

5. THE DWELLING AT NAZARETH, ver. 23. Joseph and Mary had dwelt at Nazareth in Galilee before their visit to Bethlehem. Luke i. 26, 27; ii. 4. PROPHETS . . NAZARENE. See Judges xiii. 5. In Isa. xi. 1, Christ is spoken of as the *Branch*. The Hebrew word for "branch" is *netzer*, signifying also *twig*, *sprout*, *sucker*, that is, a very small thing. Nazareth was a little town, a very insignificant place, and possibly received its name from its being as "a weak twig in contrast to a stately tree." Many of "the prophets" speak of the lowly and obscure condition of Jesus, springing, as Isaiah indicates, like a branch or twig from the "stem of Jesse." No one expected any "good thing" to "come out of Nazareth." John i. 46. To be a "Nazarene" was to be "nobody," a "weakling," a "root out of a dry ground," to have "no form nor comeliness," "no beauty." Isa. liii. 2. In this obscure hamlet Jesus dwelt till his thirtieth year, and of this entire period only one record is made. Luke ii. 39-52. Why? Read John xxi. 25. (See *Illustration 7*.)

Learn : 1. Angels are ever ready to warn God's beloved of dangers in the path. 2. When God bids us go forward it matters not whether we start by day or by night. 3. Safety in obedience. 4. If God hides us, men nor devils cannot find us. 5. Sin as base and Satanic now as in Herod's heart. 6. God and angels, friends of every little child, and of every lover of the truth as it is in Jesus. 7. Despise not lowly beginnings.

ILLUSTRATIONS FOR LESSON II.

1. Like as, in high and defenced towers, we are safe from the enemy : so, likewise, by the providence of God, we are in safety from our foes. . . . As a shadow doth protect and defend us from the beams and heat of the sun : even so doth God protect us from dangers.—*Cawdrey*.

2. Though there be millions of God's children in trouble or danger at one and the same time, yet hath God angels in ample numbers to send for their deliverance. "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly." 2 Pet. ii. 9.

3. Shut out from the inn, the holy child Jesus must begin life in a stable. Driven from his birthplace, along a desert-path he must find a tarrying-place in a foreign land. Thus early is Jesus a wanderer, without a home, without a place to lay his head. He knocks at the door of your heart. Will you admit him?

4. Ah, you fond heart, you can take the Babe in yet, and tend it with the kindest service; let

it dwell in your best room, and grow up to manhood by your side. *That* is not a mere story of something that once occurred, to be embalmed in a book. It is an ever-possible, ever-present reality for the human heart. Christ does not care by which door he can enter the soul, nor in *which* of his mortal shapes you first own him and let him in.—*Gerald Massey*.

5. A terrific picture, in which bloodthirsty Herod is chief cut-throat. "This execution was sad, cruel, and universal. No abatements were made for the dire shrieking of the mothers; no tender-hearted soldier was employed; no hard-hearted person was softened by the weeping eyes and pity-begging looks of those mothers that wondered how it was possible that any person should hurt their prettysucklings; no connivances there, no protections or friendships, or considerations, or indulgences."—*Jeremy Taylor*.

6. Sin is ever the same in every age. Witness the massacres under Nero and other emperors. Remember St. Bartholomew, the Waldenses, the Covenanters, the Spanish Inquisition, the French Revolution.

7. It is reported of Constantine, that being spoken to by many to punish some who had thrown stones at his image, saying that with the stones they had bruised all his face, he, wiping his face with his hand, and smiling with his countenance, gave them this answer: "I do not feel any hurt about me, or any wound made in my face; but my head is sound, and all my body likewise." Plainly, so it is with them who keep the commandments of God; all the evil which the devil or any wicked man can work or do against them, it is but like an evil done to their pictures—they feel it not; for how should they feel evil, for whom all things work together for their good!—*Spencer*.

HINTS FOR INFANT CLASS TEACHERS.

Ask if any of the class remember any of the lessons on **Whisper-Song.** Joseph. [Tell them "It may not be my way, It may not be thy way, And yet in His own way, THE LORD WILL PROVIDE!" that this was not the Joseph mentioned in the lesson, but another man of the same name who lived many years before.] Then ask where it was that Joseph was taken when his brothers sold him into slavery. It was into this same country that Jesus was taken as soon as the wise men left him to go back home. Ask the reason for his being