

towels, sponge—all were ready. The three men went on, and as the monkeys saw them approaching, they became very angry, and began chattering in an angry manner.

"Klaas spoke: 'This is my child,' he said; 'I don't want to beat you, or shoot you, but I have a gun, and if you do not give me the baby I must take it from you.' And he lifted up his gun and pointed it at the monkey who held the child.

"At first she pressed it tight in her arms, and kissed it again and again; then looked at him angry and savage, as if she would not give up her prize. But, at last, when she saw the men were determined, and did not mind her anger, she saw she must yield. She kissed the little thing repeatedly, stroked its face with her fingers, and then, gently laying it in the grass, ran quickly up the hillside, and sprang into the branches of a great tree.

"The men lost no time in taking the baby and his tub, and getting out of the wood, for monkeys, when excited and angry, are very dangerous."—*Sunday Magazine*.

INTERNATIONAL S. S. LESSON.

Sunday, Jan. 9.

THE SONG OF MARY.—Luke 1.46-55.

GOLDEN TEXT, v. v. 46.47.—"And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."

Committ 51-55.

INTRODUCTION.

About half a year intervened between the events of our last lesson and the song of Mary which constitutes our present lesson. In the meantime, the Angel Gabriel—the same that appeared to Zachariah was sent to Nazareth, to make known to Mary that God was about to give her a son whose name should be called Jesus; (Matt. 1:21); and to reveal to her what he should be. "He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His Kingdom there shall be no end." Mary accepted this revelation of the will of God concerning herself with a most beautiful and unquestioning faith; and directly probably, under the prompting of the Holy Spirit, went to the hill-country, to visit her cousin Elizabeth. Their meeting was one of marvelous joy; and both Elizabeth and Mary, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, became gifted with prophetic power, uttering what neither of them could have known except it had been divinely revealed to them.

LESSON NOTES.

(46). *Mary* Probably the daughter of Heli, (see Luke 3:23,) and, as well as her husband, Joseph, descended from the royal line of David. She was probably poor in a worldly sense, and everything that is related to her, or that can be gathered from her own utterances, goes to show that she was a young woman of an exceedingly devout and humble spirit; and, if we may judge by this hymn, one exceedingly well versed in the scriptures. In reply to the prophetic outburst of her cousin, *Mary said*;—*My soul doth Magnify the Lord. Magnify*, literally, means to make great; but here it is used figuratively, and implies to extol, to praise greatly, to exalt very highly in praise. This is the language of one who feels herself or himself preeminently favored by God.

(47.) *My Spirit hath*—(not only does rejoice, but hath) rejoiced. Since ever the angel's message came to her, the spirit of Mary had been filled with divine exultation and joy in view of the great condescension and favor of God in selecting her from all the daughters of men to be the mother of Him who was to be the Messiah of God. *My Saviour*. Mary uttered the words in the spirit of prophecy; and it is not probable that she fully understood her own utterances. She undoubtedly believed in the Messiah, but, that the son that was to be born of her was to become a Saviour in any other sense than that entertained by other Jews, does not seem to have been revealed to her at that time.

(48) *For He (God) hath regarded* (compassionated, pitied) *the low estate of His hand-maiden* (maid servant). In this language,

and under the spirit of prophecy, not alone nor primarily, of her own lowly condition, but representatively, of the abject condition of the royal house of David to which she belonged. The "scepter" was departing "from Judah, and the lawgiver from between his feet" as "Shiloh" was about to appear. *For behold* (mark, consider), *from henceforth* (forth from this time) *all nations shall call me blessed* (or happy). Why? In being thus chosen and honored by God.

(49) *For He that is mighty* (in the true and absolute sense) *has done to me great things*. What great things? Singled her out as the object of great and peculiar favor;—made her the mother, by promise, of the Messiah;—made her the medium of unspeakable blessing to her royal house, to her nation and to the world;—made her one whom all nations, to the remotest ages should call blessed.

(50) Mary now turns from considering what God had done for her, individually, to a more general survey of His goodness. It is as though she had said—And this, after all, is only like God—just in keeping with His exalted character as He has revealed it. *His mercy is on them that fear Him*—not only now, and in my own particular case, but from generation to generation,—that is continually.

(51) *He hath showed strength with His arm*. The whole history of Mary's ancestors—the Israelites—furnishes instances of this. The wonders in Egypt, the passage of the Red Sea, the conquest of Canaan, &c., &c. *He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts*. This, too, was verified in their history—the drowning of Pharaoh and his host, the destruction of Dathan and Abiram and their followers, the overthrow of Goliath and the Philistines by David, the destruction of Sennacherib's host, &c.

(52) *He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree*. This, too, had been exemplified many times in the past—notably so in the casting down of Saul and the elevation of David; and it was destined to be again notably exemplified in the elevation of David's Heir, the son of whom God was going to make her the mother, to His own right hand in glory.

(53) *He hath filled the hungry, &c.* This had been literally true many times in the history of her own nation;—it should prove spiritually true, also, in the history of the Lord Jesus and His Church in the coming ages.

(54) *He hath holpen his servant Israel*. This had been true in the past, it should be more wonderfully true in the future. Mary's words are at once a retrospect and a prophecy. *In remembrance of his mercy*—that is, of His promise, or covenant of mercy.

(55). *As he spake*—or promised—to *Abraham and his seed forever*. The mercy which he promised to, and afterwards fulfilled in, Abraham and his seed, was to be perpetuated in Christ and His Church, Abraham's spiritual seed, forever.

SUGGESTED THOUGHTS.

Mary's joy was not alone in what God had done for herself, but that all who feared Him were likewise partakers of His mercy. True love never stops with self.

Mary and Elizabeth, though lowly women in point of worldly fortune, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, became God's prophets; and their prophetic utterances have been preserved by the spirit with those of Hannah and Deborah, as true Scripture.

Mary, unlike Zacharias, received the angel's message in unquestioning faith. The result was that God gave her this immortal hymn of joy and exultation, while Zacharias walked in wordless silence before God until the promise was fulfilled. Blessed is she that believeth.

QUESTION SUMMARY.

(FOR THE CHILDREN.)

Who was Mary? Where did she live? From what great king was she descended? What had God promised her? Through whom did He make the promise? What was she to name her son? What is the meaning of Jesus? Whom had Mary gone to visit? Where did Elizabeth live? (v. 39). (46). What did Mary say that her soul did? What did she mean by *doth magnify the Lord*? (See note) (47) In whom had she rejoiced? Did Mary need a Saviour. Why? Then, if Mary was a sinner like as she had to be saved just as we are. How was that? By the blood of Jesus (1 John i. 17). Are there any people who worship Mary? Is that right?—Read or repeat the 1st Commandment. (48). Whom did she mean by *thy hand-maiden*? Why did she call herself that?

How had God remembered her? By choosing her to be the mother of the Lord Jesus. What would all people call her? Why? Because God had honored so much (49). What great things had God done for her? (See note) (60). How long do God's mercies endure? What does that mean? Continually, always. (61). What proud ones had God scattered?—(see note). (62). What king did God put down? and what one set up in His place. (see note). What great king was he to raise from Mary's lowly family to sit on His own right hand? (58). What hungry people did God feed 40 years in the wilderness? What rich-proud people did He destroy or drive out to make room for them? (See note). (54) Whom had God helped very often? Whom do you mean by *Israel*? The nation of the Israelites. What did God remember always when He helped the Israelites? What do you mean by *His mercy*? His covenant, or promise of mercy. (55). To whom was that promise made? Who was meant by Abraham's seed? Jesus Christ, and all who had had, or ever should have faith in him? Have you faith in Jesus? If so, God's covenant of mercy is for you though, Jesus your Saviour.

A LITTLE ADVICE.

I want to give you three or four rules: One is, always look at the person you speak to. When you are addressed, look straight at the person who speaks to you. Do not forget this.

Another is, speak your words plainly. Do not mutter or mumble. If words are worth saying, they are worth pronounced distinctly and clearly.

Another is, do not say disagreeable things. If you have nothing pleasant to say, keep silent.

A fourth is and oh' children, remember it all your lives—think three times before you speak once!

Have you something to do that you find hard and would prefer not to do? Then listen. Do the hard thing first, and get it over with. If you have done wrong, go and confess it. If your lesson is tough, master it. If the garden is to be weeded, weed it first and lay afterward. Do the thing you don't like to do first; and then with a clear conscience do the rest.

VULGAR WORDS.

A distinguished author says: "I resolved, when I was a child, never to use a word which I could not pronounce before my mother without offending her." He kept his resolution, and became a pure-minded, noble, honored gentleman. His rule and example are worthy of imitation.

Boys readily learn a class of low, vulgar words and expressions, which are never heard in respectable circles. The utmost care on the part of parents will scarcely prevent it. Of course, we cannot think of girls being so much exposed to the peril. We cannot imagine a decent girl using words she would not give utterance to before her father or mother.

Such vulgarity is thought by some boys to "be smart," the "next thing to swearing," and yet "not so wicked." But it is a habit which leads to profanity, and fills the mind with evil thoughts. It vulgarizes and degrades the soul, and prepares the way for the many gross and fearful sins which now corrupt society.

Young reader, keep your mouth free from all impurity, and your "tongue from evil," for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

At a recent meeting of the Presbyterian Council in Philadelphia, Dr. Murray Mitchell, of Edinburgh, in presenting a report on Foreign Missions, stated that more than two millions of men now living have been rescued from Paganism through the efforts of Protestant missionaries in half a century. But the laborers are few, only 2,200 ordained missionaries being now at work among the millions in darkness.

MISCELLANEOUS.

My usefulness was the last idol I was willing to part with, but now I can part with that, and am content to be laid aside and forgotten, so that He may be glorified.—*Dr. Cotton Mather*.

Little Charley had his hair "bobbed" the other day, but did not like the operation of brushing. "Ma, that barber's brush made me squawk." *Mother*: "I did not hear any noise." *Charley*: "But I squawked in my think."

THE Shintoists of Japan, as such, are not idol worshippers. In this respect, as well as in other matters, they show signs of an Israelitish origin. As many of the old Israelites wandered away into idolatry, so many Japanese worship both at Buddhist idol shrines and at the *idolless altars* of the Shinto gods. Many temples have both Buddhist and Shinto altars under the same roof; and the people pass from one to the other, without seeing any incongruity in the mingled worship of *Hotoke*—Buddha, and *himi-gods*. The temples are tumbling down, both Buddha and Shinto.—*Rev. J. Goble*.

RUNNING FOR THE GOSPEL.—It was at the city of Fang-Shan that Dr. Blodgett and Mr. J. H. Roberts, missionaries of Pekin, were, a year ago, uncomfortably jostled and followed by the crowds. During a recent visit Mr. Roberts was recognized as having been there before, and was listened to very respectfully. As he was going out one morning to preach in the villages south-east, a young man came running over the ploughed fields to meet him, eager to obtain another look. He said he had read the Truth Catechism, and was interested to know more of the Gospel Truth. Mr. Roberts says, "It did me good to see a Chinaman running for the Gospel."

If you who are not Christians would reflect seriously for even half an hour upon what you owe to the religion of the Bible, you would be amazed and humbled, and would feel yourselves impelled to weigh more carefully than ever before, its claims upon you personally. The respect which men pay to human life, the honor rendered to womanhood, the pioneer spirit which explores the unknown districts of the earth and paves the way for commerce to follow; and, especially, the loftiest standards and ideals of conduct which the merely moral world acknowledges—these, and others equally important in themselves and in their relations to every citizen of the world, are the fruits, directly or indirectly, of the religion which the Bible describes, illustrates, and inculcates. Think of this fact, and act upon it suitably.—*Congregationalist*.

HERE is an eloquent passage from an address recently delivered in England by the Bishop of Meath:—"Many of you, doubtless, have heard that wondrous opening passage of Mendelssohn's 'Elijah,' in which the musician tries to represent the despair of a whole people perishing from thirst, a despair which finds vent for a while in sullen, restless murmuring, until at length, gathering a terrible cumulative strength, it bursts forth almost appallingly in cries of heart-rending and importunate agony. So can I imagine the voice of a deceived and terror-stricken humanity, having sought in vain to slack its thirst at the dry wells of modern positivism, sending upward at length to heaven the broken-hearted cry, 'Give us back the Christ that we have lost. Away with the ghastly spectre, the hideous phantom, the "It" that has usurped His Throne, and let us learn again to love and worship a God who is heart to heart."