

LESSON IV—January 26th, 1896.

The Early Ministry of Jesus. LUKE 4: 14-22.

(Commit to memory verses 13 and 19.)

GOLDEN TEXT: "His word was with power." Luke 4: 32.

PROVE THAT--We should go to church regularly. Heb. 10: 25.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 42. *What is the sum of the ten commandments?* A. The sum of the ten commandments is, To love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbor as ourselves.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal.* Nos. 83, 69, 87, 38.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Early Ministry of Jesus. Luke 4: 14-22. *Tuesday.* The ministry rejected. Luke 4: 23-32. *Wednesday.* Ministry of mercy. Luke 4: 33-44. *Thursday.* Isaiah's prophecy. Isaiah 61. *Friday.* Hindered by unbelief. Mark 6: 1-6. *Saturday.* A Deliverer. Isaiah 42: 1-8. *Sabbath.* Made free. Rom. 6: 15-23. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY. Immediately after his baptism Jesus was tempted in the wilderness (4: 1-13), after which he returned to Jordan and chose his first five disciples (John 1: 35-55). With these he went to Galilee where he changed water into wine at the marriage in Cana. Visiting Jerusalem shortly after, at the Passover, he expelled the traders who profaned the temple by their presence (John 2: 12-25), and was visited by Nicodemus (John 3: 1-27). He returned to Galilee through Samaria, and his interview with the woman at Jacob's well took place on this journey (John 4: 1-26). His fame had preceded him and he was cordially welcomed. At Cana he healed the son of a nobleman who lived at Capernaum, and in his progress through the cities of Galilee comes once more to the town in which he had spent his childhood. He is now entering upon the second year of his ministry, the year of his greatest popularity. About this time, John the Baptist was thrown into prison, and his work as Christ's forerunner came to a close.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Fame of Jesus. vs. 14-16. II. A Prophecy of Jesus. vs. 17-19. III. The Preaching of Jesus. vs. 20-22.

I. At his baptism the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus and he was filled henceforth with his gracious presence and power.¹ The fame of his preaching and miracles spread through all Galilee so that people flocked from all quarters to hear his words and be healed of their diseases.² As he taught in their synagogues, or churches, everyone praised him. But he longed to tell those in his old home, at Nazareth, whom he had known from childhood, the glorious news that he now proclaimed. So he seems to have lost little time before he appeared in his usual place in the synagogue there. There was no stated pastor over a synagogue, but the elders asked anyone they chose to read the scripture lessons and preach. Jesus was accordingly invited to conduct the service.

II. The book he opened was not like our Bibles but was a roll of manuscript containing the prophecy of Isaiah. The text he selected to preach from was the first and second verses of the sixty-first chapter. The prophet here was preaching good tidings to the people of his own time, and foretelling that God would restore them from their captivity, but the words were intended to point to Christ. He came to make the poor rich with heavenly treasures,³ to comfort with pardon those who

were brokenhearted on account of their sins,⁴ to deliver his people from the power of sin,⁵ to open the eyes of men to see how dreadful sin is and how lovely holiness is,⁶ to tell the whole world that God was ready now to save all who should believe on him.⁷ When Jesus had read the passage he handed the roll to the person who had the care of it and, according to the custom, sat down to teach the people what it meant.

III. The sermon of Jesus is not given—only its opening words. He told the people that he was the "Anointed One," the Messiah, who was to do all that the prophet promised. His words were of such sweetness and majesty⁸ that they all wondered where he could have learnt to speak like that.⁹ But while they admired his sermon they disliked the lofty claim which he made for himself. They were not ready to accept their old fellowtownsman as the divine Messiah. And when Jesus told them that God loved others as well as Jews, and would give blessings to obedient gentiles which he would withhold from hard hearted Israelites, they were filled with rage and tried to kill him. But he did not permit them to carry out their wicked purpose for his time to die had not yet come.

¹ Verse 1. ² Matt. 4: 23-25. ³ Matt. 5: 3. ⁴ Matt. 5: 4; Rom. 8: 28. ⁵ John 8: 32, 36; Rom. 6: 16-18. ⁶ Ps. 119: 18; Prov. 4: 19; Acts 26: 18; Eph. 4: 18. ⁷ 2 Cor. 6: 2; Isa. 49: 8; Eph. 1: 6, 20. ⁸ Ps. 45: 2; Isa. 50: 4. ⁹ Matt. 13: 54; Mark 6: 2; Luke 2: 47; John 6: 42.

LESSONS. 1. We should try to bring our friends to Jesus. 2. We should attend God's house on the Sabbath day. 3. The prophets foretold about Jesus. 4. Jesus brings all blessings with him. 5. One may admire an eloquent sermon and yet have no heart for the gospel that is preached.