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The Sabbath-School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

First Quarter—Lesson VIII—Feb 20 98.

THE TWELVE SENT FORTH. —Matthew 10 : 2 15.

Read Chapter 10
Compare Luke 10 : 1-20.
Commit Verses 5-8.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*Freely ye have received, freely give.* —MATT. 10 : 8.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—Autumn of A. D. 28 and winter of 28 and 29.

Place.—Some village or town in Galilee. The exact place is unknown.

The Third Circuit of Galilee was begun at this time by Jesus with his disciples, the instructions for which are given in the chapter of to-day's lesson.

THE CHOSEN WORKERS.—Vs. 2 5. The apostles were chosen just before the Sermon on the Mount. *The twelve apostles.* According to the number of the twelve tribes of Israel. Apostle means "one sent forth," on a mission. They are called in v. 1. "disciples," that is, learners. Both names are expressive. They could not be fitting messengers (apostles) unless they had been learners. There is not time in teaching this lesson to give the history of each of the twelve, but only some general observations which will prove instructive. *Simon....called Peter* the rock, *and Andrew*, were brothers, and among the first five disciples of Jesus. *James and.... John* were also brothers, and named by Jesus, Boanerges, sons of thunder, probably describing their fury, vehement temperament. These first four called were fishermen. *Bartholomew* is undoubtedly the Nathanael of John 1 : 45. *James* is the modernized form of Jacob. *Lebbeus* is the same as *Thaddeus*, and as Judas (Jude) the son of James, in Luke 6 : 16. *Simon the Canaanite* 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., a man of Kerioth, a town of Judah. He was the only one of the disciples who was not a Galilean.

GREAT VARIETY OF CHARACTER. All kinds of men can become Christians; all kinds can serve the Lord in some good way. This great variety in Christians enables Christianity to meet the vast variety of men in the world. But all were one in heart, in the love of Jesus, in building up the kingdom of heaven.

TWO BY TWO. They were sent out two by two (Mark 6 : 7). (1) Because thus they were complete and well balanced. Each would supplement the work of the other. They would reach different classes of minds, and where one failed the other would be ready with the right word. (2) They would aid and encourage one another, and aid one another's warmth and glow of spiritual life. (3) More would be a hinderance, and would be divisive, while two would accomplish nearly all that more could do.

THEIR PERSONALITY AND POSSIBILITIES. They were plain men who had not been perverted by the false philosophies, and morals of the day. They were mostly working men, business men, practical men, but of great variety of early training, and of business life. Some were poor; some were comparatively well off; some belonged to country villages, some to the city; several were fisher men. There were two, at least, the choice of whom seemed to violate all dictates of wisdom and prudence.—Matthew the publican of a hated class, inviting hostility: and Simon the Zealot, a radical revolutionist in politics. Yet the choice of these showed the broadness of the gospel, and its power. They were men of ability; there were great possibilities in them.

THEIR ENDOWMENT WITH POWER —Vs. 1, 5. *These twelve Jesus sent forth.* He had been training them in the work by taking them with him on two tours through Galilee. Now he sent them out by themselves. The work had so increased that Jesus could not do it alone. The multitudes, like sheep without a shepherd, moved Jesus to compassion.

THEIR FIRST FIELD OF WORK.—Vs. 5, 6. *Go not in to the way of the Gentiles.* The time had not come for establishing missions to the Gentiles. It came afterwards. *And into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not,* They could pass through Samaria to Judea, but were not to stop and preach. *To the lost sheep of the house of Israel.* They were lost, helpless, in danger, but they were sheep. This limitation of their work was not to withhold the gospel from the Gentiles, but on the contrary, it was the best method of bringing the gospel to them.

First, because, if the twelve had begun by preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, they would have intensified the Jewish prejudices against it, and so closed the door to the Jewish hearts; second, because they did not themselves understand the universality of the gospel till long after; and if they had attempted to preach it to the Gentiles, they would have inevitably become preachers of the Jewish law, and made at best only converts to a reformed Judaism. A third reason is, that the Jewish nation were the soil, prepared for many generations by God's training, for the good seed of the gospel. Here it could most easily take root, and thence be spread abroad through all the world. The Jews were the shortest way to the heathen.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. Begin at home, make it the centre of a work extending into "the wide, wide world."

2. Christians are responsible for the evangelization of their own town and country.

THEIR METHODS OF WORKING.—Vs. 7-15. BY PREACHING. *Preach*, proclaim, herald, *saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.* The king had come; he had brought with him the laws and principles of the kingdom. The way was being prepared by which men could most easily enter the kingdom and enjoy all its blessedness.

BY WORKS OF MERCY. *Heal the sick*, etc. Every miracle was an object lesson and a parable. Sickness and demon possessions were fruits of sin. Jesus came to undo the works of the devil. By healing sick bodies he proved his power and willingness to heal sick souls, cleanse leprous hearts, raise the dead in sin, cast out all the devils of iniquity.

Freely ye have received. Jesus came from heaven freely, he gave his life freely, he brought salvation to the disciples freely. *Freely give.* Be like your Master, filled with his spirit of love.

To take money for miracles would ruin their work among the people, would teach selfishness instead of love and cause them to be regarded as mere exorcists, instead of preachers of free salvation.

BY GOING AS THEY WERE, in their ordinary dress, as common travelers, but trusting God for necessary support. *Provide neither gold*, nor even *brass*, or rather copper, of which their smallest coins were made. *In your purses.* Literally "girdles," in the folds of which money was usually carried. *Scrip.* A wallet or small bag, generally made of leather, and slung, like a satchel, over the shoulder, to hold the flat barley cakes, the olives, and figs, which form the simple commissariat of an Eastern pedestrian. *Neither two coats.* Without change of garments. *Neither shoes.* It does not say 'sandals,' which were necessary for the protection of the feet in rocky or stony paths, and therefore the parallel passage in Mark reads, 'Be shod with sandals.' Shoes had upper leathers and heels, and were made of softer material, and of brilliant colors. Probably, therefore, the prohibition is directed against show or luxuries. *Nor yet staves*, or a staff. They were to get nothing for their journey but what they had. But if they were used to a staff they could take it (Mark). *For the workmen is worthy of his meat*, i. e., food, enough to eat. They were to go forth and let the people for whom they labored support them. The disciples were to give freely, but their hearers were to do the same.

This was the best way to go on their mission. It was easy to do among their countrymen, and perfectly simple and natural. It left them free from all worldly anxiety, so that they could give themselves wholly to their mission without fear or favor. It was the best way to reach the people.

It is plain that this was no inflexible, unchangeable rule, for under other circumstances Jesus gave very different instructions (Luke 22 : 35, 36). His disciples carried some money with them (John 12 : 6, 13 : 29). Adhering to the same principles, the application varies with varying circumstances.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THEIR ARRIVAL AT A PLACE FOR WORK. II. *Into whatsoever city....inquire.* Do not go in a haphazard way which may lead you into trouble. *Who in it is worthy.* Worthy of your intimacy, worthy of being associated with you in your evangelistic work. They must not lodge with those whose character would bring scandal on their profession. *There abide.* Do not change your quarters for convenience or comfort. Do not waste your time in an ostentatious round of visiting. *Salute it.* Saying, "Peace be unto you," the usual salutation at this day. *And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it.* Their very presence would be a benediction to all who were of open heart. Their presence in the home is like the ark of the Lord in the house of Obed-edom. *But if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.* No such peace can come to such a home. You cannot reward the unworthy with the blessings of the worthy. *And whosoever shall not receive you.* This open denunciation was for towns where both message and messengers should be rejected. *Shake off the dust of your feet.* A symbolic act, indicating that they renounced all responsibility for them. *It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom*, etc. Because those wicked cities sinned against much less light. *In the day of judgment*, whenever that judgment should come. That day came to Jerusalem about forty years after this warning. To all sinners it will come on that last great day.

Strange Bible Facts.

The learned Prince of Granada, heir to the Spanish throne, imprisoned by order of the crown for fear he should aspire to the throne, was kept in solitary confinement in the old prison at the Place of Skulls, Madrid. After thirty-three years in this living tomb death came to his release, and the following remarkable researches, taken from the Bible and marked with an old nail on the rough walls of his cell, told how the brain sought employment through the weary years:

In the Bible the word "Lord" is found 1,853 times.

The word "Jehovah" 6,855 times.

The word "reverend" but once, and that in the ninth verse of the 111th Psalm.

The eighth verse of the 97th Psalm is the middle verse of the Bible.

The ninth verse of the eighth chapter of Esther is the longest.

The thirty-fifth verse, eleventh chapter of St. John is the shortest.

In the 107th Psalm four verse are alike—the eight, fifteenth, twenty-first, and thirty-first.

Each verse of the 136 Psalm ends alike.

No names or words with more than six syllables are found in the Bible.

The thirty-seven chapter of Isaiah and nineteenth chapter of Second Kings are alike.

The word "girl" occurs but once in the Bible, and that in the third verse, third chapter of Joel.

There are found in both books of the Bible, 3,53 ,483 letters; 773,693 words; 31,373 verses; 1,189 chapters, and 66 books.

The twenty-sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles is the finest chapter to read.

The most beautiful chapter is the 23rd Psalm.

The four most inspiring promises are John 14 : 2; 7 : 37; Matt. 9 : 28, and Psalm 37 : 4.

The first verse of the fiftieth chapter of Isaiah is the one for the new convert.

All who flatter themselves with vain boasting should read the sixth chapter of Matthew.

All humanity should learn the sixth chapter of St. Luke, from the twentieth verse to its ending.—Our Sunday Afternoon.

Boys and Their "Spare Moments."

Boys, you all have 'spare moments." What are you doing with them? Idling them away? Studying mischief? Having a good time? Here is what one boy did with his "spare moments." We find it in Success, and give it to you to think about: "A thin, awkward boy came to the residence of a celebrated school principal, and asked to see the master. The servant eyed his mean clothes, and, thinking he looked more like a beggar than anything else, told him to go around to the kitchen. He soon appeared at the back door, and repeated his request. 'You want a breakfast, more like,' said the servant girl, and set him down to some bread and butter. 'Thank you,' said the boy; I should like to see Mr ——, if he can see me.' Some old clothes may be you want. I guess he has none to spare; he gives away a sight,' remarked the girl, eyeing his ragged clothes. 'Can I see Mr.——?' asked the boy, with the most emphatic emphasis on each word. The girl for the first time stopped her work. 'Well, he is in the library; if he must be disturbed he must, I s'pose, and she whisked him off to that room, remarking as she opened the door. 'Here's somebody terrioly anxious to see you, sir, so I let him in.' The professor laid his book aside, and talked with the boy with increasing interest, and soon took down some books and began to give him an examination which extended even to Greek, and every question was answered correctly and promptly. The professor was amazed at such youthful erudition, and asked the boy how he managed, with his apparent poverty, to accumulate such an amount of knowledge. 'Oh, I studied in my spare time,' answered the boy brightly, and with the utmost unconsciousness that he was an example to even the man before him. Here was a boy, a hard-working orphan, almost fitted for college in the spare moments that his companions were wasting. Truly are spare moments the gold dust of time.—Telescope.

The Stormy Sunday.

In many Sunday schools a rainy Sunday forms an excuse for the absence of teachers and scholars, for omitting all special exercises, and for making the session as uninteresting as possible. There is no use in going to the Sunday school to-day, is apt to be the feeling on the rainy Sunday, of many who can be present without special inconvenience.

We once knew a superintendent whose Sunday-school was almost as well attended on the stormy Sundays as on the pleasant ones. Soon after he took charge of the school, there came a rainy Sunday, bringing with it the usual small attendance. But on that day the session was made unusually interesting. Of course, some classes were of necessity consolidated; but the regular work of the school was carried out to the letter. The class study was shortened a little, but a blackboard talk, carefully prepared, more than made amends for the brevity of the lesson. A solo singer had been secured, just because it was a rainy Sunday, and some songs were rendered. The superintendent produced from a magazine a story for boys and girls, and read it to the school. Everybody went home delighted with the session.

On the next Sunday, the superintendent announced that whenever it rained enough for those coming to Sunday-school to raise their umbrellas, a specially interesting programme would be observed, and in particular a story would be read. That superintendent kept at hand a scrapbook of stories specially for use in such emergencies. It was noticeable that not only the children, but also the older scholars, were present on rainy Sundays to enjoy the stories. The attendance on rainy days fell but little below the general average of the season.—S. S. Journal.

18 Years Town Constable.

Mr. B. Kinsley, Hagersville, Ont., holds the record of having been town constable for 18 years. Mr. Kinsley says: "I was cured of kidney and bladder weakness by three boxes of Doan's Kidney Pills. I often had to rise five or six times in the night on account of bladder weakness. The pills entirely did away with this annoying symptom. I highly recommend them for all kidney or bladder troubles."

The Best Pills.—Mr. Wm. Vandervoort, Sydney Crossing, Ont., writes: "We have been using Parmelee's Pills, and find them by far the best pills we ever used." For delicate and Debilitated Constitutions these pills act like a charm. Taken in small doses, the effect is both a tonic and a stimulant mildly exciting the secretions of the body, giving tone and vigor.

You will find some Christians, who know not whence their next bread is to come, speaking of the bounty of their God, while some others are repining in the midst of plenty.—Flavel.

Be honest with yourself, whatever the temptation; say nothing to others that you do not think, and play no tricks with your own mind. Of all the evil spirits abroad at this hour in the world, insincerity is the most dangerous.—J. A. Froude.

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