

When to Pray.

Ere the morning's busy ray
Call you to your work away;
Ere the silent evening close
Your wearied eyes in sweet repose,
To lift your heart and voice in prayer
Be your first and latest care.

He to whom the prayer is due,
From heaven his throne shall smile on you;
Angels sent by him shall tend
Your daily labour to befriend,
And their nightly vigils keep
To guard you in the hour of sleep.

When through the peaceful parish swells
The music of the Sabbath-bells,
Duly tread the sacred road
Which leads you to the house of God;
The blessing of the Lamb is there,
And "God is in the midst of her."

And oh! where'er your days be past;
And oh! howe'er your lot be cast,
Still think of him whose eye surveys,
Whose hand is over all your ways.

Abroad, at home, in woe, in woe,
That service which to heaven you owe,
That bounden service duly pay,
And God shall be your strength alway.

He only to the heart can give
Peace and true pleasure while you live;
He only, when you yield your breath,
Can guide you through the vale of death.

He can, he will, from out the dust,
Raise the blest spirits of the just;
Heal every wound, hush every fear;
From every eye wipe every tear;
And place them where distress is o'er,
And pleasures dwell for evermore.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN LUKE.

A. D. 26] LESSON VII. [Feb. 16

THE MINISTRY OF JOHN.

Luke 3. 7-22. Memory verses, 16, 17.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Matt. 3. 2.

TIME.—A. D. 26. The opening of the year preliminary to Christ's preparatory work, called the Year of Preparation.

PLACES.—Wilderness of Judea, and the banks of the Jordan not far north of the Dead Sea. The castle of Machærus.

CONNECTING LINKS.—Many years passed between the last lesson and this. Jesus was then twelve years of age, now he was a grown man about thirty. His cousin, whom at that time he probably had not seen, had been trained in the wild desert, and now suddenly presented himself in rough and startling guise, as a great reformer. People went out to hear him by the thousand. His fame spread to the very ends of the land, and Jews and Gentiles alike were terrified by his sermons, and tried to live better lives after-hearing him.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Generation of vipers*—Brood of serpents. *We have Abraham*—These hypocritical people believed that because their ancestor was a good man they could read their title clear to all good things in this world and the next. John simply says it makes no difference who your father or grandfather was, the question is, What sort of a man are you? *Bring forth fruits*—Everything you do and say is the fruit of your life, and a man is judged by his conduct. Never forget that. Hasty tempers, deceptions large or small, dishonesty, trickery, meanness of every description, all the faults that you notice in your friends, and that your friends notice in you, are simply so many fruits, and boys and girls are not known by their dresses or their neckties, but by the outcome of their hearts—by the words they speak and the actions they perform. Even men judge them that way; God sees the heart itself. *Fan*—That is the winnowing fan, a small tool with which the Jewish farmer separated the wheat from the chaff. The One mightier

than John, who was to come, was to winnow out the people, keeping the good and rejecting the bad. *Latchet*—The old-fashioned Eastern shoes were peculiarly fastened, and John says, This man whom I am telling you about is so much greater than I that I am unworthy to fasten his shoes on his feet. As a man might say nowadays, He is so much greater and better than I that I am not worthy to be his bootblack. *Praying*—Remember that Jesus himself needed that. Remember, too, that it was when Jesus prayed that the heavens were opened. It was when Jesus prayed, two years after this, that the great transfiguration scene came to him with its blessing; it was when Jesus prayed in the dark garden of Gethsemane that angels came and comforted him, and what Jesus experienced in his life we may experience in ours. When we pray, the heavens will open, though not in the same way.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. *The Fruits of Repentance*, vs. 7-14.

Of whom did the multitude seek baptism? What question did John ask of them? What did he demand that they should do? What did he say about Abraham's children? What about trees and fruit? What question did the people then ask? What was John's reply? What Roman officials came to be baptized? What did John bid them to do? Who else asked a question about conduct? How did John answer the soldiers? What universal duty did John proclaim? (Golden text.)

2. *The Forerunner of the King*, vs. 15-22.

What were the people thinking about John? How did John baptize the people? What did he say of one who would come after him? What would this one do with the wheat and the chaff? What else did John say in his preaching? What ruler did he rebuke? Why did he rebuke Herod? What did the ruler do to John? What noted person came to be baptized by John? What was Jesus doing as he was baptized? What wonderful sight appeared? What message from heaven was heard? On what other occasion was this voice heard? See chap. 9. 35.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Whom did the multitude throng to hear? "John the Baptist." 2. How did John describe Jesus? "One mightier than I cometh." 3. What wonder happened when Jesus was baptized? "Heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended." 4. How did the Divine Spirit descend? "In a bodily shape, like a dove." 5. What words were spoken from heaven? "Thou art my beloved Son: in thee I am well pleased."

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Repentance from sin.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

11. What do we know of our Lord's youth?

That in his twelfth year he was in the temple: "in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions."

And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions.—Luke 2. 46.

A. D. 27] LESSON VIII. [Feb. 23

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS.

Luke 4. 1-13. Memory verses, 1-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.

In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. Heb. 2. 18.

TIME.—A. D. 27.

PLACES.—The wilderness, probably beyond Jordan. The temple at Jerusalem.

CONNECTING LINKS.—The temptation of Christ seems to have come immediately after his baptism and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him, as narrated in our last lesson.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Full of the Holy Ghost*—A higher experience than even the Son of God had thus far been blessed with. *Into the wilderness*—A wild, uncultivated land, not necessarily a sandy desert. *Afterward hungered*—His mind seems to have been so absorbed by spiritual matters that he did

not recognize the pangs of hunger until the temptations had passed. *Pinnacle*—A high point. *For a season*—A phrase which shows that Jesus was tempted through all his ministry.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. *In the Desert*, vs. 1-5.

With what was Jesus filled at his baptism? By whom was he led into the desert? How long was he there? What company had he? What did he eat during that time? What did the devil tempt him to do? How did Jesus repel the temptation? From what book did he quote? See Deut. 8. 3.

2. *On the Mountain*, vs. 6-8.

Where then did the tempter lead Jesus? What was shown to him? What offer was made to him? What was asked in return? How did Jesus reply to this temptation? From what writing did he quote this time? See Deut. 6. 13.

3. *On the Pinnacle*, vs. 9-13.

Where then was Jesus brought? Where was he placed? What was he bidden to do? What Scripture was quoted to tempt him? From what book were the words quoted? See Psa. 91. 11. How did Jesus reply to this temptation? From what book were these words quoted? See Deut. 6. 16. What did the devil then do? Who came to Jesus when the devil departed? Matt. 4. 11. Of what benefit to us is the temptation of Jesus? (Golden Text.)

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. When did the devil tempt Jesus? "During forty days' fast in the wilderness." 2. What was the first of these three temptations? "To distrust God, and satisfy his hunger by a miracle." 3. What was the second? "To conquer the earth, by submitting to Satan." 4. What was the third? "To tempt God by leaping from the pinnacle of the temple." 5. How did Jesus conquer all these temptations? "By the Word of the Lord."

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The authority of Holy Scripture.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

12. What does this record teach us? That he is a pattern to all the young, in saying, "I must be in my Father's house." And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business.—Luke 2. 49.

Neither.

"WELL, I can not understand why a man who has tried to lead a good moral life should not stand a better chance of heaven than a wicked one," said a lady recently, in a conversation with others about the matter of salvation.

"Simply for this cause," answered one. "Suppose you and I wanted to go to a place of amusement where the admission was a dollar. You have half a dollar and I have nothing. Which would stand the better chance of admission?"

"Neither."
"Just so; and therefore the moral man stands no better chance than the outbreaking sinner. But, now, suppose a kind and rich person who saw our perplexity presented a ticket of admission to each of us at his own expense! What then?"

"Well, then, we would both go in alike. That is clear."

"Thus then the Saviour saw our perplexity, he came, he died, and thus obtained eternal redemption for us, and now he offers you and me a free ticket. Only take care that your half-dollar does not make you proud enough to refuse the free ticket, and so be refused admittance at last."



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