



## LESSON III.—JANUARY 21, 1906.

## The Boy Jesus.

## Golden Text.

Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and Man.—Luke ii., 52.

## Home Readings.

- Monday, Jan. 15.—Luke ii., 40-52.  
 Tuesday, Jan. 16.—I. Sam. iii., 1-10.  
 Wednesday, Jan. 17.—I. Sam. iii., 11-21.  
 Thursday, Jan. 18.—II. Tim. iii., 12-4; 5.  
 Friday, Jan. 19.—John ii., 13-22.  
 Saturday, Jan. 20.—Matt. xxi., 11-17.  
 Sunday, Jan. 21.—Is. lvi., 1-8.

(By W. Davis Clark.)

One incident—one only—of Jesus' youth is preserved. If analyzed, it will be found to be the whole period in epitome—the spirit, traits, acquirements of Jesus before entrance upon His public career.

A temple nuncio on his round had apprised Nazareth of the approaching feast. The festal caravan, chanting the psalms of ascent, was soon en route. It may be that on this sacred journey Mary disclosed to the opening consciousness of her son the things which she had kept and pondered in her heart.

Not the prodigious mass of humanity, not the golden and marble temple that could accommodate a quarter of a million, not even the speaking ceremonial which had been performed for a millennium and a half—not these, but the Messianic idea and the dawning consciousness, 'I am He,' absorbed Jesus, and made Him oblivious to time and place and human relationship. The glowing ember burst into flame.

The Child among the doctors is no anachronism. It is in strictest accord with Jewish custom. The sittings of the rabbis were open to all. 'Sons of the law,' Hebrew youths twelve years and over, were especially welcome, and encouraged to show what they knew. The catechetical was the favorite method. 'What meaneth?' was on lips of teacher and taught. What surprised the doctors in this Galilean boy was the absence of stereotyped rabbinical phrase. No touch of schools or schoolmen was on Him. Here was originality divine—the truth free from the scholastic barnacles of gloss and paraphrase, yet a childish gentleness and humility transfiguring all. The Father's matters were undoubtedly subject of discourse; the Messiah, when, whence, what like, effect of His coming? Many a doctor must have said that day, 'Whence hath this Child this wisdom?' They were in an ecstasy of admiration. The impression the Child made was no doubt lively; but the appearance of Galilean peasants who claimed to be his parents, and to whom He gave ready obedience, was calculated to tone it down.

The conversation between Mother and Child casts at least a ray on that inexplicable relationship. It is as if Mary had said, 'Son, here is your first act that surpasses my comprehension.' There is more of pathos in it than querulousness. His answer, dutiful and affectionate, is: 'Mother, I'm surprised you sought me anywhere but in my Father's house, where His matters are considered. I thought you knew the interest, unknown to others, which would attract me and hold me here.'

But cheerfully, in an instant, and for eighteen years, He quits this place of absorbing interest, this agreeable assembly; exchanges the temple for a carpenter shop, the sanhedrin for the provincial neighbors of Nazareth—all at His lowly mother's beck.

But this incident was, humanly speaking, of incalculable value to Jesus. The holy consciousness, first quickened in the temple,

opened and bloomed in His soul. While still subject to His parents, and having a perfectly normal human development of a character so lovely as to fairly captivate His rugged highland neighbors, yet the knowledge of His divine nature and vocation ran parallel therewith.

## ANALYSIS AND KEY.

- I.—The feast announced.  
 Festal caravan to Jerusalem.  
 Route and incidents by the way.  
 Jesus and His parents in the company.
- II.—Arrival in Jerusalem.  
 What interested the Boy, Jesus.  
 Dawning consciousness of His character and commission.
- III.—Jesus among the doctors.  
 Accordance with Jewish custom.  
 Socratic method—asking and answering.  
 Probable theme of inquiry.
- IV.—Jesus and His Mother.  
 The ideal of filial obedience.
- V.—Effect of incident upon character.  
 Growing knowledge of nature and vocation; parallel to physical and mental evolution.

## THE TEACHER'S LANTERN.

This incident, at first blush a pictorial affair, bristles with lessons for parents and children, for teachers and pupils. It is the anatomy of a child's heart for the child himself, and for the would-be helper of the child.

The Child Jesus was the ideal learner. He kept filling with wisdom. He stored His memory with Scripture, and in addition persistently drew from His environment, physical and social. The evidences of the accuracy and wideness of His observations abound in His discourses. It was this that prepared Him to be the ideal Teacher. . . . The home of Jesus had a beautiful setting of physical scenery. Nazareth, with its white domes and abundant foliage, has been described as a handful of pearls in a goblet of emerald. Hermon, Tabor, Carmel, the sea and Esdraelon were in sight. The impression made on Jesus' mind is evident from its reproduction in His parables. . . . Social life was also unique. There was art and traffic. The teeming population was so infused with Greek spirit as to be called 'Gentile.' It must have influenced the Youth Jesus. . . . But home was chief factor in the evolution of Jesus' character. The Hebrew home was a night-blooming cereus. Paganism knew nothing worthy the name of home. Oriental children were, as a rule, dismissed to the company of slaves. . . . In the Jewish household, on the contrary, the sweetest confidence maintained between parent and child. 'Father, what meaneth this?' was often on the child's lips, and to describe the intent of ceremonial or memorial was the father's delight. There were eight well-defined stages in the religious nurture of Hebrew youth. The sacred name greeted his eye on the door-post as he came or went. He must needs learn his Shema and Hallel. He had his own birthday text, an acrostic from Scripture which spelled his name. The thoroughness of Jesus' training is evident from the familiarity with every part of the Old Testament, in both Hebrew and Greek which He showed.

## CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR AND EPWORTH LEAGUE TOPIC.

Luke ii., 40-52.

## CHRIST'S LIFE FROM BOYHOOD.

(Union meeting with Junior Society.)

Jesus was the ideal Boy as well as the ideal Man. He grew physically, and at the same time got stronger in mind and spirit. It was at church (the temple of Jerusalem) that he had His first glimpse of what He was called to be and to do in this world. It was in the joy of this revelation and His personal surrender to it that He lost himself in 'His Father's house.' Forgetful of self, in the possession of a great thought, He talked to the rabbis like one inspired. But His vision did not make Him disrespectful to His Mother or disobedient to His parents. He went home and obeyed them. It is recorded of

His boyhood that He increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.

## C. E. Topic.

Sunday, Jan. 21.—Topic—Christ's life. I. Lessons from His boyhood. Luke ii., 40-52. (Union meeting with the Junior society.)

## Junior C. E. Topic.

## CHRIST'S BOYHOOD.

Monday, Jan. 15.—The promise to Mary. Luke i., 26-32.

Tuesday, Jan. 16.—The birth of Christ. Luke ii., 8-17.

Wednesday, Jan. 17.—The visit of the wise men.—Matt. ii., 1-12.

Thursday, Jan. 18.—The flight into Egypt. Matt. ii., 13-15.

Friday, Jan. 19.—The return to Nazareth. Matt. ii., 19-23.

Saturday, Jan. 20.—How the Child grew. Luke ii., 40.

Sunday, Jan. 21.—Topic—Lessons from Christ's boyhood. Luke ii., 40-52. (Union meeting with older society.)

## CHRISTIAN TOLERANCE.

There is a genuine and Christian toleration which is not indifference. It consists with the most deep and serious feeling. This toleration cares about truth, and cares about what seem errors in its teaching; but it rests confidently in faith that truth will win its own victories in God's good time; and it acts consistently on the knowledge that love is greater even than truth, and must break the path in places where truth has not yet appeared. This is the tolerance of faith and charity, which a man shows in places where he feels deeply, whether those places be in politics or in religion.—'Sunday School Times.'

The costliest garment worn is the cloak of hypocrisy. He who would dress in taste and without cost should be 'clothed with humility.'

## How to Unfold a Lesson.

(Prof. Dager, in the 'Evangel.')

There are many things that we must learn from the children of this world, who are often wiser in their generation than the children of light. Study the man who starts out with a bag of samples, with the one definite purpose to so present these samples as to win purchasers for the goods which they represent. What can we learn from him?

First note with what care he packs his box. He walks about the store for days, mentally connects the goods there with the customers thousands of miles away; and, not until he has gotten goods and customers associated, does he attempt the selection of his samples. The preacher must have his congregation in his study when he prepares his sermon, and the teacher must have her class in her room when she is getting ready for next Sunday.

Now comes an interesting step. The order in which articles are packed away determines largely the order in which they must be unpacked. Avoid confusion and disorder here. I saw a large box of seed, the contents of which had cost the owner many dollars, but, through the jolting of a rough road, had become indiscriminately mixed—seed of grass, clover, beets, radishes, turnips, carrots and many other vegetables commingled in a worthless mass. There was not much temptation even to a thirsty pilgrim to drink at the country store whose board announced, 'Coal Oil and Soda Water.'

I once surprised a salesman in his room, with many articles spread upon the table. He explained his position by saying, 'I was just taking these out of my valise to see if I had them packed in the best order.' A teacher might thus profitably employ a short season on Saturday evening.

May I just here emphasize that a great deal of the confidence and force with which a lesson is presented is derived from the teacher's consciousness that he has just what is needed to make those whom he teaches happy for time and eternity. I can fish with double the patience and perseverance when I feel that I have the best tackle and the most captivating bait.