

and make heaven as full, to stop the deepening of the weeping and wailing, and add to the volume of praise that swells eternally around God's throne. Let us feel our mighty obligations. Let us live continually in view of them. Let us keep looking to our Lord, who alone can enable us to fulfil them.

Poetry.

THE CHRISTIAN TRAINING.

"If loving hearts were never lonely,
If what they wished might always be,
Accepting what they wished for only,
They might be glad—but not in Thee.

Well may Thy happy children cease
From restless wishes prone to sin,
And in Thy own exceeding grace,
Yield to Thy daily discipline.

We need as much the Cross we bear
As air we breathe, as light we see ;
It draws us to Thy side in prayer,
It binds us to our strength in Thee.

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Sunday School Department.

International Bible Lessons. 1878.

Aug. 4.—**The Draught of Fishes.**—Luke
5: 1-11. A.D. 28.

DOI: 10.1002/for

GOLDEN TEXT.

And they were astonished at His doctrine: for His word was with power, Luke 5: 32.

IN THE STUDY,

The order of events. "There is a difference of opinion among commentators in regard to the order of events after Jesus left Nazareth; some following that given by Luke, and making the healing of the demoniac in the synagogue, and of Peter's wife's mother precede that of the miraculous draught of fishes; but the larger number follow Matthew, who makes the healing of the demoniac precede the incident of the lesson for pericopes of the events. Three accounts, Matt. 4: 8-22, Mark 1: 16-20, with the one of our lesson, all evidently relate to the same transaction. The facts narrated by Luke are not contradicted by Matthew, but only passed over. Nothing is more common than that circumstances omitted by one should be supplied by another, lest the sacred writers should seem to have written by separate hands." *Robinson's Harmony.*

Capernaum. "On quitting Nazareth, Jesus proceeded to Capernaum, which henceforth became his headquarters. This was then one of the most important towns on the western border of the lake of Tiberias. If its site has been correctly identified by the now forsaken spot called "Tell Hum," towards the northern border of the lake, there are remains of splendid public buildings to attest its ancient consequence. The sight is also delightful, commanding a fine view of the lake and the high mountains around. In all respects it is furnished with a lake of abode admirably suited to His purposes, both from the facility of communication, as well by land as by the lake, with many considerable and flourishing towns in the neighbourhood. Some of His disciples were fishermen on this lake." — *Kitté*.

Gennesaret. "This little inland sea is mentioned in the Bible under four names. The sea of Chinnereth, *Num. 34: 11*, *Josh. 13: 3*, from, as some think, its *harp-like* shape. The

Evangelists generally call it the sea of Galilee, *Matt. 4: 18*. Luke once names it the Lake of Genneseret, from a flat district on its west coast. John, writing much later, when Tiberias had become the most important city on its banks, speaks of it as the sea of Tiberius, *John 6: 1*. It lies in a deep gorge or rift—the deepest on the coast's surface—between the hills of Mount Hermon to the foot of Mount Haur. Down this gorge flows the Jordan through the waters of Merom, through the Lake of Genneseret, down to the Dead Sea, the *bed of which* is nearly 3,000 feet, and the *surface* 1,400 feet *below* the ocean level. The *depth* of the lake is 1,200 feet, and lies 650 feet below the ocean level, and lies *very* deep relatively to the hilly country on either side. Like most lakes it is subject to violent storms through the wind rushing down the ravines that intersect the surrounding mountains, and making the water boil as in a cauldron, *Luke 8: 25*. It is 12½ miles long, 6½ wide, and its widest part. The depth is nowhere greater than 200 feet, and generally from 80 to 140.—*See* *Stuck*

"Except the narrow entrance and outlet of the Jordan it is surrounded by beautiful hills from 500 to 1000 feet high. The towns that once crowded its shores with a teeming population, the groves and shrubbery that covered its hills, and the boats and galleys that studded its surface are gone. But the sea remains, hallowed by many scenes described in the gospels. The Saviour of mankind often looked upon its quiet beauty; He stilled its waves by a word; from its shores He called several of His apostles; here Peter sank, crying, "Lord save me;" and here some of His grandest words were spoken.

⁴How pleasant to me thy deep blue wave,
O Sea of Galilee!

For the glorious One, who came to save,
Hath often stood by thee."—*McCheyne*.

Fishings. Four kinds of fishing are alluded to in the Gospel:—With a *hook and line*; with which Peter is directed to catch the fish in whose belly he will find the tribute money, *Matt. 17: 27*. With a *hand-net* thrown from a rock or boat at any particular fish a keen eye may detect, *Mark 1: 16*. With a *bag-net* shaped especially for fishing in deep water. Such were the nets that were being mended in Matthew and Mark's accounts, and "washed" in Luke's. With a *drag-net* of great size, requiring many men to work it. This is the net of the parable in *Matt. 13*. These different appliances are fully described in "The Land and the Book,"—*Stock*.

Ships. "There are two words used in the gospels to designate the vessels used on the lake; *plouton* for ship, the largest vessel and *plouarion* for boat. The former is the word used in this narrative, the latter is the 'small ship' of *Mark* 3: 9, and the 'little ship' of *Mark* 4: 36."—*Stock*.

Josephus says, there were in his time 230 ships on the lake attended by four or five men each. Mr. McGregor of the *Rob Roy* says there are now only three fishing boats, the tax being heavy.

The business of fishing was probably as respectable and comparatively as profitable as it is now on the Banks of Newfoundland and the coasts of New England. We have no reason, but the contrary, to suppose that the disciples were in abject poverty. Peter had *something* to leave, and so John, and so also Matthew. They were men in ordinary circumstances in life, industrious and intelligent, belonging to that class from which the world's greatest workers and thinkers are most frequently drawn—the great middle class.

IN THE CLASS.

The following outline may serve to bring out the principal points in our lesson:—

1st. The earnest listeners, v. 1-3; 2nd. The fruitless toilers, v. 4, 5; 3rd. The marvellous draught, v. 6, 7; 4th. The humbled disciple, v.

8, 9 ; 5th. The call to a higher work, v. 10 ; 6th. Forsaking all, v. 11.

THE EARNEST LISTENERS.

Pressed upon Him, because of the word He spoke of God and the way He spoke it, *John* 7: 46; and also probably because He was so soon to go away, 4: 43.

Two ships, the larger fishing vessels that had been out all night on the lake. Washing their nets, *diktua*, deep water or *bag-nets*, from the weeds and dirt. Though unsuccessful, preparing for another day or night's toil.

And He entered into one, to avoid the crush on the shore.—*Mark 3: 9, ro.* And sat down, the usual posture:—the preacher sat, the people stood. What an impressive scene! The motley crowd of Jews and Greeks, of men women and children, of merchants, fishermen and farmers; the lake, the sandy beach, the hills, and the Lord of life and glory seated in the little vessel as it gently rocked on the rippling water, speaking as never man spake of the things concerning their eternal interests.

*"How sweetly flowed the gospel sound
From lips of gentleness and grace ;
As listening thousands gathered round,
And joy and reverence filled the place."*

How many heard to their soul's salvation, how many to their greater condemnation? So Jesus speaks in every Sabbath service, and in every gospel sermon to-day, *Luke 10: 16*.

THE FRUITLESS TOILERS.

Launch out, the command in the singular, was to Simon the owner of the ship. **Let down,** in the plural, to the fishermen, collectively in the vessel. **Master,** a title of respect. **All the night,** the usual time for fishing, *John 21: 3*. Nevertheless at thy word, however unlikely, however weary, yet he would obey Him. Without the Lord's presence and blessing, however favourable the time and circumstances, we toil without success; *we labour without rest, we sow without reaping, we build without foundation.* How sad it is to go out to the labours and anxieties of life without the Lord. Even prosperity in the worldly sense is spiritual adversity.—*Ex. 33: 15*.

THE MARVELLOUS DRAUGHT.

“Man’s extremity is God’s opportunity.”
They enclosed a great multitude, more than they had strength to draw up, their net to hold, or their vessel to carry. **Their net brake**, literally, *was braking or bursting*; if it had really broken they would have lost all. Behold the power and wisdom of the Lord! even the creatures of the deep obey His voice, and own His power.
 —John 1: 3, Col. 1: 16.

THE HUMBLER DISCIPLE

Depart from me, "A flash of supernatural illumination had revealed to him both his own sinful unworthiness, and who He was that was with him in the boat. It was the cry of self-loathing which had already realized something nobler. He did not *mean* the 'depart from me,' he only meant—and this was known to the Searcher of hearts—I am utterly unworthy to be near thee, yet let me stay."—*Farrar*. For similar experiences and expressions see, *Ex. 20: 18, 19; Judges 13: 22; 1 Kings 17: 18; Isa. 6: 5; Dan.*

10: 17. Humbling must come before exalting, self-emptying before the Lord can fill the heart. Nothing so humbles us as a sense of the presence and power of the Lord manifested in great mercy.

*"Law and terrors do but harden,
When they work alone ;
But a sense of blood-bought pardon
Breaks a heart of stone.*