

Sabbath School.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Adapted from Palmer's United Notes.

SECOND QUARTER.

Lesson 1. July 1. Luke 2: 1-16.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2: 11.

DATE OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST. It is very perplexing to many to find that Jesus was a truly born four years before the time from which we count his birth. The simple reason is that no one calculated dates from the birth of Christ till centuries after He had died. Then Dionysius Exiguus, the monk who published the calendar in A. D. 525, made a mistake of four years. He placed the birth of Christ A. D. in the year of Rome (U. C.) 754. But Herod the great, who slew the innocents of Bethlehem, died in April of the year of Rome 750; so that Christ must have been born several months before or not later than the last of 749.

PLACE. Bethlehem of Judea, a village five or six miles south of Jerusalem. Its name, Beth-lehem ("house of bread"), was due to the fertility of the adjacent cornfields.

RULERS. Augustus Caesar was Emperor of Rome. Herod the Great (the first of the seven Herods mentioned in the New Testament), king of Judea; but Palestine and most of the known world were subject to Augustus.

THE ROMAN EMPIRE.—In order to understand the material on which Christianity had to work, we give the best statistics available. Lyman's tables give the population of the Roman Empire at the time of Christ of 150,000,000, of which 60,000,000 were slaves, 40,000,000 were tributaries and freedmen, and only 20,000,000 were full citizens, or one-sixth of the population. The army numbered 400,000, and the navy 50,000 men. Milan gives the population of Rome, by the census of A. D. 48, at 1,984,000.

PALESTINE.—Hon. Selah Merrill, in his "Galilee in the time of Christ," thinks that the population of Palestine was about 6,000,000, and of Galilee 2,000,000.

JERUSALEM.—According to Milman, Jerusalem had at this time a population of 2,550,000. It was a city of great magnificence, and was the metropolis of the Jewish world.

EXPLANATORY.

THE COMING OF THE SAVIOUR.—PROPHESIES OF HIS COMING.—One of the strongest assurances that Jesus is the true Saviour from Heaven is the fact that he comes as part of a great divine plan. He was foretold, promised, typified from the very beginning.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS COMING.—To Zacharias, the saintly father of John the forerunner, to the virgin Mary, to Joseph, the coming was announced in words full of promise that inspired them to sing with gladness all through the ages (Luke 1).

THE PREPARATION OF THE WORLD FOR HIS COMING.—There has been no other time in the history of the world so perfectly adapted for the beginning of the Kingdom, and the spreading of the news of salvation throughout the earth, as that in which Christ was born. (1) It was after the Jews had received all that they would about God's kingdom, but before the breaking up and scattering of the nation by the fall of their capital and the temple. (2) There were many lands, but nearly all the world was subject to the one government at Rome, so that the gospel could be spread by all. The conquests of Alexander which diffused the Greek language, the Greek civilization and Greek learning throughout the East, were a marvelous providential preparation for the gospel. (3) The Bible, which the Jews had been translating into the Greek language in the third century before Christ. This version is called the Septuagint. Thus for some centuries the Greek language was being prepared to express the divine message through all lands carrying the Old Testament, which bore witness to one God, and held the prophecies of the Messiah. And they had established synagogues in almost every town, so that there was a place to which to preach the gospel, and a people who could easily be reached. (7) It was a time of great intellectual activity. It was an era of literature and learning.

THE DIVINE AND HUMAN PARENTAGE OF JESUS.—Va. 15. The mother of Jesus was the Virgin Mary, but his father was God himself, through the Holy Ghost. His reputed father was Joseph, who became the husband of Mary. Both Joseph and Mary were direct descendants of David, of whose line the Messiah was to be. The genealogy in Matthew is that of Joseph, and that in Luke probably that of Mary; so that, both legally and really, Jesus was the son of David.

1. "And it came to pass in those days, while he was yet an infant, his parents went to Bethlehem, the Emperor of Rome. That all the world." Nearly the whole known world then included in the Roman empire. (Should be taxed, rather, "enrolled.") There was to be a census, one of the objects of which was, doubtless, taxation. 3. "His own city." The city of his ancestors, where the family records were kept. 4. "And Joseph also went up unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem." (See Place.) The mother of Jesus lived in Nazareth of Galilee, but the prophet had foretold that the Messiah should be born in Bethlehem, the city of David (Micah 5: 2); and this was the only fitting place, for he was the heir of David's kingdom, in

whom should be fulfilled the promise to him that his house and his throne should be established forever (2 Sam. 7: 16); for the Messiah's kingdom was to be the completion and fruition of David's kingdom.

5. "With Mary," who also was of the lineage of David.

VI. THE BIRTH OF JESUS. Va. 6, 7. At Bethlehem Joseph and Mary found the place so crowded that even in the inn there was no room for them.

7. "Wrapped him in swaddling clothes, not clothes regularly made, but strips of cloth three or four inches wide and several feet long, wound around the child. "And laid him in a manger," etc. Bethlehem was a poor place, and its inn was probably a mere "knan" or "caravanserai," which is an enclosed space surrounded by open recesses of which the paved floor (leewan) is raised a little above the ground. There is often no heat, and the use of any vacant leewan is free, but the traveler pays a trifle for food, water, etc. The knan was crowded the traveler must content with the corner of the doorway or enclosed space among the cattle, or else in the stable. The stable is often a limestone cave or grotto, and there is a very ancient tradition that this was the case in the knan of Bethlehem.

8. "And there were in the same country." In the fields near Bethlehem. "Shepherds abiding in the field," with their flocks. There are no detached farmhouses in Palestine, as with us, but the farmers live in villages and hence would have to abide in the fields to watch their flocks. "Keeping watch over their flock by night." Thieves, wild beasts, and the dangers of the rough precipices form the chief reasons for a night-watch over the flock.

9. "And, lo, the angel," not "the" but "an" angel, "of the Lord," one sent from heaven, "came upon them." The word does not mean that the angel stood "above" them. It is our (French) "survenir," to come unexpectedly. It indicates a sudden but actual appearance. "And the glory of the Lord," the radiant brightness, which in all the Scriptures is the best symbol and manifestation of God's nature, expressing wisdom, love, power, purity, mystery, eternity, omnipresence. This accompanied the angel.

10. "And they were sore afraid," not "they were sore afraid," but "they were sore afraid." Literally, "feared a great fear." The universal consciousness of sin and of unfitness for the eternal world makes all mankind afraid of any unseen power, and of the spirit of the world or revelation of the nearness to God.

11. "And the angel said . . . Fear not." The glad tidings of a Saviour, bringing light and love, a Father in heaven, and forgiveness of sins, can alone take away all fear from the soul. "I bring you good tidings of great joy." The best tidings the world ever heard. (See v. 14.) "To all people." To all ages, to all climes, to all colors. And the joy is more intense to each one because it is for all.

12. "For unto you is born . . . a Saviour." One who should save them from all iniquity, who should be the great gospel center, the one to whom all eyes should be turned, the one to whom all hearts should be drawn, the one to whom all hands should be lifted, the one to whom all tongues should be given, the one to whom all hearts should be drawn, the one to whom all hands should be lifted, the one to whom all tongues should be given.

13. "And suddenly," as if revealed by a flash of lightning, "A multitude of the heavenly host," an organized army joining with the first angel to show the interest all heaven has in the coming of the Saviour. "The angels are often represented as a body-guard of the Lord." Thus in Raphael's famous Madonna and Child, the whole space around is filled with angel faces. So when the eyes of Ephraim's servant were opened he saw the air full of chariots and horses of fire. "Praising God." Even the angels could find nothing more worthy of praise than God's love in the salvation of men, his wisdom in planning the way, and his power in accomplishing his purpose. The song consists of two strains: 1. "Glory to God—in heaven." 2. Peace, good will to men—on earth.

VIII. SEEKING AND FINDING THE SAVIOUR.—Va. 15, 16. "Let us now go." At once, without delay. So should we ever seek the Saviour. The shepherds had so much faith in the angel's message that they proceeded to investigate and see for themselves. So should all who have heard other tell of this Saviour. "They came with haste." Showing their zeal and ardour, as well as faith. We can never find the Saviour too soon. "And found," everything just as the angels had told them; and they then knew that the angel's message was true.—The Saviour had come. Their faith and obedience met with a rich reward.

PRactical SUGGESTIONS.

1. The mission of the Son of God to this world is the greatest event in history.

2. Va. 1-5. God's providence uses for

the accomplishing of his own purposes the actions and plans of men who had far other purposes in their minds.

3. Only the God-man is able to be a Saviour sufficient for the needs of man.

4. V. 8. The greatest blessings come to us while we are faithfully performing our daily duties.

The greatest gifts of God sometimes come in the humblest form; as, all literature in the letters of the alphabet, the salvation of the world in a babe in a manger.

6. The coming of Jesus and the joy of the angels, such as how terrible is the evil and danger of sin, and how precious is salvation and heaven.

7. The greatest good news on earth is that God has good will towards the whole race of sinful men; that he loves the whole world.

B. Y. P. U.

OUR OFFICE.

The B. Y. P. U. is a young people's society, their increased spiritual, their stimulation in Christian service, their education in scriptural knowledge, their instruction in Bible history and doctrine, their enlistment in missionary work, through existing denominational institutions.

OUR FELLOWSHIP.

All Young People's Societies of whatever name in Baptist churches and Baptist churches having no organizations are entitled to represent themselves in our meetings, but as we are young people's names or method. Our common bond is in the New Testament, in the full expression of whose teachings.

WE ARE ONE PEOPLE WITH ONE MISSION.

Correspondence to this department should be sent to the B. Y. P. U. Office, 100 St. John, N. B.

For the Week Beginning June 24th.

The topic for the conquest meeting this month is one more or less familiar to our people. Boys and girls review this school work occasionally. They need to refresh their memories. We are in school in the study of missions. This will be reviewed month for month for Canadian Baptists.—Review.

B. Y. P. U. means Baptist Young People's Union. Do you see that word Baptist? It stands for something. Run up the flag. Stand true to your colors. The world has come to accept the principles, preached by the once despised sect, not because the fathers were anxious to tone down the message, but because they spoke out the truth frankly, fully and fearlessly. To be a genuine Baptist today means to stand the Book and proclaim its truths. Better run up the flag.

You do not need an over supply of grace to begin good work, but it requires an unfailing supply to keep pegging away when the work is not booming, and if helpers have failed. Let us get a good grip of Paul's: "If God be for us," God is always on the right side. It is our privilege to be on God's side.

Nova Scotia friends will please note and keep the special information furnished them this week. The leaders are doing their best and have given much time.

To Nova Scotia Delegates to Toronto.

DEAR FRIENDS.—Many of you have been thinking your Transportation Leader has been attending to his own professional work and has been neglecting his duties as a leader of the delegation. He has neglected the former for the latter. Still the very satisfactory results accomplished will amply warrant the loss and delay. Had earlier propositions been accepted you could not have secured the best accommodations now offered under \$10 in advance of present rates. Your ticket now costs you one full fare, \$25.00, for the trip through Lake of the 1000 Isles to Montreal, and from there to \$1 per tourist car balance sleeper, as you prefer. This brings the trip within the range of many who would require the best sleeping accommodation. Even Sydney, C. B., can be represented at a cost for ticket \$2.15, side trip (optional) \$2.50, nights half price, \$1.50, a total of \$33.15. This is via I. C. R. to St. John, thence via C. P. R. Delegates from Western Nova Scotia will cross the Bay and join the party at St. John—ticket \$1.00, nights \$1.50, or places in proportion. New Brunswick and P. E. Island delegates will join us at various points, and Thursday, 7.20 a.m., July 14th, we will steam into Toronto in four or five sleepers exclusively for our own, the largest and happiest 300 mile delegation attending the Convention. Please write me for any information you may desire.

Yours faithfully

SMITH L. WALKER.

Very glad to report that since the April meeting of the P. E. I. Baptist Conference two young people's societies have been organized, a B. Y. P. U. in Mr. Higgins' church at North River, and a C. E. at Eldon on Mr. Kelstead's farm. There are Presbyterians and Methodists in the Endeavor Society at Eldon, so they thought best to organize as they have done.

We welcome our young sister societies to work and study with us that we may all be better prepared for our Master's work. Wherever there is a Union in our churches the delegates should highly of its work.

Mr. J. K. Ross, Rev. B. H. Bentley and myself were appointed a committee to prepare for the Young People's Rally in connection with our Association at East Point in July. It will be held on the Thursday evening before the Association. The subjects are chosen and the speakers appointed. Space will be open for anybody to speak on the general subject of the organization.

Boys and girls are like trees, we can influence their growth if we go about it prayerfully and carefully. Let us not make weeping willows of them simply for style, but let us help them check their downward growth, and urge them to look upward day by day, learning better how to appreciate the glorious sunlight of God's love.

Will all the Unions in our Island Churches please remember that it is their privilege to help along our meeting by sending some of their active members loaded with reports (we want verbal reports) of their year's work. Arrange it so that one of the delegates from your church will also represent the Union. Be sure to report! See to it secretaries.

Can't somebody else plan to go to Toronto? Don't you think you would like very, very much to enjoy the feast, not to mention the trip?

Yours heartily,

JEREMIAH S. CLARK.

Convention Notes.

Inquiries are being made every day regarding the arrangements which have been made for the "side trips." We are able this week to announce them definitely. Side-trip tickets will be issued at single fare for round trip on July 21st, 22nd, 23rd and 24th, to any point within the Province of Ontario and Quebec, as far west as Fort William and as far east as the river Saguenay, on presentation of the return portion of the round trip ticket to Toronto issued for the Convention.

The time limit of side-trip ticket to agree with the date of the expiration of the Convention. Stopover privileges will be granted on side-trip tickets. Each delegate will be limited to one side-trip ticket.

It should be noted that the excursion to Niagara Falls on Monday, the 23rd, is not classed as a "side-trip," and no one need therefore give up the excursion through fear of thereby forfeiting his right to make a side-trip to any other point.

It is safe to say that the work of no single committee in connection with the Convention is as great as that of the entertainment committee. Only those who have had experience in the work know what it means to provide suitable accommodation for 6,000 delegates. The committee have been working faithfully for the last two months with gratifying success. There is no doubt of their being able to find the necessary accommodation; but knowing, as they do the rush and confusion which always accompany a great gathering of this kind at the last, they expect to be able at least a month before the Convention, to have their work so well in hand as to be able to tell the intended location of every delegate.

PRESS COMMITTEE.

A Backslider Reclaimed.

I will ask the conductor to put you off." This was what was said by a man who had been approached by a Christian worker on a railroad train who asked the question, "May I talk with you a little while?" and was answered promptly, "Yes, sir, all right." And to the question, "Are you a follower of Christ?" he said, "That is none of your business. I don't care to be preached to, and won't be insulted in this way. I will ask the conductor to put you off." And he did.

Upon speaking to the conductor, he was astonished to hear the conductor say, "We are not troubled with that kind of thing on this train very much. I think we can stand some more of it," and the man threatened to report him.

C.illing the worker back to him, he said, "As I cannot get the conductor to put you off, I would like to ask you a few questions, for I believe you are an old hypocrite. What did Cain say to his wife, and how do you know Adam was the first man, and what do you think about hell? Did you ever see the bottomless pit? Did you ever talk with an angel?" Afterplying these questions and many more like them for some time as fast as he could talk, one little verse was given him: "The Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The man suddenly stopped, bit his lips until the blood almost came, turned white, clenched his fist, and suddenly said, as he burst into a violent fit of weeping: "I am a backslider. May God help me and have mercy on my soul!" He left the train soon after, and although nothing more was said, all the people on the train nearest his seat, and that of the Christian worker were solemnly impressed by the words of one verse of God's Word, which had the power to turn man's ridicule and ill and malicious questioning to naught.

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Secretary-Treasurer, City Printing and Publishing Co., Montreal, P. Q.

As the flower is gnawed by frost, so every human heart is gnawed by faithlessness. And as surely as irrevocably, as the fruit-bud falls before the east-wind, so falls the power of the kindest human heart if you meet it with poison.—Austin.

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WORDS OF JESUS.

BY J. H. S. MEYER.

Weary one, my rest I'll give thee;

Heavy laden, sore oppressed,

Bearing thy burdens all unto me,

Come, and I will give you rest.

Anxious one, my peace I'll give thee;

Trust me, I will always aid;

O, let not thy heart be troubled,

Neither let it be afraid.

I will give thee living water,

He who craves from other springs

Soon again from thirst will suffer:

Thus it is with earthly things.

But the water that I offer

To the man who comes to me,

Unto him a spring of water

Of eternal life shall be.

Rest, and peace, and life I offer:

Best of blessings, rich and free.

Come then, trusting; nothing doubting;

Come, they're offered now to thee.



















































































