

## Devotional Service.

By REV. T. J. PAER, M.A.

JANUARY 21.—"SEND ME."

Isaiah 6: 1-10.

(QUARTERLY MISSIONARY MEETING.)

### HOME READINGS.

Mon., Jan. 15. The field. . . . . Matt. 24: 3-14  
Tues., Jan. 16. God's kingdom to come. . . . . Lk. 14: 16-13  
Wed., Jan. 17. Ways and means. . . . . Rom. 10: 1-13  
Thurs., Jan. 18. Send of haste. . . . . Job 5: 13-17  
Fri., Jan. 19. The conversion of the pagan. . . . . Prov. 11: 14, 25; Heb. 11: 1-6  
Sat., Jan. 20. Heroes of the frontier. . . . . Heb. 11: 32-38

Modern missions were anticipated in prophetic times. Although the extension of Protestant Christianity to heathen nations began systematically in A.D. 1792, yet the call to the work had been sounding all through the ages. We have in our topic Scripture the history of Isaiah's call to the great work of extending the truth—the work of mission. The call is in the form of a vision, both striking and picturesque. The scenes move before him in solemn grandeur. God is represented as sitting on the throne, and attended by ministering seraphim. His throne is exalted, and the posture of sitting denotes dignity and majesty. The language of the description is taken from the temple. The image is that of God sitting in the most holy place. Surrounding him are the attendants, and the cloud filling the sanctuary. The prophet is represented as without the temple, near the altar of sacrifice. The veil between is supposed to be withdrawn, and he is permitted to contemplate the sacred and solemn manifestation of the immediate dwelling-place of God. The chapter consists of three parts: (a) The vision (verses 1-4), as described in the foregoing. (b) The effect on the prophet (verses 5-7). He was overcome with a sense of unworthiness, but was cleansed by the fire coal from the altar, and assured that his sin was taken away. (c) The commission of the prophet (verses 8-13). God inquires who will go for Him to the people and bear his message, and the prophet expresses his willingness to go. Hence there is in our Scripture the Vision, the Preparation, the Commission.

### THE WONDERFUL VISION.

Before we can serve God effectively, we must to some extent, realize his greatness. In all departments of human activity, knowledge of the person served is essential to perfect service. To know the object of our religious trust and service engenders loyalty and faithfulness. The lives of God's most eminent servants in all ages acknowledge that the first and indispensable preparation for his service is a vision of God himself; a conception of his majesty, his might and his holiness. Our young people, on whom the responsibilities of the Church, and Christian service will more and more rest, should carefully and prayerfully study the Word to obtain an intelligent and faith-inspiring view of the character of God. Without this, a profound understanding of divine things is impossible, and hope and help for service, either at home or abroad, are dimly seen, and but weakly appreciated.

### PREPARATION FOR THE WORK.

Our topic Scripture clearly indicates that God wants human messengers to convey the good tidings of divine love and mercy to the world. He might have sent angelic hosts on the errand of salvation. But no! Man is to be honored as the herald. God has chosen to send men to their fellow-men to

import his heavenly message. By man shall man be saved. The inquiry, "Whom shall I send?" does not indicate divine perplexity, but the urgent question of one who calls for willing workers. And God prepares his workers for their duties in many ways:

1. By an inspiring vision of himself, as a preceding paragraph describes.

2. By conviction of personal unworthiness. (Verse 5.) A great hindrance to service, missionary and evangelistic, is self-satisfaction, and self-sufficiency. As a necessary qualification for the Lord's work, the believer must have a sense of his own littleness, and a deep appreciation of the greatness of God. He must fully realize "our sufficiency is of God." When the worker for God really sees God as he is, he immediately sees himself as he is, and concludes that he is utterly unfit to render acceptable service without further preparation. Both Job in the Old Testament, and Peter in the New, felt deeply this experience. (Job 42: 5, 6; Luke 5: 8.)

(3) By consecrating all powers to his use (Verses 3, 6, 7.) After confession of sinfulness and unworthiness on the part of the prophet, he was cleansed and fitted for his work. His iniquity was removed, that is, whatever obstacle there was to his communicating the message of God to the people arising from his own unworthiness, was taken away. To understand the meaning of the "live coal," it should be remembered that fire among the Orientals has always been regarded as an emblem of purifying. Thus the followers of Zoroaster in Persia worship fire as the emblem of a pure divinity. The prophet received a spiritual purification and preparation for his mission. Every missionary, every minister of the Gospel, every Christian worker, though conscious of personal unworthiness, should yet go freely and cheerfully to his work, if he is assured that he is commissioned of God, and prepared of the Holy Spirit for his task.

### THE COMMISSION.

Having had a vision of God, and having received a suitable preparation, the prophet is now prepared to respond to God's call. He did not require to be pressed into the service; he was a volunteer. Nor was he deterred by the difficulty or painfulness of the service that lay before him. He knew that it would be hard and distasteful. He knew that it might to a degree be unavailing. But notwithstanding all these discouraging features, this prophet of the early day did not shrink from it. Many a faithful missionary and Christian worker since, laboring in the same spirit of fearlessness and consecration. They do not ask, "Is it easy?" "Is it pleasant?" But, "Does God call me to perform it?" Study the case of Paul (Acts 21: 18). What God demands from his people is not success, but faithfulness. And yet was a faithful servant of God, in the pulpit or in the pew, ever labor without some success. Much seed may be apparently wasted, but some will ripen into a productive and glorious harvest. God's call is still repeated, "Who will go for us?" The call is still heard individually, "I heard the voice of the Lord." The call still leads to self-surrender. "Here am I." The call still demands self-abandonment, "Send me." "Send me —" anywhere, on any errand, at any time, in any capacity. Will you go? Will you help others to go? May God give all Methodist young people the deep, broad missionary spirit of the ancient prophet!

### HOW TO DO IT.

Adopt systematic, persistent, and liberal giving to missions. Introduce into your League, if you have not already done so, the "Pray, Study, Give" plan, advocated in the Forward Movement for Missions. Last year the young people of Canadian Methodism raised for missions about \$12,000,

which would amount to about fifteen cents per member for a year. If they had given on an average of two cents per member per week, they would have raised over \$80,000, which would have been enough to send out all the volunteers now ready to go to the mission field. The withholding of your little two cents per week, Epworth Leagues, is holding back the missionary from his divinely-appointed work.

### ALL AT IT.

The foreign missionary has his task, and so has every Christian at home. Let every Christian strive to bring to Christ at least one unsaved soul this year. The results of this work, if continued, would be astonishing. Starting with one disciple, it would take but one generation to reach the whole world at its present population, allowing for natural increase, if each convert would reach an additional soul each year with the Gospel. Beginning with one Christian, and supposing that the number would be doubled at the end of each year, it would take only thirty-one years to reach over two billions of souls, a number five hundred millions more than the present population of the world. Let every League in Methodism inaugurate this win-one movement illustrated in John 1: 35-47.

### OUR MARCHING ORDERS.

Our Lord's commission to all is, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." You cannot go; then send. God has not equipped you for this work of going to the heathen; he has not opened up your way to proclaim the truth in the regions beyond. True, but he has equipped others and opened up their way. Thousands are waiting to go with the glad message across the seas. It is your duty, Leagues at home, to stand by the contributions of your means, those whom God has called, and thus hasten the glorious day when his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth.

### POINTS FOR THE PRESIDENT.

Procure a map, or draw on the blackboard, or on a large piece of paper, and show the location of our principal missions in Canada and beyond. You will obtain information from the latest missionary report, and your pastor will give you any information you may require. Lead the members of the League to an intelligent understanding of the great missionary work we, as a Church, are endeavoring to do.

## JANUARY 23.—"LESSONS FROM SIMON AND US."

Luke 7: 36-50.

### HOME READINGS.

Mon., Jan. 25. Jesus in Capernaum. . . . . Mark 2: 1-11  
Tues., Jan. 26. Best gifts for Christ. . . . . Matt. 23: 1-11  
Wed., Jan. 27. Forgiveness in mercy. . . . . Lk. 7: 36-50  
Thurs., Jan. 28. The treatment of the fallen. . . . . Lk. 17: 1-4  
Fri., Jan. 29. Love and forgiveness. . . . . Lk. 17: 1-4  
Sat., Jan. 30. From faith to peace. . . . . Lk. 17: 1-4

Truth never changes. Being the outcome of the mind of God, eternal as its author. The same principles of truth, that would lead a man to act right in the days of Noah, would lead a man to act right now. Moral precepts are not subject to change with the fleeting centuries, and spiritual truths cannot be altered to suit the fancy of passing generations. It may be said of moral truth, as the poet says of the broad but in a deeper and more accurate sense:

"Men may come, and men may go,  
But I go on forever."

Hence it is that the truths couched in the words of Jesus to Simon nineteen hundred years ago are just as important to us on the threshold of the Twentieth century.