

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1881.

FIRST QUARTER.

Lesson XIII.—MARCH 27.

SELECTED LESSON. PREACHING THE KINGDOM. Luke ix. 1-6.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 2-5.

This lesson was not designated by the International Lesson Committee, but the text has been agreed upon by a number of lesson-publishers, in order to furnish uniformity for this day's study. It is a Home Mission Lesson, presenting the work of Jesus in sending out his Apostles to preach in their own near vicinity.

Between the events of the last lesson and those of this, Jesus was full of labors, beginning a new tour of Galilee, in which many notable works were done, and much valuable teaching was imparted. Having completed this tour, he sent forth the twelve, as shown in this lesson.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He sent them to preach the kingdom of God."—Luke ix. 2.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

- M. Preaching the Kingdom, Luke ix. 1-6. T. Parallel from Matthew, Matt. x. 1-16. W. Parallel from Mark, Mark vi. 7-13. F. Charge to the Twelve, Matt. x. 17-42. S. Missions from Jerusalem, Acts viii. 1-25. S. Home-Work for Jesus, Luke ix. 1-6.

PARALLEL TEXTS.

With the lesson: Matt. x. 1-42; xi. 1; Mark vi. 7-13. With vs. 1: Matt. x. 1; Mark vi. 7; xvi. 17, 18; John xiv. 12; Acts i. 8. With vs. 2: Matt. x. 7, 8; Tit. ii. 12-14. With vs. 3: Psa. xxxvii. 3; Matt. x. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 4. With vs. 4: Matt. x. 11. With vs. 5: Matt. x. 14; Acts xiii. 51. With vs. 6: Mark vi. 12; Acts ix. 40.

HOME WORK FOR JESUS.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. Its Aim, Vs. 2. II. Its Equipment, Vss. 1, 3-5. III. Its Fruit, Vs. 6.

QUESTIONS.—Why was healing the sick one of the duties of the twelve? What occasion for this mission is stated in Matt. ix. 35-38?

What gifts did Jesus bestow upon the twelve? What instruction as to baggage did he give them? What as to their stopping places? What concerning those who would not receive them? From what encumbrances should ministers be free? (1 Cor. ix. 13, 14.) What lesson as to home-life may they learn from v. 4? What duty is taught them in v. 5? See Acts xiii. 51; xviii. 6.

What two results of town and village work are here stated? How is this stated in Mark vi. 12, 13? What spiritual benefits were thus bestowed? What material benefit?

In chap. viii. 1, we see Jesus going "throughout every city and village (of Galilee), preaching and showing the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God; and the twelve were with him." In this lesson, the twelve were sent out without him, and were dispersed, two by two, among the towns and villages, while he preached in the cities. The time had come for an aggressive movement. He and his Kingdom must be widely published. Contrast this with his forbidding the leper to make him known, (v. 14). Now, the people were eager to hear about the Kingdom; and the open and fierce opposition of the Pharisees could not long be delayed. Hence the necessity of sending out men to publish the good news, and, by this method, training them to the work which they must carry on after his departure. In this temporary service, see the seed of the missionary movements. The specific directions given here to the twelve, and repeated in nearly the same language to the seventy (x. 1-16), were more applicable to these occasions, than intended for the more permanent missionary work. See contrary directions in xxii. 35, 36. In this lesson, the Apostles were Home Missionaries. They were to go only among their own nation.

NOTES.—I. The Missionaries, (v. 1.) He called. In a solemn gathering for a specific work, which, however, was of a temporary character. It was time to

put their knowledge to use; they must be trained in actual service; and there was the loud call of need. Twelve. See their names in vi. 14-16. There are also three other lists. See Matt. x. 2-4; Mark iii. 16-18; and Acts i. 13. In the latter, the name of Judas Iscariot is lacking. In the other three lists, his name is mentioned last; while in all, Peter's name takes the lead. There are three pairs of brothers among the twelve: Peter and Andrew, James and John, and the sons of Alphaeus, James and Judas, (not Iscariot). See vi. 16. Philip and Nathanael were old friends (John i. 45), and several had been associated as disciples of the Baptist. Note the calls of some of them to discipleship, (Matt. iv. 19-21; ix. 9). The number, twelve, suggests the twelve tribes, an unbroken Israel (Matt. xix. 28; 1 Kings xviii. 31), and that the apostles were to be the messengers to the whole people of the dispersion. Disciples. Learners, as all the disciples of Christ must be, to fill out their name. Here they acted as apostles; i. e., those sent out on a mission. Gave power and authority. Miracles were wrought by them, alone in his name, (Acts iii. 6; iv. 30; xvi. 18). To give this power to others was greater than to exercise it himself, and gave proof of his divinity. The disciples needed the miracle-working power—which in the Jewish estimation took highest rank—as a credential to attest their mission, and to arouse the people and call attention to the truths which they preached. Devils. Demons; or evil spirits. The authority was to cast out all such from persons possessed with them.

II. Their Mission, (v. 2).

He sent them. As the Father sent him, so sent he them. See John xx. 21. To preach the Kingdom of God. To herald the kingdom; to announce, like the Baptist, that it was at hand; to prepare the way for instruction, which Christ afterwards afforded in his sermon at Capernaum (John vi.) Heal the sick. Herald and healing were complements of each other. Soul and body were to be cared for, and the mind and soul reached through care for the body. Bodily healing became symbolic of the spiritual, and also set forth the beneficence of Christ's mission. The command in Matt. x. 8, was to "heal the sick, cleanse the leper, raise the dead, cast out devils," and to do it freely.

III. Their Equipment, (v. 3).

Nothing. Though likely to meet with opposition, they were not to make even ordinary provision for the journey, nor to take what with every traveler would be a matter of course; but to cast themselves upon the hospitality of the people, as a test of the people's desire for the truth, and of their own faith. Scrip. A bag made of leather, used especially to carry food upon a journey, and slung over the shoulders. Neither bread, neither money. Christ's care for them would furnish all needed supply. Two coats. Tunics, or closely fitting garments resembling in form and use our shirt, made of either wool, cotton, or linen, generally without sleeves, and reaching to the knee. Sometimes two were worn at a time, (Luke iii. 11; Mark xiv. 63). The apostles were not to depend upon any external advantages, but upon the Lord who sent them, and the "power" spoken of in v. 1. They afterwards reported that they were abundantly provided for by the people, (xxii. 35).

IV. Their instructions, (vs. 4, 5).

They are only partially given here. See parallel passages in Matt. x. and Mark vi. Whatsoever house ye enter, etc. They were not vagrants or beggars, but "workmen worthy of their meat" (Matt. x. 10). They were to avoid the laborious formalities and the consuming of time, which frequent changes of quarters would involve. They were to keep directly at their work. No mention is made of their going into synagogues to preach. It was rather a colporteur work, or house-to-house mission. Whosoever will not receive you. Not receiving them was refusing Christ. No distinction is made as to high or low; the only question is as to receiving or rejecting Christ's messengers. Shake off the dust, etc. A solemn and expressive sign; as much as to say, "We free ourselves of responsibility concerning you." "The scribes thought that the dust of heathen lands defiled those who came in contact with it; accordingly, when they entered Judea from a heathen

country, they shook off the dust of the land, as a testimony that they had no part or lot with heathenism."

V. Their Conduct, (v. 6).

They departed. Prompt obedience characterized them. They obeyed to the letter, going "through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere." See the report of the seventy upon their return from a similar mission (x. 17), and a hint as to the reception of the twelve in xxii. 35.

The Disciples were to trust the Lord for all needed supplies.

Christ directed his disciples not to meditate beforehand what they should speak, assuring them that, when the time came to speak, all needed arguments should be put into their mouths. Some people misled by these exceptional cases, have undertaken to live without any sort of forethought about temporal supplies, and to preach without any sort of preparation for the work of the pulpit.

There may be peculiar circumstances, where we cannot make provision; and then the thing to do is to serenely trust the Lord, who will never fail us. But he will not put a premium on laziness; and therefore it is never safe to neglect proper preparation, when it is in our power to make it, and then trust the Lord to help us out.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

One day Jesus saw two fishermen getting ready to throw their net out to catch fish. They were brothers, and their names were Peter and Andrew. Children repeat. Jesus called them. He had other work for them to do. Peter and Andrew followed Jesus. Continue account, as in Matt. iv. 21, 22. There were other men whom Jesus called, that were not fishermen. After a while, Jesus had twelve friends, who often went with him from place to place. They were called his disciples. Jesus was their teacher. What do you think he taught them? What work did he have for them to do? Our Golden Text tells us. Teach it. Do you think that was better work than fishing?

It is the very best work in all the world.

Has Jesus any friends now whom he sends to preach? Yes; ministers and missionaries. What is a missionary? The teacher should gather some items of interest about missionaries—home and foreign.

Remember the missionaries of the future are to come from our classes; and if they do not come in numbers and with holy zeal, will it not be partly owing to our neglect in training the little ones?

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Boys' Department.

Scripture Enigmas.

No. 116.

- 1. Tell of Israel's birthright who was heir? 2. Who was called the Friend of God? declare. 3. Who was it took a gleaner for his bride? 4. And who walked with God, and never died? 5. Who in wisdom all the world surpassed? 6. Then whose boil was healed by figs at last? 7. Who did Israel's tribes from Midian save? 8. What's the name a wrestling angel gave? 9. Say who was from Sodom's judgment saved? 10. Say whose shoulders bore the key of David? 11. Then, from whom all people are descended? 12. Last, whose kingdom never shall be ended?

Now the initials of these names expressed Mark a place whose townsmen David blessed.

No. 117.

- 1. The twelfth foundation-stone of the heavenly Jerusalem. 2, 3. The temple thereof, as personified, first, by God the Father; secondly, by God the Son. 4. The precious stone which constituted the city's fourth foundation. 5. The health-giving foliage of its Tree of Life. 6. No descriptions of character to whom its gates would be closed. 7. The apostle who saw the city. 8. The heavenly attendant who "showed him these things."

The initial letters give the joyous exclamation four times repeated by the city's inhabitants in the immediate presence of God.

The angelic hosts their voices raise In burst of song and shout of praise: By earth the exultant strain is heard, Whilst heaven adores the Eternal Word.—Selected.

CURIOS QUESTIONS.

- 182. Give the answers and the texts: 1. Which two of the Psalms are alike? 2. Who caught a fish with money in its mouth? 3. Who had six toes on each foot, and six fingers on each hand? 4. Who stole money from his mother? 5. What verse in the Bible has all the alphabet but one? 6. Who plowed with twelve yoke of oxen? 7. Who fell out of the window when Paul was preaching? 183. Form a diamond—words downwards the same as from left to right—of the following words: 1. Half a negative. 2. The five o'clock meal. 3. Round journeys. 4. Neither one side nor the other. 5. An ancient weapon of war. 6. A cutting instrument. 7. Half an exclamation.

Answer to Scripture Enigma.

No. 115.

- 1. Cor-ban.....Mark vii. 11. 2. Ne-st.....Psa. lxxxiv. 3. 3. Li-on.....Judges xiv. 5. 4. Us-es.....Titus iii. 14. CORNELIUS. Acts x. 1, 45-48.

ANSWERS TO CURIOS QUESTIONS.

- 178. She undertook to go between us. 179. 1. Spine, pine; 2. Cornice, nice; 3. Mohawk, hawk; 4. Stream, ream. 180. Make a little fence of trust Around to-day; Fill the space with loving work And therein stays Look not through the sheltering bars, Upon to-morrow; God will help you bear what comes Of joy or sorrow. 181. WORD SQUARE. D O O R O M R I O R E S R I S K

Select Serial.

A Thorny Path.

BY HESBA STRETTON.

CHAPTER XI.

BAD NEWS FOR DON.

Don had been sent down from the fever hospital to a Convalescent Home at the seaside for a week or two, till he could return to his life in London, strong enough to have some hope of recovering his former health. He had not written to Mrs. Clack, because he could not write, and had only taken his first lessons in that useful art in the home he had just left. But he was not troubled with any doubts of Mrs. Clack's giving him a welcome when he returned to his old haunts. He felt as certain that she would be overjoyed to see him again as he could be to see her. Whole years seemed to have passed over him since the day old Lister had died, and he sunk under the fever himself. He had grown a good deal during his illness, and his old clothes were uncomfortably short in the arms and legs, though he had chosen them much too large, to give him plenty of room to grow in. But he could not trust Mrs. Clack and her wisdom to set this little difficulty right.

He had a thousand strange things to tell her; especially of the wonderful sights to be seen on the seashore, and the marvellous stories that he had heard of that same Lord Jesus Christ, whose name she had spoken to the poor blind man, as he lay dying. He could not believe that Mrs. Clack knew all those beautiful stories, or surely she would have told them to him long ago, for they were true—that was the chief beauty of them. The mother at the Convalescent Home had read them to him out of a book, as he lay on the seashore, and had even taught him to read a few words to himself. He had brought a Testament back with him; and he would ask Mrs. Clack to hear read every night till he knew every word, and could read them to himself, or to any poor creature that lay dying, not knowing where he was going to, or what Jesus Christ had done for his sake. His heart was very full when he turned

into the court once more. He was ready to cry with joy, and a few tears actually escaped from under his eyelids, to be brushed away quickly lest any body should see them. He was going to sit down in his old seat, by Mrs. Clack's fire with little Dot on his knee, and Mrs. Clack in her rocking-chair opposite to them, listening to all his wonderful news. He had learned to sing "Oh let us be joyful!" and now he and Mrs. Clack and Dot could all sing it together.

It was dusk, the very hour of his usual return, and he knocked his one single, quiet tap at Mrs. Clack's door. There was no answer. After a while he knocked a second time and stepped back to look up at the window. There was no light. That was not unusual, for he knew she loved to sit in the twilight; but there was a white blind across the window; and there was a strange stillness, and a sense of emptiness about the closed house which struck him forcibly. He tried the latch, but that was fast; and though he knocked a third time, no notice was taken of him.

Don sat down on the low doorsill somewhat dullest and sad at heart, as one whose first gladness had received a chill. He could hear voices and see lights in the other houses, while this one was so dark and still. Mrs. Clack had always warned him to keep himself to himself in the court among her neighbors, and he obeyed her now as he had always done before. He did not go to inquire after her but waited patiently at her door till something should happen.

At length he heard the crutches of Cripple Jack coming limpingly along the court. Jack caught sight of him in the dusk and stopped, leaning against the wall, as if ready to hold conversation with Don.

"She's gone!" he said, nodding towards the empty house.

"Dead!" cried Don, in a tone of profound terror. It struck Jack's mind that it would be worth while to see how far Don could be made a gull of, and he answered, without a moment's hesitation:

"Ay, dead!" he repeated, "and buried a week last Tuesday. Lor! she were raving and wandering just like the old man was before her. You could hear her across the court, and she were calling for you over and over again, like this: 'Don, Don!' and Jack imitated Mrs. Clack, as if she had been in the habit of shouting in a very loud voice.

"Dead!" uttered Don, thunderstruck with grief and dread.

"And buried the very next morning," continued Jack, "the fever was so very strong on her, and the doctor had all the stores burned up, and the house looked, and the keys kept by the parish, so as nobody is to go into it for nobody knows how long. Some folks say the fever's got into the walls and it's to be pulled down to the ground, but I don't know as that's true."

"And where's little Dot?" asked Don, rousing himself from his stupor a little.

"She's stopping a bit with the Watsons," he answered; "but you should only see Peggy thrashing her! Its only for a while, though, for she's to be sent to the workhouse. I'm sorry for that Don, I'm really sorry. She's a nice little thing and very good; hardly ever whimpers so as you can hear her; no, not when Peggy whacks the hardest; and my! she can whack!

"She shan't ever go to the workhouse," said Don, in a low voice of resolution.

"Oh, I remember," went on Jack, chuckling to himself over Don's credulity, "the officer is coming to take her to-morrow morning at nine o'clock. There was nothing left from Mrs. Clack after her funeral was paid for and all the stores burnt up. So that made an end of everything, except Dot. Is there nothing more you'd like to ask me?"

"Nothing," answered Don in the sickness of despair; "I wish you'd go away and leave me."

"I'll go," said Jack; "it's none so pleasant standing here when you may catch the fever from the walls; so good bye to you."

Don could not speak; the sudden calamity that had befallen him was too dreadful for words or tears. He had lost everything at one blow, and he felt bewildered and amazed at the sudden