

LESSON II.

THE CHILD JESUS VISITS JERUSALEM

January 14, 1900

Luke 2: 41-52. Commit to memory vs. 49-52. Read Matt. 2: 1-38.

41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.

45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

48 And when they saw him, they were amazed; and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

Revised Version—1 And; 2 Omit to Jerusalem; 3 Were returning; 4 Boy Jesus; 5 His parents knew it not; 6 To be in the company; 7 Returned to Jerusalem; 8 Seeking for him; 9 Margin, or teachers; 10 Amazed; 11 Astonished; 12 Sought thee; 13 In my Father's house; 14 And; 15 Advanced; 16 Men.

EXPLANATION

Connection.—On the eighth day after His birth Jesus received His name (Luke 2: 21), and on the fortieth day Mary presented Him in the Temple, where Simeon and Anna recognized and proclaimed Him as the long-looked for Messiah, "A light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel" (vs. 22-34). Probably a little later came the visit of the Wise Men from the East. Then followed the flight into Egypt and the slaughter of the babes at Bethlehem (ch. 3). By and by Joseph and Mary returned to Nazareth (ch. 3: 19-23), their old home, where Jesus grew. Only this one incident of His childhood is recorded. It is well, for otherwise attention would be drawn from his main life work, and in this one incident we have enough to show what childhood should be.

41, 42. Went to Jerusalem every year; as did all devout Jews wherever they lived. The Passover commemorated the deliverance of the people of Israel, when the angel passed over them and slew the Egyptians. (Exod. 12: 1-14.)

43-45. Twelve years old; the age when a Jewish boy became a "son of the law," and began to attend the Temple services. A boy of twelve in the East would be as well developed physically and intellectually as a boy of fifteen with us. After the custom; of going year by year to the Feast. The days; the seven days of the Passover. (Ex. 12: 15.) The child Jesus; Rev. Ver., "The boy Jesus." Tarried behind; so taken by the services as not to know how time was passing. Knew not of it. He was evidently a boy to be trusted, and so they felt no anxiety about him. In the company; in some other part of the caravan. All the neighbors travelled together, a sort of large camping party. A day's journey. The first day's

journey of a caravan is always short. They sought him, as he did not make his appearance when the caravan halted for the night. Turned back again; with heavy hearts. They would think of the wonderful things before He was born, and all that had happened when He was a babe.

46, 47. After three days; from the time they left Jerusalem. In the temple; in a chamber of the great Temple Court. There were many chambers and porches. (John 10: 23.) Sitting; at the feet of the learned teachers. Edersheim says that the older students sat on a low bench and the younger on the ground, literally "at the feet." Asking them questions. Perfect liberty to put questions was given, as in a Bible Class. Missionaries in the East follow the same custom still. Were astonished; at His grasp of the Scriptures and His original answers. Children often have wondrous insight into truth, and the perfectly pure heart and willing mind of this child would make His vision clearer (Matt. 5: 8; John 7: 17).

48-50. When they; Joseph and Mary. Were amazed; to see him so much at home with these learned men. His mother said; there is gentle rebuke in her words. Sought thee sorrowing; with aching hearts. How is it that ye sought me? that is, about the city, instead of going direct to the Temple. Wist ye not? Did ye not know. I must be in my Father's house. (Rev. Ver.) Not Joseph, but God was His father. Christ's first recorded words are a claim of His divinity, that He was indeed the Son of God.

50-52. Was subject unto them; in constant, loving obedience. In her heart; in thought and memory. In wisdom and stature; mind and body. It is well when the balance is thus kept.