

FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL

International S. S. Lesson.

LESSON VIII.—THE TWELVE SENT FORTH.—FEB. 20.

(Matt. x: 1-15.)

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Freely ye have received, freely give.”—Matt. x. 8.

TIME AND PLACE.—A.D. 28, Autumn. Capernaum.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. The names of the Twelve, 2-4 II. The Mission of the Twelve, 5-13. III. The Treatment of the Twelve, 14.

INTRODUCTION.—While Jesus was speaking the words found in our last lesson, He was sought by a certain ruler, Jairus by name, who besought His healing power in behalf of his daughter. On His way to the ruler's home the healing of the woman with the issue of blood took place. In the meantime, the ruler's daughter having died, she was restored to life by Jesus' power. Other and numerous miracles followed in Capernaum, and in the journey which followed among the cities and villages of Galilee. In this tour He was accompanied by His twelve disciples, who were thus trained for the duties of the commission which they received, as recounted in our present lesson. The time of this commission is by some placed as late as the date of John the Baptist, early in the year A. D. 29.

VERSE BY VERSE.—2. “Apostles.”—The word means those who are sent forth. “First, Simon.”—He was not the first called, nor did Jesus give him authority over the other disciples. He was, however, prominent among the disciples, and often seemed to take the place of leader.

4. “Simon the Canaanite.”—By Luke he is called Simon Zelotes. “Iscaiot.”—So called from his native place, *Kerioth*.

5. “The way of the Gentiles.”—That is, into Gentile or heathen territory. “Samaritans.”—They were a mongrel race, partly Jewish and partly heathen, who occupied the province of Samaria.

6. “The lost sheep of the house of Israel.”—All the Jews who were said to be as sheep without a shepherd are included in this.

7. “The kingdom of heaven.”—The kingdom which Jesus as the Messiah was about to establish. “Is at hand.”—Or draws nigh.

8. “Heal the sick, etc.”—This command was accompanied by divine power. (See verse 1.) “Freely ye have received.”—They had received this power from the Lord without price; they were to exercise it as freely.

9. “Provide neither gold, etc.”—They were not to make such provision as travellers ordinarily made for journeys.

10. “Scrip.”—A bag used by travellers for carrying food and other necessities. “Coats.”—Literally, *tunics*, the inner garment. “Neither shoes, nor yet staves.”—Comparing this with the corresponding passage in Mark, the meaning probable is, that they were to go just as they were, without making special preparation. “The workman is worthy of his meat.”—Meaning that they were to be supported by those whom they served.

11. “Who in it is worthy.”—The worthiness here consists in readiness to receive the gospel message. “There abide.”—They were not to spend their time in receiving hospitality and entertainment, but in preaching the gospel.

13. “Your peace.”—The reference is to the blessing of peace invoked by those entering a house as guests.

14. “Shake off the dust of your feet.”—This was a symbolic act signifying, as it is stated in Mark and Luke, *a testimony against them*.

15. “More tolerable.”—Sodom and Gomorrah, that is, will receive a less severe judgment than those who thus reject the gospel.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

DAILY READING.

First Day.—The Twelve Sent Forth—Matt. x. 1-15.

Second Day.—“What I tell you . . . that speak”—
x. 16-27.

Third Day.—“He that receiveth you receiveth me”—
Matt. x. 28—xi. 1.

Fourth Day.—The Twenty Sent Forth—Luke x. 1-20.

Fifth Day.—“How shall they hear without a preacher?”—Rom. x. 1-18.

Sixth Day.—“Go and bring forth fruit.”—John
xv. 1-27.

Prayer Meeting Topic, Feb. 20.—Every Christian a
Missionary—Acts 1. 1-11.

MISSIONARY WORK.

Every friend of Jesus is a friend of missions. Where there is a healthy spiritual life, there is a love for the missionary cause. When you consider the reasons of this, you obtain an insight into the glory of missions, and into your calling to embrace this cause as a part of your soul's life. Come and hear how much there is to make missionary work glorious and precious.

1. It is the cause for which Jesus left the throne of heaven. The heathen are His inheritance, given to Him by His Father. It is in heathendom that the power of Satan has been established. Jesus must have Himself vindicated as the conqueror. His glory, the coming and manifestation of His kingdom, depend on missions.

2. Missionary work is the principal aim of the Church on earth. All the last words of the Lord Jesus teach us this. The Lord is the head and He has made Himself dependent upon His body, upon His members, by whom alone He can do His work. As a member of Christ, as a member of the Church, shall I not give myself to take part in the work, that this goal may be reached?

3. It is the work for which the Holy Spirit was given. See this in the promise of the Spirit: in the leading of the Spirit vouchsafed to Peter and to Barnabas and Saul. In the history of the Church we find that times of revival go hand in hand with new zeal for the missionary cause. The Holy Spirit is always a holy enthusiasm for the extension of the kingdom.

4. Missionary work brings blessing on the Church. It rouses to heroic deeds of faith and self-denial. It has furnished the most glorious instances of the wondrous power of the Lord. It gives heavenly joy over the conversion of sinners to those who watch for it with love and prayer. It cleanses the heart to understand God's great plans, and to await the fulfilment of them in supplication. Missionary work is a token of life in a Church, and brings more life.

5. What a blessing it is for the world. What would we have been, had not missionaries come to our heathen forefathers in Europe? What a glorious blessing has not missionary work already won in some lands? What help is there for the hundred millions of heathen, if not in missions?

6. There will be a blessing for your own soul in love for missionary work.

You will be exercised in faith. Missionary work is a cause for faith, where everything goes on slowly, and not according to the fancy of men. You will learn to cleave to God and the word.

Love will be awakened. You will learn to go out of yourselves and your little circle, and with an open eye and a large heart to live in the interests of your Lord and King: you will feel how little true love you have, and you will receive more love.

You will be drawn into prayer. Your calling and power as an intercessor will become clearer to you, and therewith the blessedness of thus co-operating for the kingdom. You will discern how it is the highest conformity to Him who came to seek the lost, to give up your own ease and rest to fight in love the fight of prayer against Satan in behalf of the heathen.

And if you would know how to have your love for missions, as the work of your Lord, increased, attend to the following hints:—Become acquainted with the missionary cause. Endeavour by writings and books to know what the condition and need of heathendom is; what, by the blessing of the Lord, has been already done there; what the work is that is being done now. Speak with others about this cause. Let the Lord see that you are in earnest with His work. If there is missionary work that is being done in your neighborhood, show yourself a friend to it. Although there be much imperfection in that work,—and where is there work of man that is perfect?—complain not of the imperfection, but look upon the essence of the cause, the endeavor to obey the command of the Lord, and give your prayer and your help. A friend of Jesus is a friend of missions. Love for missionary work is an indispensable element of the new life.—Rev. Andrew Murray.