1905, by American Press Association.] While reading any book that is worth reading (and Christians should have no time for others) we do well to note that which we learn as we proceed. In this gospel we have seen that Jesus is the Creator of all things, that in Him alone is life, that He is the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, that He is the Son of God, the King of Israel and that all who receive Him become children of God. Chapter 11 suggests a risen Christ, a temple cleansed, and points onward to the marriage of the Lamb. Chapters 12 and 13 show us a religious ruler and a sinful woman and many others receiving Him as the Christ, the Saviour of the world and a whole household in Capernaum believing on Him because they had seen something of His marvelous power. Now we find Him in Jerusalem at a feast of the Jews.

We know that Jesus when in Jerusalem often went to the temple. His mother found Him there when He was only twelve years old, and in His public ministry He often taught there. We find Him there in this lesson also (verse 14), but we are not told of many other places that He ever visited. It was just like Him to visit this Bethesda (house of mercy), where so many sick people were, that He might heal some of them. The places we choose to visit when away from home or while on a journey indicate where our heart is, whether we are living unto self or unto Him.

This pool was by the sheep gate (margin), and this takes us back to Neh. iii, where we find in verses 1, 32, that the building of the wall began and ended at the sheep gate and that the priests began the rebuilding, and it suggests that there is no real health for body or soul apart from Him who for us was brought as a lamb to the slaughter and who by the sacrifice of Himself provides redemption for all who, like sheep, have gone astray (Isa. lii, 6, 7).

The facts mentioned in connection with this pool are that at a certain season an angel communicated to the water healing properties and whoever stepped in first was made whole of whatsoever disease he had (verse 4). How great the contrast between the healing of only one at a time and such a statement as Luke iv, 40, "All they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto Him, and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them!" Then notice that the man healed after the water was troubled could not be very impotent, for he must get in first in order to be healed, and as sinners we are utterly impotent.

The case of the man thirty-eight years impotent is truly pitiful and more fully sets forth the utter helplessness of every sinner. His sad "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool" would touch any heart, but how deeply it touched the heart of Him who seeth not as man seeth and who saw some special sin back of this impotence (verse 14).

How necessary are the words, "Cease ye from man," and again, "They saw no man save Jesus only with themselves" (Isa. li, 22; Mark ix, 8). Loving and pitying the man, who did not know Him who spoke to him and therefore could not have faith to be healed, Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk" (verse 8), and immediately he was whole and obeyed His Healer. It being the Sabbath day, he is soon found fault with by the religious critics, who would rather see him continue helpless than dare to walk and carry his bed on the Sabbath; but he cannot tell them who healed him, for he did not know the man who spoke to him at the pool (verse 13).

How meek and lowly our Lord was, ever doing good and desiring to be unknown! When the man afterward learned in the temple who healed him and told the Jews that it was Jesus, then these religious idolaters who made the Sabbath and all their feasts to be their gods sought to slay their Messiah because they could not or would not believe that He was their Messiah. There are idolaters everywhere in Christendom whose sufferings, unless they repent, will surely be heavier than those of the heathen idolaters who never heard of Christ. Note John's last words, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (I John v, 21).

Our Lord's "Sin no more" to this man (verse 14) and also to the woman in chapter viii, 11, doubtless had reference to their special sins of which they had been guilty, but I John ii, 1, is a word for every believer and includes all sin. "These things write I unto you that ye sin not." He who saves His people from their sins (Matt. i, 21) is able to do it moment by moment, yet we ever need the blood that cleanseth, and He sees sin where we see none, for "the thought of foolishness is sin" (Prov. xxiv, 9).

In verses 32, 36, 37, 39, of our lesson chapter we have four witnesses to Christ—John the Baptist, the works of Christ, God the Father and the Scriptures. In verses 28, 29, we have the two resurrections of the just and unjust at the beginning and end of the millennial hour, Compare Rev. xx, 4-6. In verse 25 we have the present age hour when all who believe live. I shall never cease to thank God for verse 24, for by it in 1873 I learned that, receiving Christ, I had eternal life and should never come into judgment for sin.

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CONVINCED

[Original.] Scene in the Winter palace at St. Petersburg. The czar's cabinet. The czar standing with one hand on his writing table, looking out of the window.

Czar—Oh, that I might find some drug to give me intervals of oblivion, beset on every side, never knowing when I go out but that a bomb may be thrown into my carriage, and, if I remain in the palace, but that a glass of wine handed me by an attendant may contain poison. (Enter Count Demidoff.) What, you here, Demidoff? I was just thinking of my isolated condition. Were it not for you, good friend, I would despair. Every day a new plot is reported. Sometimes I fear I shall go mad.

Demidoff—Calm yourself, your majesty, there is not the reason for fear that you suppose. Never has there been less cause for inquietude.

Czar—Ah, Demidoff, what a comfort you are! And yet sometimes I fancy your affection for me leads you to conceal the dangers that threaten from me. Have you any special news for me this morning?

Demidoff—None except that every day I gather fresh assurances that all near your majesty's person are devoted to you, would die for you.

Czar—Thanks, Demidoff (looking at the clock). You may go now, my friend. I am expecting some one. I have another confiscated estate for you, one of the finest in Russia.

Demidoff kneels, kisses the czar's hand and withdraws. The czar rings and an attendant enters.

Czar—Has the Countess Maria Nicholievna arrived?

Attendant—She is waiting your majesty's pleasure.

Czar—Admit her. (Enter countess.) Have you been to Paris?

Countess—I have just come from there.

Czar—Well?

Countess—By pretending to be a nihilist I won the confidence of the conspirators and am their trusted messenger to one who is managing the plot here.

Czar—And who is that?

Countess—I would not dare make an accusation without absolute proof at hand. The conspirator stands too high in your majesty's confidence.

Czar—Do you not bear credentials, instructions or something of the kind addressed to—is it man or woman?

Countess—I bear papers, but they are addressed to no one.

Czar—Well, what do you propose to do?

Countess—I ask your majesty's permission to leave you for ten minutes. At the end of that time I will return and hope to be able to convince your majesty of the identity of the person I know to be guilty.

Czar—Be it so. You may withdraw. Countess leaves the room, Czar paces back and forth, impatiently waiting her return. Re-enter countess. Czar looks at her inquiringly.

Countess—Thus far, your majesty, I have been successful, but do not know if the rest of my plan may not miscarry. I risk all on what I am doing, knowing well that it is either my downfall or that of the person I accuse. Will your majesty please send for Count Demidoff.

Czar—Demidoff. Certainly. We will need him, of course.

Czar rings and sends for Demidoff. Meanwhile he paces the floor, the countess standing silent, both waiting. Enter Demidoff. Seeing the countess, he starts and turns pale. The czar looks at him wonderingly.

Czar—Count, are you ill?

Count—Ill? No, your majesty, only—

Countess—Surprised to see me here.

Count (trembling)—I do not know the lady.

Countess (to the czar)—Your majesty, this is the man who conducts the matter of the Paris conspiracy in St. Petersburg. The papers I brought I was directed to give to him. Had I given them to your majesty or your chief of police we would not have been able to convince your majesty that your most trusted friend was seeking your assassination. During the few minutes that I left you I went to the count's apartment in the palace, gave him the papers, charging him to keep them on his person, as he valued his life. If he has done as I told him not five minutes ago, they will be found on him. If he has had time to get rid of them, my plan fails and I must bear the consequences of having accused one who possesses to the highest degree your majesty's confidence.

Count—Your majesty! This is some plot to drag me from the position I hold which enables me to protect you.

Czar—So I believe, count.

Countess—Will your majesty be pleased to have the count searched?

Count (pleadingly)—Your majesty, would you subject me to such an indignity at the instigation of a paid spy?

Czar—I would give you an opportunity to prove your innocence. (Taps a bell and an attendant enters.) Search him (pointing). The attendant searches the count and finds the incriminating papers in his boot. Czar takes them and scans them eagerly, covers his face with his hands, then turns to Demidoff, "And you, too, Brutus?"

Demidoff, who has flung at the countess one glance of fierce hate, bangs his head. Czar gives three taps on the bell, and members of the secret police enter.

Czar (pointing)—Take him away. (Demidoff is led away. The czar turns to the countess.) This is the most important work you have ever done for me. As a reward I give you the Reichloff estates that I was to have bestowed upon the man you have exposed. He will not need them in Siberia. (Exeunt.) MARY ALICE BOND.

Will J. Davis a Free Man.
Chicago, Feb. 10.—The indictment charging Manager Will J. Davis of the Inroque's theater with manslaughter, on account of the loss of life in the theater fire, was quashed by Judge George J. Kersten, on the ground that the document fails to show any omission of duty on the part of Davis. He was discharged from custody.

Fire Threatens Illinois Town.
Decatur, Ill., Feb. 13.—A fire in the business portion of Taylorville has destroyed several stores and the entire business section is threatened. A brisk north wind is sweeping the flames toward the court house. The estimated loss is \$40,000. The fire department from Decatur was summoned.

No Egg Corner in Chicago.
Chicago, Feb. 11.—The representatives of the packers denied that they had cornered the egg market. Dealers in eggs upheld the packers in their statements, declaring that there were not 6,000 cases of eggs in Chicago and that no corner existed.

Fatal Explosion at Coin.
Coin, Ia., Feb. 13.—Her babe burned almost to a crisp from an explosion that proved fatal to both, Mrs. Luther Morley, after hours of torture, died here. The explosion of a gasoline lighting plant which Morley was pumping with air caused the double fatality.

Anti-Football Bill Defeated.
Lincoln, Feb. 10.—By a vote of 43 to 37 the house defeated the Cunningham bill, making the playing of football in the state a felony.

Jury Justifies Homicide.
Whitman, Neb., Feb. 14.—The coroner's jury in the inquest over the remains of J. Boehme, who was killed in the depot here Friday night by George B. Phillips, practically acquitted Phillips in its verdict of "killed in self-defense."

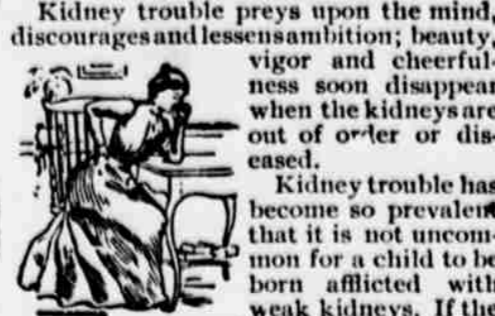
Tucker a Federal Judge.
Lincoln, Feb. 11.—Senator E. A. Tucker of Humboldt, Richardson county, has been appointed a federal judge for Arizona by President Roosevelt. The information came to Senator Tucker in a telegram from Congressman Burkett. Senator Tucker had not made application for the place and the appointment came as a complete surprise.

Miles Will Contest Again.
Lincoln, Feb. 10.—The supreme court reversed the lower court and remanded for a new trial the Miles will contest, involving property valued at \$1,500,000. By the will of Stephen B. Miles, a wealthy pioneer, the bulk of his property was left to his son, Joseph. Another son contested on the ground that the will probated was not the final testament of his father. The supreme court sustains this contention.

Republican Banquet at Lincoln.
Lincoln, Feb. 14.—The sixteenth annual banquet of the Young Men's Republican club of Lincoln on the birthday anniversary of Abraham Lincoln was held last night. Two hundred guests were present. The following addresses were given: "From Lincoln to Roosevelt," Allen L. Gale, Lincoln; "The Party," William F. Gurley, Omaha; "Abraham Lincoln," former Congressman W. M. Treloar of Missouri.

How Fulgurites Form.
A fulgurite is formed by a bolt of lightning. A geologist gives this explanation: "When a bolt of lightning strikes a bed of sand it plunges downward into the sand for a distance less or greater, transforming simultaneously into glass the silica in the material through which it passes. Thus by its great heat it forms at once a glass tube of precisely its own size. Now and then such a tube is found and dug up. Fulgurites have been followed into the sand by excavations for nearly thirty feet. They vary in interior diameter from the size of a quill to three inches or more, according to the bore of the flash."

Women as Well as Men Are Made Miserable by Kidney and Bladder Trouble.



Kidney trouble preys upon the mind, discourages and lessens ambition; beauty, vigor and cheerfulness soon disappear when the kidneys are out of order or diseased. Kidney trouble has become so prevalent that it is not uncommon for a child to be born afflicted with weak kidneys. If the child urinates too often, if the urine scalds the flesh, or if, when the child reaches an age when it should be able to control the passage, it is yet afflicted with bed-wetting, depend upon it, the cause of the difficulty is kidney trouble, and the first step should be towards the treatment of these important organs. This unpleasant trouble is due to a diseased condition of the kidneys and bladder and not to a habit as most people suppose.

Women as well as men are made miserable with kidney and bladder trouble, and both need the same great remedy. The mild and the immediate effect of Swamp-Root is soon realized. It is sold by druggists, in fifty-cent and one-dollar size bottles. You may have a sample bottle by mail free, also a Home of Swamp-Root pamphlet telling all about Swamp-Root, including many of the thousands of testimonial letters received from sufferers cured. In writing Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., be sure and mention this paper. Don't make any mistake, but remember the name, Swamp-Root, Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root, and the address, Binghamton, N. Y., on every bottle.



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