

The Fourfold Gospel

Part IV: From First to Second Passover

Workbook Based on *The Fourfold Gospel*

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Electronic Edition

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Introduction

This lesson workbook is based on an electronic edition of *The Fourfold Gospel* by Ernie Stefanik. I have corrected some errors that existed in the electronic edition mostly consisting of punctuation and spelling errors as well as minor omissions.

Each lesson is divided into three sections. In this Bible Class edition, I have taken the commentary and extracted the Biblical text and placed it in a separate section labeled "Bible Text Only" allowing easier reading of the Bible text. Below the Bible text, there is a section labeled "Bible Text and Commentary" which contains the original work set forth in *The Fourfold Gospel*. Lastly, there are some study questions appropriate for individual study or class discussion.

For McGarvey and Pendleton's Introduction and the Electronic Edition Introduction, see the first book in this series (Parts: I, II, III).

Allan McNabb

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PART FOURTH.
FROM THE FIRST TO THE SECOND
PASSOVER.
(Time: One Year.)

XXIV.
JESUS ATTENDS THE FIRST PASSOVER OF
HIS MINISTRY.
(Jerusalem, April 9, A. D. 27.)

Subdivision A.
JESUS CLEANSSES THE TEMPLE.
^dJOHN II. 13-25.

Bible Text:

^d13 And the passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 And he found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: 15 and he made a scourge of cords, and cast all out of the temple, both the sheep and the oxen; and he poured out the changers' money, and overthrew their tables; 16 and to them that sold the doves he said, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house a house of merchandise. 17 His disciples remembered that it was written, Zeal for thy house shall eat me up. 18 The Jews therefore answered and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? 19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. 20 The Jews therefore said, Forty and six years was this temple in building and wilt thou raise it up in three days? 21 But he spake of the temple of his body. 22 When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he spake this; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said. 23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, during the feast, many believed on his name, beholding his signs which he did. 24 But Jesus did not trust himself unto them, for that he knew all men, 25 and because he needed not that any one should bear witness concerning man; for he himself knew what was in man.

Bible Text with Commentary:

^d13 And the passover of the Jews was at hand [We get our information as to the length of our Lord's ministry from John's Gospel. He groups his narrative around six Jewish festivals: 1, He here mentions the first passover; 2, another feast, which we take to have been also a passover (v. 1); 3, another passover (vi. 4); 4, the feast of tabernacles (vii. 2); 5, dedication (x. 22); 6, passover (xi. 55). This gives the entire length of our Lord's ministry as three years and a fraction], **and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.** [It was fitting that he should enter upon his full ministry in this city, as it was still the center of what was recognized as a heaven-revealed worship. The fitness of Jerusalem for such beginnings was afterwards recognized in the preaching of the gospel of the New or Christian dispensation--Acts i. 8.] **14 And he**

found in the temple [Our English word "temple" includes two Greek words; namely, 1. The *naos*, or sanctuary--the small structure which contained the holy and most holy places, and which answered to the tabernacle used in the wilderness. 2. The *heiron*, or entire court space which surrounded the *naos*, and which included some nineteen acres. The *heiron* was divided into four courts, and as one entered toward the *naos* from the east, he passed successively through them, as follows: 1, Court of the Gentiles; 2, of the women; 3, of Israel; 4, of the priests. It was in this outer or Gentiles' court that the markets described in this section were held] **those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting** [This market in the temple was for the convenience of the people, and the nearness of the passover increased its size. Oxen and doves were constantly needed for sacrificial purposes, and as each family which ate the passover required a lamb, they would be in the market in great abundance. Josephus tells us it required about two hundred thousand lambs for the passover feast, but his exaggerations will stand a liberal discount]: **15 and he made a scourge of cords, and cast all** [The rest of the verse shows that "all" does not refer to men, but to sheep and oxen. The scourge was used in driving them out] **out of the temple, both the sheep and the oxen; and he poured out the changers' money, and overthrew their tables** [The Jews were each required to pay, for the support of the temple service, one half-shekel annually (Ex. xxx. 13; Matt. xvii. 24). These money-changers sat at small tables, on which their coins were piled and counted]; **16 and to them that sold the doves he said, Take these things hence** [As the doves were in cages of wicker-work, they could not be driven out; hence Jesus called upon their owners to remove them. Though Jesus cleansed the house, he wrought no waste of property. The sheep and oxen were safe outside the temple, the scattered money could be gathered from the stone pavement, and the doves were not set free from their cages]; **make not my Father's house a house of merchandise.** [Jesus bases his peculiar authority over the temple on his peculiar relationship to Him for whom the temple was built. As a Son, he purged the temple of his Father. In the beginning of his ministry he contested their right to thus appropriate his Father's house to their uses, but in the end of his ministry he spoke of the temple as "your house" (Matt. xxiii. 38), thereby indicating that the people had taken unto themselves that which truly belonged to God, even as the wicked husbandmen appropriated the vineyard (Luke xx. 14, 15). The rebuke of Jesus was addressed to the priests, for the market belonged to them, and the money-changers were their agents. Edersheim says that this traffic alone cleared the priests about three hundred thousand dollars a year. Though churches differ widely from the temple, they are still God's houses, and should not be profaned. Religion should not be mixed with traffic, for traffic tends toward sin. Phariseism is its fruit--a wish to carry on profitable business, even with God. On this occasion Jesus objected to the use of the temple for trade without criticising the nature of the trade. When he purged the temple three years later, he branded the traders as robbers--Matt. xxi. 13.] **17 His disciples remembered that it was written** [Ps. lxxix. 9], **Zeal for** [loving concern for] **thy house shall eat me up.** **18 The Jews therefore answered and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?** [The Jews felt that only a divinely commissioned person could thus interfere with the ordering of God's house. They therefore called upon Jesus to give them a sign as an evidence that he possessed such divine commission. The manner in which he had cleansed the house of its traffickers was of itself a sign, if they had only had eyes to see it. Jesus could not have thus cleansed the temple unaided had he been a mere man. The power which he showed in the temple was much like that which he manifested in Gethsemane--John xviii. 6.] **19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.** [John here records this saying, and Matthew (ch. xxvi. 61) and Mark (xiv. 58) tells us how at the trial it was twisted into a charge against Christ; thus the Evangelists supplement each other. For the temple in this sentence uses the word "*naos*," or sanctuary, the structure

which was peculiarly the seat of God's presence. The sanctuary was a figure or symbol of the body of Christ, and the words of Jesus were a covert prediction that as they were desecrating the symbol so would they destroy his body, which it symbolized. They revered the Spirit of God neither as it dwelt in the sanctuary nor as it dwelt in the body of Christ. The body of Jesus was a temple (Col. ii. 9), and Christians and the church are also temples (I. Cor. iii. 16, 17; vi. 19; II. Cor. v. 1; II. Pet. i. 13). God's temples can not be permanently destroyed. They are "raised up."] **20 The Jews therefore said, Forty and six years was this temple in building** [The temple which then stood upon Mt. Moriah was the third structure which had occupied that site. The first temple, built by Solomon (B. C. 1012-1005), was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. The second temple, built by Zerubbabel and Jeshua (B. C. 520), had been torn down and rebuilt by Herod the Great, but in such a manner as not to interfere with the temple service. The sanctuary was completed in one year and a half, while the courts required eight years. Josephus says eighteen thousand workmen were employed in its erection. Additional outbuildings and other work had been carried on from that time, and the whole was not completed until A. D. 64], **and wilt thou raise it up in three days?** [To put before him the difficulty of what he apparently proposed to do, they merely mention one item--time. They say nothing of the army of workmen, nothing of a variety and cost of material, nothing of the skill required in the process of construction. How impossible seemed his offer! Yet by no means so impossible as that real offer which they misunderstood. A man might rear a temple in three days, but, apart from Christ Jesus, self-resurrection is unknown to history.] **21 But he spake of the temple of his body.** [John differs from the other three Evangelists, in that he frequently comments upon the facts which he records. Both history and commentary are inspired.] **22 When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he spake this** [It was three years before they understood this saying. Thus truth often lies dormant for years before it springs up in the heart and bears fruit--I. Cor. xv. 58; Eccles. xi. 1]; **and they believed the scripture** [several passages foretell the resurrection--Ps. xvi. 9, 10; lxxviii. 18], **and the word which Jesus had said.** [They believed that Jesus had meant to predict that the Jews would kill him, and that he would rise again on the third day.] **23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, during the feast** [the seven days' feast of unleavened bread--Lev. xxiii. 5, 6], **many believed on his name, beholding his signs which he did.** [We have no description of the miracles wrought at this time. See John iv. 45; xx. 30.] **24 But Jesus did not trust himself unto them, for that he knew all men** [The word here translated "trust" is the same as that translated "believe" in the preceding verse. They trusted him, but he did not trust them, for he knew them. He did not tell them anything of his plans and purposes, and the conversation with Nicodemus which follows is a sample of this reticence], **25 and because he needed not that any one should bear witness concerning man; for he himself knew what was in man.** [John gives us many examples of this supernatural knowledge which Jesus possessed. See i. 42, 47, 48; iii. 3; iv. 29; vi. 61, 64; xi. 4, 14; xiii. 11; xxi. 17. This chapter itself gives us a faithful picture of "what was in man." We find in it temple, profaners, money-makers, sign-seekers, opposers of reform, false and weak professors of faith, etc., but none to whom Jesus could trust himself.]

Study Question:

1. Upon what occasion did Jesus go to Jerusalem?
2. How do we determine the length of Jesus' earthly ministry from John's gospel?
3. What did Jesus find in the temple? What did He do?
4. Did Jesus perform a miracle to cleanse the temple?

5. Did the Jews have authority to turn the temple into a house of merchandise? Why?
6. Do we have authority to turn the church into a house of merchandise? Why?
7. Why might the Jews have asked for a sign?
8. What sign would Jesus give the Jews? What was their response?
9. What about the sign didn't the Jews understand?
10. Are our bodies temples? Explain.
11. What resulted from people seeing Jesus' signs?
12. What does it mean to "believe on His name" (Jn. 2:23)?
13. Why didn't Jesus trust himself unto them? How does this prove His deity?

XXIV.

JESUS ATTENDS THE FIRST PASSOVER OF
HIS MINISTRY.

(Jerusalem, April 9, A. D. 27.)

Subdivision B.

JESUS TALKS WITH NICODEMUS.

^dJOHN III. 1-21.

Bible Text:

^d1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 the same came unto him by night, and said to him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him. 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born anew. 8 The wind bloweth where it will, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. 9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? 10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou the teacher of Israel, and understandest not these things? 11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. 12 If I told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things? 13 And no one hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, *even* the Son of man, who is in heaven. 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; 15 that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. 17 For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him. 18 He that believeth on him is not judged: he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil. 20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be reproved. 21 But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God.

Bible Text with Commentary:

^d1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews [Nicodemus is mentioned only by John. His character is marked by a prudence amounting almost to timidity. At John vii. 50-52 he defends Jesus, but without committing himself as in any way interested in him: at John xix. 38,

39, he brought spices for the body of Jesus, but only after Joseph of Arimathæa had secured the body. Nicodemus was a ruler, or a member of the Sanhedrin]: **2 the same came unto him by night** [Thus avoiding the hostility of his colleagues, and also obtaining a more personal and uninterrupted interview with Jesus. That his coming by night revealed his character is shown by the fact that John repeats the expression when describing him at ch. xix. 39. But, in justice, it should be said that Nicodemus was the only one of his order who came at all during our Lord's life], **and said to him, Rabbi, we** [Nicodemus uses the plural, to avoid committing himself too much. Nicodemus would assert nothing but that which was commonly admitted by many. We learn from John xii. 42, 43 that late in the ministry of Christ, when hostility towards him was most bitter, many of the rulers still believed in him. No doubt, then, when Nicodemus said "we" he used the word advisedly and conscientiously] **know that thou art a teacher come from God** [The rulers knew that Jesus was not the product of any of the rabbinical schools, and his miracles marked him as a prophet and distinguished him from all who were guided merely by reason, no matter how learned]; **for no one can do these signs that thou doest** [John ii. 25], **except God be with him.** [These words show the effect of Christ's miracles. Miracles arrest attention and challenge investigation, and prove that he who works them is from God--Acts x. 38.] **3 Jesus answered** [Not the words, but the thoughts of Nicodemus. The answers of Jesus often look rather to the thoughts of the questioner than to the form of the question. Nicodemus came seeking to know something about the kingdom of God, and Jesus opened at once upon the subject] **and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.** [The word translated "anew" may also mean "from above," and some commentators seek to so translate it here, but it is rightly translated "anew," for Nicodemus understood it to mean a *second* birth. As to the import of the passage, Luther's words are pertinent: "My doctrine is not of doing, and of leaving undone, but of being and becoming; so that it is not a new work to be done, but the being new created--not the living otherwise, but the being new-born." To "see" the kingdom means to possess or enjoy it--Ps. xvi. 10; xc. 15; John viii. 51; Luke ii. 26.] **4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born?** [Knowing that a man can not be literally born a second time, Nicodemus states to Jesus the literal import of his words, hoping thereby to draw from him an explanation of this new, strange metaphor which he was using. So far as he did grasp the meaning of Jesus, Nicodemus saw himself barred forever from the kingdom by an impossible requirement. Many, like him, need to learn that God asks of us nothing that is impossible; that, on the contrary, the yoke is easy and the burden is light.] **5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.** [By far the vast majority of scholars consider the word "water" in this verse as a reference to Christian baptism. The Cambridge Bible says "the outward sign and inward grace of Christian baptism are here clearly given, and an unbiased mind can scarcely avoid seeing this plain fact. This becomes still clearer when we compare John i. 26, 33, where the Baptist declares, 'I baptize in water,' the Messiah 'baptizeth in the Holy Spirit.' The fathers, both Greek and Latin, thus interpret the passage with singular unanimity." Men would have no difficulty in understanding this passage were it not that its terms apparently exclude "the pious unimmersed" from Christ's kingdom. But difficulties, however distressing, will justify no man in wresting the Scriptures of God (II. Pet. iii. 16; Rom. iii. 4). Water and Spirit are joined at Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts ii. 38; xix. 1-7; Tit. iii. 5.] **6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.** [Jesus here draws the distinction between fleshly birth and spiritual birth. He did this to prepare Nicodemus to understand that it is the *spirit* and not the flesh which undergoes the change called the new birth. Regeneration is no slight, superficial change, but a radical one, and one which we can not work for ourselves.] **7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born**

anew. [Jesus here plainly declares that none are exempt from this gospel requirement. Man must obtain more than his fleshly nature if he would inherit eternal life.] **8 The wind bloweth where it will, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.** [In this sentence we have the word *pneuma* translated by the *two* words "wind" and "spirit." There can be no justification in rendering *pneuma* "wind," when in the last clause of the same sentence, and three times in the immediate context, it is rendered "spirit." There can be no doubt that it means the same in both clauses of this verse, and if we render it wind in the first clause, we must say "born of the wind" in the last clause. Whatever is the meaning of this verse, it must be extracted from the rendering which the Revisers have strangely placed in the margin, viz.: "The Spirit breathes where it will, and thou hearest," etc. It teaches that a man is born of the Spirit by hearing the voice of the Spirit, breathing as he wills through inspired men. It is equivalent to Paul's maxim that faith comes by hearing the word of God.*] **9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? 10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou the teacher of Israel, and understandest not these things?** [The Jewish teachers or doctors of the law made very arrogant claims to knowledge, but it often happens that the professedly learned are remarkably unacquainted with the first principles of their religion. It was so with the Jewish teachers (Matt. xv. 14). Nicodemus should have understood that such a change as Jesus was speaking of would be necessary, for, 1. It was foreshadowed in the Old Testament (Deut. x. 16; I. Sam. x. 9; xvi. 13; Ps. li. 10; Ezek. xviii. 31; Jer. iv. 4). 2. John the Baptist suggested the need of some such change when he attacked the Jewish trust in their descent from Abraham.] **11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We** [a rhetorical plural--Mark iv. 30] **speak that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen.** [his words were not founded upon reasonings, speculations, and guesses, but were the plain testimony of an eye-witness, who was able to see and had seen things which to us are invisible]; **and ye receive not our witness.** [Ye teachers of Israel, who, above all men, should receive our guidance, are the very last to follow us. As the Jewish rulers would not receive Christ's testimony, let us not be surprised if many of our day refuse to listen to the gospel which we preach.] **12 If I told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?** [Jesus here divides religious phenomena into two divisions--earthly and heavenly. The earthly phenomena are those which have their sphere in this world. In this sense regeneration is an earthly thing; for though it has a heavenly origin, its manifestations are among the daily sights and experiences of our earthly life. Religion has also its heavenly phenomena, such as the ordering of God's celestial household; the experiences of those who pass into the divine presence; the propitiation, or the changes wrought in the attitude of God toward man by the sacrifice of Christ; the powers and limitations of Christ's priestly intercession, etc. These things have their sphere far removed from earth, and transcended the comprehension of Nicodemus. Now, if Nicodemus would not believe Jesus when he told him of things which he himself partially knew, how would he believe when Jesus spoke of that which was utterly unknown to him?] **13 And no one hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven.** [Nicodemus is here informed that Christ alone can teach concerning heavenly things. Jesus can so teach, for he did not begin on earth and ascend to heaven, but he came from heaven to earth, and returned thence (afterwards) to heaven. Jesus speaks of himself as being present in heaven, because his divine nature was in constant communication with the powers of heaven. If we conceive of heaven as a locality (a proper conception), Jesus was upon the earth; but if we conceive of it as a present communion with the presence of God (also a proper conception), then Christ was in heaven as he talked with Nicodemus--John viii. 29.] **14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; 15 that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life.** [Jesus here

indicates the prophetic and typical character of the Old Testament. The extent of Christ's indorsement of the Old Testament becomes apparent when we consider on how many occasions he revealed himself under the same symbolism which the Old Testament used to reveal him. At John ii. 19 he revealed his resurrection under the symbolism of the destroyed and restored temple. At Matt. xii. 40 the same event is revealed under the symbolism of Jonah and the whale. And here his crucifixion is likewise partially veiled and partially disclosed under a symbolic reference to the brazen serpent. The account of the brazen serpent will be found at Num. xxi. 4-9. The lesson of the brazen serpent will be found in its main points of resemblance to the crucifixion of Christ. When the people were bitten by fiery serpents, something made to resemble a serpent was hung upon a pole, and the people who looked to it in faith found through it healing and life. Such is the epitome of Christ's gospel. When the world was perishing because of sin, Jesus, made to resemble sin (Rom. viii. 3; II. Cor. v. 21) was hung upon the cross, that those who look unto him in faith (Isa. xlv. 22) may find life through him--I. John v. 11-13.] **16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life.** [Luther calls this verse "the Bible in miniature." It is a lesson as to God's love: 1. Its magnitude--he gave his only begotten Son. 2. Its reach--he gave to a sinful world (Rom. v. 8). 3. Its impartiality--he gives it to whomsoever; that is, to all alike (Matt. v. 45; Rev. xxii. 17). 4. Its beneficial richness--it blesses with life eternal. 5. Its limitations--it is nowhere said that God so loves that he will save unbelievers. Love is the mutual and binding grace between God and man; it may almost be said that in Christ it made God human and man divine. John uses the word "eternal" seventeen times in his Gospel and six times in his first Epistle. He always applies it to life. The synoptists use it eight times, applying it to life, and also to fire, punishment, damnation and habitation.] **17 For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him.** [Christ's first mission to the world was for salvation rather than for judgment. His second mission will be for judgment, but a judgment-hour wherein he will be able to save those who have accepted the means of grace which he established by his first coming. But the first coming of Christ incidentally involved judgment (John ix. 39), and John the Baptist emphasized the judgment of Christ. This judgment, however, was not the principal object of Christ's coming, but was an inevitable result of it. Jesus here speaks of it as a self-executed judgment. It was a necessary result of the revealed presence of Christ (Luke ii. 35). That Christ is at present a Saviour, and not a judge, is a truth which needs to be emphasized. Catholics are taught to fear Christ and flee to the Virgin; and many ignorant Protestants are disposed to look upon him as a prosecutor rather than as an advocate.] **18 He that believeth on him is not judged; he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God.** [The name "Jesus" means Saviour; to disbelieve this name is to reject Christ as Saviour. Verses 14 and 15 require belief in Jesus as the Son of man. This verse requires belief in him as the Son of God. Belief in this dual nature of Jesus is essential to salvation. Unbelief is the world's crowning sin; and belief is, humanly speaking, the source of its justification. The verse teaches that God's judgments are in a state of perpetually present enactment. The believer is saved now (Acts xiii. 39), and the unbeliever rests already under that condemnation which he fears the Son of God may some day pronounce against him.] **19 And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil. 20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be reproved. 21 But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God.** [These verses show that when God judges a man by his faith, the judgment is not arbitrary and irrational. Men *believe* according to the secret aspirations and desires of their nature. Christ, as the example and model of life,

shines out as the light of the world; those who approve and love such a life are drawn to him and constrained to believe in him. Spiritually, they abide in his presence, that they may compare their lives with his, and that they may be assured that their works are wrought under the renewing and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, who is sent of Christ. But one whose desires are evil shrinks from Christ, and struggles to disbelieve in him: he seeks to know as little of Christ as possible, because such knowledge exposes the wickedness and depravity of his own sinful nature.]

* From this (Bro. McGarvey's) construction of verse 8 I dissent, and hold that the Revisers have given us the true reading in the text. The question has been fully discussed in Lard's Quarterly, Vol. III, p. 337; Benjamin Franklin's Sermons, Vol. I, p. 281; Millennial Harbinger, 1832, p. 604; 1833, p. 24; 1869, pp. 317, 478, 522, 688. I take the passage to mean that the process by which a man is regenerated by the Spirit of God is no more mysterious than other operations in the natural world, of which operations the blowing of the wind is taken as an example.--P.

Study Questions:

1. Who was Nicodemus? What did Nicodemus do after Jesus' death?
2. Why might Nicodemus have gone to Jesus by night?
3. How did Nicodemus know that Jesus was a teacher come from God?
4. Why must we be born anew? How are we born anew?
5. How was Jesus lifted up? How is it similar to Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness?
6. Who has eternal life?
7. Why did God send Jesus into the world?
8. What does it mean to believe on the name of Jesus?
9. Why are people who believe on Jesus' name not judged?
10. Why are people who do not believe on Jesus' name judged already? What is their judgment (Jn. 1:19-21)?
11. Why do evil people hate the light?
12. Why do people who do truth come to the light?

XXV.

FIRST MINISTRY IN JUDÆA--
JOHN'S SECOND TESTIMONY.

(Judæa and Ænon.)

^dJOHN III. 22-36.

Bible Text:

^d22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judæa; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. 23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized. 24 For John was not yet cast into prison. 25 There arose therefore a questioning on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about purifying. 26 And they came unto John, and said to him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond the Jordan, to whom thou hast borne witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. 27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it have been given him from heaven. 28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but, that I am sent before him. 29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, that standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is made full. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease. 31 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is of the earth, and of the earth he speaketh: he that cometh from heaven is above all. 32 What he hath seen and heard, of that he beareth witness; and no man receiveth his witness. 33 He that hath received his witness hath set his seal to *this*, that God is true. 34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for he giveth not the Spirit by measure. 35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. 36 He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Bible Text with Commentary:

^d22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judæa [That is, he left Jerusalem, the capital of Judæa, and went into the rural districts thereof. We find him there again in John xi. and Luke xiii.-xviii. He gained disciples there, but of them we know but few, such as Mary, Martha, Lazarus, Simeon, and Judas Iscariot]; **and there he tarried with them** [It is not stated how long he tarried, but it may have been from April to December, for the passover was in April, and December was "yet four months" before the harvest--John iv. 35], **and baptized**. [This baptism was not into the three names of God (John vii. 39), into which the apostles were afterwards directed to baptize (Matt. xxviii. 19). It was a continuation of John's baptism, preparatory to the organization of the church--a preparation for the kingdom. Some think that Jesus, at this time, baptized in his own name, and afterwards gave the full baptismal formula into the other two names--Father and Spirit. But there is no evidence of this, and Christian baptism is a baptism into the death of Christ (Rom. vi. 3). Christ would hardly have ordered baptism into his death before his crucifixion. Such a proceeding would have wrought confusion.] **23 And John also was baptizing** [The fact that John also was baptizing is a further indication that the baptism administered by Jesus was preparatory. There would hardly be two kinds of baptism administered by

divine consent at one time] **in Aenon** [This name means "springs"] **near to Salim, because there was much water there** [If one starts at Sychar, at the foot of Mount Ebal, and follows the Damascus road northward for seven miles, he comes upon the valley called Wady Farah. In this beautiful wady the stream flows eastward, having Salim three miles to its south and 'Ainun four miles to its north. For the most part the valley is narrow, and hemmed in by rocky cliffs. But if one follows the course seven miles eastward from the Damascus road, he comes upon a beautiful valley, about one mile wide and three miles broad--a place every way suitable for the gathering of multitudes to hear the preaching of John. A perennial stream, with copious springs all along its course, furnishes, even in the longest, driest summers, the "much water" required for baptism]: **and they came, and were baptized.** ["Here, then," says Lieutenant Conder, "in the wild, desert valley, beneath the red precipices, where the hawk and kite find nests in 'the stairs of the rocks', or by the banks of the shingly stream, with its beautiful oleander blossoms shining in the dusky foliage of luxuriant shrubs, we may picture the dark figure of the Baptist, in his robe of camel's hair, with the broad leather Bedawi belt around his loins, preaching to the Judæan multitude of pale citizens--portly, gray-bearded rabbis, Roman soldiers in leathern armor and shining helmets, sharp-faced publicans, and, above all, to the great mass of oppressed peasantry, the 'beasts of the people,' uncared for, stricken with palsy, with blindness, with fever, with leprosy, but eagerly looking forward to the appearance of that Messiah who came to preach the gospel to the poor."] **24 For John was not yet cast into prison.** [John's Gospel shows that the ministry of Christ was well under way before that of the Baptist ceased: a fact which the synoptists do not reveal.] **25 There arose therefore a questioning on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about purifying.** [What this questioning was we are not told. The word "therefore" doubtless refers to the baptisms just mentioned, so that the dispute probably related to the necessity or purifying effects of that ordinance. But whatever the dispute was about, it brought to notice the fact that Jesus was baptizing more than John, a fact which some of the disciples of John quickly resented.] **26 And they came unto John, and said to him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond the Jordan, to whom thou hast borne witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.** [This verse shows that John's disciples looked upon Jesus as one who owed all his position and popularity to the Baptist's testimony, and were, therefore, surprised to find that Jesus was surpassing John. They looked upon this conduct as a species of ingratitude on the part of Jesus. This verse also shows us that the witness of John did not pass unheeded. His witness was public and notorious, and men remembered it, though they did not always profit by it. That these friends of John felt unkindly toward Jesus is shown by their exaggerated statement that "all men come to him."] **27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it have been given him from heaven.** [Some take this to mean that Jesus could not have had this great success unless Heaven gave it to him; but it is more likely that John used the words with entire reference to himself. A *man* can only take what is given to him; the Son of God takes what he chooses. The friend receives only what hospitality extends to him, but the heir takes what he will, as the owner of the house.] **28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said** [In stating that John had borne witness (ver. 26) John's disciple had already committed themselves to the fact that John disclaimed to be the Messiah, and that Jesus was the Messiah; for it was concerning these two things that John had given his testimony], **I am not the Christ, but, that I am sent before him. 29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, that standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is made full.** [John looks upon the body of disciples as the Lord's bride, and prophetically anticipates the very title which was subsequently applied to the church. It was the duty of "the friend of the bridegroom" to arrange the preliminaries of the wedding, and to promote the mutual interests of the bride and bridegroom. His duties and responsibilities greatly exceeded those of

our "best man," for it was his place to demand the hand of the bride, and to prepare everything for the reception of the bride and bridegroom. Joy at the sound of the bridegroom's voice is part of the drapery of John's figure. Voices of bride and bridegroom are a Biblical symbol of festivity and joy (Jer. vii. 34; xxv. 10; xxxiii. 11). The Song of Solomon is the only book in the Bible which dwells upon the relationship of bride and bridegroom, and in it the voice of the bridegroom is mentioned with joy (Song ii. 8). If John meant anything more by the phrase than mere drapery, he used it to express his pleasure that the Messiah was directing his own affairs and speaking his wishes with his own voice, instead of using his friend as a mouthpiece.] **30 He must increase, but I must decrease.** [Noble words! "He must increase"--because the divine law has ordered it, and prophecy has foretold it (Isa. lii. 13), and because the very divinity of his nature absolutely requires it. "I must decrease"--in popularity, in power, in following. The Christian minister finds the increase of his work the same as the increase of Christ's kingdom; but with the Baptist the case was different. He was a Jewish prophet, and as the power of the New Dispensation, under Christ, gained headway, the Old Dispensation, of which he was a part, waxed old, and was ready to vanish away.] **31 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is of the earth, and of the earth he speaketh: he that cometh from heaven is above all.** [Some think that the testimony of the Baptist closes with the thirtieth verse, and that the rest of the chapter is the comment of the apostle John, but there is certainly no sufficient ground for such a view.] **32 What he hath seen and heard, of that he beareth witness; and no man receiveth his witness.** [In verses 31 and 32 the Baptist draws a contrast between his testimony and that of the Messiah. The Baptist's testimony was largely of a negative character. He testified that he was not the Christ (ver. 28), and while he pointed Jesus out as the Christ, the worthy one, the spiritual baptizer, he nowhere undertook to elaborate as to the character or nature of Jesus. He looked upon Jesus as being so far above all earthly prophets that no prophet could reveal him. The task of such revelation devolved upon Jesus himself. God must be self-revealed. It was no heavy disappointment to John that his disciples had failed to grasp his testimony concerning Jesus. Jesus was himself the supreme witness concerning himself, and yet so few were persuaded by the testimony of Jesus that John hyperbolically says "no man receiveth his witness."] **33 He that hath received his witness hath set his seal to this, that God is true.** [We have here a metaphor, taken from the sealing of a document, as an expression of trust in or adherence to it. Compare John vi. 27; I. Cor. ix. 2. To receive Christ's witness was to publicly confess a conviction that God was true--true to his promise that he would send a Messiah, a Saviour (Rom. iii. 4). To believe Christ is to believe God; to make Christ a liar is to make the Father one also, for he speaks concerning Christ (I. John v. 10) and through Christ--John vii. 16; xvi. 24.] **34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for he giveth not the Spirit by measure.** [To give anything by measure indicates a partial, scanty bestowal (Ezek. iv. 16). The Spirit of God, even in inspired prophets, was but a partial and intermittent gift (I. Cor. vii. 25; xiii. 9; I. Pet. i. 11; Heb. i. 1), but in Jesus, the Son of God, the Spirit of God dwelt fully and uninterruptedly (Col. i. 19). The present tense, "giveth," points to a continuous communication of the Spirit. If Christ had received the Spirit "by measure," then his gift of the Spirit might be exhausted.] **35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.** [This fact was afterwards asserted by Jesus (Matt. xxviii. 18). Jesus is indeed King of kings--Ps. ii. 6-8; Matt. xi. 27; Acts ii. 33; x. 36; Eph. i. 22.] **36 He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life** [the New Testament represents everlasting life as a present possession obtained by belief]; **but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.** [In the second clause of this verse "obeyeth" stands in contrast with "believeth" in the first clause. No mental assent, however strong, is reckoned by the Scriptures as faith unless it results in obedience (Jas. ii. 20; Rom. i. 5). "Wrath of God" is a strong phrase, and is not to be lightly explained away. The unconverted

sinner rests under this wrath. His study should be not only to avert a sentence to be pronounced at some future day, but to be freed from one already resting upon him. This verse shows conclusively that Christ's atoning work had its divine as well as its human side; that God had to be propitiated as truly as man had to be reconciled. The Baptist had already repeatedly warned the Jewish people of wrath to come if they rejected the Messiah, and in this, his last recorded utterance, he boldly reiterates that warning.]

Study Questions:

1. Where did Jesus go and what did He do after leaving Jerusalem?
2. Why would John have been baptizing where there was much water?
3. What question was discussed between John's disciples and a Jew? What did John's disciples say to John to solicit his answer to the question?
4. How did John respond to his disciples' statement?
5. Did men receive Jesus' witness?
6. What would someone do if they received Jesus' witness? Explain.
7. Had Jesus been given the Spirit by measure? Had God given all things into Jesus' hand? Explain both answers.
8. Who has eternal life?
9. If we disobey Jesus, do we believe? If we disobey Jesus, do we have eternal life?
10. If we do not believe and obey Jesus, what do we have?
11. Who has the wrath of God taken from them?

XXVI.

JESUS SETS OUT FROM JUDÆA FOR GALILEE.

Subdivision A.

REASONS FOR RETIRING TO GALILEE.

^aMATT. IV. 12; ^bMARK I. 14; ^cLUKE III. 19, 20; ^dJOHN IV. 1-4.

Bible Text:

^c**19 but Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother's wife, and for all the evil things which Herod had done, 20 added this also to them all, that he shut up John in prison. ^b14 Now after John was delivered up, ^awhen he heard that John was delivered up, ^d1** Whentherefore the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John **2 (although Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples), 3 he left Judæa, and departed again {^awithdrew ^bcame} ^dinto Galilee. 4 And he must needs pass through Samaria.**

Bible Text with Commentary:

^c**19 but Herod the tetrarch** [son of Herod the Great, and tetrarch, or governor, of Galilee], **being reproved by him** [that is, by John the Baptist] **for Herodias his brother's wife, and for all the evil things which Herod had done** [A full account of the sin of Herod and persecution of John will be found at Matt. xiv. 1-12 and Mark vi. 14-29. John had spoken the truth to Herod as fearlessly as to the Pharisees, publicans and soldiers], **20 added this also to them all** [the sins of Herod, as a ruler, already outweighed his virtues; (comp. Dan. v. 27); but, with reckless abandon, Herod went on, adding to the weighty reasons which justified his condemnation], **that he shut up John in prison.** [In the fortress at Machærus, east of the Dead Sea, as we learn from Josephus. The duration of the ministry of John the Baptist is variously estimated at from fourteen to eighteen months.] ^b**14 Now after John was delivered up** [either delivered up by the people to Herod (Matt. xvii. 12), or delivered up by Herod himself to the warden of the castle of Machærus (Luke xii. 58), or by Providence to Herod himself--Acts ii. 23], ^a**when he** [Jesus] **heard** [he was in Judæa when he heard it] **that John was delivered up** [and], ^d**1 When therefore the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John** [We saw at John iii. 26 how the Baptist heard about the number of Jesus' baptisms, being informed by his jealous friends. Like jealous friends, no doubt, informed the Pharisees. Jesus may have known of this information being given by reason of his supernatural powers, but it is more likely that he heard of it in a natural way] **2 (although Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples)** [Jesus, as divine Lawgiver, instituted baptism, and his disciples administered it. We nowhere hear of the disciples of John administering baptism. In fact, the Baptist, like the disciples of Jesus, baptized under a divine commission, and could not delegate the power to others. It was the office of Jesus to commission others to this work, not to perform it himself. Had he done so, those baptized by him might have foolishly claimed for themselves some peculiar honor by reason thereof (I. Cor. i. 14, 15). Jesus was the spiritual baptizer, in which baptism the efficacy lies in the administrant; but water baptism, the efficacy of which lies rather in the spirit of the one baptized than in the virtues of the administrant, Jesus left to his disciples], **3 he left**

Judæa, and departed again {^awithdrew^bcame} ^dinto Galilee. [We have in these verses two reasons assigned for the withdrawal of Jesus into Galilee, namely: 1. The imprisonment of the Baptist 2. Knowledge of the Pharisees that Jesus was baptizing more disciples than John. The first gives us the reason why he went to Galilee, the second the reason why he left Judæa. Jesus did not go into Galilee through fear of Herod, for Herod was tetrarch of Galilee. The truth is, the absence of John called for the presence of Jesus. The northern part of Palestine was the most fruitful soil for the gospel. During the last six or eight months of John's ministry we find him in this northern field, preparing it for Christ's kingdom. While we can not say definitely that John was in Galilee (Bethabara and Ænon being the only two geographical names given), yet he certainly drew his audiences largely from the towns and cities of Galilee. While John occupied the northern, Jesus worked in the southern district of Palestine; but when John was removed, then Jesus turned northward, that he might sow the seed of the kingdom in its most fruitful soil. But if there was a reason why he should *go* to Galilee, there was an equal reason why he should *depart* from Judæa. His popularity, manifesting itself in the number of his baptisms, was exciting that envy and opposition which caused the rulers of Judæa eventually to take the life of Jesus (Matt. xxvii. 18). The Pharisees loved to make proselytes themselves (Matt. xxiii. 15). They, no doubt, envied John's popularity, and much more, therefore, would they be disposed to envy Christ. The influence of the Pharisees was far greater in Judæa than in Galilee, and the Sanhedrin would readily have arrested Jesus had he remained in Judæa (John vii. 1; x. 39), and arrest at this time would have marred the work of Jesus. Therefore, since it is neither sinful nor unbecoming to avoid persecution, Jesus retired to Galilee, where he remained until his second passover. By birth a prophet of Judæa, he became, in public estimation, by this retirement, a prophet of Galilee. Though Jesus first taught in Judæa, the ministry in Galilee so far eclipsed the work in Judæa that it was spoken of as the place of beginning (Luke xxiii. 5; Acts x. 37), and prophetically designated as the scene of the divine manifestation--Matt. iv. 14.] **4 And he must needs pass through Samaria.** [The province which took its name from the city of Samaria, and which lay between Judæa and Galilee. Owing to the hatred which existed between Jews and Samaritans, many of the Jews went from Jerusalem to Galilee by turning eastward, crossing the Jordan, and passing northward through Peræa. This journey required about seven days, while the more direct route, through Samaria, only took three days. Galilæans often passed through Samaria on their way to and from the Jerusalem feast (Josephus' Ant. xx. 6, 1). The arrest of John would scatter his flock of disciples (Mark xiv. 27), and Jesus, as chief shepherd (I. Pet. v. 1-4), hastened to Galilee, to gather together those which might else go astray and be lost.]

Study Questions:

1. Why had Herod imprisoned John?
2. Of what had John reproved Herod?
3. Why did Jesus go to Galilee and how long did He stay? Why might He go to Galilee for these reasons?
4. What route did He take? What was unusual about taking this route?
5. Did Jesus personally baptize people? Why is this noteworthy?

XXVI.

JESUS SETS OUT FROM JUDÆA FOR GALILEE.

Subdivision B.

AT JACOB'S WELL, AND AT SYCHAR.

^dJOHN IV. 5-42.

Bible Text:

^d5 So he cometh to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph: 6 and Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. 7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. 8 For his disciples were gone away into the city to buy food. 9 The Samaritan woman therefore saith unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, whom am a Samaritan woman? (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) 10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. 11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: whence then hast thou that living water? 12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his sons, and his cattle? 13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: 14 but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life. 15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way hitherto draw. 16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. 17 The woman answered and said unto him, I have no husband. Jesus saith unto her, Thou saidst well, I have no husband: 18 for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: this hast thou said truly. 19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. 20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. 21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father. 22 Ye worship that which ye know not: we worship that which we know; for salvation is from the Jews. 23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth. 25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh (he that is called Christ): when he is come, he will declare unto us all things. 26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak to thee am *he*. 27 And upon this came his disciples; and they marvelled that he was speaking with a woman; yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why speakest thou with her? 28 So the woman left her waterpot, and went away into the city, and saith to the people, 29 Come, see a man, who told me all things that *ever* I did: can this be the Christ? 30 They went out of the city, and were coming to him. 31 In the meanwhile the disciples prayed him, saying, Rabbi, eat. 32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not. 33 The disciples therefore said one to another, Hath any man brought him *aught* to eat? 34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him

that sent me, and to accomplish his work. 35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh the harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white already unto harvest. 36 He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. 37 For herein is the saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. 38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye have not labored: others have labored, and ye are entered into their labor. 39 And from that city many of the Samaritans believed on him because of the word of the woman, who testified, He told me all things that *ever* I did. 40 So when the Samaritans came unto him, they besought him to abide with them: and he abode there two days. 41 And many more believed because of his word: 42 and they said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy speaking: for we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.

Bible Text with Commentary:

^d5 So he cometh to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph: 6 and Jacob's well was there. [Commentators long made the mistake of supposing that Shechem, now called Nablous, was the town here called Sychar. Shechem lies a mile and a half west of Jacob's well, while the real Sychar, now called 'Askar, lies scarcely half a mile north of the well. It was a small town, loosely called a city, and adjoined the land which Jacob gave to Joseph (Gen. xxxiii. 19; xlviii. 22; Josh. xxiv. 32), Joseph's tomb being about one hundred yards east of it. The mummy of Joseph, carried out of Egypt at the time of the Exodus, was buried in this parcel of ground, and there is but little doubt that it really rests in the place indicated by the tomb; and though the name Sychar may be derived from the words "liar" or "drunkard," it is more likely that it means "town of the sepulchre," referring to this tomb. The Old Testament is silent as to when or why Jacob dug this well. It lies on the southern side of the valley of Shechem, where it opens upon the plain of Moreh (now called el-Mukhnah), about a hundred yards south of the foot of Mt. Gerizim. It is one of the few Biblical sites about which there is no dispute, and probably the only place on earth where one can draw a circle of a few feet, and say confidently that the feet of Christ have stood within the circumference. Maundrell, who visited it in 1697, said that it was 105 feet deep, and had in it fifteen feet of water. But travelers have thrown stones into it to sound its depth, until at present it is only sixty-six feet deep, and has no water in it except in very wet winters. It is seven and half feet in diameter, and is walled with masonry to a depth of about ten feet, below which it is cut through the solid rock. It lies 400 yards nearly due south from Joseph's tomb. As the neighborhood abounds in springs, the well would hardly have been dug save by one who wished to be independent of his neighbors--as Jacob did.] **Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus by the well.** [John gives us important items as to the humanity of Jesus. He tells us how he sat as a wayworn traveler, hungry and thirsty, at Jacob's well; and he alone records the words, "I thirst," spoken on the cross (John xix. 28). The top of the well is arched over like a cistern, and a round opening is left about twenty inches in diameter. On this arch or curbing Jesus sat. We should note the perpetuity of blessings which springs from a good deed. Gutenberg did not foresee the newspaper when he invented printing; Columbus did not anticipate the land of the free when he led discoverers to our shore, nor is it likely that the prophetic eye of Jacob ever saw the wearied Christ resting upon the well-curb which he was building.] **It was about the sixth hour.** [That is, twelve o'clock, if we reckon by Jewish time, or six o'clock in the evening, if we reckon by the Roman method. We prefer the latter method.] **7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water** [She was not of the city of Samaria (which was then called

Sebaste--the Greek word for Augustus--in honor of Augustus Cæsar, who had given it to Herod the Great), but a woman of the province of Samaria, which lay between Judæa and Galilee, and reached from the Jordan on the east to the Mediterranean on the west, comprising the country formerly occupied by the tribe of Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh]: **Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. 8 For his disciples were gone away into the city to buy food.** [Had the disciples been present they would have bargained with the woman for the use of her rope and pitcher; but in their absence Jesus himself asked her for a drink. He met her on the ground of a common humanity, and conceded to her the power of conferring a favor. Women have been immemorially the water-carriers in the East (Gen. xxiv. 13, 14; Ex. ii. 16). Palestine is in summer a parched land, inducing intense thirst, and the people usually comply cheerfully with the request for water; it was probably so in Jesus' day (Matt. x. 42). Mohammed commanded that water should never be refused.] **9 The Samaritan woman therefore saith unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew [as his language and dress declared], askest drink of me, whom am a Samaritan woman? (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)** [It is not likely that she meant to refuse his request, but she yielded to the temptation to banter one who she thought despised her, and whose necessities now caused him for a moment to forget his pride. The ancestors of the Samaritans were introduced into the land of Israel by the king of Assyria, after he led the ten tribes into captivity (II. Kings xvii. 24-41). When the Jews returned from their captivity in Babylon and began to rebuild their temple, the Samaritans asked permission to build with them, and when this was refused, an enmity arose between the two people which never died out (Ez. iv. 1-5; Neh. ii. 10, 19; iv. 1-3). We must, however, restrict the word "dealings" to social intercourse. Race antipathy did not ordinarily interfere with trade or other matters involving money, as is shown by verse 8 above. According to later tradition, a Jew accepted no hospitality from a Samaritan, and to eat his bread as a guest was as polluting as to eat swine's flesh, but such social courtesy was the very thing which Jesus here asked. There are to-day between one and two hundred Samaritans dwelling in Shechem at the foot of Mt. Gerizim, and Dr. Robinson says of them that they "neither eat, nor drink, nor marry with the Jews, but only trade with them."] **10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.** [Jesus is himself the Gift of God (John iii. 16; II. Cor. ix. 15). But she knew not that God had bestowed a special Gift, and much less that the one to whom she spoke was that Gift. Had she known this she would have understood that though physically Jesus was the object of her charity, spiritually their cases were reversed, and she was the needy one, as Jesus intimates. Living water would mean literally running or spring water, as contrasted with still or cistern water (Gen. xxvi. 19; Lev. xiv. 5). Jesus here uses it in a spiritual sense. He fills us with his grace and truth (John i. 14) and grants unto us continual, untold refreshing (Rev. vii. 17). The reviving and regenerating effects of the Holy Spirit are likewise called living water (John vii. 37-39).] **11 The woman saith unto him, Sir [the word "Sir" is elsewhere translated "Lord"], thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: whence then hast thou that living water?** [She understood his words literally, and was puzzled by them; but, won by the courtesy which suggested an exchange of gifts, she answered respectfully, though incredulously.] **12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his sons, and his cattle?** [We should note three points in this verse: 1. The greatness of Jesus. The woman had just called him "Lord." The man at Bethesda, though he knew not Jesus, afterwards did the same (John v. 7). People felt the majesty and dignity of Jesus. When he offered to give a greater blessing than that given by Jacob, the woman at once contrasted him with Jacob--Jacob with sons and cattle and wealth--and wondered if this lonely stranger could really imagine himself greater than the illustrious patriarch. 2. She claimed descent from Jacob; it was a false claim. Jesus classed the Samaritans

with Gentiles (Matt. x. 5), and spoke of them as strangers or aliens (Luke xvii. 18). 3. She spoke of the well as given by Jacob. She meant that it had been given to Joseph (Gen. xlviii. 22), and that her people had inherited it as descendants of Joseph.] **13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: 14 but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst** [Jesus here draws a contrast between earthly and heavenly blessings. No worldly joy gives lasting satisfaction, but Jesus is the bread and water of life to his disciples (John vi. 35); their unfailling satisfaction]; **but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life.** [A beautiful figure of the joy in Christ. In heat, in cold; in drought, in shower; in prosperity, in adversity; it still springs up, cheering and refreshing the soul, and this unto all eternity--Rev. vii. 17; xxi. 6.] **15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw.** [She but dimly comprehended the nature of Christ's offer, but was persuaded of two things: 1. The wonderful water was to be desired. 2. Jesus was able and willing to give it. When she spoke of coming "to draw" her words suggested the household to which it was her duty to minister, and prepared the way for the command of Jesus to bring the head of the household.] **16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.** [She had asked Jesus for the water of God's grace, but she needed to be made conscious of how much she needed it--conscious (if we follow the figure) of her dormant thirst. Jesus, therefore, gave command to call her husband, that by so doing he might reveal her life and waken her to repentance.] **17 The woman answered and said unto him, I have no husband. Jesus saith unto her, Thou saidst well, I have no husband: 18 for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: this hast thou said truly.** [The divine wisdom of Jesus brought to light a sad state of affairs. During the period of five marriages the woman's life had at least some outward show of respectability, but now it was professedly unclean. The number of marriages reflects somewhat upon the character of the woman, and hints that some of them may have been dissolved by her own fault, though the loose divorce law of that age permitted a man to dissolve the marriage ties on very slight provocation. Among the Jews the great Hillel is reported to have said that a man might properly divorce his wife if she burnt his dinner while cooking. It is not likely that any higher ideals of matrimony obtained among the Samaritans.] **19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.** [She had heard of the miraculous knowledge of the Jewish prophets, and this evidence given her by Jesus persuaded her that he was one of them, as a like evidence had persuaded Nathanael (John i. 48, 49). By thus calling him a prophet she virtually confessed the truth as to all the things concerning which he had accused her.] **20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain [i. e., Mt. Gerizim]; and ye [ye Jews] say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.** [Though a desire to divert the conversation from her own sins may have, in some slight measure, prompted the woman to bring up this question about places of worship, yet her main motive must have been far higher. If we ourselves stood in the presence of one whom we felt assured to be fully inspired of God, how hastily would we propound to him some of the vexed questions which befog the religion of our time! Prompted by such a feeling, this woman sought to have the great dispute between Jew and Samaritan decided. Solomon's temple in Jerusalem was soon after its erection confronted by those who denied its claims to be exclusively the place set apart for divine worship. Jeroboam, the rebellious servant of Solomon, taught the people that Bethel and Dan were as acceptable for worship as Jerusalem. But Jerusalem, as the site of the first great temple, held precedence above all rivals until its claims were discredited in popular estimation by the fact that it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. When, after many years, the returning captives rebuilt its walls, it lacked the sanction of age, and it had lost many of the features of divine recognition, which contributed to the sacredness and grandeur of the first structure. Soon after its erection in the days

of Nehemiah, Manasseh, son of the high priest Joiada, and brother of the high priest Jonathan (Neh. xii. 10, 11; xiii. 28), married to the daughter of Sanballat, Persian governor of Samaria. Refusing to dissolve this marriage at the decree of the governor of Jerusalem, Manasseh was chased by Nehemiah from Jerusalem, and his father-in-law made him high priest of the Samaritans, and undertook to build for him the temple which afterwards crowned the summit of Mt. Gerizim. Manasseh left Jerusalem about B. C. 332. The temple built for him was destroyed by John Hyrcanus about B. C. 129, but the place where it stood was still the sacred center of Samaritan worship, as it is to this day. Mt. Gerizim, and its supporting city of Shechem, had many grounds on which to base their claims to be a sacred locality: 1, Here God appeared to Abraham for the first time after his entering Canaan (Gen. xii. 6, 7); 2, here Jacob first dwelt (Gen. xxxiii. 18); 3, here Joseph came seeking his brethren (Gen. xxxvii. 12, 13); 4, here was a city of refuge (Josh. xx. 7-9); 5, here Joshua read the blessings and cursings (Josh. viii. 33); 6, here also he gave his last address (Josh. xxiv. 1); 7, here were buried the bones of Joseph (Josh. xxiv. 32), and the neighborhood was prominent at the time of the division of the ten tribes (I. Kings xii. 1, 25). If we may consider Samaritan traditions of that day as similar to those of the present, they had added greatly to the real importance of the neighborhood, for they now contend that 1, Paradise was on the summit of Gerizim; 2, Adam was formed of the dust of Gerizim; 3, on Gerizim Adam reared his first altar; 4, Seth here reared his first altar; 5, Gerizim was the Ararat on which the Ark rested, and the only spot which the flood did not overflow; and therefore the only place which escaped the defilement of dead bodies; 6, on it Noah reared his altar; 7, here Abraham attempted to offer Isaac; 8, here he met Melchizedek; 9, here was the real Bethel, where Jacob slept and saw his ladder vision. Backed by such high claims, the woman deemed it possible that this prophet might decide in favor of Samaria's holy place. We should note that the Samaritans worshiped in Mt. Gerizim because they could say, "Our fathers did so." Thus many errors are perpetuated to-day because our fathers practiced them; but our fathers had no more authority to alter or amend God's word than we have. The Jews worshiped in Jerusalem because it had been prophesied that God would select a spot as the peculiar place for his worship (Deut. xii. 5-11), and because according to this prophecy God had selected Mt. Moriah in Jerusalem--I. Kings ix. 3; II. Chron. iii. 1, 2.] **21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father.** [Jesus uses the word "hour" to indicate that the time was *near at hand* when all religious distinctions as to places would be abolished, and when every spot might be used for purposes of worship--I. Tim. ii. 8.] **22 Ye worship that which ye knownot: we worship that which we know; for salvation is from the Jews.** [Jesus here speaks as a Jew, and draws a comparison between the intelligent worship of his people and the ignorant worship of the Samaritans. Though the Samaritans possessed the Pentateuch, they were without the revelation of God which the prophets of Israel had developed, and their worship was neither authorized nor accredited by God. Moreover, it led toward nothing; for salvation was evolved from the Jewish religion, and not from that of Samaria. Salvation proceeded from the Jews. From them, according to the flesh, Christ came, and from them came also the prophets, apostles and inspired writers who have given us that full knowledge of salvation which we possess to-day. We must take the words of Jesus as referring rather to the two *religions* than to the two peoples. Though as a body the Jews did not know whom they worshiped, and though their teachers were blind leaders of the blind, yet the fault was in their unbelief, and not in the revelation or religion in which they refused to believe. On the contrary, if the Samaritans had believed his religion to the full, it would hardly have been sufficient to have enabled him to know what he worshiped. Samaria was, in the days of the idolatry of Israel, a chief seat of Baal worship, and in later days it was the home of magicians and sorcerers.] **23 But the hour cometh, and now is** [the hour is really here, but the knowledge of it is not

yet comprehended], **when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers.** [Jesus draws the mind of the woman from the place of worship to the Person or Being worshiped, and from the form to the spirit of worship. God seeks for genuine, and not formal worshipers, and for those who worship him in truth; *i. e.*, those who render him the obedience of faith with a filial spirit, and not those who render him the empty service of types and shadows, ceremonies and rites, which, through disbelief, have lost their meaning.] **24 God is a Spirit** [These words contain one of the most simple, yet most profound, truths which ever fell upon mortal ear. Their truth is one of the great glories of revelation, and corrects the mistaken conclusion of human reason. They show that 1, God is absolutely free from all limitations of space and time, and is therefore not to be localized in temples (Acts vii. 48); 2, that God is not material, as idolaters contend; 3, that he is not an abstract force, as scientists think, but a Being; 4, that he is lifted above all need of temples, sacrifices, etc., which are a benefit to man, but not to God (Acts xvii. 25). Spiritual excellence raises man above the beast, and spiritual excellence in turn raises God above man--Isa. xxxi. 3]: **and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth.** [That is, men must offer a worship corresponding with the nature and attributes of God.] **25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh (he that is called Christ): when he is come, he will declare unto us all things.** [The breadth and largeness of Jesus' teaching suggested to her the great Teacher who was to come, and caused her to yearn for him who could tell, as she thought, perhaps even larger things. The Samaritans justified their idea of a coming Benefactor by passages found in the Pentateuch, and got their name for him from the Jews. Relying on the prophecy found at Deut. xviii. 18, modern Samaritans regard the Messiah as a returning Moses, calling him *El-Mudy*--the Guide. They contend that his name will begin with M, and that he will live to be 120 years old. This woman's idea of the Messiah was probably also very crude, but it was in part an improvement on the general Jewish conception, for it regarded him as a teacher rather than a world-conquering, earthly prince.] **26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak to thee am he.** [This is the first recorded declaration of his Messiahship made by Jesus. He was not confessed to be Messiah by Simon Peter (Matt. xvi. 16) till the last year of his ministry. Jesus spoke more freely as to his office in Samaria than in Judæa or Galilee; for, 1, the Samaritans would make no effort to take him by force and make him a king (John vi. 15); 2, his short stay in Samaria justified an explicit and brief revelation.] **27 And upon this came his disciples; and they marvelled that he was speaking with a woman.** [The spirit of the Rabbis is shown by their later precept; viz.: "Let no one talk with a woman in the street, no, not with his own wife." The estate of woman was then, and had been for a long time previous, very low. Socrates thanked the gods daily that he was born neither a slave nor a woman. Roman law gave the husband absolute authority over the wife, even to put her to death; and Jewish contempt for women is made apparent by the readiness with which the Jews divorced them]; **yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why speakest thou with her?** [So deep was their reverence and respect that they did not question, though they did not understand.] **28 So the woman left her waterpot** [in the forgetfulness of great joy, and as the unconscious pledge of her return], **and went away into the city [Sychar], and saith to the people, 29 Come, see a man, who told me all things that ever I did** [To publish Christ is one of the first impulses of those who feel Christ's gracious power. Her invitation is like that given by Philip (John i. 46). On second thought her statement is not so much of an exaggeration as it at first appears. Her five marriages and present state covered the whole period of her maturer life, and the way in which Jesus had disclosed it all convinced her that every detail of it was spread out before him]: **can this be the Christ?** [Her question does not imply that she herself had any doubts about the matter. She uses the interrogative form because she does not wish to be dogmatic, but prefers to let the people judge for themselves. Observe the woman's change of mind

concerning Jesus. She first called him "Jew" (ver. 9), then "Sir" (ver. 11), then "prophet" (ver. 19), and now she invites her city to come forth and see "the Christ." **30 They went out of the city, and were coming to him. 31 In the meanwhile** [the time between the departure of the woman and the arrival of her fellow-townsmen] **the disciples prayed him, saying, Rabbi, eat. 32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not. 33 The disciples therefore said one to another, Hath any man brought him *ought* to eat?** [They understood his words literally, as a declaration that he had dined.] **34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work.** [His delight at the woman's conversion, as a part of the work which his Father had given him to do, overcame for a time his desire for food. Food has several characteristics: 1. enjoyment; 2. satisfaction of desire; 3. refreshment and strength. God's work had these characteristics to Jesus, whose life fulfilled the principle that man shall not live by bread alone.] **35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh the harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white already unto harvest.** [Jacob's well overlooked the luxuriant grainfields of the plain of Moreh. As the disciples looked abroad over its patches of varying green, they would say that it would yet be four months before these patches could be harvested. The harvests in the natural world are slow. But turning their eyes toward Sychar, the disciples could see the citizens of the town in their white garments pouring forth to see Jesus, and to be gathered by him as a harvest of disciples which had sprung up and ripened from the seeds of truth sown by the woman but a few moments before. Spiritual sowing brings speedy harvests. Some commentators look upon the words of Jesus as proverbial, but there is no proverb extant which places only four months between sowing and reaping. In Palestine this period covers six months. We must, therefore, take the words of Jesus as a plain statement as to the length of time between the date of his speaking and the date of harvest. Harvest begins about the middle of April, and counting back four months from that date we find that this visit to Sychar occurred somewhere about the middle of December.] **36 He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.** [Harvest times were seasons of great joy (Deut. xvi. 13-15; Ps. cxxvi. 6; Isa. ix. 3). But the joy of joys shall come when God gathers his redeemed into the heavenly garner. In this present the humble teacher sows and the evangelist, or more gifted brother, reaps; but in that glad hour it shall matter little whether we have been a sower or a reaper, for we shall all rejoice together. Sower and reaper alike shall receive wages, a part of which shall be the "fruit" gathered--the souls saved. Jesus regarded gaining a brother as a large compensation, a great gain--Matt. xviii. 15.] **37 For herein is the saying true** [see Isa. lxv. 21, 22; Lev. xxvi. 16; Job xxxi. 8; Mic. vi. 15], **One soweth, and another reapeth. 38 I sent you to reap** [Christ, as Lord of the harvest, sent both sowers and reapers] **that whereon ye have not labored: others have labored, and ye are entered into their labor.** [In earlier days many prophets and holy men had labored to prepare the people of Palestine, that they might be gathered of Christ as disciples. Later John the Baptist had wrought a mighty work toward this same end. Into a field thus sown and cultivated Jesus was now leading his apostles, that they might reap for him the ripened harvest. He bids them observe the speedy and easy reaping on this occasion as an encouraging example to them, that they may go forth with strong assurance and confidence. Even the minds of the Samaritans were prepared to receive him, and a quick harvest could be gathered among them.] **39 And from that city many of the Samaritans believed on him because of the word of the woman, who testified, He told me all things that *ever* I did.** [The Jews rejected the testimony of the prophets and holy men of God as recorded in the Scripture (John v. 46, 47), but the Samaritans accepted the testimony of this woman, and she was a sinner.] **40 So when the Samaritans came unto him, they besought him to abide with them: and he abode there two days.** ["His own" received him not, but

these "strangers" welcomed him. The stay was brief, but long enough to prepare the way for a future church among the Samaritans in the neighboring city of Samaria (Acts viii. 5-8). From the nearer town of Shechem came Justin Martyr, one of the greatest Christian writers of the second century.] **41 And many more believed because of his word: 42 and they said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy speaking: for we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.** [Only such ready hearers could arrive at so great a truth in so short a time. Wealth of revelation and blessing had made the Jews selfish, and their conception of their Messiah was so perverted by this selfishness that they could not conceive of him as being a *world* Saviour. Thus wealth often dwarfs where it should rather enlarge the heart. The incident comprised in this section presents the expansiveness of Christianity in a threefold aspect; viz.: 1, we see it breaking down the walls of racial prejudice; 2, we observe it elevating woman, and certifying her fitness to receive the very highest spiritual instruction; 3, we behold it lifting up the degraded and sinful, and supplying them from the fountains of grace. Such is real Christianity--the Christianity of Christ.]

Study Questions:

1. To what city did Jesus come while traveling through Samaria?
2. Where did Jesus stop to rest? What time was it?
3. What did Jesus ask of the woman at the well? Why?
4. What was unusual about Jesus asking the woman for a drink?
5. What was different between the woman's water and Jesus' water? Explain.
6. How does Jesus' water spring up unto eternal life in those who drank it?
7. What was the woman's reaction to Jesus' command to bring her husband to Him? To too many men had she been married? Why might the one whom she has, not be her husband?
8. How did the woman know that Jesus was a prophet and the Christ?
9. Why did Jesus say that the hour was coming when God would be worshiped neither in that mountain nor in Jerusalem?
10. Why did Jesus say that salvation was from the Jews?
11. What does it mean to worship in spirit and truth?
12. Why might the disciples have marveled that Jesus was speaking to the woman? What did they ask Jesus?
13. Why might the woman had left her waterpot?
14. What did the disciples want Jesus to do while the woman was gone into the city? What was Jesus response? Explain.
15. What did Jesus teach His disciples about sowing and reaping?
16. Why did the Samaritans believe that Jesus is the Savior of the world?
17. How long did Jesus stay with them?
18. Why could Jesus stay in Sychar and not in Jerusalem?

XXVI.

JESUS SETS OUT FROM JUDÆA FOR GALILEE.

Subdivision C.

ARRIVAL IN GALILEE.

^cLUKE IV. 14; ^dJOHN IV. 43-45.

Bible Text:

^d**43 And after the two days he went forth from thence into Galilee. ^c14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: ^d44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honor in his own country. 45 So when he came into Galilee, the Galilæans received him, having seen all the things that he did in Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.**

Bible Text with Commentary:

^d**43 And after the two days** [the two days spent among the Samaritans at Sychar] **he went forth from thence** [from Samaria] **into Galilee. ^c14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee** [Power of the Spirit here means its manifest *use* to perform miracles, rather than its presence, influence or direction. Jesus was always under the influence and direction of the Spirit, but did not previously perform miracles]: ^d**44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honor in his own country.** [Galilee was Jesus' "own country" (John i. 46; ii. 1; vii. 3, 41, 52; Luke xxiii. 5-7). In Judæa he had begun to receive so much honor as to bring him into danger at the hands of the Pharisees: he would receive less in Galilee. Verse 43 resumes the itinerary of verses 1, 2, after the interlude which tells of the woman at Sychar.] **45 So when he came into Galilee, the Galilæans received him, having seen all the things that he did in Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.** [The works which Jesus had done in Jerusalem were for the most part fruitless as to its inhabitants, but they bore the fruit of faith in far-off Galilee. Of "the many who believed on him" in Jerusalem (John ii. 23), it is highly probable that a large number were Galilæan pilgrims who were then there attending the passover.]

Study Questions:

1. Where did Jesus go after staying in Sychar for two days?
2. What had Jesus testified about His own country? What did that testimony have to do with Galilee?
3. Did the Galileans receive Jesus? Why?

XXVII.

GENERAL ACCOUNT OF JESUS' TEACHING.

^aMATT. IV. 17; ^bMARK I. 14, 15; ^cLUKE IV. 14, 15.

Bible Text:

^a17 From that time Jesus began to preach, ^bpreaching the gospel of God, 15 And saying, {^aand to say,} Repent ye; for ^bthe time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God {^aof Heaven} ^bis at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel, ^cand a fame went out concerning him through all the region round about. 15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

Bible Text with Commentary:

^a17 From that time Jesus began to preach [The time here indicated is that of John the Baptist's imprisonment and Jesus' return to Galilee. This time marked a new period in the public ministry of Jesus. Hitherto he had taught, but he now began to preach. When the voice of his messenger, John, was silenced, the King became his own herald. Paul quoted the Greeks as saying that preaching was "foolishness," but following the example here set by Christ, he used it as the appointed means for saving souls. While Matthew gives us many of the earlier incidents of Christ's life, he enters upon the account of his *ministry* at the time when Jesus returned to Galilee. From that time forward he was probably an eye-witness of the events which he records], ^bpreaching the gospel of God, 15 And saying, {^aand to say,} Repent ye; for ^bthe time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God {^aof Heaven} ^bis at hand. [Jesus preached the gospel or good news of his own advent and of the setting up of the unending kingdom which should convert the world to righteousness and save the souls of men. We should note that Jesus himself declares that the prophesied time for the setting up of his kingdom was at hand. There were many general prophecies as to this kingdom, but one which especially fixed the *time* of its coming; viz.: Dan. ix. 24-27. This prophecy tells of seventy weeks in which each day is reckoned as a year, so that the seventy weeks equal four hundred and ninety years. They are to be counted from the date of the decree which ordered the rebuilding of Jerusalem. The Messiah, or Prince, was to come at the beginning of the seventieth week, or four hundred and eighty-three years from the date of the decree. Some take the decree referred to as to be that mentioned in Nehemiah ii. Jahn and Hales fix the date of this decree in the year 444 B.C. According to this, Jesus would have begun his ministry in the year A. D. 39. Others take the decree to be mentioned in Ezra vii., which was thirteen years earlier, and which would bring the beginning of the ministry of Jesus to the year A. D. 26. But there is much uncertainty about all ancient chronology. Suffice it to say that Daniel told in round numbers how long it would be until Messiah should come, and that Jesus said that this time had been fulfilled. It would have been easy to ascertain the correct chronology at the time when Jesus spoke, and we have no record that any presumed to dispute his statement. Jesus announced the coming of a new dispensation. The King had already come, but the kingdom in its organization and administration was as yet only "at hand." Until the crucifixion of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost the kingdom could not be fully organized, for the blood shed upon the cross furnished the means for purification which precedes a proper entrance into the kingdom, and the coming of the Holy Spirit afforded that indwelling strength by which those entering are enabled to abide therein]: **repent ye, and believe in the gospel.** [That is, prepare for the kingdom by repenting of sin, and by believing the glad news that the

kingdom was approaching, for the King had come (John i. 49). The preaching of Jesus at this time did not differ materially from that of John the Baptist, for John preached repentance and the approaching kingdom (Matt. iii. 2), and the gospel (Luke iii. 18), and belief in the King (John i. 29, 36; iii. 36). The fact that repentance comes before belief in this passage is by some taken as an indication that repentance precedes faith in the process of conversion, but it should be remembered that the preaching here is addressed to the Jewish people, who already believed in God, and in the Scripture as the revelation of God. They were, therefore, required to bring forth fruit worthy of the old faith and the old revelation as preparatory to their reception of the new faith and the new revelation. Thus repentance and faith appears to be the established order for Hebrews (Heb. vi. 1), and their proselytes (Acts xx. 21), because of the spiritual standpoint or condition in which the gospel found them. But those who have no faith in God can surely have no repentance toward him, for belief precedes every call upon God, whether for mercy, pardon, or any other blessing--Rom. x. 13, 14], **‘and a fame went out concerning him through all the region round about.** [The miracles of Jesus and the manner in which he taught caused the people to glorify his name.] **15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.** [If we may trust later tradition (and the New Testament corroborates it), synagogues were very plentiful in that day, there being at least one in each town. In the synagogue the people met on Sabbath and feast days. The temple at Jerusalem was used for ceremonial worship, but the services in the synagogue were of far different order, the study and application of the Scripture being the principal feature.]

Study Questions:

1. What did Jesus preach from the time John was imprisoned?
2. How was the time fulfilled and the kingdom of God was at hand.
3. Where did Jesus teach? What was their reaction to Jesus and His preaching?

XXVIII. THE SECOND MIRACLE AT CANA.

^dJOHN IV. 46-54.

Bible Text:

^d**46 He came therefore again unto Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. 47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought *him* that he would come down, and heal his son; for he was at the point of death. 48 Jesus therefore said unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe. 49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. 50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. The man believed the word that Jesus spake unto him, and he went his way. 51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, saying, that his son lived. 52 So he inquired of them the hour when he began to amend. They said therefore unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. 53 So the father knew that *it was* at that hour in which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house. 54 This is again the second sign that Jesus did, having come out of Judæa into Galilee.**

Bible Text with Commentary:

^d**46 He came therefore again** [that is, in consequence of the welcome which awaited him] unto Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine [see page 114]. **And there was a certain nobleman** [literally, "king's man:" a word which Josephus uses to designate a soldier, courtier, or officer of the king. He was doubtless an officer of Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee. That it was Chuzas (Luke viii. 3) or Manaen (Acts xiii. 1) is mere conjecture], **whose son was sick at Capernaum.** [The nouns in this verse are suggestive. We have a "nobleman," yet neither riches nor office lifted him above affliction; a "son," yet approaching an untimely death before his father; and both these parties came to sorrow in "Capernaum," the city of consolation. Neither circumstance, nor age, nor situation can guarantee joy. We must still be seeking Jesus.] **47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee** [and was therefore within not very easy reach of his sick child's bedside], **he went unto him** [literally, "he went away unto him." The verb contains a delicate suggestion that the father was reluctant to leave the son, even to seek aid], **and besought *him* that he would come down, and heal his son; for he was at the point of death.** [Many, like this father, only seek divine aid when in the utmost extremity.] **48 Jesus therefore said unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe.** [Though Jesus spoke these words to the nobleman, yet he also intended them for those who stood by, for he used the plural "ye." That the Galilæans in general deserved reproof for their lack of faith, is shown by the upbraiding words which he spoke concerning their cities (Matt. xi. 20-24). Jesus wanted men to believe in him because of his self-evidencing character and words (John x. 38; xiv. 11; xv. 22-24; xx. 29). But the people required to have their faith buttressed by miracles. There is a vast difference between believing in a man, and believing his credentials. Miracles were our Lord's credentials; his ministry among men can not be thought of without them; and when the Baptist's faith in Christ himself wavered, Jesus referred him to them (Matt. xi. 4, 5). See also John x. 37. The two words, "signs" and "wonders," indicate the two aspects of miracles.

To the thoughtful they were signs or attestations that the one who performed them acted under the authority and approval of God; to all others they were mere wonders, which startled by their strangeness. Jesus was fresh from Sychar, where many required no other sign than his words.] **49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.** [The father felt that the case was too urgent to admit of delay for argument. It seemed to him that he raced with death. His faith differed from that of the centurion in that he felt that the *presence* of Jesus was required to perform the miracle. He also regarded the powers of Jesus as limited to the living; but we must not censure his faith as particularly weak, for in both these respects it resembled that possessed by Mary and Martha--John xi. 21, 22, 32, 39.] **50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth.** [Jesus enlarges the nobleman's conception of his divine power by showing him that his words take effect without regard to distance.] **The man believed the word that Jesus spake unto him, and he went his way. 51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, saying, that his son lived. 52 So he inquired of them the hour when he began to amend.** [More correctly, "began to get better." The father expected that the fever would depart slowly, as it usually does; but the reply of the servants shows that he was mistaken.] **They said therefore unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.** [Though for harmonistic reasons we are persuaded that John himself uses the Roman method of computing the hours, which would make the phrase here mean 7 P. M., yet since the phraseology here is not his, but that of the Galilæan servants, we take it to mean 1 P. M., for they would use the Jewish method of computing from sunset to sunset. If both parties had started at once, they would have met before sundown, as each had but eleven miles to traverse. But it is more reasonable to suppose that the wearied but now believing father sought some refreshment and a brief rest before returning, and that the servants tarried awhile to see if the child's recovery was permanent. This would lead to their meeting after sundown, at which time, according to the invariable custom, they would call the previous period of daylight "yesterday."] **53 So the father knew that it was at that hour in which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.** [We note here a growth in the faith of the nobleman. He first believed in the power of Jesus' *presence*, then in the power of Jesus' *word*, and finally he believed generally in Jesus, and his household shared his belief. This is the first mention of a believing household; for others see Acts xvi. 14, 15, 34; xviii. 8.] **54 This is again the second sign that Jesus did, having come out of Judæa into Galilee.** [One small sign and many converted in Samaria; two great miracles and one household converted in Galilee. Such is the record. Jesus doubtless had many other converts in Galilee, but it is often true that the greater labor brings the lesser harvest.]

Study Questions:

1. Where was Jesus when he healed the nobleman's son? What miracles had Jesus done there previously?
2. How sick was the nobleman's son?
3. Jesus told them that they would not believe without seeing signs and wonders. What is the difference between a sign and a wonder?
4. Why would the people not believe without seeing signs?
5. What do we learn by the fact that Jesus healed the nobleman's son without going to his house?
6. What did the nobleman do because he believed?
7. What was the result of the man returning home and seeing that his son was well?

8. How was this a sign?

XXIX.

JESUS' TEMPORARY RESIDENCE AT CAPERNAUM.

^aMATT. IV. 13-16.

Bible Text:

^a13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali: 14 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, 15 The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, 16 The people that sat in darkness saw a great light, And to them that sat in the region and shadow of death, To them did light spring up.

Bible Text with Commentary:

^a13 And leaving Nazareth [This expression means that Jesus now ceased to make Nazareth his home. For description of Nazareth, see page 60], **he came and dwelt in Capernaum** [See page 119. Capernaum means city of Nahum, or village of consolation. Its modern name, "Tel-Hum," means hill of Nahum. The word "dwelt" means that Jesus made this town his headquarters. He owned no house there (Matt. viii. 20). He may have dwelt with some of his disciples--for instance, Simon Peter--Matt. viii. 14-16], **which is by the sea, in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali** [Capernaum was in Naphtali, and the border of the tribe of Zebulun was three or four miles south of it. This part of the country was densely populated, and had in it many choice spirits such as Jesus chose for his apostles]: **14 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet** [Isa. viii. 21, 22; ix. 1, 2], **saying, 15 The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles,** [This land or region was the first to suffer in the beginning of those wars which finally resulted in the captivity of the ten tribes. The people of this district were smitten by Benhadad (I. Kings xv. 20), and afterwards by Tiglath-pileser (II. Kings xv. 29; I. Chron. v. 26), some time before the general captivity of the ten tribes (II. Kings xvii. 6). It is called Galilee of the Gentiles, because it was, according to Strabo and others, inhabited by Egyptians, Arabians and Phoenicians, as well as by Hebrews.] **16 The people that sat in darkness saw a great light, And to them that sat in the region and shadow of death, To them did light spring up.** [Those who by reason of their ignorance and depravity suffered the torments of war, and sat as it were under the shadow of the wing of death, were designated by prophecies as the class among whom the light of the gospel would spring up in all the fullness and richness of its blessing. Jesus, the "Light of the world," fulfilled this prophecy, and apart from him there can be no pretense of its fulfillment. Galilee had its prophets, but the enemies of Jesus themselves bear witness that none of them were great enough "lights" to fulfill this prophecy--John vii. 52.]

Study Questions:

1. Where did Jesus dwell? How did this fulfill prophecy?
2. Why did the people sit in darkness? What great light did they see?
3. Why did the people sit in the region and shadow of death? How did the light spring up among them?

XXX.

JESUS CALLS FOUR FISHERMEN TO FOLLOW HIM.

(Sea of Galilee Near Capernaum.)

^aMATT. IV. 18-22; ^bMARK I. 16-20; ^cLUKE V. 1-11.

Bible Text:

^a18 And walking ^b16 And passing along by the sea of Galilee, he saw ^atwo brethren, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, {^bthe brother of Simon} casting a net in {^ainto} the sea; for they were fishers. ^b17 And Jesus said {^ahe saith} ^bunto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. ^a21 And going on from thence ^ba little further, ^ahe saw two other brethren, James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, ^bwho also were in the boat ^awith Zebedee their father, mending their {^bthe} nets. 20 And straightway he called them: ^c1 Now it came to pass, while the multitude pressed upon him and heard the word of God, that he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret; 2 and he saw two boats standing by the lake: but the fishermen had gone out of them, and were washing their nets. 3 And he entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the multitudes out of the boat. 4 And when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. 5 And Simon answered and said, Master, we toiled all night, and took nothing; but at thy word I will let down the nets. 6 And when they had done this, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their nets were breaking; 7 and they beckoned unto their partners in the other boat, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. 8 But Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. 9 For he was amazed, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken; 10 and so were also James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. 11 And when they had brought their boats to land, they ^astraightway ^cleft all, ^bleft the nets, ^aleft the boat and their father, ^bZebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after him. {^cfollowed him}

Bible Text with Commentary:

^a18 And walking ^b16 And passing along by the sea of Galilee [This lake is a pear-shaped body of water, about twelve and a half miles long and about seven miles across at its widest place. It is 682 feet below sea level; its waters are fresh, clear and abounding in fish, and it is surrounded by hills and mountains, which rise from 600 to 1,000 feet above it. Its greatest depth is about 165 feet], **he** [Jesus] **saw** ^a**two brethren, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, {^bthe brother of Simon} casting a net in {^ainto} the sea** [The New Testament speaks of three kinds of nets, viz.: the *amphiblestron*, which is only mentioned here; the *sagene*, mentioned only at Matt. xiii. 47; and the *dictua*, which is mentioned in all other places. The *dictua* was a casting-net; the *sagene*, a seine or dragnet; and the *amphiblestron* was a drownet, a circular bell-shaped affair, which was thrown upon the water, so that it spread out and caught, by sinking, whatever was below it]; **for they were fishers.** [Though Simon and Andrew had been companions of Jesus on at least one journey, they did not as yet understand that his service would require

all their time. The facts that Jesus now temporarily resided at Capernaum afforded them an opportunity to return to their old occupation, which they readily embraced. Fishing was then a prosperous trade on the lake of Galilee.] **^b17 And Jesus said {^ahe saith} ^bunto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.** [It was an invitation to follow, that they might be instructed by hearing his teaching and beholding his work. Jesus called them from a lower to a similar but higher labor. He calls all honest tradesmen in this manner. He invites carpenters to build his temple, servants to serve the great King, physicians to heal immortal souls, merchants to invest in pearls of great price, etc. The fisherman found many points of resemblance between the old and new calling, such as, 1, daily hardships and dangers; 2, earnest desires for the objects sought; 3, skill and wisdom in the use of means, etc. Disciples are fishers, human souls are fish, the world is the sea, the gospel is the net, and eternal life is the shore whither the catch is drawn.] **^a21 And going on from thence ^ba little further, ^ahe saw two other brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, ^bwho also were in the boat ^awith Zebedee their father, mending their {^bthe} nets.** [They also, like Peter and Andrew, were at work when Jesus found them. God calls the busy to his business. For instances where God has called the busy, see cases of Moses (Ex. iii. 1, 2), Gideon (Judg. vi. 11), Saul (I. Sam. x. 1-3), David (I. Sam. xvi. 11-15), Elisha (I. Kings xix. 19-21), Matthew (Matt. ix. 9), Saul (Acts ix. 1-6). Moreover most of these were called from lowly work, for such is God's method (I. Cor. i. 26-29). We should note two reasons why God chose the lowly and unlearned: 1, their minds being free from prejudice were more ready to entertain new truth; 2, the strength of the gospel was made more apparent by the weakness of its ministers (I. Cor. ii. 3-5; II. Cor. iv. 7; Zech. iv. 6). Of these two brothers, James was the first apostolic martyr and John the last survivor of the twelve. James was beheaded about A. D. 44 (Acts xii. 1, 2); and John, after upwards of seventy years' Christian service, died at Ephesus about A. D. 100.] **20 And straightway he called them** [From Matthew and Mark we would suppose that Jesus was alone when he called the two sets of brothers, and that with them he immediately left the lake. But we learn from Luke that a multitude was gathering about Jesus, and that he taught and worked a miracle before leaving the lake]: **^c1 Now it came to pass, while the multitude pressed upon him and heard the word of God, that he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret** [This body of water bore many names. It was anciently called Chinnereth (Num. xxxiv. 11), or Chinneroth (Judg. xii. 3), from a fortified town (Josh. xix. 35) and district (I. Kings xv. 20) in Naphtali bearing that name. It is here called Gennesaret, from a plain of that name upon its northwestern shore (which may be a corruption of the old name Chinnereth.) It received its name, Galilee, from the district to which it belongs, and in later times it bore the name Tiberias (John vi. 1), from the city of that name on its western shore]; **2 and he saw two boats standing by the lake: but the fishermen had gone out of them, and were washing their nets.** [We may conceive of the fishermen, in answer to Jesus' call, drawing their boats together to the point where he stood upon the shore. Then, as Jesus stood teaching, they occupied themselves in the shallow water behind by washing their nets while they listened to him.] **3 And he entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land.** [He did this that he might avoid the press, and that the people might be better able both to see and to hear.] **And he sat down** [the usual attitude or posture of a teacher] **and taught the multitudes out of the boat.** **4 And when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.** ["Put out" is in the singular, being addressed to Simon alone; "let down" is plural, being addressed generally to those in the boat.] **5 And Simon answered and said, Master, we toiled all night, and took nothing: but at thy word I will let down the nets.** ["Master" is a broader word than "Rabbi"; it indicates a superior, but does not confine his

superiority to matters of instruction. The words of Peter show a willingness to oblige or honor Jesus, but are devoid of hope as to the thing proposed. Night was the time for fishing (John xxi. 3); and the proper place to cast the net was near the shore; but if Jesus wished to fish by daylight in the middle of the lake, Simon was not too weary to humor the wish.] **6 And when they had done this, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their nets were breaking** [that is, the nets began to snap when they tried to lift them out of the water]; **7 and they beckoned unto their partners in the other boat, that they should come and help them.** [This indicates that they were well out into the lake, where it was easier to beckon than to shout explanations. Some think the marvel wrought by Jesus made them speechless, but they were so engrossed in the magnitude and value of the catch that the full glory of the miracle had not yet come upon them.] **And they came, and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.** [They probably ran a second net under the one which enclosed the fishes, and by thus doubling the strength of the net were able to draw the fish up between the boats. A great load thus suddenly dumped in the side of a boat will cause it to list, dip water and threaten to sink. Such appears to have been the case here until the loads were so distributed as to right the ships.] **8 But Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.** **9 For he was amazed, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken** [This miracle came home to the soul of Peter because it was wrought in his own boat, with his own nets, and concerned his own business. Religion is only powerful as it becomes personal. Peter's request shows how deeply the miracle impressed him. It gave him that sense of the divine presence which never fails to overwhelm the hearts of men. No man can behold God in his glory and live (Ex. xxxiii. 20-23; xx. 18, 19); and though there have been exceptions where men have seen God or his representatives and lived (Ex. xxiv. 9-11; Judg. vi. 21-23; xiii. 22, 23; Isa. vi. 1-5; Dan. x. 16-19; Gen. xxxii. 30); yet no man, not even the purest, has ever stood in the presence of God or his ministers without feeling such a sense of weakness and sinfulness as to almost extinguish life--Rev. i. 17; Job xlii. 5, 6]; **10 and so were also James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.** [Jesus here shows the purpose for which this miracle had been wrought. It was a prophetic type or picture which foreshadowed the triumphs of the day of Pentecost and other seasons when the apostles had great ingatherings of souls through the preaching of the gospel.] **11 And when they had brought their boats to land, they ^astraightway ^aleft all** [that is to say, Peter and Andrew], **^bleft the nets** [but James and John], **^aleft the boat and their father, ^bZebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after him. {^cfollowed him}** [The four partners, boats, different kinds of nets, hired servants, etc., and the fact that Salome, the wife of Zebedee, was one of those who ministered to Christ out of her substance (Matt. xxvii. 55, 56; Luke viii. 3), all indicate a business of very respectable proportions: a fact which suggests that the church of Christ would catch more souls if all its parts were in partnership. Evidently when the four men left the boats and nets Zebedee took charge of them. While the four rightly recognized that the divine call was superior to their earthly obligations, there is nothing which leads us to imply that their sudden departure discomfited Zebedee. The call of Christ here marks a change in their relationship to him. Hitherto discipleship had not materially interfered with business, but this present call separated them from their occupation, and prepared them for the call to be apostles which came later, and which required them to be his constant companions--Mark iii. 14.]

Study Questions:

1. What was Peter, Andrew, James, and John's profession? What was their business relationship and how do we know that they were successful?
2. What did Jesus call them to do? What were they doing when Jesus called them?
3. Metaphorically speaking, how is evangelism fishing for men?
4. Why might Jesus have taught the people from Peter's boat?
5. After teaching the people, what did Jesus tell Peter to do? What was his response and how does it exemplify faith?
6. What happened when Peter let down the nets? Was it a miracle? Explain.
7. What was Peter's reaction? What was James and John's reaction?
8. What did Jesus say to Peter?
9. What did they do after bringing their boats to land?

XXXI.

HEALING A DEMONIAIC IN A SYNAGOGUE.

(At Capernaum.)

^bMARK I. 21-28; ^cLUKE . iv. 31-37.

Bible Text:

^b21 And they go into {^che came down to} Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And ^bstraightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught. {^cwas teaching them} ^b22 And they were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as having {^chis word was with} ^bauthority, and not as the scribes. 23 And straightway there was in their {^cthe} ^bsynagogue a man with {^cthat had} ^ban unclean spirit {^ca spirit of an unclean demon}; ^band he cried out, ^cwith a loud voice, ^b24 saying, ^c34 Ah! 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. 35 Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the demon {^bunclean spirit} ^chad thrown him down in the midst, ^btearing him and crying with a loud voice, ^che came out of him, having done him no hurt. ^b27 And they were all amazed, {^camazement came upon all}, ^binsomuch that they questioned among themselves, ^cand they spake together, one with another, saying, ^bWhat is this? ^cWhat is this word? ^ba new teaching! ^cfor with authority and power he commandeth ^beven the unclean spirits, ^cand they come out. ^band they obey him. 28 And the report of him went out straightway {^c37 And there went forth a rumor concerning him} ^beverywhere into all {^cevery place of} ^bthe region of Galilee roundabout.

Bible Text with Commentary:

^b21 And they [Jesus and the four fishermen whom he had called] go into {^che came down to} Capernaum, a city of Galilee. [Luke has just spoken of Nazareth, and he uses the expression "down to Capernaum" because the latter was on the lake shore while Nazareth was up in the mountains.] And ^bstraightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught. {^cwas teaching them} ^b22 And they were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as having {^chis word was with} ^bauthority, and not as the scribes. [Mark uses the adverb "straightway" and the particle "again" (which has a similar meaning) to depict the rapid movement of Jesus. As used by him in this connection it probably indicates that this was the next Sabbath after the calling of the four fishermen. The astonishment of the people was natural. Not yet recognizing Jesus' divinity, they could not understand how one so humble could speak with such authority. They contrasted his teaching with that of the scribes. The scribes were learned men who preserved, copied and expounded the law and the tradition (Ez. vii. 6, 12; Neh. viii. 1; Matt. xv. 1-6; xxiii. 2-4; Mark xii. 35; Luke xi. 52). They were also called "lawyers" (Mark xii. 28; Matt. xxii. 35), and "doctors of the law" (Luke v. 17-21). Though the teaching of Jesus differed from the teaching of the scribes as to *matter*, the contrast drawn is as to *manner*. They spoke on the authority of Moses or the elders, but Jesus taught by his own authority. Their way was to quote minute precedents supported by endless authorities. A passage taken from later rabbinical writings starts thus: "Rabbi Zeira says, on the authority of Rabbi Jose bar Rabbi Chanina, and Rabbi Ba or Rabbi Chija on the authority of Rabbi Jochanan," etc. Contrast with this the oft-repeated "I say to you" of Jesus--Matt. v. 18, 20, 22, 26, 28,

34.] **23 And straightway there was in their {‘the} ^bsynagogue a man with {‘that had} ^ban unclean spirit {‘a spirit of an unclean demon}** [Matthew, Luke and Mark all concur in pronouncing demons unclean; that is, wicked. They thus corrected the prevailing Greek notion that some of the demons were good. The word "demon," as used in our Saviour's time by both Jews and Greeks, meant the spirits of the departed or the ghosts of dead men, and the teaching of that and prior ages was that such spirits often took possession of living men and controlled them. But whatever these demons were, the Scripture, both by its treatment of them and its words concerning them, clearly indicates that they were immaterial, intelligent beings, which are neither to be confused with maladies and diseases of the body, nor with tropes, metaphors, or other figures of speech. In proof of this we adduce the following Scripture facts: 1, the legislation of the Old Testament proceeded upon the assumption that there was such a thing as a "familiar spirit" (Lev. xix. 31); 2, in the New Testament they are spoken of as personalities (Jas. ii. 19; Rev. xvi. 14), Jesus even founding a parable upon their habits (Luke xi. 24-26); 3, Jesus distinguished between them and diseases, and so did his disciples (Matt. x. 8; Luke x. 17-20); 4, Jesus addressed them as persons, and they answered as such (Mark v. 8; ix. 25); 5, they manifested desires and passions (Mark v. 12, 13); 6, they showed a superhuman knowledge of Jesus (Matt. viii. 29). It would be impossible to regard demon possession as a mere disease without doing violence to the language used in every instance of the expulsion of a demon. The frequency of demoniacal possession in the time of Jesus is probably due to the fact that his advent formed a great crisis in the spiritual order of things. For fuller treatment of the subject, see *Millennial Harbinger*, 1841, pp. 457, 580; 1842, pp. 65, 124]; ^b**and he cried out, ‘with a loud voice** [The man cried, the unclean spirit determined what he should cry. The silence and decorum of the synagogue made the outcry more noticeable, and the demon betrayed his excitement and alarm in speaking before he was spoken to], ^b**24 saying, ‘34 Ah! what have we to do with thee** [for explanation of this idiom see page 116], **Jesus thou Nazarene? art thou come to destroy us?** [Jesus came to destroy the *works* of the devil (I. John iii. 8). At his second coming the *workers* themselves shall suffer (Matt. xxv. 41). We find that they recognized that the time of this "torment" had not yet come--Matt. viii. 29.] **I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.** [It is impossible that fever or disease, mental or physical, could give such supernatural knowledge. The demon called Jesus the Holy One, 1, because it was one of his proper Scriptural names (Ps. xvi. 10; Acts iii. 14); 2, because holiness was that characteristic which involved the ruin of demons as unholy ones--just as light destroys darkness. We should note here the unfruitful knowledge, faith, and confession of demons. They lacked neither knowledge (Matt. viii. 29) nor faith (Jas. ii. 19), nor did they withhold confession; but Jesus received them not. Repentance and willing obedience are as necessary as faith or confession.] **35 Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.** [We have in this phrase two personages indicated by the personal pronoun "him"; one of whom is commanded to come out of the other; one of whom is now rebuked and hereafter to be destroyed, the other of whom is delivered. In commanding silence Jesus refused to receive the demon's testimony. We can see at least three reasons for this: 1, it was not fitting that the fate of the people should rest upon the testimony of liars; 2, because receiving such testimony might have been taken as an indication that Jesus sustained friendly relations to demons--something which the enemies of Christ actually alleged (Matt. xii. 24); 3, the Messiahship of Jesus was to be gradually unfolded, and the time for its public proclamation had not yet come.] **And when the demon {^bunclean spirit} ‘had thrown him down in the midst, ^btearing him and crying with a loud voice, ‘he came out of him, having done him no hurt.** [The demon first racked the body of the man with a convulsion, and then, with a cry of rage, came out. All this was permitted that, 1, there might be clear evidence of demoniacal possession; 2, the demon's

malignity might be shown; 3, it might be manifested that the spirit came not out of its own accord, but because compelled thereto by the command of Christ. The cry was, however, a mere impotent expression of anger, for Luke, "the beloved physician," notes that it did the man no hurt.] ^b27 **And they were all amazed, {^camazement came upon all}, ^binsomuch that they questioned among themselves, ^cand they spake together, one with another, saying, ^bWhat is this? ^cWhat is this word? ^ba new teaching! ^cfor with authority and power he commandeth ^beven the unclean spirits, ^cand they come out. ^band they obey him.** [The power to command disembodied spirits thus amazed the people, because it was more mysterious than the power to work physical miracles. By this miracle Jesus demonstrated his actual possession of the authority which he had just assumed in his teaching.] **28 And the report of him went out straightway {^c37 And there went forth a rumor concerning him} ^beverywhere into all {^cevery place of} ^bthe region of Galilee roundabout.** [This fame was occasioned both by the miracle and the teaching. The benevolence and publicity of the miracle, and its power--the power of one mightier than Satan--would cause excitement in any community, in any age. Though this is the first miracle recorded by either Mark or Luke, yet neither asserts that it was the *first* miracle Jesus wrought, so there is no conflict with John ii. 11.]

Study Questions:

1. Where was Jesus living at this time?
2. What did Jesus do in the synagogue on the Sabbath?
3. Why were the people astonished at Jesus' teaching?
4. Who did Jesus heal in the synagogue?
5. What did the demon say to Jesus? What was Jesus' response?
6. What did the demon do after Jesus commanded him to come out of the man? Was the man hurt?
7. What is significant about the fact that the demon did not harm the man?
8. Why were the people amazed? What did they do?
9. Why did the people obey? How is this similar to the reason for our obedience today?
10. What went out from Capernaum throughout the region of Galilee?

XXXII.

HEALING PETER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW
AND MANY OTHERS.

(At Capernaum.)

^aMATT. VIII. 14-17; ^bMARK I. 29-34; ^cLUKE IV. 38-41.

Bible Text:

^c38 And he rose up from the synagogue, ^b29 And straightway, when they were come out of the synagogue, they came {^centered} ^binto the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick of {^cwas holden with} a great fever. ^a14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother lying sick of a fever. ^band straightway they tell him of her: ^cand they besought him for her. ^b31 and he came ^c39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; ^a15 And he touched her hand, ^band took her by the hand, and raised her up; ^cand it {^bthe fever} ^cleft her: and immediately she rose up {^aarose,} ^band she ministered unto them. {^ahim.} ^b32 And at even, ^awhen even was come, ^cwhen the sun was setting, {^bdid set,} ^call they that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them unto him; ^bthey brought unto him all that were sick, and them {^amany} ^bthat were possessed with demons. ^cand he laid his hands on every one of them, ^aand he cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all ^cthem ^athat were sick: ¹⁷ that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our diseases. ^b33 And all the city was gathered together at the door. ³⁴ And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many demons; ^c41 And demons also came out from many, crying out, and saying, Thou art the Son of God. And rebuking them, he suffered them {^bthe demons} ^cnot to speak, ^bbecause they knew him. ^cthat he was the Christ.

Bible Text with Commentary:

^c38 And he rose up from the synagogue [where he had just healed the demoniac], ^b29 And straightway, when they were come out of the synagogue, they came {^centered} ^binto the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. [Peter and Andrew had dwelt at Bethsaida (John i. 44). They may have removed to Capernaum, or Bethsaida, being near by, may be here counted as a part, or suburb, of Capernaum. Its name does not contradict this view, for it means "house of fishing," or "fishery."] ³⁰ Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick of {^cwas holden with} a great fever. [The Papists, who claim that Peter was the first pope, must confess that he was married at this time, and continued to be so for years afterwards (I. Cor. ix. 5). Celibacy is unauthorized by Scripture (Heb. xiii. 4). God says it is not good (Gen. ii. 18). Luke speaks as a physician; for Galen, the father of medicine, divided fevers into little and great.] ^a14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother lying sick of a fever. ^band straightway they tell him of her: ^cand they besought him for her. [Their interest in her shows the spirit of love and kindness which pervaded the home.] ^b31 and he came ^c39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever [Though it was an inanimate force, it was still subject to rebuke, as were the winds and waves of Galilee--Matt. viii. 26]; ^a15 And he touched her hand, ^band took her by the hand, and raised her up [thus showing that the miracle came from him, and that he felt a tender

interest in the sufferer]; **and it** {^bthe fever} **left her: and immediately she rose up** {^aarose,} ^b**and she ministered unto them.** {^ahim.} [Her complete recovery emphasized the miracle. Such fevers invariably leave the patient weak, and the period of convalescence is long and trying, and often full of danger. She showed her gratitude by her ministry.] ^b**32 And at even,** ^a**when even was come,** ^c**when the sun was setting,** {^bdid set,} ^c**all they that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them unto him;** ^b**they brought unto him all that were sick, and them**{^amany} ^b**that were possessed with demons.** [Their delay till sundown was unquestionably caused by the traditional law of the Sabbath which forbade men to carry any burden on that day (John v. 10). The Sabbath closed at sundown (Lev. xxiii. 32). The distinction is drawn between the sick and the demon-possessed. Lightfoot gives two reasons why demoniacal possession was so common at that time, viz.: 1, the intense wickedness of the nation; 2, the addiction of the nation to magic, whereby the people invited evil spirits to be familiar with them.] **and he laid his hands on every one of them,** ^a**and he cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all** ^c**them** ^a**that were sick: 17 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet** [Isa. liii. 4], **saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our diseases.** [Isaiah's vision is progressive; he sees, first, a man of sorrows; second, a man sorrowful because he bore the sickness and sorrows of others; third, a man who also bore sin, and healed the souls of others by so doing. Such was the order of Christ's life. His early years were spent in poverty and obscurity; his days of ministry in bearing, by sympathy and compassion, the sicknesses and sorrows of others (John xi. 35; Mark xiv. 34); and in the hour of his crucifixion, he became the world's sin-bearer--John i. 29; I. Pet. ii. 24.] ^b**33 And all the city was gathered together at the door. 34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many demons;** ^c**41 And demons also came out from many, crying out, and saying, Thou art the Son of God. And rebuking them, he suffered them** {^bthe demons} ^c**not to speak,** ^b**because they knew him.** ^c**that he was the Christ.** [Those who are disposed to frequent spiritual seances and to seek information from mediums should remember that the Son of God permitted his disciples to receive no information from such sources. He forbade demons to speak in the presence of his own, even on the most important of all topics.]

Study Questions:

1. Where did Jesus go after teaching and healing the demoniac in the synagogue? Who was with Him?
2. What was wrong with Peter's mother-in-law? What did Jesus do when He healed her?
3. How did this fulfill prophesy?
4. What did Peter's mother-in-law do after being healed? Why is this significant?
5. Who did the people bring to Jesus? When? What did Jesus do?
6. Why didn't Jesus allow the demons to speak?

XXXIII.

JESUS MAKES A PREACHING TOUR
THROUGH GALILEE.^aMATT. IV. 23-25; ^bMARK I. 35-39; ^cLUKE IV. 42-44.

Bible Text:

^b35 And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed. ^c42 And when it was day, he came out and went into a desert place. ^b36 And Simon and they that were with him followed after him; 37 and they found him, and say unto him, All are seeking thee. 38 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. ^cand the multitudes sought after him, and came unto him, and would have stayed him, that he should not go from them. 43 But he said unto them, I must preach the good tidings of the kingdom of God to the other cities also: for therefore was I sent. ^b39 And he ^aJesus went about in all Galilee, ^binto their synagogues throughout all Galilee, ^ateaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, ^band casting out demons, ^aand healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people. 24 And the report of him went forth into all Syria: and they brought unto him all that were sick, holden with divers diseases and torments, possessed with demons, and epileptic, and palsied; and he healed them. 25 And there followed him great multitudes from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judæa and *from* beyond the Jordan. ^c44 And he was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

Bible Text with Commentary:

^b35 And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up went out [*i. e.*, from the house of Simon Peter], and departed into a desert place, and there prayed. [Though Palestine was densely populated, its people were all gathered into towns, so that it was usually easy to find solitude outside the city limits. A ravine near Capernaum, called the Vale of Doves, would afford such solitude. Jesus taught (Matt. vi. 6) and practiced solitary prayer. We can commune with God better when alone than when in the company of even our dearest friends. It is a mistaken notion that one can pray equally well at all times and in all places. Jesus being in all things like men, except that he was sinless (Heb. ii. 17), must have found prayer a real necessity. He prayed as a human being. Several reasons for this season of prayer are suggested, from which we select two: 1. It was a safeguard against the temptation to vainglory induced by the unbounded admiration and praise of the multitude whom he had just healed. 2. It was a fitting preparation on the eve of his departure on his first missionary tour.] ^c42 And when it was day, he came out and went into a desert place. [Mark has in mind the season when Jesus sought the Father in prayer, and so he tells us it was "a great while before day." Luke has in mind the hour when Jesus faced and spoke to the multitude, so he says, "When it was day."] ^b36 And Simon [as head of the house which Jesus had just left, Simon naturally acted as leader and guide to the party which sought Jesus] and they that were with him [they who were stopping in Simon's house; viz.: Andrew, James and John] followed after him [literally, pursued after him. Xenophon uses this word to signify the close pursuit of an enemy in war. Simon had no hesitancy in obtruding on the retirement of the Master. This rushing after Jesus in hot haste

accorded with his impulsive nature. The excited interest of the people seemed to the disciples of Jesus to offer golden opportunities, and they could not comprehend his apparent indifference to it]; **37 and they found him, and say unto him, All are seeking thee.** [The disciples saw a multitude seeking Jesus for various causes: some to hear, some for excitement, some for curiosity. To satisfy the people seemed to them to be Christ's first duty. Jesus understood his work better than they. He never encouraged those who sought through mere curiosity or admiration (John vi. 27). Capernaum accepted the benefit of his miracles, but rejected his call to repentance--Matt. xi. 23.] **38 And he saith unto them, Let us go elsewhere into the next towns** [the other villages of Galilee], **that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth.** [*I. e.*, I came forth from the Father (John xvi. 28) to make and preach a gospel. His disciples failed to understand his mission. Afterwards preaching was with the apostles the all-important duty--Acts vi. 2; I. Cor. i. 17.] **and the multitudes sought after him, and came unto him, and would have stayed him, that he should not go from them.** [They would have selfishly kept his blessed ministries for their own exclusive enjoyment.] **43 But he said unto them, I must preach the good tidings of the kingdom of God to the other cities also: for therefore was I sent.** [Jesus sought to arouse the entire nation. That which the disciples regarded as a large work in Capernaum was consequently in his sight a very small one. Those who understand that it is God's will and wish to save every man that lives upon the earth will not be overelated by a successful revival in some small corner of the great field of labor.] **39 And he Jesus went about in all Galilee** [The extreme length of Galilee was about sixty-three miles, and its extreme width about thirty-three miles. Its average dimensions were about fifty by twenty-five miles. It contained, according to Josephus, two hundred and forty towns and villages. Its population at that time is estimated at about three millions. Lewin calculates that this circuit of Galilee must have occupied four or five months. The verses of this paragraph are, therefore, a summary of the work and influence of Jesus during the earlier part of his ministry. They are a general statement, the details of which are given in the subsequent chapters of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke--the Gospel of John dealing more particularly with the work in Judæa], **into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues** [The word "synagogue" is compounded of the two Greek words "*sun*," together, and "*ago*," to collect. It is, therefore, equivalent to our English word "meeting-house." Tradition and the Targums say that these Jewish houses of worship existed from the earliest times. In proof of this assertion Deut. xxxi. 11 and Ps. lxxiv. 8 are cited. But the citations are insufficient, that in Deuteronomy not being in point, and the seventy-fourth Psalm being probably written after the Babylonian captivity. It better accords with history to believe that the synagogue originated during the Babylonian captivity, and was brought into the motherland by the returning exiles. Certain it is that the synagogue only came into historic prominence after the books of the Old Testament were written. At the time of our Saviour's ministry synagogues were scattered all over Palestine, and also over all quarters of the earth whither the Jews had been dispersed. Synagogues were found in very small villages, for wherever ten "men of leisure," willing and able to devote themselves to the service of the synagogue, were found, a synagogue might be erected. In the synagogues the people met together on the Sabbaths to pray, and to listen to the reading of the portions of the Old Testament, and also to hear such instruction or exhortation as might be furnished. With the permission of the president of the synagogue any one who was fitted might deliver an address. Thus the synagogues furnished Jesus (and in later times his disciples also) with a congregation and a suitable place for preaching. We find that on week days Jesus often preached in the open air. But the synagogues are thus particularly mentioned, probably, because in them were held the most important services, because they were necessary during the rainy and cold season, and because their use shows that as yet the Jewish rulers had not so prejudiced the public mind as to

exclude Jesus from the houses of worship], **and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, ^band casting out demons** [Mark singles out this kind of miracle as most striking and wonderful], **^aand healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people. 24 And the report of him went forth into all Syria** [caravans passing through Galilee back and forth between the Mediterranean seaports on the west and the Persian cities on the east, and between Damascus on the north and Egypt on the south, would carry the reports concerning Jesus far and wide]: **and they brought unto him all that were sick, holden with divers diseases and torments, possessed with demons, and epileptic, and palsied; and he healed them.** [Thus, by his actions, Jesus showed that the kingdom of God had come. The wonders of Moses were mostly miracles of judgment, those of Jesus were acts of compassion. The diseases here enumerated are still among the most difficult for physicians to handle. The term "palsy" included all forms of paralysis, catalepsy and cramps.] **25 And there followed him great multitudes** [these popular demonstration, no doubt, intensified the erroneous notion of his disciples that the kingdom of Jesus was to be one of worldly grandeur] **from Galilee and Decapolis** [Decapolis is formed from the two Greek words "*deka*," ten, and "*polis*," city. As a geographical term, Decapolis refers to that part of Syria lying east, southeast, and south of the Lake of Galilee. There is some doubt as to which were the ten cities named, for there seem at times to have been fourteen of them. Those commonly reckoned are 1. Damascus. 2. Philadelphia. 3. Raphana. 4. Sythopolis. 5. Gadara. 6. Hyppos. 7. Dion. 8. Pella. 9. Galas. 10. Kanatha. The other four are Abila and Kanata (distinct from Kanatha), Cæsarea Philippi, and Gergesa. None of these were in Galilee save Sythopolis. According to Ritter, these cities were colonized principally by veterans from the army of Alexander the Great. A reminiscence of their Macedonian origin is found in the fact that there was a city named Pella in Macedonia. These cities are said to have been formed into a confederacy by Pompey the Great. In the time of Jesus they were chiefly inhabited by Greeks or heathen, and not by Jews. Josephus expressly calls Gadara and Hyppos Greek cities] **and Jerusalem and Judæa and from beyond the Jordan.** [The land beyond Jordan was called Peræa, which means "beyond." According to Josephus, it included territory between the cities of Pella on the north and Machærus on the south. That is to say, its northern boundary began on the Jordan opposite the southern line of Galilee, and its southern boundary was at Moab, about the middle of the east shore of the Dead Sea.] **44 And he was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.**

Study Questions:

1. When and where did Jesus pray? What can we learn from His example?
2. Why had Jesus come forth (come to earth)?
3. Where did Jesus go after departing from Capernaum? What did He do?
4. What did the people of Syria do? Why?
5. How many people followed Jesus? Where were they from?

XXXIV.

JESUS HEALS A LEPER AND CREATES MUCH EXCITEMENT.

^aMATT.VIII. 2-4; ^bMARK I. 40-45; ^cLUKE V. 12-16.

Bible Text:

^c12 And it came to pass, while he was in one of the cities, behold, ^bthere cometh {^acame} ^bto him a leper, ^ca man full of leprosy: and when he saw Jesus, ^bbeseeching him, and kneeling down to him, ^che fell on his face, ^aand worshipped him, ^cand besought him, saying, ^bunto him, ^cLord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. ^b41 And being moved with compassion, he stretched forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, {^csaying,} I will; be thou made clean. ^b42 And straightway the {^ahis} ^cleprosy departed from him. {^awas cleansed.} ^band he was made clean. 43 And he strictly charged him, ^cto tell no man: ^band straightway sent him out, ^a4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; {^bsay nothing to any man:} ^cbut go thy way, and show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, ^bthe things which {^athe gift that} Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. ^b45 But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to spread abroad the matter, {^c15 But so much the more went abroad the report concerning him:} and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed of their infirmities. ^binsomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into a city, ^c16 But he withdrew himself in the deserts, {^bwas without in desert places:} ^cand prayed. ^band they came to him from every quarter.

Bible Text with Commentary:

^c12 And it came to pass, while he was in one of the cities [it was a city of Galilee, but as it was not named, it is idle to conjecture which city it was], behold, ^bthere cometh {^acame} ^bto him a leper [There is much discussion as to what is here meant by leprosy. Two diseases now go by that name; viz., psoriasis and elephantiasis. There are also three varieties of psoriasis, namely, white, black and red. There are also three varieties or modifications of elephantiasis, namely, tubercular, spotted or streaked, and anæsthetic. Elephantiasis is the leprosy found in modern times in Syria, Greece, Spain, Norway and Africa. Now, since Lev. xiii., in determining leprosy, lays great stress on a white or reddish-white depression of the skin, the hairs in which are turned white or yellow, and since it also provides that the leper who is white all over shall be declared clean, and since in the only two cases where lepers are described--Num. xii. 10; II. Kings v. 27--they are spoken of as "white as snow," scholars have been led to think that the Biblical leprosy was the white form of psoriasis. But the facts hardly warrant us in excluding the other forms of psoriasis, or even elephantiasis; for 1. Leviticus xiii. also declares that any bright spot or scale shall be pronounced leprosy, if it be found to spread abroad over the body; and this indefinite language would let in elephantiasis, cancer and many other skin diseases. In fact, the law deals with the initial symptoms rather than with the ultimate phases of the fully developed disease. 2. Elephantiasis was a common disease in our Saviour's time, and has been ever since, and would hardly be called leprosy now, if it had not been popularly so called then. The word "leprosy" comes from "*lepo*," which means to peel off in scales. It is hereditary for generations, though modern medical authorities hold that it is not contagious. However, the returning Crusaders spread it all over Europe in the tenth and eleventh centuries, so that according to

Matthew Paris there was no less than nine thousand hospitals set apart for its victims. The facts that the priests had to handle and examine lepers, and that any one who was white all over with leprosy was declared clean, led scholars to think that the laws of Moses, which forbade any one to approach or touch a leper, were not enacted to prevent the spread of a contagion, but for typical and symbolic purposes. It is thought that God chose the leprosy as the symbol of sin and its consequences, and that the Mosaic legislation was given to carry out this conception. Being the most loathsome and incurable of all diseases, it fitly represents in bodily form the ravages of sin in the soul of a man. But there must also have been a sanitary principle in God's laws, since we still deem it wise to separate lepers, and since other people besides the Hebrews (as the Persians) prohibited lepers from mingling with other citizens. Elephantiasis is the most awful disease known. The body of its victim disintegrates joint by joint, until the whole frame crumbles to pieces. Psoriasis is milder, but is very distressing. Mead thus describes a case: The "skin was shining as covered with flakes of snow. And as the furfuraceous or bran-like, scales were daily rubbed off, the flesh appeared quick or raw underneath." In addition to the scaly symptoms, the skin becomes hard and cracks open, and from the cracks an ichorous humor oozes. The disease spreads inwardly, and ends in consumption, dropsy, suffocation and death], **“a man full of leprosy** [Some have thought that Luke meant to indicate one so completely covered with leprosy as to be clean (Lev. xiii. 12-17). But the fact that Jesus sent him to the priest, shows that he was not such a clean leper. Luke meant to describe a leper in the last stages of the disease--a leper past all hope]: **and when he saw Jesus, ^bbeseeching him, and kneeling down to him, ^che fell on his face, ^aand worshipped him, ^cand besought him, saying, ^bunto him, ^cLord** [The Jews, in addressing any distinguished person, usually employed the title "Lord." They were also accustomed to kneel before prophets and kings. It is not likely that the leper knew enough of Jesus to address him as the Son of God. He evidently took Jesus for some great prophet; but he must have had great faith, for he was full of confidence that Jesus had power to heal him, although there was but one case of leper-cleansing in the Scriptures--II. Kings v. 1-19; Luke iv. 27], **if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.** [The leper believed in the power of Jesus, but doubted his willingness to expend it on one so unworthy and so unclean. In temporal matters we can not always be as sure of God's willingness as we can be of his power. We should note that the man asked rather for the blessing of cleanness than for health. To the Jew uncleanness was more horrible than disease. It meant to be an outcast from Israel, and to be classed with swine, dogs and other odious and abhorrent creatures. The leper, therefore, prayed that the Lord would remove his shame and pollution.] **^b41 And being moved with compassion, he stretched forth his hand, and touched him** [Mark habitually notes the feelings, and hence also the gestures, of Jesus. It was not an accidental, but an intentional, touch. Popular belief so confused and confounded leprosy with the uncleanness and corruption of sin, as to make the leper feel that Jesus might almost compromise his purity if he concerned himself to relieve it. The touch of Jesus, therefore, gave the leper a new conception of divine compassion. It is argued that Jesus, by this touch, was made legally unclean until the evening (Lev. xiii. 46; xi. 40). But we should note the spirit and purpose of this law. Touch was prohibited because it defiled the person touching, and aided not the person touched. In Jesus' case the reasons for the law were absent, the conditions being reversed. Touching defiled not the toucher, and healed the touched. In all things Jesus touches and shares our human state, but he so shares it that instead of his being defiled by our uncleanness, we are purified by his righteousness. Moreover, Jesus, as a priest after the order of Melchizedek (Heb. v. 6), possessed the priestly right to touch the leper without defilement--Heb. iv. 15], **and saith unto him, {^csaying,} I will; be thou made clean.** [The Lord's answer is an echo of the man's prayer. The words, "I will," express the high authority of Jesus.] **^b42 And**

straightway the {^ahis} ^cleprosy departed from him. {^awas cleansed.} ^band he was made clean. ["Luke says, 'departed', giving the merely physical view of the event. Matthew says, 'was cleansed,' using ceremonial language. Mark combines the two forms"--*Godet.*] **43 And he strictly charged him, ^cto tell no man** [The language used indicates that Jesus sternly forbade the man to tell what had been done. The man's conduct, present and future, shows that he needed severe speech. In his uncontrollable eagerness to be healed he had overstepped his privileges, for he was not legally permitted to thus enter cities and draw near to people (Num. v. 2, 3); he was to keep at a distance from them, and covering his mouth, was to cry, "*Tame, tame*--unclean, unclean" (Lev. xiii. 45, 46; Luke xvii. 12, 13). The man evinced a like recklessness in disregarding the command of Jesus]: **^band straightway sent him out, ^a4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; {^bsay nothing to any man:}** [Several reasons are suggested why the Lord thus commanded silence: 1. It may have been better for the man not to mention his cure (John ix. 34). 2. He required the decision of the priest to make him legally clean; and too much talk might so prejudice the priests as to lead them to refuse to admit his cure. 3. But the best reason is that it accorded with our Lord's general course, which was to suppress excitement, and thus prevent too great crowds from gathering about him and hindering his work. To take this view is to say that Jesus meant to prevent exactly what happened] **^cbut go they way, and show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, ^bthe things which {^athe gift that} Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.** [Though healed of his leprosy, the man was not legally clean until declared so by the priest. The priest alone could readmit him to the congregation. The local priest inspected the healed leper, and if he was found clean or cured, he was purified by the use of two birds, cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop, razor and bath. After seven days he was again inspected, and if still cured the priest repaired with him to the temple, where he offered the gift for his cleansing, which was three lambs, with flour and oil; or if the leper was poor, one lamb and two doves or pigeons, with flour and oil (Lev. xiv.). The healed leper was a testimony that Messiah, the great Physician, had come, and that he respected the law of Moses. This testimony was given both to priests and people.] **^b45 But he went out** [from the presence of Jesus and from the city], **and began to publish it much, and to spread abroad the matter, {^c15 But so much the more went abroad the report concerning him:}** [the leper was so elated that he could scarcely refrain from publishing his cure, and he must also have thought that this was what Jesus really wanted--that in commanding him not to publish it he did not mean what he said] **and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed of their infirmities. ^binsomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into a city** [Not a natural or physical inability, but the inability of impropriety. Jesus could not do what he judged not best to do. The excitement cause by such an entry was injurious in several ways: 1. It gave such an emphasis to the miracles of Jesus as to make them overshadow his teaching. 2. It threatened to arouse the jealousy of the government. 3. It rendered the people incapable of calm thought. Two things constantly threatened the ministry of Jesus, namely, impatience in the multitude, and envious malice in the priests and Pharisees. Jesus wished to add to neither of these elements of opposition. Thus the disobedience of the leper interrupted Jesus, and thwarted him in his purpose to visit the villages. Disobedience, no matter how well-meaning, always hinders the work of Christ], **^c16 But he withdrew himself in the deserts, {^bwas without in desert places:}** [That is, in the remote grazing-lands like that desert in which he afterwards fed the five thousand. Such was our Lord's unexampled meekness that he preferred the silent deserts to the applause of multitudes. His meekness was as high above the capacity of a merely human being as were his miracles] **^cand prayed.** [Luke's gospel is pre-eminently the gospel of prayer and thanksgiving] **^band they came to him from every quarter.**

Study Questions:

1. What city was Jesus in when the leper came to Him?
2. What is a leper?
3. What did the leper do when he approached Jesus?
4. How confident was the leper of Jesus' ability to heal his leprosy?
5. Why did Jesus heal the leper?
6. What did Jesus say when healing the leper? What is the significance of His statement?
7. How quickly was the leper healed? Why is this significant?
8. What did Jesus command the man to do after being healed? Why would Jesus have given these commands?
9. What resulted from the man telling others about his healing?
10. Where did Jesus go after healing the leper? What happened there?

XXXV.

JESUS HEALS A PARALYTIC AT CAPERNAUM.

^aMATT. IX. 2-8; ^bMARK II. 1-12; ^cLUKE V. 17-26.

Bible Text:

^c17 And it came to pass on one of those days, ^bwhen he entered again into Capernaum after some days, ^cthat he was teaching; ^bit was noised that he was in the house. 2 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 them. ^cand there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, who were come out of every village of Galilee and Judaea and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was with him to heal. 18 And behold, men bring {^athey brought ^bthey come, bringing} unto him a man sick of the palsy, {^cthat was palsied:} ^alying on a bed: ^bborne of four ^cand they sought to bring him in, and to lay him before him. 19 And not finding by what *way* they might bring him in because of the multitude, ^b4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the crowd, ^cthey went up to the housetop, ^bthey 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. ^cand let him down through the tiles with his couch into the midst before Jesus. ^b5 And Jesus seeing their faith saith {^asaid} unto the sick of the palsy, Son, {^cMan,} ^abe of good cheer; ^cthy sins are forgiven thee. ^b6 But there were certain of the scribes ^cand the Pharisees ^bsitting there, ^a3 And behold, ^cbegan to reason, ^band reasoning in their hearts, ^asaid within themselves, ^csaying, ^aThis man blasphemeth. ^b7 Why doth this man thus speak? he blasphemeth: ^cWho is this that speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, ^bbut one, *even* God? ^calone? ^b8 And straightway Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they so reasoned {^ctheir reasonings,} ^bwithin themselves, ^a4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts ^canswered and said {^bsaith} unto them, ^aWherefore think ye evil in your hearts? ^bWhy reason ye these things in your hearts? ^a5 For which is easier, ^bto say to the sick of the palsy, ^cThy sins are forgiven thee; ^bor to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? 10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins, (^athen saith he to the sick of the palsy), {^c(he said unto him that was palsied),} I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, {^bbed,} ^cand go up unto thy house. 25 And immediately he rose up {^aarose,} ^cbefore them, ^band straightway took up the bed, ^cthat whereon he lay, ^band went forth before them all; ^aand departed to his house. ^cglorifying God. ^binsomuch that they were all amazed, 8 But when the multitudes saw it, they were afraid, ^c26 And amazement took hold on all, and they glorified God; ^awho had given such authority unto men. ^bsaying, We never saw it on this fashion, ^cand they were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day.

Bible Text with Commentary:

^c17 And it came to pass on one of those days, ^bwhen he entered again into Capernaum after some days, ^cthat he was teaching; ^bit was noised that he was in the house. [Luke uses the general expression "those days," referring to the early portion of our Lord's ministry in Galilee. Mark says, "some days," which implies the lapse of a considerable interval. The healing of the leper created such excitement that for some time, probably several weeks, Jesus kept out of the cities. He now, after the excitement has

subsided, quietly enters Capernaum, and probably goes to the house of Simon Peter, now looked upon as his headquarters in Capernaum (Mark i. 29). His entrance into Capernaum marks the end of his first missionary tour through Galilee.] **2 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 them.** [Oriental houses are one or two storied structures, built in the form of a square, or rectangle, with an open space in the center called the court. They have one door which opens from the street into an open space called the porch, and this porch in turn opens upon the court. In this porch there is usually a stairway leading to the roof. The roofs are invariably flat, and are surrounded by a breastwork or parapet to keep those on them from falling off. Roofs or housetops are used as we use yards, only they are somewhat private. Some think that this house was a two-storied structure, and that Jesus was teaching in the upper room or second story. If this were so, there would have been little profit to the people who clung about the street door, for they could neither see nor hear. Besides, a two-storied house would probably have been beyond the means of Simon Peter. It is more likely that Jesus was in the room opposite the porch across the court. If so, the crowd at the door might catch an occasional word, or by tiptoeing obtain a momentary glance; and thus fan the hope of some ultimate satisfaction. The gospel is here called "the word," for it is the Word among words, as the Bible is the Book among books.] **‘and there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by** [the fact that they were sitting, shows that they were honored above the rest: Jesus did not increase their ill-will by any needless disrespect], **who were come out of every village of Galilee and Judaea and Jerusalem** [It is not likely that such a gathering came together by accident. Capernaum was known to be the headquarters of Jesus, and these leaders of the people had doubtless gathered there to wait for some opportunity to see or hear Jesus. They recognized the necessity of coming to some definite judgment regarding him. We shall see in this scene the beginning of their hostility to Jesus, which developed into four objections: 1. Alleged blasphemy; 2. Intercourse with publicans and sinners; 3. Supposed neglect of ascetic duties, such as washings, fastings, etc.; 4. Alleged violation of the sabbath]: **and the power of the Lord was with him to heal.** [That is to say, the power of God the Father was then working in Jesus to perform miracles (John xiv. 10). Some take this as implying that other miracles had been wrought that day, before the arrival of the paralytic. But the words are more likely a preface for what follows; in which case the meaning is that the cold disbelief of the Pharisees did not prevent Jesus from working miracles, as disbelief usually did--Matt. xiii. 58; xvi. 1-4.] **18 And behold, men bring {^athey brought ^bthey come, bringing} unto him a man sick of the palsy, {^cthat was palsied:} ^alying on a bed: ^bborne of four** [Palsy is an abbreviation of the word "paralysis." It is caused by a cessation of the nervous activities. See page 175. In the East bedsteads were practically unknown. An Oriental bed is a thin mattress, or pallet, just large enough for a man to lie upon; and those generally used by the poor to-day are made of sheepskin with the wool on it. Such a bed could be easily carried by four men, if each took hold of a corner.] **‘and they sought to bring him in** [*i. e.*, into the house], **and to lay him before him. 19 And not finding by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, ^b4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the crowd** [To these four who sought Jesus it seemed a case of now or never. If they waited till another season, Jesus might withdraw himself again for "some days," or the palsied man might die. "Now" is always the day of salvation], **‘they went up to the housetop** [They went up by means of the stairs in the porch, or by ascending to the roof of an adjoining house, and stepping across to the roof of Simon's house. Many commentators assert that they went up by an outside stairway, erroneously believing that such stairs are common in Palestine; but they are almost unknown there, and their presence would only expose the inmates of the house to violence and pillage], **^bthey 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 let him down through the tiles with his couch into the midst before Jesus. [Some have thought that removing the roof merely means that they took away the awning over the court, and also that the removal of the tile merely means that they took down the parapet or wall which prevented people from falling from the roof into the court. But the language is strongly against such a construction. An awning is not a roof, and it is rolled up, not "broken up." Moreover, the man was let down "through the tiles," which seems to indicate that the remaining tiles encased an opening through which he was lowered. The tiles were plates of burnt clay, suitable for roofing rather than for building walls or parapets. We are not told in what part of the house Jesus stood, but evidently an opening was made in the flat roof above him, and the man was lowered to the floor in front of Jesus by means of short straps or pieces of rope fastened to the four corners of the bed. A stout parapet would have aided rather than hindered, if the body had been lowered into the court.]

^{b5} And Jesus seeing their faith [The four friends of the sick man showed their faith by those bold and persistent efforts which took liberties with the house of a neighbor; and the palsied man showed his faith by consenting to the extraordinary means employed in his behalf] **saith {^asaid} unto the sick of the palsy, Son, {^cMan,} ^abe of good cheer; ^cthy sins are forgiven thee.** [The affectionate address, "Son," might have ordinarily surprised the Jewish doctors, who held themselves too far removed from sinners to speak thus familiarly with them. But the smaller surprise was swallowed up in the greater, when they heard Jesus pronounce the forgiveness of the man's sins. Since man had trod the globe, sin against God had never been pardoned by the direct, authoritative utterance of fleshly lips. Such power resides in Jesus alone. Since then, and even in modern times, mistaken priests have presumed to speak forgiveness; but the apostles claimed no such power (Acts viii. 22). So far as the church forgives sins (John xx. 23), it does it merely as the organ of God, and must do so according to the methods and ordinances laid down by God. Those who profess to forgive sin by word of mouth, should be able to make good their claim to this boasted power by healing diseases or otherwise removing the consequences of sin. Failing to do this, they must forever rest under the justified suspicion that they are, wittingly or unwittingly, guilty of blasphemy.] **^{b6} But there were certain of the scribes ^cand the Pharisees ^bsitting there, ^{a3} And behold, [they] ^cbegan to reason, ^band reasoning in their hearts, ^asaid within themselves, ^csaying, ^aThis man blasphemeth. ^{b7} Why doth this man thus speak?** [A scornful expression, shown by the repetition, *houtos houtoo*, which means, literally, "this one these things."] **he blasphemeth: ^cWho is this that speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, ^bbut one, *even* God? ^calone?** [In classic Greek to blaspheme means to speak evil of, or to slander a person, and it is used in this sense in the New Testament (Tit. iii. 2; II. Pet. ii. 2; Jude 8). Its ordinary New Testament use, however, is quite different, since it is employed to designate something which reflects evil on the character or nature of God. This use is peculiar to monotheistic writers, and was unknown to the Greeks. Such blasphemies may be divided into three general heads, thus: 1. To attribute the unworthy to God. 2. To deny the worthy to God. 3. To arrogate or claim any attribute, power, authority, etc., which belongs exclusively to God. It was under this third head that Jesus seemed to lay himself open to accusation--an accusation entirely just if he had not been the Son of God. The Pharisees were not faulty in their logic, but were mistaken in their premises; hence Jesus does not deny their doctrine; he merely corrects their mistaken application of it to himself. As to this pronounced forgiveness of Jesus, two questions arise: 1. Why did he forgive the man's sins? The haste with which the man was brought to Jesus suggests that his condition was critical; in which case the torment of his sin would be the greater. As a searcher of hearts Jesus saw the unuttered desire of the sick man, and at once responded to it. If his words meant nothing to the conscience of the man, they were wasted; but

Jesus knew what was in man. 2. Why did he pronounce the forgiveness so publicly? As the terms of pardon prescribed in the law were yet in full force, this open speech of Jesus was a surprising assertion of authority. In fact, such assertions were exceptional in his ministry; for only on three recorded occasions did he thus forgive sins (Luke vii. 48; xxiii. 43). Being the exceptional and not the established method of pardon, and being thus employed in the presence of so representative an audience, it was evidently used for a special purpose; and that purpose was to show that Jesus had such power, that men seeing this power might believe him to be the Son of God. He was vindicating an eternal law of the universe, in which all human beings throughout all generations would be interested; viz.: that humanity has a Ruler who can present it spotless before the throne of God (Jude 24). Jesus propounded his law in the presence of those most interested in exposing it if false, and most able to explode it had it not been true. Whether his words were truth or blasphemy, was the controversy between Christ and the rulers from that day to the end of his ministry--Matt. xxvi. 65.] **^b8 And straightway Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they so reasoned{their reasonings,} ^bwithin themselves, ^a4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts** [Jesus read their thoughts by his divine insight, and not because of any recognized habit or tendency on their part to criticise him, for this is the first recorded indication of hostility on the part of the Pharisees, though it is hinted at, at John iv. 1. Such discernment of the thought was to be a characteristic mark of the expected Messiah (Isa. xi. 2, 3), and Jesus had it (John ii. 25). It also is an attribute peculiar to God--I. Chron. xxviii. 9; Jer. xvii. 10; Rom. viii. 27; Rev. ii. 23] **answered and said {^bsaith} unto them, ^aWherefore think ye evil in your hearts?** [Jesus could see invisible sin, and could forgive it or condemn it, as the conditions moved him. The powers of discernment, forgiveness and condemnation make him the perfect Judge.] **^bWhy reason ye these things in your hearts? ^a5 For which is easier, ^bto say to the sick of the palsy, ^cThy sins are forgiven thee; ^bor to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?** [To understand this sentence we should place the emphasis upon the word "say," because the question at issue was the power or effect of his speech. The rabbis, after their first shock of surprise, thought that Jesus feared to attempt the fraud of a so-called miracle in the presence of learned men, lest he should be detected and exposed; and hence looked upon his present action as an attempt to bear himself safely off before the public, and to maintain his standing by the use of high-sounding words. They felt that he used words of unseen effect, because he dared not use those of seen effect. This was precisely the view that Jesus knew they would take, and that he wished them to take; for by showing his ability to work in the realms of sight that which is impossible; viz.: the healing of the sick man, he could place before them proof suited to their own reasoning that he had a like ability to work the impossible in the realms of the unseen; viz.: the forgiveness of the man's sins. By thus demonstrating his authority in the eternal and physical world, Jesus assures us of his dominion over the internal and spiritual.] **10 But that ye may know that the Son of man** [Daniel's name for the Messiah--Dan. vii. 10-13] **hath authority on earth to forgive sins** [The words "on earth" are taken by some to indicate the then existing contrast between Christ's present humiliation or ministry on earth, and his future glorification or enthronement in heaven; in which case they would mean that Jesus could grant now that which some might think could only be exercised hereafter. Others take them to mean the same as if Jesus had said, "You think that forgiveness can only be granted by the Father in heaven, but it can also be granted by the Son upon earth. That which you have heretofore sought from the Father you may now seek from me." The latter is probably the correct view. As to the test of power or authority, the miracle of Jesus was very convincing; for in the popular opinion sin was a cause of which disease was the effect. We are told, on the authority of later rabbis, that it was a maxim among the Jews that no diseased person could be healed till his sins were blotted out. We also recognize a correlation between sins and

diseases, which the Saviour's use of this miracle justifies. A mere miracle, such as swallowing fire or causing iron to float, would not prove ability to forgive sins. The proof consisted in the relation which disease bears to sin, and the consequent relation which healing bears to forgiveness. The connection between disease and sin is a real and necessary one. The Jews were right in seeing this connection, but they erred in thinking that they were warranted in *personally* crinating every one whom they found afflicted, and in judging that the weight of the affliction indicated the quantity of the sin. The Book of Job should have corrected this error. Such unrighteous judgments are condemned by Christ (John ix. 3; Luke xiii. 2-5). Paralysis is, however, to-day looked upon as ordinarily the punishment of some personal sin, usually that of intemperance or sensuality], (**then saith he to the sick of the palsy**), {**he said unto him that was palsied**}, **I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, {^bbed,} and go up unto thy house.** [What command could be more pleasant than that which bade this sick man go home forgiven and healed?] **25 And immediately he rose up {^aarose,} ^bbefore them, ^band straightway took up the bed, ^cthat whereon he lay** ["A sweet saying! The bed had borne the man; now the man bore the bed"--*Bengel*], **^band went forth before them all; ^aand departed to his house. ^cglorifying God. ^binsomuch that they were all amazed, 8 But when the multitudes saw it, they were afraid, ^c26 And amazement took hold on all, and they glorified God** [The "all" of this passage hardly includes the scribes and Pharisees, or, if it does, their admiration of Jesus was but a momentary enthusiasm, which quickly passed away]; **^awho had given such authority unto men.** [Some take the word "men" as the plural of category, and apply it to Christ. Others think that they regarded Jesus as a mere man among other men, and that they therefore looked upon his power as a gift given to men generally, and not as something peculiar to himself. If this latter view is correct, it is likely that they took the words "Son of man" as referring to men generally, and not as a reference to the Messiah, such as Jesus meant it to be.] **^bsaying, We never saw it on this fashion, ^cand they were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day.** [Literally, seen paradoxes: things contrary to common thought and ordinary experience. They had seen a threefold miracle: sins forgiven, thoughts read and palsy healed.]

Study Questions:

1. When did Jesus enter again into Capernaum? What did He do?
2. Where was Jesus teaching when He healed the paralytic? Who was there?
3. Jesus spake "the word" unto them (Mk. 2:2). What is significant about the phrase, "the word"?
4. Tell the story of the four men taking the paralytic to Jesus. What did they have to do to carry him and lower him down before Jesus?
5. Explain the phrase, "Jesus seeing their faith." How do others see our faith?
6. How did Jesus address the man? Why is this significant?
7. After Jesus told the paralytic that his sins were forgiven, what did the scribes and Pharisees reason within themselves?
8. Why did the Pharisees accuse Jesus of blasphemy?
9. Why should they have realized that Jesus was not blaspheming?
10. How did healing the paralytic prove that Jesus is divine (i.e., God)?
11. Which was easier for Jesus to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee; or, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? What is Jesus teaching in this question?
12. What is significant about Jesus referring to Himself as the Son of Man?

13. Why was it good for them to know that the Son of Man had power on earth to forgive sins?
14. What did Jesus command the man to do after being healed of palsy? Why might He have issued this command? What did the man do?
15. What was the multitudes' reaction to seeing the miracle and Jesus teaching? Why?

XXXVI.

THE CALL OF MATTHEW.

(At or near Capernaum.)

^aMATT. IX. 9; ^bMARK II. 13, 14; ^cLUKE V. 27, 28.

Bible Text:

^c27 **And after these things he went forth, ^aagain by the seaside; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. 14 And as he ^aJesus passed by from thence, he saw ^cand beheld ^aa man, ^ca publican, named {^ccalled} Matthew, ^cLevi, ^bthe son of Alphaeus, sitting at the place of toll, and he saith {^csaid} unto him, Follow me. 28 And he forsook all, And he arose {^crose up} and followed him.**

Bible Text with Commentary:

^c27 **And after these things** [after the healing of the paralytic] **he went forth, ^aagain by the seaside** [*i. e.*, he left Capernaum, and sought the shore of the sea, which formed a convenient auditorium for him, and which was hence a favorite scene for his teaching]; **and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. 14 And as he ^aJesus passed by from thence, he saw ^cand beheld ^aa man, ^ca publican, named {^ccalled} Matthew, ^cLevi, ^bthe son of Alphaeus** [It will be observed that Matthew, in his account of his call, does not make himself prominent. All the evangelists keep themselves in the background. Because Mark and Luke give us the name "Levi," it has been thought by some that they describe the call of a different person from the one mentioned by Matthew--an opinion which seems to have started with Origen. But the difference in name is not an important divergence, for many in that day had two names; as, for example, Lebbæus, who was called Thaddæus; Silas, who was called Sylvanus; John, who was called Mark, etc. Moreover, it was then common to change the name; as is shown by the cases of Simon, who became Peter; Joseph, who became Barnabas; Saul, who became Paul, etc. Therefore, as we have previously suggested (p. 111), that Nathanael was also known as Bartholomew, so here we are satisfied that Levi is called Matthew; for the narratives which describe the calls are almost verbatim, and they agree chronologically, being placed by all three Evangelists between the healing of the paralytic and the feast where Jesus ate with publicans. Mark involves us in another difficulty by calling Levi the son of Alphæus; for a man named Alphæus was the father of James the younger (Matt. x. 3). It is not likely, however, that Matthew and James were brothers, for Alphæus was a very common Jewish name, and brothers are usually mentioned in pairs in the apostolic lists, and these two are not so mentioned. Pool takes the extreme view here, contending that James, Matthew, Thaddæus, and Simon Zelotes were four brethren], **sitting at the place of toll** [Wherever it is at all practicable, Orientals sit at their work. The place of toil was usually a booth or a small hut. Whether Matthew's booth was by the lake, to collect duties on goods and people ferried across; or whether it was by the roadside on the great highway leading from Damascus to Acco, to collect taxes on all produce brought into Capernaum, is not material. The revenues which Rome derived from conquered nations consisted of tolls, tithes, harbor duties, taxes for use of public pasture lands, and duties for the use of mines and salt works], **and he saith {^csaid} unto him, Follow me. 28 And he forsook all, And he arose {^crose up} and followed him.** [Such obedience was not, of course, performed in ignorance; it indicates that Matthew was already a disciple, as were the four fisherman

when they also received a like call. Matthew was now called to become a personal attendant of Jesus, preparatory to being chosen an apostle. Nor are we to conclude from the abruptness of his movements that he went off without settling accounts with the head of his office. Though it may be more dramatic to thus picture him as departing at once, yet the settlement of accounts was indispensable to his good name in the future, and in no way diminishes the reality and beauty of his sacrifice--a beauty which Matthew himself forbears to mention, as became him (Prov. xxvii. 2). But Matthew certainly neither delayed nor sought counsel (Gal. i. 15, 16). By thus calling a publican, Jesus reprov'd the religious narrowness of his times.]

Study Questions:

1. Where did Jesus go after healing the paralytic? What did the multitude do? What did Jesus do?
2. Where was Matthew when Jesus saw him?
3. What did Jesus say to Matthew? What did Matthew do?