

Sunday School Lesson.

FEBRUARY 6, 1881.

THE BOYHOOD OF JESUS.— Luke ii. 39-52.

I.—Early Childhood.

Perhaps all who read the Gospels, but especially children, wish that we could know something more about the child Jesus than is recorded. There were, doubtless, good reasons for not lifting the veil from the greater part of that sacred childhood. It is lifted only once, and by only one evangelist. We are indebted to St. Luke for the incidents and statements which form the reading for our lesson. He was, no doubt, inspired by the Holy Spirit to tell us thus much and no more, and we might learn all that it was important for us to know, viz., that there was perfect harmony between the earlier and the later life, and that the perfect manhood with which we are so familiar was the natural outcome and development of a perfect childhood. The gospel could scarcely have been considered a perfect record if nothing had been said about the childhood of Him who manifested such a deep interest in children. And this one lesson tells us sufficient for all practical purposes. In ordinary life with what pride and hope do fond parents and affectionate teachers look on such a child. But, alas! the after life does not always fulfil the fair promise of early childhood. How sad when it does not.

II.—A Visit to Jerusalem.

The male Jews were expected to go to Jerusalem to all the three feasts, but with the women this was voluntary, and was usually confined to the Passover. That both Joseph and Mary were accustomed to go was an indication of their piety, and as pious parents should, as soon as the son was old enough, they took him with them. In all probability He had been regularly taken to the synagogue at Nazareth on the Sabbath, and joined with His parents in the simple worship there. Mary was not fancy without reverence that Jesus had looked forward with deep interest to this special event, the first break in the quiet life that humble home at Nazareth. Jerusalem was the capital, the centre of everything in Jewish life, and above all, the temple was there. But then we must also remember that He was more than a boy; and so, as in after life, all that was merely human would be chastened and sanctified by the consciousness, which it is evident had been awakened, of His higher nature and His great mission, until as He beheld His Father's house, every other thought would be swallowed up in that of His Father's business, and every other feeling in the desire to do His Father's will.

III.—Lost from the Company.

"As they returned,"—"Yes they had to return. For if the duties of life must give place to worship, worship in its turn must give place to them. Jerusalem is good; but Nazareth is good too. Let him then who neglects the one, on pretext of attending to the other, ponder this scene. Work and worship serve to relieve each other, and beautifully alternate." The people were accustomed to go to and from the feasts in large companies or caravans. It was very easy, therefore, for a boy of twelve to disappear for some time without being missed. His friends would suppose, as Joseph and Mary did, that he had joined some other circle for the time. Every boy and girl should strive to be thoughtful and act in all things as not to give father and mother one unnecessary care or pang. But it was not thoughtlessness in Jesus—neither was it mere absorption in the higher thoughts that were filling His mind—there was a truth which His disappearance was intended to teach. It was that they must not call in question anything which He felt it necessary to do in fulfillment of the great mission for which He came into the world. Mary had to be reminded of that more than once afterwards (John ii. 4; Mark iii. 31-35, &c.).

IV.—Found in the Temple.

"After three days," means on the third day. They then found him in the temple. "A chamber of the temple was set apart as a kind of open free school. The doctors or teachers—famous 'doctors of the law' (Acts v. 34)—at 'in Moses' seat,' the older students on a low bench; the younger on the ground, literally, 'at the feet' of their instructor. The relation between master and scholar was often one of affectionate reverence and sympathy, and was expressed by one of the famous scribes in a saying worth remembering. 'I have learnt much from the Rabbi's my teachers; I have learnt more from the Rabbi's my colleagues; but from my scholars I have learnt most of all.' Here then they found Jesus 'both hearing them and asking them questions,' and astonishing all by his wisdom. Boys have often been lost, but never was boy so well found.

V.—At Home in Nazareth.

Having done all that He deemed His Father's business required at that time, He quietly returned with His parents to their humble home, and was again subject to them, and continued so for many years. There are some points, and it is easy to see which they are, in which every one may be, and should try to be, like Him. His was "a sinless childhood, a sinless boyhood, a sinless youth, a sinless manhood, spent

in that humility, toil, obscurity, submission, contentment, prayer, to make them an external example to all our race." We are not sinless as He was, by nature, but we may be made so through His merits and by His grace."—W. M. Sunday-School Magazine.

AFTER MANY DAYS.

A young man called in the office of a Christian man, not long since, to thank him for the instructions given him fourteen years ago. The gentleman expressed surprise, and said: "I have not the pleasure of knowing you, pray tell me where I've met you?" "I was a scholar in Olivet Mission Sabbath-school, in the western part of the city, and was one of a class of twelve boys, and most of us were rather wild and gave you much trouble."

"Yes, I remember teaching in that school, and know we had some rather rude children. Did you really receive benefit from my instructions?" "Yes, indeed; your kind words I never could forget; they followed me, and I was led to give myself to Christ, and have come to thank you."

Imagine, if you can, the joy of this faithful teacher. He gathered fruit after many days. "Not long since a lady presented herself for membership in a church. One of the questions asked by the elders was, 'What was it that first led you to think about your soul?'"

She replied, "I was a scholar in Olivet Sabbath-school, many years ago. Most of us girls were very wild and thoughtless, but I never could forget the pious, excellent lady who taught us the Scriptures. Her life and instructions I never forgot, and now I trust to live all my days for Jesus who died for me." To our faithful teacher, great and glorious will be thy reward.

The founder of the Mission School and its superintendent for many years, was the late S. S. Fisher, who met an untimely death in the St. Lawrence River a few years since. By his efforts mainly the brick building was erected on Carr Street where still are gathered hundreds of children for Bible instruction. Who can estimate the streams of blessing which flow from a single Sabbath-school? More unrestrained concentration to the good work is surely the great want of our times. "Work while it is called day, for the night cometh when no man can work."

THE HOUSEHOLD.

Colds in the head are always in order. Some one recommends as an easy cure, if attended to promptly, a teaspoonful of pulverized borax dissolved in a pint of hot water; when tepid sniff some up the nostrils two or three times a day, or use the dry powdered borax like snuff, taking a pinch as often as required.

Mrs. Thompson, in the Evangelist, says that the best remedy for sleeplessness is to wet a towel, apply it to the back of the neck, pressing it toward the base of the brain, and fasten the dry half of the towel over, so as to prevent too rapid evaporation. The effect is prompt and pleasant, cooling the brain and bringing on a sweet slumber. Warm water is better than cold. To all suffering from overwork, excitement or anxiety, this remedy must prove a blessing.

Sponges long in use are sometimes affected with sliminess, which is caused by the sponge not being wrung as dry as possible immediately after use. When this has once formed, it increases rapidly. A London paper says that one of the most efficient receipts for cleansing sponges, and certainly one of the cheapest, is a strong solution of salt and water, in which they should soak for a few hours, and be thoroughly dried. Sponges should not be left in a sponge dish; they should be kept suspended where the air can freely circulate around them. Quick evaporation of the dampness is the main thing to keep them in good order.

A beautiful head of hair is appreciated by everybody, and how to secure it, interests everybody. The hair and scalp must be kept free from scurf and dandruff, and not be allowed to get dry and harsh. The roots must be stimulated to healthy action. Flexibility and a handsome gloss are essential. All these requisites are easily secured by the use of Ayer's Hair Vigor.

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