

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW.

A. D. 27.]

LESSON VI. JESUS IN GALILEE.

[Aug. 7.]

Matt. 4. 17-25.

[Commit to memory verses 18-20.]
 17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.



18 And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

19 And he said unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

20 And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.

21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James, the son of Zebedee, and John his

brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the kingdom of God, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

25 And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan.

General Statement.

Between the temptation in the wilderness and the ministry of Jesus in Galilee there occurred an interval of one year, whose events are related only by John. Most of this year was passed in Judea, where throughout his ministry Jesus made but little impression upon the people and gained but few followers. Hence this period has been named by some "the Judean ministry;" by others, "the year of obscurity." From the wilderness Jesus returned to the banks of the Jordan, and there gained his first disciples. John 1. 29-31. With this little company he went to Cana in Galilee, and there wrought his first miracle. John 2. 1-11. He made a short visit to Capernaum, and then went to Jerusalem, perhaps with the purpose of making the capital the center of his ministry. He aroused a general interest, and incurred great opposition, by driving the traders out of the temple. John 2. 12-25. But the number of those who accepted him as the Messiah was small, and the people of Judea were from first to last

among the bitterest enemies of the Saviour. For nearly a year he remained in Judea, but very little record remains of his teaching or his works. When news came to him that John the Baptist had been put in prison by Herod the tetrarch, or ruler of Galilee, he at once left Judea and went toward the northern province. On the way he passed through Samaria, and at Jacob's well had the wonderful conversation with the Samaritan woman. In Galilee he first revisited Cana, and while there wrought a miracle at Capernaum, healing the nobleman's son. Thence he went to Nazareth, the home of his boyhood, but was rejected by his own townspeople; so that he was led to fix his home at Capernaum. There he remained during the second year of his public labor, a year known both as "The Period of Galilean Ministry," and "The Year of Popularity." The results of this year's work are summarized in our lesson.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 17. From that time. From the time when John the Baptist was put in prison. ver. 12. Jesus delayed entering Galilee as a field of labor while John was working there. **Jesus began to preach.** For a year or more he had been teaching, but in conversations with individuals, as with Nicodemus and the woman of Samaria. Now he began to deliver public discourses. **To say.** He took up the message as it had been laid down by John the Baptist, and began by proclaiming repentance and the kingdom of God. **Repent.** See Lesson III, verse 2, and notes. Repentance is a new purpose, leading to a new life. Literally, "change your thought." **The kingdom of heaven.** He proclaimed that a new kingdom was to be established, in which all who accepted God as King and Jesus as Prince should be citizens; a kingdom which should have God's will for its law and love for its authority. **Is at hand.** It was not really organized until Jesus had died upon the cross and his Spirit had descended upon his disciples. (1) All men are sinners, and hence all must repent if they would be saved. (2) That kingdom which others saw, we may enter.



18. Jesus, walking by the sea. This event is related in greater detail in the fifth chapter of Luke's gospel. It took place near Capernaum, very soon after Jesus came from Judea. **The sea of Galilee.** This is a body of fresh water of oval shape, thirteen miles long and seven wide, and six hundred and fifty-three feet below

the level of the Mediterranean Sea. It is east of Galilee and west of the Bashan district. Once it was surrounded by prosperous towns, but now its shores are nearly uninhabited. **Saw two brethren.** These two brothers, the sons of Jonah, or John, were well acquainted with Jesus, for they had become his disciples nearly a year before. The circumstances of their first meeting with him are narrated in John 1. 35-42. They had returned to their trade of fishing, and were now summoned to a closer companionship. About six months after this they were called to be apostles. **Simon called Peter.** Simon was the earlier name, and the name Peter, "Rock," had been given to him by Jesus at their first meeting. He was, by the fervency of his nature, by his gifts, and by his spirit of leadership the "chief among the apostles," though not in any such sense as is claimed by the popes of Rome, his pretended successors. **Andrew his brother.** Though named after Peter, and of secondary influence among the twelve apostles, Andrew was one of the earliest followers of Jesus, and the one who brought Peter to him. It is noticeable that almost every mention of his name, apart from the list of the apostles, is in connection with bringing some person to Jesus. (3) *We may not be leaders like Peter, but we can be individuals like Andrew.* **Casting a net.** They may have been standing on the shore, or in a boat, for fishing with the net was practised in both ways. **They were fishers.** An honest, though humble employment. (4) *Christ chooses workers and not idlers for his service.*

19. He said unto them. The call was given after a discourse of Jesus to the people on the shores, followed by the miracle of the draught of fish (Luke 5. 1-11), which was to be a type of their success in Jesus' Master's work. **Follow me.** He called upon them to leave their homes and their vocations, and to become his companions, learning his teachings by association with him. He did not, however, summon all who believed in him to lead such a life. **Fishers of men.**