

comes to us from the thirty years of silence in Nazareth, the home of Jesus from his early childhood until the beginning of his public ministry.

In the second lesson passage, after the introduction in vs. 1, 2, the writer teaches (vs. 3, 4) that God offers to Christians all that is necessary for the highest life, that he had made it possible for all to escape from corruption and become partakers of the divine nature. The thought of the lesson verses is, that Christians must do their part. They are to strive earnestly after growth in all Christian virtues. In this way they will render intelligent service to their master.

Luke 2:40 describes the physical and mental growth of the child Jesus. He possessed a healthy, vigorous body, a quick and intelligent mind. He was dear to God and the object of God's fatherly care. When he was twelve years old, his parents, in obedience to the law (Deut. 16:6) requiring every Jewish man to be present in Jerusalem at the feasts of the Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles, took Jesus to the holy city.

I. The Father's Business in the Temple, Luke 2:42-50.

Vs. 42, 43. *Twelve years old.* At this age a Jewish boy became a "son of the law" and began to wear the phylacteries, small leather cases in which were pieces of parchment bearing certain selections from the scriptures; he was regarded as "grown up" and was required to keep the ordinances of his religion. *Fulfilled the days*; seven days, Ex. 12:15. *Tarried behind.* He did not know likely that his parents had left. *Joseph and his mother* (Rev. Ver., "his parents") *knew not*; a sign of their confidence in him. He was left free to do as he chose in the large city.

Vs. 44, 45. *Company*; the group of pilgrims from Nazareth, who traveled together and were well acquainted with one another,—"the caravan." *A day's journey*; perhaps to Beeroth, six miles north of Jerusalem. The rate of traveling for a caravan was about ten miles per day. *Sought him*; likely in the evening, when preparing for supper and the night's rest. It was quite natural that relatives should become separated in such a large and rejoicing group of friends. No blame is attached to the parents. *Seeking him*; liter-

ally, making careful, anxious search.

Vs. 46, 47. *After three days*; a Jewish way of saying "on the third day." One day was spent on the journey to Beeroth; a night on the return journey; the second day on a fruitless search in the city; on the third day they found Jesus. *In the temple*; in one of the chambers used for teaching. *Sitting*; as a pupil, as was the custom, at the feet of the teachers. *Doctors*; teachers of the law, rabbis. *Asking them questions*; in all modest humility and seeking to satisfy his holy thirst for knowledge, especially of sacred things. His interest was in the teaching rather than in the ritual at the altar. *Amazed* (Rev. Ver.); not at his teaching, but at his aptness as a pupil. *Understanding . . . answers*; the intelligence shown in his answers to the questions of the rabbis.

V. 48. *They were amazed.* The simple Galileans held their great teachers in the deepest awe, and the present demeanor of Jesus in their presence contrasted with his previous quiet, reserved manner. *Son*; literally, "child." The mother was slow to recognize her boy's development, and was, therefore, more anxious than was necessary. *Sought thee sorrowing*; "were searching for thee with aching hearts." This was the first sorrow he had caused her.

V. 49. *How is it . . . ?* Not a reproof, but a question of surprise. *Wist ye not . . . ?* Did ye not know? from an old English verb, "to wit," that is, "to know." *About my Father's business*; literally, "in the things of my Father,"—Rev. Ver., "in my Father's house." Mary had told Jesus that Joseph his father had been seeking him. He gently claims God as his Father. He uses a new name for God. Already we have had "the Highest" (ch. 1:76) and "master" (of slaves), ch. 2:29. "Father" introduces the Christian era. This is the first recorded saying of our Lord. It is the keynote of his after life. From this on he called no man his father in the ordinary sense.

II. The Father's Business at Home, 51, 52.

V. 51. *They understood not.* At so early an age he was beyond the depth of his parents. Even we do not yet fully understand. *Went down with them*; gentle and affectionate. *Came to Nazareth*; his home