

Lesson I.

CHRIST THE LIFE AND LIGHT OF MEN January 1, 1905

John 1: 1-18. Commit to memory vs. 1-4.* Read John 8: 12-30.

GOLDEN TEXT—In him was life; and the life was the light of men.—John 1: 4.

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

Revised Version—1 hath been; 2 the darkness apprehended it not; 3 came; 4 that he might; 5 the light; 6 came that he might; 7 there; 8 light, even the light; 9 coming; 10 the right; 11 children; 12 became; 13 Omit the; 14 from; 15 beareth; 16 crieth; 17 said; 18 become; 19 for 20 we all received; 21 Omit but.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

Time and Place—Birth of Jesus, 5 B.C.; beginning of John the Baptist's ministry, 26 A.D.; beginning of Jesus' ministry, 27 A.D.

Connection—The first three Gospels, studied last year, give a detailed account of our Lord's life. John's purpose and plan are different.

He selects incidents to show (1) that Jesus is the Christ, or Old Testament Messiah; (2) that Jesus is the Son of God. Those who believe will "have life through His name." (See ch. 20: 31.)

I. THE ETERNAL WORD.—1, 2. In the beginning; at the creation of the world (Gen. 1: 1), and during eternal ages before, the Word was. The Word. Our words make known our thoughts. So Jesus makes known God's power, wisdom, and love; hence called the Word. Was with God; sharing God's glory as an equal, ch. 17: 5; Shorter Catechism, Ques. 6. Was God; truly one with the Eternal Father. The same; repeated for emphasis.

3-5. All things . . . made by him; through His agency, Heb. 1: 2. In him was life. He is the source of all life, physical, mental, moral, spiritual, John 5: 26; 14: 6. The light of men; giving men light, as that of reason and conscience, and the words of inspired men, even before He Himself came into the world. Shineth in darkness. Sin is darkness. Apprehended (perceived) it not (Rev. Ver.). Sin blinds to the Saviour's glory and beauty.



From painting by Helman Hunt

"THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"

II. THE WORD REJECTED.—6-8. A man sent from God; as the herald of the Christ. John; the Baptist (Matt. 3: 1), a cousin, by his mother, of Jesus, Luke 1: 36. For a witness. He was the first to point the people to Jesus, vs. 23, 34, 36.

That all men through him might believe. That was the purpose of John's testimony. Not that Light. John was only a light that was lighted, a lamp.

9-11. The true Light. Jesus was a light that enkindled light, like the sun. Which lighteth every man. A lamp carries but a short way; the sun lights the whole round world. Was in the world; in all the revelations made by God to men, and especially when He came in His earthly ministry. World (with all its inhabitants) . . . made by him; and therefore belonged to Him. World knew him not; who was their rightful King; so blinded were they by sin. His own; His own world, and His own people, the Jews. Received him not. The guilt of the Jews was all the greater, because they had fuller knowledge.

III. THE WORD RECEIVED.—12, 13. As many as received him; into their hearts with love and trust. Gave he the right, etc. (Rev. Ver.). What higher privilege could there be? That

believe on his name; trust Him, and give themselves up to Him. This is the human side of salvation. Born . . . of God. This is the divine side. Spiritual life can come only from God.

*The Scripture Memory passages of the Supplemental Lesson Course are recommended as a substitute for those here given Sabbath by Sabbath. They will be found in the Supplemental Lesson Leaflets.