

The Sunday School

BIBLE LESSON.

Abridged from Peloubet's Notes.

First Quarter, 1905.

JANUARY TO MARCH.

Lesson III.—January 15.—Jesus Wins His First Disciples.—John 1: 35-51.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.—John 1: 49.

EXPLANATORY.

I. THE FIRST TWO DISCIPLES OF JESUS.—ANDREW AND JOHN.

THROUGH THE WITNESS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.—Vs. 35-40. The Great Expectation. "We are informed by Tacitus, by Suetonius, and by Josephus, that there prevailed throughout the entire East at this time, an intense conviction, derived from ancient prophecies, that a strong powerful monarch would arise in Judea, and gain dominion over the world."

35. THE NEXT DAY AFTER. John had pointed out Jesus to the people as the Lamb of God (v. 29). Everything was now ready for Jesus to begin his ministry, and he must begin it with disciples who were willing to come under his training, of scholars in his school.

36. AND LOOKING. Gazing steadfastly upon, contemplating JESUS as HE WALKED. Not toward John, as on the previous day, but walking by. BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD! see last lesson. "Behold is an exclamation, not a verb. Hence the comma in v. John, doubtless, pointing towards him, exclaimed, "Behold! the Lamb of God!"

37. AND THEY FOLLOWED JESUS. Walked after him till they caught up with him. Later they followed him as a Teacher and Master.

38. THEN JESUS (hearing steps behind him) TURNED, AND SAW THEM. SAITH. "To all who follow he gives their opportunity." WHAT SEEK YE? A courteous way of welcoming further conversation, as if he had said, "Is there anything I can do for you?" RABBI. Rabbi is a Jewish title of honor applied to the learned, and especially to teachers.

BEING INTERPRETED. For the Greek reading people far away from Palestine. MASTER. Greek, teacher, as we say "school-master," "head-master." WHERE DWELLEST THOU? Implying that they would like to talk with him sometime, when he was at leisure.

39. COME AND SEE. R. V. "Come and ye shall see." A BODE WITH HIM THAT DAY. The rest of the day from the TENTH HOUR. According to Jewish reckoning, four o'clock in the afternoon. Professor Adeney thinks that they went to Jesus' home in the morning, spent the day with Jesus, and at four o'clock started to find their brothers.

40. ONE OF THE TWO. ANDREW. We naturally infer that the unnamed other was John himself.

II. TWO MORE DISCIPLES.—PETER AND PROBABLY JAMES.

THROUGH THE INVITATION OF OTHERS.—Vs. 41, 42. 41. HE FIRST FINDETH. First here is not an adverb modifying findeth, but an adjective belonging to be, Andrew. Thus the R. and Am. S. say "He findeth first," implying that both went forth to find each his brother, and Andrew found his brother Peter before John found his brother James. In this case the first four disciples of Jesus were fishermen, a significant symbol of the work his disciples were to do as fishers of men. WE HAVE FOUND GREEK, EUREKAMEN. "The most comprehensive of all Eureka's. THE MESSIAH. THE CHRIST. —Messias is the Greek spelling of the Hebrew word, "Messiah," which is the same as the Greek "Christ," both meaning anointed, the anointed one. It was by anointing that kings and priests were set apart for their work. The Messiah was the king, high priest, deliverer, long promised and foretold, for whom the Jews were eagerly looking.

42. JESUS BEHELD HIM. As if looking into his very soul. THOU ART SIMON. That is your present name. SON OF JONA. The true reading is "John" as in R. V. THOU SHALT BE CALLED CEPHAS. Cephas is Aramaic—Syriac (Aram is one name for Syria), the modernized form of the Hebrew language, commonly used in Palestine at that time. BY INTERPRETATION, A STONE. Better as in R. V., "Peter," which (Petros) is the Greek for "stone," or "rock." This was a prophecy of Peter's future life and career. Whatever thou are now, thou shalt win the name Peter. It expressed the possibilities within him. It became his true name after much instruction, hard experiences, some falls, much prayer and abiding with Jesus.

III. ANOTHER DISCIPLE, PHILIP. THROUGH THE PERSONAL CALL OF JESUS. AND FINDER TH PHILIP. The others had sought Jesus; Jesus himself, finds Philip. He must have seen that Philip was ready for his invitation, and that there was something in him which would make him a useful disciple and a pos-

sible apostle, although almost nothing is recorded of his labors, except this, that he brought Nathanael to Jesus. Philip means "lover of horses." Four persons of this name are mentioned in the New Testament. Philip the apostle and Philip the deacon (Acts 6: 5; 8: 1-12) are the most frequently confused. This was the one who became Philip the Apostle. We will find him again at the feeding of the five thousand (John 6: 5, 6). On the day of the Triumphal Entry, introducing some Greeks to Jesus; at the Last Supper (John 14: 8, 12); and in the upper chamber after the Ascension.

44. WAS OF BETHSAIDA. "House of hunting or fishing," "fish town," near the mouth of the upper Jordan, where it enters the Sea of Galilee. THE CITY OF ANDREW AND PETER. Hence, probably, they were acquaintances. If we take the reading of the R. V., it is possible that "he" refers to Peter. In that case Andrew found Peter, and Peter found Philip.

IV. NATHANAEL GOES AND SEES FOR HIMSELF.—Vs. 45-51. 45. PHILIP FINDETH NATHANAEL. of Cana in Galilee (John 21: 2). He was probably on his way home, and an acquaintance, if not before at least in the wilderness under the preaching of John. Nathanael is generally regarded as another name for Bartholomew, i. e., "son of Ptolemy"; for (1) here and in John 21: 2, he is classed with the apostles. (2) In the lists of the apostles Bartholomew is coupled with Philip, while (3) Nathanael is never mentioned in the first three Gospels, and Bartholomew is never mentioned by John. It was quite common for men in those times to have more than one name, as Simon Peter, Judas Iscariot. WE HAVE FOUND HIM (the Messiah) OF WHOM MOSES IN THE LAW, THE Pentateuch, the five books of Moses, thus distinguished from the other books of the Old Testament (see Gen. 49: 10; Num. 24: 17-19; Deut. 18: 15). AND THE PROPHETS, DID WRITE (Isa. 7: 14; 9: 6, 7; 52: 13-15; 53: 1-12; Ezek. 34: 23-31; Dan. 9: 24-27). The disciples of John must have been continually questioning as to where the Messiah was of whom John preached.

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE SON OF JOSEPH. This is the language, not of the evangelist, but of Philip. Joseph was the reputed father of Jesus, and Philip supposed this was true. It was the common and necessary designation of the relation between Jesus and Joseph.

46. CAN THERE ANY GOOD THING COME OUT OF NAZARETH? Nathanael, living in Cana, four miles away, knew Nazareth well; a small town, with, probably, not the best reputation, but not necessarily rude, degraded, or vicious beyond other towns. It was naturally a surprise to Nathanael that the great Deliverer and King could come out of that little village, which had hitherto given no signs of superiority.

PHILIP SAITH UNTO HIM (as the most natural and wise answer to Nathanael's question).

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Charcoal sweetens the breath after smoking, drinking or after eating onions and other odorous vegetables.

Charcoal effectually clears and improves complexion, it whitens the teeth and further acts as a natural and eminently safe cathartic.

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COME AND SEE. There is always danger of looking without seeing, as in case of the Pharisees (Matt. 23: 13-16).

1. See what Christ has done for others. Compare Christian lands with all others. Take two maps; color one according to the morals, the happiness, the blessings of the different peoples, making the best white, and darkening the shades as the picture grows darker. Then take another map, and color it according to the prevalence and purity of its Christianity, and the two maps will agree. Where the most Christianity, there the most of every good to man. Look at the effect of conversion to Christ on your friends and neighbors.

47. JESUS SAITH OF HIM. To those gathered around him, but probably in the hearing of Nathanael himself, as is implied in his responsive question. BEHOLD. Interjection, not a verb, hence the comma in R. V. AN ISRAELITE INDEED. "Not only outwardly, but inwardly; one answering to the true idea of an Israelite, as contrasted with the prevalent formalism and hypocrisy of the time; a true, prayerful servant of God." IN WHOM IS NO GUILE. No deceit, no hypocrisy, a truly sincere man, seeking the truth without prejudice. It does not say he was sinless but guileless.

48. WHEN THOU WAS UNDER THE FIG TREE. The fig tree on account of its luxuriance of leaves, forming a natural arbor for privacy and shade, was a favorite resort, especially for meditation and rest. I SAW THEE. Outwardly or by prophetic vision; for, far more, he saw his heart, his inner life, his spiritual nature.

49. THOU ART THE SON OF GOD. THE KING OF ISRAEL. The fact that Jesus recognized the secret struggle and the victory, unknown to man, showed that he had divine insight. The two phrases describe the Messiah, in both his divine nature and in his earthly manifestation.

50. THOU SHALT SEE GREATER THINGS THAN THESE. To him that hath shall be given.

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