

Hush!

"I can scarcely hear," she murmured,
 "For my heart beats loud and fast,
 But surely, in the far far distance,
 I can hear a sound at last."
 "It is only the reapers singing,
 As they carry home their sheaves,
 And the evening breeze has risen,
 And rustles the dying leaves."
 "Listen! there are voices talking."
 Calmly still she strove to speak,
 Yet her voice grew faint and trembling,
 And the red flushed in her cheek.
 "It is only the children playing
 Below, now their work is done,
 And they laugh that their eyes are dazzled
 By the rays of the setting sun."

Fainter grew her voice and weaker,
 As with anxious eyes she cried,
 "Down the avenue of chestnuts
 I can hear a horseman ride."
 "It was only the deer that were feeding
 In a herd on the clover grass;
 They were startled and fled to the thicket
 As they saw the reapers pass."

Now the night arose in silence,
 Birds lay in their leafy nest,
 And the deer crouched in the forest,
 And the children were at rest;
 There was only a sound of weeping
 From watchers around a bed,
 But rest to the weary spirit,
 Peace to the quiet dead!
 —Selected.

LESSON NOTES.

THIRD QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW.

B.C. 4] LESSON II. (July 10)
 THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

Matt. 2. 13-23. Memory verses, 19-21.
 GOLDEN TEXT.

He delivered me, because he delighted in me. Psa. 18. 19.

OUTLINE.

1. From Bethlehem to Egypt.
2. From Egypt to Nazareth.

TIME.—4 B.C. The flight and the return could not have been far apart. Perhaps the time of the lesson may reach into the following year, which would make it as we have dated, 3 B.C.

PLACES.—Bethlehem. The land of Egypt. Nazareth in Galilee.

RULERS.—Same as in last lesson. Herod the Great dies, and his son becomes tetrarch, his kingdom being divided among his sons, no one of whom was a king, as he had been.

CONNECTING LINKS.—The lesson follows lesson first as closely as one part of a story can follow another. The time that elapsed could not have been long.

EXPLANATIONS.—*The angel of the Lord*—A messenger, who, by some manifestation, made Joseph know his child's danger and the course to pursue. *He was mocked*—His command disregarded. They had learned what they desired from him, and he was angry that they had made him no return. *In all the coasts*—By coast we mean seashore. But here coast means the near environs, the edges of the town. *According to the time*—Children of the age that they had computed the new-born king to be. Herod knew he could not be two years old, and he knew he was more than a very few days old. So he was very thorough.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. From Bethlehem to Egypt.
 What was the expectation of Herod when the Magi left him?
 What is shown of the man's nature by his following acts?
 What was his purpose?
 Was his act necessary to accomplish his purpose?
 How was it thwarted?
 Who was the prophet who uttered the words of ver. 16?

Were these words spoken originally of Jesus?

How, then, do they fulfil prophecy?
 What was the service which, in God's providence, Joseph rendered to the world?

2. From Egypt to Nazareth.

What is the distance from Egypt to Nazareth?

Under what guidance were all of Joseph's movements which concerned this child?

In what year did Herod die?

Did Joseph show distrust of God's power by going to Nazareth, instead of Bethlehem?

Did he not literally fulfil God's command, while he, at the same time, used his own judgment?

Why was it safer in Nazareth?

Was there any prophecy such as Matthew cites?

How will you explain this?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Herod's plan was well laid. He thought he had slain the new-born king.

The child's friend was greater than his foe. Joseph was not a great man, nor a rich, nor a learned; but he took Mary to Bethlehem; he carried the child to Egypt; he made him secure in Nazareth. He served faithfully. We can do no more.

God's sovereignty, man's freedom, to Nazareth, Joseph's free act, that it might be fulfilled; God's long-formed plan.

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Study out the political condition of Palestine on Herod's death. How the different parts were governed.

2. Notice the evidences that the departure from Bethlehem was hurried: and the departure from Egypt leisurely made. There are certainly two evidences of each.

3. Locate Nazareth in a mental map of Palestine. Jesus passed twenty-eight years or more in that town. Get the sea, the mountains, the towns all fixed and familiar, so you can draw the whole on slate or paper in a moment.

4. Write ten questions on this lesson and their answers such as you would ask were you teaching it.

5. Learn every other fact about the life of Jesus to this time, not told by Matthew, but told by Luke, chaps. 1 and 2.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—God's watchful care.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

2. Who is the Redeemer of mankind?
 Our Lord Jesus Christ.
 Galatians iii. 13; Ephesians i. 7; 1 Thessalonians i. 10; Matthew xx. 28; Colossians i. 14; 1 Peter i. 18.

A. D. 26] LESSON III. (July 17)

JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Matt. 3. 1-12. Memory verses, 11, 12.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance. Matt. 3. 8.

OUTLINE.

1. The Man.
2. The Ministry.

TIME.—26 A. D. Just before the opening of Christ's public life.

PLACE.—Beyond Jordan, at the fords. He seems to have preached in all the vicinity of Jordan, moving slowly northward.

RULERS.—Tiberius is Augustus Caesar now; Pontius Pilate rules Judea; Herod Antipas in Galilee.

CONNECTING LINKS.—The years have gone slowly by. The baby at Nazareth is a man now. Once only in all these years has the figure passed across their path. He was a boy then of twelve, and in Jerusalem questioning the Rabbis in the temple. The air is full of strange, indefinable influence. The doctors say the fulness of time draws nigh. All at once a voice breaks on their ear from the wilderness of Judea, "The voice of one crying, Prepare ye the way of the Lord." He begins to baptize those who throng to hear his preaching. Let us join them, too.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Preaching*—Not such preaching as ours nowadays, but exhortations to reform, like those of the prophets. *Repent ye*—That is, reform; turn again to God; change your lives. *Kingdom of heaven*—Or the expected kingdom of Jehovah, long promised, and long hoped for. *The voice of one*—This means, I am the man who was to

cry in the wilderness, etc. *Raiment of camel's hair*—Clothing woven from camel's hair. A coarse kind of cloth worn by peasants. *Meat eats locusts and wild honey*—This shows how poor he was, and how, in appetites he was allied to the wandering Bedouins. They still live in the same way. *Generation of vipers*—Nation of evil doers. *The axe is laid*—The axe at the root meant overthrow and ruin. This was John's way of warning against sin. It was true. It was a Roman axe. *Whose shoes, etc.*—John says he is not worthy even to be the slave of the coming king. *Whose fan is in his hand*—The fan, or shovel, for winnowing was used to separate wheat from chaff. *He will . . . purify his floor*—The work of Christ is thus compared to the common work of the Jewish farmer, all the details of the act of winnowing and storing grain and destroying chaff are given. It meant that the king should also be a judge.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. The Man.

Who was the man who is introduced by this lesson?

Why is he introduced?

Where had his life been passed previous to this preaching? Luke 1. 80.

From what order of society had he sprung?

What relation was he to Jesus?

Did John know Jesus personally?

What position did Jesus assign to him among men?

What was his end?

2. His Ministry.

To what classes did John preach?

How was his preaching received?

Why were men so ready to be baptized by him?

What was the subject of his preaching?

What was the effect of his preaching?

What was the character of his preaching?

How was his preaching a preparation for the Lord's coming?

What has been in almost every age the reception given to the preaching of the stern reformer?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

The one thing needful in John's time to prepare for Christ's coming was repentance. Times have not changed at all.

John believed in the Ten Commandments. He did not think them relics of a long past age.

He preached: Do no violence; accuse none falsely; be content with wages, that is, "covet not;" exact no more than that which is appointed, that is, "do not steal." He believed in fruit-bearing as a sign of repentance.

He did not believe in universal salvation. There was wheat and chaff.

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Find twenty different things asserted in this lesson about John the Baptist.

2. Compare John's personal appearance with that of Elijah.

3. Find five elements of character shown by him.

4. Write down all the different things that John said at any time in his life that are recorded.

5. Does any of them furnish evidence that even he doubted concerning Christ?

CATECHISM QUESTION.

3. Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, who became man, and so was, and continues to be, God and man, in two distinct natures and one Person for ever.

John i. 1; John. i. 14; 1 Timothy ii. 5.

A SMALL boy in South Carolina raises canary birds, and gives the proceeds of their sale to the Board of Foreign Missions. In three years this enterprising and benevolent young person has thus gathered and given about a hundred dollars.

THE late William Burns, the devoted missionary in China during the rebel movements in the Amoy districts, was free to go where he liked, when no other European could venture near the rebels. "That's the man of the Book," they would say, "and he must not be touched."



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