

# Notes on the Lessons.

## LESSON I—January 5th, 1896.

### The Forerunner of Christ. LUKE 1: 5-17.

(Commit to memory verses 15 and 16).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways." Luke 1: 76.

PROVE THAT—We should prepare for Christ's coming. Isa. 40: 3.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 39. *What is the duty which God requireth of man?* A. The duty which God requireth of man is obedience to his revealed will.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*. Nos. 248, 249, 26, 28.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday*. The Forerunner of Christ. Luke 1: 5-17. *Tuesday*. A wondrous infancy. Luke 1: 59-66. *Wednesday*. Prophecy of greatness. Luke 1: 67-80. *Thursday*. Service of the altar. Ex. 30: 1-10. *Friday*. The Lord's Messenger. Mal. 3: 1-6. *Saturday*. Promise of Elijah. Mal. 4. *Sabbath*. Christ's testimony to John. Matt. 11: 7-14. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

### EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. This Gospel was written by Luke, "the beloved physician" (Col. 4: 14), who was the companion of Paul, and also wrote the Acts of the Apostles. The first two chapters have been called "The Gospel of the Infancy," because they narrate events connected with the birth and youth of Jesus.

LESSON PLAN. I. His Godly Parents. vs. 5-7. II. His Birth Announced. vs. 8-14. III. His Character Described. vs. 15-17.

I. HIS GODLY PARENTS. 5. **There was in the days of Herod the king of Judea**—This was Herod the Great. He was an I-du mae'an usurper and vassal of the Romans (Gen. 49: 10). He ruled also over Samaria, Galilee and Perea. The period was marked by intellectual activity, the universal rule of Rome, a high state of civilization, the decay of faith in idolatry, the dispersion of Jews everywhere disseminating some knowledge of the true God and prepared to form the nuclei of Christian Churches, and one language, the beautiful Greek, everywhere spoken (Gal. 4: 4). **A certain priest named Zach-a-ri-as**—(*The Lord remembers*). He was not the High Priest, but only "a certain priest." **Of the course of A-bi'a or Abijah.** The word "course" (*Ephemeris*) means first "a daily ministry," then a class of the priesthood which exercised its functions for a week. Aaron had four sons. The two eldest, Nadab and Abihu, were struck dead for using strange fire in the sanctuary (Lev. 18). From the two remaining sons, El-ez-a-zar and Ith'a-mar, had sprung, in the days of David, twenty-four families, sixteen from the descendants of Eleazar, and eight from those of Ithamar. To these David distributed by lot the order of their service from week to week, each for eight days inclusively from Sabbath to Sabbath (1 Chr. 24: 1-19; 2 Chr. 31: 2). After the exile only four of the families were represented amongst the returned priests. These were then subdivided into twenty-four courses, and to these the original names were given (Neh. 13: 30). The course of Abia was the eighth. The chief priests, so often referred to in the gospels, were the heads of these courses, **And his wife was of the daughters of Aaron.** Both John's parents were of priestly rank. **And her name was Elizabeth—**(*God is my oath*). This was the name of Aaron's wife (Ex. 6: 23) "the mother of priesthood."

6. **And they were both righteous before God**—i. e. not merely according to human judgment, but before the eyes of God (Ps. 119: 6; 2 Cor. 1: 12) one of the oldest forms of high praise among the Jews (Gen. 6: 9; 7: 1; 18: 23-28; Ps. 37: 37; Ezek 18: 5-19). It is used also of Joseph (Matt. 1: 19). The "righteous man" was the ideal Jew. (Farrar). The inward reality of his righteousness corresponds to its perfect outward exhibition in conduct and religious observances. **Walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless**—"Commandments" refers to the more general principles of the moral law to the decalogue for example (Rom. 8: 8-13); "ordinances" refers to the multitude of particular Levitical precepts (Heb. 9: 1). (Codet). This distinction was not accurately kept, but the two words together would, to a pious Jew of that day, have included all the positive and negative precepts, which the later rabbis said were 613 in number, namely 248 positive, and 365 negative. (Farrar). "Walking" is a Hebrew metaphor for the whole outward conduct. "Blameless" does not mean sinless (Phil. 3: 6) but that their lives were above reproach.

7. **And they had no child, because**