



LESSON IV.—APRIL 24.

The Mission of the Seventy.

Luke x., 1-16.

Golden Text.

Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest. Luke x., 2.

Home Readings.

- Monday, April 18.—Luke x., 1-16.
 Tuesday, April 19.—Luke x., 17-24.
 Wednesday, April 20.—Matt. x., 5-15.
 Thursday, April 21.—Matt. x., 16-27.
 Friday, April 22.—Ezek. iii., 1-11.
 Saturday, April 23.—Matt. xxv., 34-46.
 Sunday, April 24.—John xvii., 6-19.

1. . . . After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would . . . come.

2. Therefore . . . said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest.

3. Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

4. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.

5. And into whatsoever house ye . . . enter, first say, Peace be to this house.

6. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: . . . if not, it shall turn to you again.

7. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

8. And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:

9. And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

10. But into whatsoever city ye . . . enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,

11. Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

12. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city.

13. Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented . . . , sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

14. But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.

15. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, . . . shall be thrust down to hell.

16. He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.

(By R. M. Kurtz.)

INTRODUCTION.

We are entering upon the study of the closing months of the life of our Lord upon earth. The great Galilean ministry is

over, and, after attending the Feast of Tabernacles at Jerusalem, the Master directs his steps toward Perea. This was the region east of the Jordan, and in that day it had a considerable population, most of which was composed of Jews. A reference to the map will be of great aid in this lesson.

To-day we learn of the way Christ prepared the people of Perea for his own work among them. The Perea ministry lasted several months, estimated at from four to six.

Though not a special missionary Sunday, the instructions given by the Lord to the seventy as they set out upon this mission, makes a good missionary lesson. Call the attention of your class to the fact that discipleship does not mean simply to believe and to live correct moral lives. The word 'Gospel' means 'good news,' and the man who is rejoicing in having heard and believed this good news, ought to, and will, if he is a true disciple, tell or send it to those who have not heard it.

In business great importance attaches to the testimony which the older customers of a firm bear to the worth of its product. Large companies send out much printed matter containing testimonials as to the worth of their goods. Now, if this is important in attaining success in some enterprise of this life, how much more important it is for the members of the church of Christ to bear their testimony to people who have not yet heard the Gospel.

Not only was the commission given, for a limited territory, but at the close of his life on earth Christ commanded his Gospel to be preached to all the world.

THE LESSON STUDY.

Verse 1. 'After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also.' After the close of the Galilean ministry and the words and works attending it, Christ prepares for his ministry beyond Jordan by sending seventy of his disciples to carry his message of peace to the inhabitants of that country. The words, 'other seventy also,' mean that this company was the second sent forth upon such an errand. See the account of the sending out of the twelve, Luke ix., 1-6, and parallel passages. The seventy were to go by twos, for mutual sympathy and counsel.

2-4. 'The harvest truly is great.' Christ instructs the seventy both as to their journey itself and the work to be done. Notice two things about the instructions covered in these three verses. They were to pray for more laborers to be sent into the ripe field. They were not to feel that the entire burden was to rest on themselves, nor were they to wait until abundant help was on the ground. It was the true missionary principle, to do everything one can, and to look to God for further means.

Then the seventy were to be unencumbered with the provisions for travel, as men would make preparation. The advance troop of the missionary army was not to be encumbered with baggage, but was, so to speak, to live on the country through which it passed. No time-wasting salutations were to be indulged in—the King's business required haste.

5-11. 'The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.' The work of the disciples and their manner of living while on this mission is outlined in verses 5-11. Their entrance into a house was to be accompanied by a blessing upon it, if such were welcome. They were to remain in one house when in a community, and not to allow their duties to be interfered with by being entertained at different places, thus adding a merely social feature to their life in any place and preventing the concentration of all their energies upon the task before them.

The laborer was worthy of his hire, that is, the disciples need not regard themselves as objects of charity because they were thus provided for. Their message and their works of mercy abundantly compensated the host who provided for them.

Upon entering a city the message of the kingdom was to be proclaimed or announced as a preparation to its more complete

setting forth by Christ himself, as he later followed this introductory work.

If any city did not receive them the disciples were to publicly denounce such a rejection, but not without reminding the inhabitants that the kingdom of God was near to them. The Gospel was preached for a witness to them, and the responsibility for its rejection lay with them.

12-16. 'He that heareth you heareth me: and he that despiseth you despiseth me: and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.' This is one of the most solemn passages in the Scriptures. The wickedness of Sodom was such as to call down destruction upon it, but more awful still is the condition of the soul that despises the Son of God. Notice the woe pronounced upon those cities that had refused the evidences of Christ's divinity. The real lesson lies in these last verses. Have you been ignoring his message to you?

The next lesson is 'Prayer and Promise,' Luke xi., 1-13.

C. E. Topic.

Sunday, April 24.—Topic—What Christ can do for 'Darkest Africa.' Isa. xlv., 11-19.

Junior C. E. Topic.

THOU GOD SEEST ME.

Monday, April 18.—'The eyes of the Lord.' II. Chron. xvi., 9.

Tuesday, April 19.—'His eyes behold.' Ps. xi., 4.

Wednesday, April 20.—'He looketh.' Job xxviii., 24.

Thursday, April 21.—'Doth not he see my ways?' Job xxxi., 4.

Friday, April 22.—'I have surely seen.' Ex. iii., 7.

Saturday, April 23.—'Not as man seeth.' I. Sam. xvi., 7.

Sunday, April 24.—Topic—'Thou God seest me.' Gen. xvi., 7-13; Heb. iv., 13.

With the Teacher.

Do you daily pray for your scholars? Love begets love. Love your scholars and they will love you.

To save one soul from death is worth the labor of a lifetime.

Are you discouraged? Tarry in your closet and you may hear an angel say, 'Fear not, but speak.'

Next to the parent and the pastor, the teacher has the best opportunity to influence the young.—'Living Epistle.'

Induce the scholars to study the next Sunday-school lesson at home. This will insure a better recitation and a more interesting class study.

The Teacher's Meeting.

A prominent Sunday-school worker has this to say:

'My own opinion, after ten years' trial, is that teachers' meetings for the study of the lesson are—

1. "A necessity" to the growth of the school and the interest of the scholars.

2. "Practicable," no matter what the location of the school and the ability of the teachers are.

3. "Helpful" in drawing teachers and superintendents together in their work.—'Living Epistle.'

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