

The Sunday School

BIBLE LESSON

Abridged from Peloubets' Notes.

Second Quarter.

THE TWELVE SENT FORTH.

Lesson X. June 3. Matt. 9:35 to 10:8.
GOLDEN TEXT.

It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.—Matt. 10:20.

EXPLANATORY.

I. THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST FIELD.—Vs. 35, 36. 35. JESUS WENT ABOUT ALL THE CITIES AND VILLAGES. This was his third evangelizing tour. He did not remain in one place till all were converted and made perfect, but having gathered the harvest that was ripened in one place, he left those fields to ripen further while he gathered the harvest that was already ripe in other places.

His Threefold Work. (1) TEACHING IN THEIR SYNAGOGUES, where he could best reach the people on the Sabbath. He taught divine truths, and unfolded the Scriptures to them with new and deeper meanings. (2) PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM. Heralding, proclaiming far and wide the good news of the kingdom, that it was at hand, how to enter it, what it would do for all who came into it. (3) HEALING EVERY SICKNESS, positive disease, severe, dangerous, even violent. The Greek word, *nosos*, is akin to the Latin, *noceo*, to hurt. EVERY DISEASE. Greek, "malakia," weakness, debility; from "malakos," soft, weak; hence it refers rather to chronic cases.

The Pressing Need. 36. WHEN HE SAW THE MULTITUDES. Many more than any one person could reach or help. HE WAS MOVED WITH COMPASSION. Thus the Father "so loved the world." Infinite love and compassion is the keynote of the gospel, the motive for missionary work and all deeds of helpfulness. WERE SCATTERED ABROAD. Not dispersed, but thrown down, prostrated by disease, by weariness, by sin, by hunger of soul, as soldiers are prostrated on the ground by their enemies. AS SHEEP HAVING NO SHEPHERD. Those who should have been their shepherds, who professed to be such, were no true shepherds, but hirelings, who ate the sheep they should feed.

II. THE DEMAND FOR MORE LABORERS.—Vs. 37, 38. 37. THEN SAITH HE UNTO HIS DISCIPLES. To all who accepted him as well as to the twelve. THE HARVEST TRULY IS PLENTIFUL. Not merely "those who will actually be saved, but men in general, who, unless gathered and saved, will perish like wheat that is not reaped." BUT THE LABORERS. Those who were willing and were qualified to gather in this harvest. ARE FEW, compared with the greatness of the work. There were not enough to do the work.

38. PRAY YE THEREFORE. You who are in training for the work, you who are to be laborers in the harvest, and realize the greatness of the need and the difficulty of the work.

All who are interested in missions of any kind should take heed to this precept of Jesus. THAT HE WILL SEND FORTH. "The word is stronger: 'thrust out, force them out,' as from urgent necessity."

III. THE SELECTION OF THE TWELVE FOR SPECIAL TRAINING AND WORK.—Vs. 1-4. 1. CALLED UNTO HIM HIS TWELVE DISCIPLES. Whom he had chosen some time before, just previous to the Sermon on the Mount. The number was according to the twelve tribes of Israel. In v. 2 they are called THE TWELVE APOSTLES. "Apostle" means "one sent forth" on a mission, "a messenger." "Our word 'missionary,' derived from the Latin, likewise signifies 'one sent.'" "Disciples" are learners, scholars, those who go to school, as here to Christ, the great Teacher. It was needful that these twelve should be both apostles and disciples. They could not be fitting messengers (apostles) unless they had been learners, and their work as messengers of the gospel was a means of their learning more.

2. SIMON . . . CALLED PETER (the rock), AND ANDREW, were brothers, and among the first five disciples of Jesus (John 1:34-45). JAMES . . . AND JOHN were also brothers, and named by Jesus, Boanerges, sons of thunder, probably describing "their fiery, vehement temperament."

3. BARTHOLOMEW is undoubtedly the Nathanael of John 1:45. JAMES is the modernized form of Jacob. LEBBAEUS is the same as THADDEUS, and as Judas (Jude) the son of James (R. v.), in Luke 6:16.

4. SIMON THE CANANITE means not "of Canaan," nor "of Cana," but "the Zealot," "a party of fanatic nationalists among the Jews, leaders of the national revolt against the foreign yoke." JUDAS ISCARIOT, i. e., man of Kerioth, a town of Judah. Hence he was the only one of the disciples who was not a Galilean.

IV. THEIR QUALIFICATIONS.—These twelve common men, fishermen, a publican, a Zealot, are a very interesting and helpful study, as we see them becoming apostles of world-wide influence, foundation stones of the kingdom of God. The charcoal was changed into diamonds. They had their faults, but the faults were flaws in a jewel, not the crudeness of charcoal.

V. 1. HE GAVE THEM POWER. The word signifies both "power" and "authority," or "right." Even if it were not evident that here both ideas are included, we find both words expressly used in the parallel passage.

VI. THEIR METHODS OF WORK.—Vs. 5-8. First. The Limits of Their Field. 5. GO NOT INTO THE WAY OF THE GENTILES. Do not take any road that leads to the surrounding nations, as for instance the cities of Tyre and Sidon. CITY OF THE SAMARITANS. Though nearer than the Gentiles. The time had not come for this more distant work, but it would come later.

6. GO RATHER TO THE LOST SHEEP OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL. These belonged to the flock of God, but had wandered far away and were lost.

THIS LIMITATION (1) was only temporary. (2) The soil of the Jewish nation had been prepared for the good seed for generations, and here it would be easiest to put the good seed into the soil and get it rooted and growing. (3) They were not yet prepared to understand the universality of the gospel. (4) They were best acquainted with these people. Our own town and city is the best base of operations. Begin at home and then reach out into "the wide, wide world."

8. HEAL THE SICK. Sickness and demon possession were fruits of sin, object lessons of sin. Jesus came to undo the works of the devil. By healing sick bodies through his disciples, he proved his power and willingness to heal sick souls, cleanse leprosy hearts, raise the dead in sin, cast out all the devils of iniquity. FREELY YE HAVE RECEIVED. Jesus had charged nothing for what he had done. He came from heaven freely, he gave his life freely, he brought salvation to the disciples freely. FREELY GIVE, of that which cost you nothing. Be like your Master, filled with his spirit of love.

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