

SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

VOL. 24.]

FEBRUARY, 1890.

[No. 2

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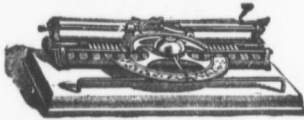
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| 9.— | “ “ “ “ 21, 5, 4. |
| 16.— | “ “ “ “ 114, 122, 128. |
| 23.— | “ “ “ “ 130, 134, 126. |



[No. 2.]



THE HARAM-ES-SHERIF.

The Haram-es-Sherif.

BY THE REV. GEO. J. BOND, B.A.

It was on a lovely morning that we visited the Haram-es-Sherif, or Noble Sanctuary, as the Temple enclosure is called by the Moslems. A few years ago it would have been death to a Christian to make an attempt to enter it; but now, except on high festival occasions, it is easy to get permission, through one of the consuls. We went, I remember, under the ægis of the

American Consul; and his *kawass*, a warlike-looking functionary, with silver-knobbed staff of office, and sword at side, accompanied us as representative of the protectorate of the United States, and on presentation of the consular permit at the guard-house, a Turkish official was also detailed to accompany us. Soon after entering the enclosure we had a somewhat amusing proof of the insane bitterness against Christians in the actions and words of a poor old woman, who railed at us with what I suppose was a tirade of abuse, while she tried hard

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to scrape up stones and dirt to cast at the infidels who had been allowed to invade these sacred precincts.

The Temple Area, for such it undoubtedly is, is a vast platform, raised in great part above immense substructions, built in the flowery days of the Jewish kingdom, to form a foundation for that superb building, level with the summit of Mount Moriah. As it exists at present, it is an irregular quadrangle, sixteen hundred and one feet long on the west, and fifteen hundred and thirty feet on the east, while on the north it measures ten hundred and twenty-four feet, and on the south, nine hundred and twenty-two. It is entered by eight gates.

Be Strong.

BY REV. JAMES COOKE SEYMOUR.

● LORD, dismiss my fears,
Put strength within my heart;
From Hope's bright eye let not the light
Through unbelief depart.

Why should I doubt? Thy Word
A Rock eternal is;
Thy truth and love can never change,
I'll trust my God for this.

Epworth League.

THAT grand old veteran, Dr. Douglas, whose words carry with them such weight and wisdom, writes warmly on its behalf, as shown in our last number. This movement is very widely endorsed by the leading minds of the Methodist Church. The *Guardian* has written strongly in its favor. The *Halifax Wesleyan* writes as follows:—

"The Epworth League has been formed for the purpose of stimulating biblical study, more intimate acquaintance with doctrines, institutions and literature of our Church. It is believed that biographical and historic studies will strengthen denominational loyalty, and at the same time diffuse a broad and generous catholicity of spirit and purpose. The organization is of a most flexible character, adjusting itself to all institutions of the Church and embracing all departments of work. A series of reading courses has been prepared. In addition to Bible study and Methodist history, biography, constitutional principles and spiritual life, art and science and travel, etc., are included. Diplomas and seals will be awarded to members of the League that take the course. A grand impetus may be thus given to the intellectual culture and spiritual life of our young people. This, in the best sense, is a 'forward movement.' We rejoice that such a scheme has been inaugurated. It has been a great success in the United States, having 1,200 chapters and 60,000 members. Application can be made to Dr. Withrow, of Toronto, for fuller information. But we hope soon to have an Eastern Committee.

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Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., EDITOR.

TORONTO, FEBRUARY, 1890.

The Epworth League—Objections Met.

WE sometimes meet the inquiry, "What good will the Epworth League do us? We have a well-organized Young People's Society. What advantage shall we derive from becoming a department of the League?" Now, we respectfully submit, this is not the best way to look at the subject. The real question is, "What additional good will the Epworth enable us to do?" The answer to this, we think, is "Much every way." We believe it will be an inspiration to Christian duty and service. That the sense of fellowship with kindred spirits, pledged

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to a life of religious devotion, will be like keeping step in an army. You will move forward, foot to foot and shoulder to shoulder, with the assurance of victory, like a Macedonian phalanx, instead of fighting single-handed and alone against the foes we all must meet.

It is sometimes objected that the Epworth League is a sort of fifth wheel to a waggon which has already its full complete running gear. It is not designed to be anything of the sort. It is rather like the balance-wheel of a watch, whose purpose is to bring into harmony all the other wheels, to cause them to work together without jar or friction, to avoid waste of power, and to more efficiently secure the common object for which the entire watch was contrived.

It is further objected that the League will unduly multiply meetings, and that unless we have an India rubber week that will stretch out to nine or ten evenings, it will be impossible in busy city churches to carry out its programmes. This is quite a misapprehension. The League may actually reduce the number of meetings. It may so act as a unifying agency among the various societies of the church that in cases where their work may overlap or be nearly similar they may be united into one. For instance, there is, or ought to be, in every church a teachers' meeting for the study of the Sunday-school lesson. There is often, too, a literary society, on a different evening. Now, as the prescribed readings of the League are largely biblical, these meetings may with advantage to both be combined, and half the time be devoted to each. The secular department will thus be lifted up, ennobled and preserved from degenerating into frivolous "entertainment," and the teachers' meeting will be widened in influence and interest.

The only case in which the League would introduce an extra meeting is where there is no young people's devotional service class, or prayer-meeting, and this is a case in which this multiplication is, we think, decidedly necessary. Such meetings are the very life of the church—the very soul of youthful, as well as of adult piety. The first and foremost object of the League is to promote personal piety and Christian service. We would rather begin a League with half a dozen earnest souls banded together by means of this solemn pledge for the glory of God and the salvation of their fellow immortals who are swiftly travelling towards eternity, than with half a thousand of frivolous young people who desire only to have a good time and "lots of fun." That is all very well in its place, but it is not worth while organizing an Epworth League for.

But it may be said, "We are already organized on lines of Christian work, Bible and literary study and social entertainment; and we would have to disband and organize anew on a different basis, perhaps displacing the old and tried officers for new ones." Not at all. Almost any existing society of young people can become a department of the Epworth League without in any way interfering with its autonomy and self-management. The presiding

officer is promoted to be a member of the inner council of the League, becomes a link with all the other departments, and he and the other officers sustain precisely the relation to the sub-society that they did before.

Epworth League Song—The Choice.

To him who stands at parting ways,
Whom choice confronts of this or that —
The level path through pleasant days,
The heights the saints are toiling at—
Godspeed ! and may he never rue
The road he chooses of the two.

To climb seems better, truly ; for
Though hard at first, the way grows dear,
And leads by many a cheerful flower,
And daily brings that land more near
Where our departed loved ones wait
To greet us at the heavenly gate.

The broader way winds ever down ;
At first through gardens fair and sweet,
And then through withering meadows brown
And slimy fens that hold the feet.
At last, with failing heart and breath,
The traveller meets the tide of death.

O youth, with spirit pledged, yet free,
To make of life the truest, best,
One sure, safe path there is for thee,
The path our Saviour trod and blessed.
There walk, and thou shalt truly find
The truest good—a peaceful mind.

—James Buckham, in *Our Youth*.



"I desire to form a League, offensive and defensive, with every soldier of Christ Jesus."—John Wesley.

THIS new Social and Religious Movement is awakening very great interest throughout the entire country, as evidenced by hundreds of letters of inquiry from all parts—from Newfoundland to British Columbia. Already a considerable number of Branches have been established in Toronto, Vancouver, B.C., London, Oshawa, Ottawa, Peterboro', Lindsay, Ingersoll, Sarnia, St. Catharines, Belleville, St. John, N.B., Charlottetown, P.E.I., Moncton, N.B., and elsewhere, and others are forming every week. The Mass Meetings in Toronto and London have been very successful in creating an interest, giving information, and promoting the objects of the League.

In the Metropolitan Church, Toronto, the Young Ladies' Mission Circle became enrolled in the department of Christian work of the

League. They held a bazaar for mission purposes, resulting in over \$400 for that good object.

The Lombard Street Mission, carried on chiefly by the young people of this Church, holds meetings on several evenings in the week, in a large and comfortable steam-heated room, in a new warehouse in that once unsavory street. They have had a large number of waifs from the Model Lodging House, many of whom were far gone in dissipation. Numbers of these have remained for special prayer and much good is being done, and not least is the moral benefit received by the young workers in this Christly work. One said to the writer that she would not have believed it possible that she should become so interested in such work.

The Young Peoples' Prayer Circle has taken up the Epworth League prayer topics, assigning the conducting of the meeting to its members in rotation. (See advertisement of these in advertising pages.)

In Carlton Street Church, in this city, 175 members are enrolled in the Epworth League, which is doing good work. A full report of Leagues organized will soon be given.

On New Year's eve a good supper was given to over one hundred of the attendants on this mission, afterwards a short religious service was held and a number of them went to the watch-night at the Metropolitan Church.

Another mission band in connection with this church, has conducted for over a year a very successful Sunday-school, class-meeting and evening service, in the east end of the city, which have resulted in several conversions and in the reformation of some confirmed drunkards.

Death of the Rev. Dr. Williams.

CANADIAN Methodism mourns to-day the fall of one of its most beloved and honored standard bearers, one of its most devoted chief shepherds and one of its wisest counsellors and guides. In a more than ordinary sense is it true that a prince and a great man is fallen this day in Israel. For half a century Dr. Williams lived in the love and confidence of his brethren—a love and confidence growing deeper and stronger as the years passed by. Early in his ministry he came to the front as a potent energy in Canadian Methodism. He had great native force of character, which he exhibited in his preaching, his circuit administration, and in the important positions of Chairman of District and President of Conference, to which he was early and repeatedly called.

The disease from which he suffered was a very painful one, but through it all he exemplified the patience and resignation of the true Christian. He found great comfort in repeating, and in having Mrs. Williams read to him the Scriptures and the grand old hymns of early Methodism. In one fine hymn of Oliver's

he especially delighted, and quoted it with deep fervor:

"The God of Abraham praise,
Who reigns enthroned above,
Ancient of everlasting days
And God of love."

With moistened eye and shaken voice he repeated the lines:

"He calls a worm His friend,
He calls Himself my God,
And He shall save me to the end,
Through Jesus' blood."

"That" he said, "is my religious experience." On a subsequent occasion, to Dr. Johnston and myself, he said, "I cannot tell you, not merely with what divine power, but with what divine sweetness, these words come over my soul. They are like the breath of the new-mown hay from a meadow in June."

Dr. Williams was a man of broad sympathies, of deep and tender affections. His was a cheerful, sunny type of piety. There was in it nothing sombre or austere. He especially delighted in the grand old hymnody of Methodism. He was a man of rich musical culture, and did much to improve the congregational singing of the Methodist Churches by his labors in editing a series of books on the Church hymnody and on that of the Sunday-school. His last labor of this kind was on the new Canadian Hymnal, which was issued during the last weeks of his illness. "This," he said, in committee, "is the last work of the sort that I shall do." But he entered into it with zest, and ever and anon would break out in sacred song in his rich, musical voice in some favorite hymn that carried his thoughts back to earlier days. Still later, as he lay upon his sick couch, he prepared a little manual of Christian doctrine especially for the young. His active sympathies went out in their behalf, and he was much interested in the Epworth League, which shortly before his death was adopted as a connexional movement. He proposed to write to some of the official brethren in its interests, and also a short pastoral on its behalf to the young people of the Church. But for this his ebbing strength was found insufficient.

The immense concourse at his funeral, the many scores of ministers and laymen from distant parts of the Province, the touching and eloquent tributes paid to his memory, all bear witness to the love which he inspired and the honor in which he was held.

He who prays as he ought will endeavour to live as he prays.—Owen.

MANY favors which God giveth us ravel out for want of hemming, through our own unthankfulness; for though prayer purchaseth blessings, giving praise doth keep the quiet possession of them.—Thomas Fuller.

Put the Names on Record.

DEAR SIR,—You ask for information in reference to Pledge Cards in Sunday-schools. In our school we adopted the following plan: We got two large pledge cards, size 22 x 28 inches, of heavy Bristol board, with the heading very tastefully engrossed, and with ruled spaces on each card for about 250 signatures. These cards are handsomely and durably framed in antique oak and bronze, and with a movable back, so that the cards may be easily removed at any time, without disturbing the glass, etc. The cards thus framed, which are certainly an ornament to any hall, are hung up in a convenient and conspicuous place in the main Sunday-school room. The one is headed for boys and the other for girls.

The following diagram will give an idea of their appearance—

GRACE CHURCH S. S. PLEDGE CARD.	
* BOYS *	
<i>"By the help of God, I promise to abstain from the use of Intoxicating Liquors as a beverage."</i>	

Whenever any of the scholars wish to sign their names they apply to any of the officers of the school, and are permitted to do so. Occasionally we draw special attention to the pledge cards, and all are urged to sign them, opportunity being offered for doing so.

It will not be necessary here to suggest the best methods of getting all the scholars to sign the cards.

In the use of these cards we remind all the boys and girls, that, although they grow up and many of them leave us, their names will always be registered as total abstainers upon the walls of their old Sunday-school. This is a fact they are not likely to lose sight of. "The necessity, therefore, of having everything about the cards of a permanent character will be easily recognized.

The names are always written carefully in ink.

Fear of trespassing upon your space prevents further remarks.

S. R. PARSONS.

Grace Church S. S., Winnipeg.

A Superintendent from Portage la Prairie writes:—

"We have a good-sized blank-book with this simple pledge printed on the first leaf of this

book: 'We whose names are here inscribed, promise wholly to abstain from the use of all intoxicating drinks as a beverage.' This is our pledge book, and once every quarter and whenever there is a temperance lesson, we bring our pledge book to the front, and I ask our teachers every one to be an advocate for temperance, and to try and induce every member of our school to sign our book. We have 180 scholars' names on our book, out of an average attendance of 210. We ask old and young, every one, to sign the pledge, in this way we keep this question continually before the young on these Sabbaths. But you must remember that our's is a Bible school, and we do not talk about this question every Sabbath. But every now and then we bring it before them.

Book Notices.

Broken Shackles. By GLENELG. Pp. 304, with Portrait and Engravings. Toronto: William Briggs. Cloth 75 cents; paper 50 cents.

This is the life-story of a very remarkable man—an old Negro, old as the present century, yet still hale, hearty and hardworking. It tells of his mother's capture in Africa, of the horrors of the "Middle Passage," of life and adventure, of humor and pathos, of tragedy and comedy in slave-life, of corn-huskings and camp-meetings, of escape from slavery, of the "Underground Railway," and of many other features of a state of things now, thank God, forever past. The story will move alternately to smiles and tears. Among many other excellences of "Ole Man Henson," he was a sincere Christian. "Most of all," he says, "I praise God because He set my captive soul at liberty. He has made me His chile and an heir of His kingdom. De devil often hits me hard and wounds me sore. He often says, 'Do you expect to go to heaven? look at the kin' of man yo' wuz in de early days—werry wicked.' Den I remind him that Christ come to save de los' sheep, to save sinners, and I ax him if I'm not a sinner saved by grace? He quits botherin' me then. My work's about ended. I'm waitin' for my Mastah to call me, an' when He calls I'll be forever with the Lawd."

The Drummer Boy of the Rappahannock; or, Taking Sides. By the REV. EDWARD A. RAND. Pp. 386. New York: Hunt & Eaton; and Methodist Book Rooms, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. Price \$1.25.

The Rev. Mr. Rand has produced a number of admirable Sunday-school books. This one fully sustains his reputation. It is a story of the American Civil War, and therefore will appeal to the patriotic instincts of young Americans as it will not to Canadian readers; but the moral principles inculcated are common to all mankind, and the duty of taking sides against wrong and for the right in the battle of life is as important for young Canadians as for any others.

Audubon's Adventures ; or, Life in the Woods.

By the REV. B. K. PIERCE, D.D. Pp. 252.
New York: Hunt & Eaton; and Methodist
Book Rooms, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax.
Price 60 cents.

This is the sort of book of which we would like to see many more in our Sunday-school libraries. It is a book full of wholesome adventure such as boys like, a book that will cultivate a taste for natural history, and a habit of close observation. Audubon was a very remarkable man, his great book on birds—great in a double sense, it is more than an able bodied man can lift—sells for about \$500. The magnificent drawings are a monument of his genius. We commend this book to all schools and young people.

Peter the Preacher ; or, Reaping a Hundred-fold. By CARLISE B. HOLDING. Pp. 430.
New York: Hunt & Eaton; and Methodist
Book Rooms, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax.
Price \$1.25.

The author of this striking story tells us that it is improbable only in appearance, that of every incident in the book a counterpart may be cited in real life. It is the tale of the call to the ministry of a young man and of his strange adventures in beginning his life-work among the rough men of a western town. It is a sound, wholesome story, and may be an inspiration to some who are trying to make the best of both worlds.

Shoulder Arms ; or, The Boys of Wild Lake School. By JOHN PRESTON TRUE. Pp. 328.
New York: Hunt & Eaton; and Methodist
Book Rooms, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax.
Price \$1.25.

This is an excellent story of school-boy life, such as will be relished by all live, wide-awake boys. A school is a little world in which all the traits that characterize the full-grown man find room for development. The wise teacher of this school knew how to foster the heroic instinct of the boys' hearts, and the reading of the story will have the same effect.

The General Hymnary for Mission and Special Services. Pp. 456. London: C. H. Kelley; and Methodist Book Rooms, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. Price cloth, limp, 20 cents; cloth, boards, 25 cents.

This excellent collection has been compiled by the sub-committee of the Wesleyan Book Committee. It is exceedingly catholic in its character, but needs we think a fuller index, and we do not like the alphabet arrangement of the hymns.

Prayers for Christian Families, with an Introduction on Family Prayer. Pp. 295. London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room; and Methodist Book Rooms, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. Price \$1.25.

Such books doubtless subserve a good purpose in promoting the practice of family prayer, but we think a loving and grateful heart fed on the word of God, will have little need for even these excellent suggestions.

Opening and Closing Services.**OPENING SERVICE.****I. Responsive Sentences. (Psa. 95. 2-5.)**

Supt. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving.

School. And make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

Supt. For the LORD is a great God.

School. And a great King above all gods.

Supt. In his hands are the deep places of the earth:

School. The strength of the hills is his also.

Supt. The sea is his, and he made it:

School. And his hands formed the dry land.

II. Singing.

III. Prayer, followed by the Lord's Prayer in concert.

IV. Reading Scripture Lesson.**V. Singing.****LESSON SERVICE.****I. Class Study of the Lesson.****II. Singing Lesson Hymn.**

III. Recitation of Title, Golden Text, Outline, and Doctrinal Suggestion by the school in concert.

IV. Review and Application of the Lesson, by Pastor or Superintendent.

V. The Supplemental Lesson.

VI. Announcements (especially of the Church service, and week-evening prayer-meeting).

CLOSING SERVICE.**I. Singing.****II. Responsive Sentences.**

Supt. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

School. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

III. Dismissal.**APOSTLES' CREED.**

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER: STUDIES IN LUKE.

B. C. 4.]

LESSON V. JESUS BROUGHT INTO THE TEMPLE.

[Feb. 2.]

GOLDEN TEXT. A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. Luke 2: 32.

Authorized Version.

Luke 2: 25-35. [Commit to memory verses 29-32.]

25 And, behold, there was a man in Je-ru-sa-lem, whose name was Sim'e-on; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Is-ra-el; and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Je'sus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people:

32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Is-ra-el.

33 And Jo'seph and his mother marveled at these things which were spoken of him.

34 And Sim'e-on blessed them, and said unto Ma'ry his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Is-ra-el; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;

35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also;) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

Revised Version.

25 And behold, there was a man in Je-ru-sa-lem, whose name was sim'e-on; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Is-ra-el; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Je'sus, that they might do concerning him after the custom of the law, then he received him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Now lettest thou thy servant depart, O Lord, According to thy word, in peace;

30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples;

32 A light for revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of thy people Is-ra-el.

33 And his father and his mother were marveling at the things which were spoken concerning him; and Sim'e-on blessed them, and said unto Ma'ry his mother, Behold, this child is set for the falling and rising up of many in Is-ra-el; and for a sign which is spoken against; yea, and a sword shall pierce through thine own soul; that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed.

General Statement.

The beautiful scene described in this lesson follows in the sacred record immediately after the narrative of the appearing of the angels to the shepherds. Eight days after a Jewish boy was born he was formally introduced into the Jewish Church, and at the close of forty days it was the custom for his mother to offer a sacrifice in the temple. A poor woman was permitted to sacrifice a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons. From richer ladies larger and costlier offerings were expected. Mary's offering is one of the evidences of the poverty of the parents of our Lord. Immediately on entering the sacred courts they see the venerable form of Simeon, whose goodness and prophetic insight can hardly have been unknown to them. Taking the babe from its mother's arms, the old man sees with prophetic ken far into the future, and pours out his soul in thanksgiving to God for allowing him to catch a glimpse of the world's Redeemer.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 25. A man . . . Simeon. Probably unknown to fame. One of the most conspicuous rabbis living in Jerusalem at this time was named Simeon. He was the son of Hillel "the great" and father of Gamaliel, and five years after this was himself made president of the Sanhedrin. When at a later period the expositions of the law made by the great rabbis were collected (into the Mishna), Rabbi Simeon was not quoted from; and this singular fact has led some Christian scholars to think that he became a believer in Jesus and may have been identical with this man. There was also a famous old Essene of this name. But "the name was so common that conjectures are precarious." Clearly, whatever eminence this Simeon may have secured was of little importance in the mind of the inspired writer. (1) *God hath chosen the weak and base things of this world to confound the things that are mighty. Just and devout.* Whether learned or not, he was known for rectitude and spirituality. This is the "perfection of character." Mic. 6: 8. (2) *Faith without works is dead.* (3) *The form of godliness without its power is hateful to God. Waiting.* What a singular contrast to those about him! The priests were continually going through their mummeries; the Pharisees and Sadducees were endlessly arguing; the multitudes were superstitiously paying their

tributes and offering their sacrifices; Herod was kept busy murdering his rivals; the Romans were encroaching more and more on the rights of the Hebrews; Simeon was simply waiting—and he had good reason to wait. See the next verse. (4) *They also serve who only stand and wait.* The consolation of Israel. Pious Jews often referred to the great Prince whom their prophets had led them to expect as "the consolation." Hope of him was the only comfort they had in this time of Israel's degradation. The phrase passed into an oath; and Jews who were not so pious swore by it: Let me never see the consolation if so and so be not true. (5) *Jesus says to us, I will not leave you comfortless. The Holy Ghost was upon him.* Simeon, living at a climatic hour in history, was doubtless the subject of unusual divine inspiration and leadership; but in our more ordinary spheres we may have the same holy companionship.

26. It was revealed. A beautiful legend tells us that in reading Isaiah's prophecy, years before, Simeon had been puzzled as to the meaning of what is now the fourteenth verse of the seventh chapter of Isaiah. Praying for light, he received the assurance that he should see its fulfillment. Should not see death. Perhaps it was this phrase which led to the general belief that Simeon

was very old. Luke says nothing about his age; but a spurious Gospel gives it at one hundred and thirteen years. **The Lord's Christ.** Jehovah's chosen One. We cannot too frequently remind ourselves that Christ is not a proper name, like Smith or Jones; but the phrase Jesus Christ is really Jesus the Chosen One, as we might say Garfield the President.

27. Came by the Spirit. For the privilege of divine leadership see the first of our "Practical Teachings." God's providence is incessantly working, whether we recognize it or not. To bystanders—perhaps even to Joseph and Mary—this may have seemed a chance meeting. **Parents.** Luke, who dwells more than any other evangelist on the miraculous birth of our Lord, repeatedly uses this phrase. "In common life it is almost obvious no other phrase was possible." **The custom of the law.** In connection with the mother's ceremony of purification forty days, after the birth of the babe, he was formally presented to the Lord, and then redeemed, or bought back again, by paying five shekels.

28. Took he him up. The priest usually took the child in his arms, as our ministers take infants when about to baptize them. Simeon appears to have received Jesus instead of the priest, except, indeed, as another legend tells us, he was himself a priest. He needed not to be told of any of the wonders that had already happened, but immediately recognized his Saviour.

29. Now lettest thou thy servant depart. Now thou hast emancipated thy slave. (See the second Practical Teaching.) **In peace.** A phrase not often used except in connection with the dying. He bids "an eternal farewell" to all his former hopes and fears, for all of life's interests are crowded out by the presence of the Messiah. (6) *No Christian has any apology for fretting or anxiety.*

30. Mine eyes have seen thy salvation. And now I am ready to look death in the face. But, after all, how little of Christ's salvation had Simeon seen! Jesus's wonderful words and works of love; the cross, on which in his own body he bore our sins; the sepulcher in the garden; his resurrection from the dead; his ascension into heaven; the wonderful pentecostal outpouring; the proclamation of the Gospel to the ends of the earth; and all that it has been during the centuries to the world and to individual souls—Simeon saw none of these things, but they are manifest to us. (7) *How greatly our responsibility increases with our privileges.*

32. Light....Gentiles....glory of...Israel. The truth of which the Hebrew race had been the custodian was to be increased, and, passing far beyond national lines, pervade the earth. The Sun of righteousness is to rise, until in its noontide splendor its healing beams should reach and enlighten all nations.

33. Joseph and his mother marvelled. Every new incident was a new source of amazement to them.

31. Fall and rising again. He was set as a stone in the midst of a fatal current—to be used by some as a stumbling-block, by others as a stepping-stone; by some, like Peter and Paul, as both, at different stages of their experience. (8) *Our destiny depends on our use of Gospel privileges. A sign. Spoken against.* Not one man then living was in harmony with Jesus's ideals. Even the best men and women—like Nicodemus and John the Baptist and Peter and Mary herself—were at first "offended" at him, and only gradually and partially came to understand him. He came into the world as a divine force, direct from God's throne, and clashed with, and eventually tore through, all earthly ideals and ambitions. The gentle words and the works of power which so console and inspire our hearts were a daily threat to the worldly priesthood, and the formal Pharisees, and the unscrupulous Herodians. A far-sighted observer might have foreseen his death from the outset. Later Jewish writings allude to him as the "deceiver," the "demoniac," and worse. Every-where the "sect" he founded was "spoken against" (Acts 28, 22); for a world steeped in loathsome iniquity could not tolerate the silent reproof of stainless lives. The prejudice raised against them was so blind and bitter that it came to be believed that they were incestuous and cannibals. Christianity is now fashionable throughout the civilized world, but even to this day an inflexible Christian with lofty ideals is pretty sure to be misunderstood and maligned by his ungodly neighbors. We should never forget that the Cross, which we cherish as the symbol of all that is holy, wear as an ornament, weave into our textiles, and carve into our architecture, was for many centuries the symbol of infamy.

35. A sword shall pierce. Shall strike. A prediction, perhaps of Mary's martyrdom; perhaps of the slow agony that must have torn her heart as her wonderful Son's career ran counter to all her preconceptions and seemed to end in a miserable death; perhaps it was meant to be a revelation of her own inherent sinfulness—she, too, must "fall" before she could "rise again;" must feel the pangs of repentance before she could experience the joys of salvation. **That the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.** This connects with verse 34; the statement about the "sword" being parenthetical. It is, then, for the purpose of revelation that the sign is uplifted. Jesus is himself the great test of human hearts. In Galilee and Jerusalem his very presence brought out the good that lingered in the hearts of robbers and harlots, and brought out the bad that lurked in the hearts of priests and Pharisees. Wherever he stepped the superficial distinctions of society were effaced, and men and women took rank according to the thoughts of their hearts. Wherever he is preached to-day the same is measurably true.

CRITICAL NOTES.

BY PROFESSOR MARCUS D. BUELL, BOSTON UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY.

The mother of Jesus had compared and pondered the things which had been said concerning her child by the angel, by her cousin Elisabeth, and by the shepherds; yet her understanding of what he was to be was of course not such as ours is now, nor even what it became afterward when her son had ascended. Acts 1, 14. She could not yet know that in the birth of her babe the Word had been made flesh; that in this infant soul was the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person; that he was before all things, and that in him all things were created and consisted.

Mary, as a true daughter of Judaism, could think of no sublimer destiny for her son than that of the traditional Jewish Messiahship. Her babe was to become a prophet and statesman greater than Moses; a king more victorious than David. Chap. 1, 32. It was fitting, therefore, that no item of his Jewish training should be neglected. He had been not only born of woman, but also born under the law, as Paul, Luke's apostolic teacher, long afterward wrote; it was therefore appropriate, as it was imperative, that the obligations and blessings of the law should be assumed and bespoken for him in the rite of circumcision.

The Baptist, years afterward, had misgivings about administering baptism to the Lord (Matt. 3. 4); but the Spirit that rested upon Mary did not permit her to feel, as we of this later time should feel, in view of the sinlessness of Jesus, the impropriety of submitting him to a rite which betokened "the putting off of the body of the flesh," not to mention the incongruity of the ceremonies of purification and presentation. In thus consciously acknowledging and securing for her child his religious rights and privileges, she was unconsciously co-operating to make him in all points like his brethren, so that he might thus "fulfill all righteousness."

While Mary and Joseph are thus performing the ceremonies connected with the formal ratification of the child's covenant relations, they are once again and finally instructed by the voice of prophetic inspiration concerning his Messianic destiny.

25. Behold. The narrator wishes us to note what an unexpected event accompanied the purification and presentation formalities. **Simeon.** A common name for a Jew. He cannot be identified. Apart from his trustworthy character we need to know no more of him. The chief attention is to be directed to what he said on this occasion. **Righteous, and devout.** These words are evidently intended to account for his interest in the coming of the Messiah, as well as for his prophetic inspiration. Not the wicked and worldly, but the holy and spiritually-minded, are moved by the Holy Spirit. **Consolation.** The national deliverance to be brought about by the Messiah. When, in the days of exile, Israel was suffering dejection and gloom, the Messianic hope would be naturally thought of as consolation, and the words of a prophet like Isaiah, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people," have inexpressible sweetness. **Upon him,** giving him more than his ordinary and human power to discern religious truth. Luke does not here refer to the Holy Spirit's influence upon moral character and life (as thought largely developed by his master Paul), but upon the mind.

26. Revealed. The first effect of the Holy Spirit's resting upon him. The Greek word is the one which was commonly applied to the obtaining of a response from an oracle. Thus it favors the idea that the revelation came to Simeon as a result in part of his yearning for the coming of the Messianic time. But only in part, for others had been as eager for this sight, and had not been given it. Revelations of the future are so rare, that we must look for some unusual circumstance when they do occur. The preparation of the world for the coming of its Saviour was just such a circumstance. **See death.** Instead of "die," to correspond with "see Christ." There is no emphasis on the idea of seeing. **The Lord's.** That is, God's. He was to see the Messiah whom God himself had sent forth. The words evidently allude to false Messiahs, vouchered for by human authority alone. How little did Simeon suspect, when that revelation came to him, how and when the Messiah would be pointed out to him! Compare John the Baptist's perplexity. Matt. 11. 3. We must think of Simeon not only as one instant in prayer, but also as a careful student of the times, and attentive to all the latest news from Rome.

27. In the spirit. The power of the Spirit quickening his perceptions for the discovery of the Messiah, even in the disguise of infancy. **Temple.** The temple enclosure, not the sanctuary. **Parents.** For in the eyes of the law Joseph was his father. **The child Jesus.** Instead of "Jesus," for vividness. If Simeon had not been "in the spirit" he would not have noticed the child. So the Spirit enabled John the Baptist to discern him. John 1. 33. So Samuel discerned David. 1 Sam.

16. 7, 12. **Do concerning him.** Present him in the temple, and offer a sacrifice for purification. Vers. 22, 23.

28. Received him. The word is purposely used instead of "took" to indicate Simeon's feeling. He now received the child as the fulfillment of the divine promise. **Blessed God.** Uttered words of thanks and praise.

29. Now. Now that I have seen the Messiah. **Depart.** From life. **Lord.** The Greek word here used expresses greater humility on the part of the user than does the usual word. **Thy word.** The promise that he should not die until he had seen the Christ. ver. 26. **In peace.** The coming of the Messiah enables him to depart without anxiety for the welfare of Israel.

30. Thy salvation. He has seen the person who is to deliver God's people.

31. All peoples. The deliverance of the Lord's people will enlist the attention of all nations.

32. A light. Further description of the Messianic salvation. The heathen are to see in the history of God's people, and especially in the coming of the Messiah, a revelation of the true God. **The glory.** The Messianic salvation is to be the pride and boast of the covenant people. Rom. 3. 1-2; 9. 4, 5.

33. Marveling. The Revised Version correctly represents their astonishment as continuing. How strange that the aged Simeon, like the shepherds and the Magi, had had a revelation concerning this child. Surely out of the mouth of these several witnesses the word of the Lord must be considered as confirmed. But the aged man had yet more to say.

34. Blessed them. Asked God in prayer to give them his blessing. The words of the prayer are not given. **Said unto Mary.** At the conclusion of his prayer. **Is set.** It is his destiny. **Falling and rising up.** In the moral and religious sense. The presentation of Christ should become the test by which the destiny of many Jews should be decided. Receiving him, they should receive the One that sent him; rejecting him, they should thereby reject their God. Multitudes, believing in him, should find in him the way, the truth, the life. John 15. 22; 1. 11, 12; Luke 20. 18. **A sign.** A living manifestation of God's grace and power. **Spoken against.** For the first time here is a vague allusion to the sufferings of the Messiah. Instead of universal acclamation, the Anointed of the Lord will meet opposition. How little does the gentle mother suspect how much is contained in these words!

35. A sword. The Greek word represents an unusually large and heavy sword. A vivid picture of the unutterable personal sorrow that would fall upon her maternal heart in the public persecution and cruel death of her son. **Thine own.** The original puts a pathetic emphasis upon these two words which is not easily reproduced in English. **That thoughts.** This clause sets forth the divine aim in sending a Messiah who shall be spoken against. He will prove a test of character. As certainly as a spectroscope shows the composition of a ray of starlight, so surely does a knowledge of Jesus reveal every man to himself and to others.

The Lesson Council.

Question 5. What was the Jewish expectation of "the consolation of Israel?"

We read in Isa. 25. 9, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." This is the "consolation of Israel" for which good old Simeon, in common with all Jews, had been waiting. The Holy Ghost was upon him, and his

eyes were opened to see in the child Jesus this "consolation" for which all Israel was waiting. Would that the Holy Ghost in like manner might come upon all the children of Abraham, that they might now receive the "consolation" for which they still wait.—*Rev. C. W. Cushing, D.D., Wheeling, W. Va.*

The "consolation of Israel" unquestionably meant the Messiah. Him the Jews awaited with various anticipations, according to each man's spiritual characteristics. Some looked for a temporal deliverer—a conquering king; others expected a prophet of great power; while a few doubtless yearned for a deliverer from sin, and the restoration of the nation to its former spiritual glory. Every man's ideal of Christ was colored by his own heart-life. The selfish expected through him some special gratification of self, while the holy looked for help in the mighty conflict with sin.—*Rev. D. C. Knowles, D.D., Tilton, N. H.*

The expectation was the appearance of a great prince, possibly not of divine, but of human origin, who would deliver Israel from political bondage, make Jerusalem the center of his temporal sovereignty, and the Jews rulers of the world. It was a gross, material, and narrow conception. Few indeed cherished the true spiritual idea that the only "consolation for Israel" and for all mankind is to be found in deliverance from sin.—*Rev. Henry Spillmeyer, D.D., East Orange, N. J.*

Even the most devout souls expected "the Comforter" to be a mighty prince who would overthrow the political enemies of Israel. Some with a purer vision saw that the real foes of their nation were selfishness, pride, and the great adversary, the devil, and looked for a Jesus to "save his people from their sins." The word "consolation" is kin to that strong word which John uses in his First Epistle, "We have an advocate with the Father," and this itself issued in that beautiful description of spiritual help in 2 Cor. 1, 3-7, and in 2 Thess. 2, 16, where the Gospel is called "an eternal comfort." This is the "strong encouragement" of Heb. 6, 18, and constantly suggests that souls like Simeon expected a Messiah who would above every thing else purify his nation and make it right with God.—*Rev. W. I. Haven, Boston, Mass.*

The New Testament and the teaching of the rabbis show that the Jews expected a Messiah who should spring from the line of David, become their king, deliver them from foreign bondage, subdue all their foes, and end all their troubles. Some rabbis called him *Menachem*, that is, "the comforter." As a righteous ruler, wielding superhuman power, he was to inaugurate an age of inconceivable splendor and blessing. Some descriptions of the anticipated glory of Jerusalem and the prosperity and happiness of the Jews are most extravagant. Jerusalem was to be lifted up nine miles into the air and become as large as all Palestine. Doubtless the more religious minds dwelt mainly upon the spiritual blessings of Messiah's reign.—*Prof. Charles F. Bradley, Evanson, Ill.*

Lesson Word-Pictures.

BY REV. E. A. RAND.

An old man, weary with many years, but "waiting for the consolation of Israel." O, when will the light of this advent fall upon his longing eyes! Some time, the Spirit has said, some time before death; but when? Does he know, this aged Simeon burdened with years, looking for Israel's consolation, that he will see it this

very day, see the shining of the Star that was to come forth out of Jacob, behold the Scepter that was to rise out of Israel? This very day behold Messiah, the Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace? Where will it be—what will be the manner of this manifestation of Israel's consolation? In Jerusalem's streets will there be the dazzle of a great, golden, triumphant retinue that has just swept down from heaven, the great Messiah-Prince sitting enthroned in its midst?

Has any one such an anticipation? Simeon has not. There is the pressure of an impulse upon him to go to the temple. He is strongly, strangely noticed, that is all. On his way to the temple no nothing peculiar. He hears naught that is unusual. There are no gorgeous street-retinues. He sees no great Hebrew-king. On the other hand, there is a file of heavily-armed Roman soldiers tramping along the street, and saying, virtually, "The Roman is king, the Hebrew a vassal."

Simeon has reached the temple. There is nothing unusual here. People come and go. The priests glide from court to court. The smoke of sacrifice ascends from the altar-top. The fine, clear voices of the singing Levites resound in the lofty, echoing temple. Nothing unusual! To-day is as weary yesterday.

But what is the meaning of that group over there? Only a father and mother—Joseph and Mary—who have brought an offering for the little babe in Mary's gentle arms. Only people of humble garb and lowly station.

That is all! Nothing unusual! But the child on the mother's bosom? What about that? Simeon cannot seem to remove his eyes from the babe. Simeon must look, cannot help looking.

Suddenly a veil drops before his eyes. Why that glad illumination of his face? Why that kindling of his sight? Why that lifting of the hands in glad surprise? That is the Child-Messiah! That is Israel's Prince! That is the Son's Conqueror! That is the son of Mary, yet Son of God!

Simeon cannot repress the holy, joyful, jubilant emotions in his heart. He cannot keep down his voice. He takes the Babe in his arms. His aged, wrinkled face is lifted in thanksgiving to God. And now the Spirit waves him as a reed by the wind sweeping down the Jordan valley. He breaks forth into the *Nunc Dimittis*. He craves of God the blessing of peace upon his soul, now ready to depart. With the vision of the prophet ever young, this old servant of God looks abroad upon the earth and sees the Light of the redemption going everywhere. A reverent awe has fallen upon Joseph and Mary, and they bend to take the blessing of the old man who carries in his arm the child of Mary; the Redeemer of the world.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY MARTHA VAN MARGER.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Welcoming Jesus.*

Talk about the welcome Jesus met when he came to earth. Who were glad to see him? Yes, Mary and Joseph. Call on some child to tell the story of last Sunday's lesson. Tell that the shepherds welcomed Jesus because they knew he was the Son of God. The angels were sent to tell them, because they were good men who were watching for the coming of Jesus. God saw this desire in their hearts, and he did then what he does now, makes Jesus known to those who want to know him. Not many were watching for Jesus when he came, so there were not many to welcome him. Tell that this lesson introduces us to two people who were

glad to see Jesus. Print "Simeon" and "Anna" in large letters on the board.

Show a picture of the temple. Tell how beautiful it was, and how it used to be crowded with people some days, but every day there were some there to worship God. Tell that Simeon and Anna were both old. They loved to go to the temple and were often there. They were looking for Jesus to come, and were all ready to welcome him. Open the Bible and read two or three of the prophecies about his coming. This was the way they learned about Jesus—they studied God's holy word.

Point out the Holy Place in the temple, where sacrifices were offered, and tell of the custom of giving little children to God. Make a word picture of Mary coming with her offering of doves. The priest offered the doves, and then took the Holy Child and held him before the altar of God. Now Jesus was given to G. d.

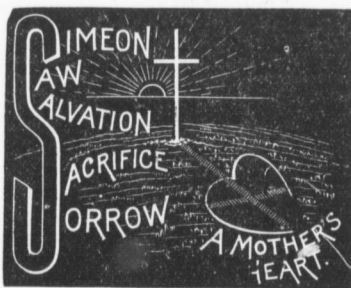
Tell the story of Simeon's coming and what he did. How did he know Jesus? God opened his eyes to see who the babe was! And good old Anna, too, saw and understood, because she loved God, and wanted to know his Son Jesus.

Show how children can welcome Jesus. The heart that wants to please him will be sure to know where to find him. Sing, "Come to Jesus."



Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



QUESTIONS FOR THE BLACKBOARD REVIEW. Whose name appears at the top of the board? Who was he? What had been revealed to him? What did he see in prophetic vision? 1. A light represented on the board as the rising sun, dispelling the darkness, and symbolizing the light for a revelation to the Gentiles. Who is this light? JESUS. 2. He saw in this light Salvation. For whom is this salvation? 3. What next did he see? Ans. Sacrifice. How is it represented on the board? [Point to the cross.] Could salvation come in any other way except by sacrifice? 4. We see on the board that the cross throws a shadow that rests on a heart. Can any one tell what Simeon saw in that? [See verse 35.] When and where was this fulfilled. [See John 19, 35.]

DIRECTIONS FOR COLORS. All the words in white; the sun bright yellow; the cross and shadow brown; the heart red.

Berean Methods. The Teachers' Meeting.

Attend carefully to the "background" of this lesson.

I. *The first forty days:* a) The silent mother in Bethshem, brooding over her sacred mysteries; b) The shepherds publishing abroad their glad news; c) The wise men and Herod, each conjecturing from his own standpoint whereto these strange events might lead; d) The general public agog with rumors. . . II. *"The custom of the law":* a) The ceremony of naming a Hebrew child; b) The sacrifice required at the purification; c) What this ceremony meant to devout Jews; d) Inferences drawn from Mary's offering. . . III. *Illustrations from the Scripture:* a) Passages concerning the purification in Leviticus and Numbers; b) Simeon's characteristics, Mic. 6, 8; c) "A light to lighten the Gentiles," Isa. 9, 2, 40, 1; 49, 6; d) "A sign spoken against," Acts 28, 22; John 8, 48; 1 Cor. 1, 22, 23. . . IV. *Hebraisms of the lesson:* a) The "Consolation of Israel;" b) The Lord's Christ; c) Depart in peace, etc. . . V. *Illustrative legends:* a) That Simeon was a rabbi; b) That he was blind and received his sight at the approach of Jesus; c) That Jesus shone like a pillar of light in his mother's arms; d) That in reading the Scriptures Simeon had years before been troubled by Isa. 7, 14, but had been divinely assured that he should not die until the promise of that verse had been fulfilled; e) That he was one hundred and thirteen years of age. . . VI. *The importance of this incident to us* because of Simeon's unusual breadth and clearness of vision of God's plan: a) "The Holy Ghost was upon him;" b) "Came by the Spirit;" c) "The face of all people;" d) "A light to lighten the Gentiles." . . VII. *General teachings of the lesson:* a) That the Holy Ghost has in all ages been vouchsafed in large measure to every heart prepared for its reception; b) That the godly man has every needed truth revealed to him, and is guided by the Holy Spirit, even when sometimes unconscious of the guidance; c) That the Son of God fulfilled all the requirements of the Mosaic law; d) That Christ came to save all people; e) That this infant son of poverty was the glory of his race; f) That Jesus stands in the way of every man like a stone, to be used as a stepping-stone or a stumbling-block according to that man's choice; g) That men's opinions of Christ reveal what manner of men they are.

References. FREEMAN'S HAND-BOOK. Ver. 25: The "Consolation," 752. . . FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Poetical, 3266, 3763. Ver. 25: Prose, 4888; Poetical, 3698. Ver. 26: Poetical, 451, 3401; Prose, 3008, 3049, 9554, 10615. Ver. 29: Prose, 1289. Ver. 30: Prose, 11996, 11578. Ver. 32: Poetical, 3266, 3763; Prose, 3070, 4049, 8943, 9035, 10280. Ver. 33: Poetical, 3243, 3248.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Seer's Sight of Christ.

I. THE SEER.

1. Righteous. "Was just." v. 25.
"To do justly, and to love mercy." Mic. 6, 8.
2. Prayerful. "Devout." v. 25.
"Fervent prayer of a righteous man." James 5, 16.
3. Believing. "Waiting for the consolation." v. 25.
"We have waited for him." Isa. 25, 9.
4. Spiritual. "Holy Ghost. . . upon him." v. 25.
"Moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Pet. 1, 21.

II. HIS SIGHT OF CHRIST.

1. The Saviour. "Thy salvation." v. 30.
"I have waited for thy salvation." Gen. 49, 18.
2. The world's Saviour. "Gentiles." v. 32.
"For a light to the Gentiles." Isa. 42, 6.

3. **The Rejected Saviour.** "Spoken against." v. 34.
"A stone of stumbling." Isa. 8. 14.
4. **The Suffering Saviour.** "Sword shall pierce." v. 35.
"By the cross...his mother." John 19. 25.
5. **The Discerning Saviour.** "Thoughts...revealed." v. 35.
"A stumbling-block...power of God." 1 Cor. 1. 22-24.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

"God Moves in a Mysterious Way His Wonders to Perform."

Almost every circumstance of the advent of the Son of God differed from what it would have been if planned by you or me. This is especially true of the incidents of this lesson.

1. *Jesus was poor.* God might have ushered him into the world through the golden gates of a palace; but he was born in a caravansary cradled in a manger, bred in a degraded town, toiled as a carpenter, and, even while controlling storms and diseases and devils and death, he "had not where to lay his head." We would not have had it so; but "thus it became him." Men when they would raise a house apply their mechanical forces to the basement, and, lifting the lower portions, lift it all. So Jesus could never have elevated humanity had he begun with the topmost layer.

2. *He conformed to laws framed to meet the needs of ordinary men.* He was consecrated to God's service like any other infant. He was baptized like a penitent sinner. He paid his Roman taxes as if he were not himself of prouder royal lineage than Tiberius Cæsar. He conformed to the temple ritual like any ordinary Hebrew sinner. Our first impulse would be, like Peter's, to exclaim: "Pity thyself, Lord; this shall not be unto thee." It is only after we have partaken of his spirit that we can understand in how profound a sense he "came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill."

3. *God's ministers turned away from the Son of God.* It is easy to understand the deadly hostility of an Idumean Herod to one of "David's royal line." It seems natural, too, that the ecclesiastical and civil authorities, both of them rather burdensome and unpopular, should hang close together. But the deep spiritual degeneracy of the priesthood is startling. Here was the capital city all astrife with wonder, expecting the speedy fulfillment of prophecy; an angel had appeared to a priest in the temple; the shepherds of the temple flock had heard the strains of the heavenly host; even Gentiles had seen the star of the King and had come to worship him. But no greeting awaits him from the servants of his Father's house. Only the form of religion was there. Its spirit was found only in the heart of the humble devout man who daily waited for the consolation of Israel.

4. *God often uses strange instruments to do his work.* We would not have chosen an obscure man to make this utterance; rather some famous teacher, learned and holy; and we would have had Annas present, and Herod, and the Wise Men. The legend-makers have been busy, during the centuries since, trying to make this simple incident worthy the occasion. (See Notes, and Teachers' Meeting.) But man's ways are not God's ways. If we had had the great Reformation in project we would hardly have chosen the German monk to bring it about. Men judge by the outward appearance, but God judges the heart.

5. *The stepping-stones of God's providence are often turned into stumbling-blocks by man's perversity.*

HOME READINGS.

- M. Jesus brought into the temple. Luke 2. 25-35.
Th. A day of salvation. Isa. 55. 1-10.
W. "A light of the Gentiles." Isa. 42. 1-8.
Th. Salvation for the Gentiles. Isa. 49. 5-12.
F. The mother's sorrow. J. hn 19. 23-27.
S. A stone of stumbling. 1 Pe. 2. 1-10.
8. Two views of Christ. 1 Cor. 1. 18-25.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 2.9, New Canadian Hymnal.
Again we meet with one accord,
In God's appointed way.
- No. 10, N. W. Canadian Hymnal.
Let earth and heaven agree,
Angels and men be joined.
- No. 4, New Canadian Hymnal.
O for a thousand to guess to sing
My great Redeemer's praise.

TIME.—B. C. 4

PLACE.—Courts of the temple.

RULERS.—Same as before.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The universality of redemption.

Angel voices ever singing,
When all thy mercies.

Holy, holy, holy!

Tell me more about Jesus.

The name of our salvation.

O let us be glad.

No name so sweet.

How sweet the name.

Sing them over again.

The gospel bell is ringing.

Who'll be the next?

Love divine.

Beautiful the little hands.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. Simeon, v. 25-27.

What is to be understood by "waiting for the Consolation of Israel?"

What was to be understood by "the Holy Ghost was upon him?"

[In answering this question, do not forget that Jesus said the Comforter could not come until he had gone away, and that this was more than thirty years before the singular out-pouring of divine power upon the disciples in the upper room at Jerusalem.]

What is the meaning, as it was understood by those who first read this gospel, of the phrase "The Lord's Christ?"

How can a man "come by the Spirit" from place to place?

How far could a devout lay Jew come "into the temple?"

What was the custom of the law?

What indication of the poverty of the "parents" of Jesus is there in the context?

2. The Child Jesus, v. 27-32.

What gave Simeon this inevitable satisfaction?

In what sense had his eyes seen God's salvation?

Did the Jews learn from the shepherds that "all people" were to be blessed, or was that a general expectation among devout Jews?

Who fell and rose again because of Christ's life?

What sign, which was once the type of all ignominy, has become the glory of Christendom?

How is Jesus a revealer of the thoughts of the heart?

3. Mary his Mother, v. 33-35.

In what sense was Mary's soul stabbed by the career of her divine Son?

Practical Teachings.

It is possible to go and come in our daily duties "by the Spirit." It is possible to be so informed and saturated by divine force that not one misstep shall be taken, not one misjudgment made, not one evil thought cherished, not one wrong deed done, or wrong word spoken.

We have all the same reason to say to God, "Let now thy servant depart in peace," that Simeon had. If our hearts were as correctly attuned to the divine harmonies as his, we would cherish no ambitions that were not secondary to the glory of God.

No great new force can come into this world without tripping up many a self-confident one and raising many a fallen one.

That which is a cause of contempt in one age is often the highest honor in the next. Each new scientific discovery, the Protestant reformation, abolitionism, advanced humanitarianism, are ready instances of the working of this law.

Hints for Home Study.

1. Find in the law of Moses the prescription for a sacrifice in connection with the circumcision of an infant child.

2. Find, if you can, a legend identifying Simeon with a famous Hebrew rabbi.

3. Find what circumstances made it possible for a layman thus to take incidental part in the services of the temple.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Simeon, v. 25-27.

In what city did Simeon live?

What is said of his character?

For what was he waiting?

What revelation was made to him?

By whom was this revelation made?

To what place was he guided, and by whom?

What promise of sure guidance have we? Prov. 3. 6.

2. The Child Jesus, v. 27-32.

Who was brought into the temple?

For what purpose was Jesus brought?

What offering did the law require? ver. 24.

What did Simeon do with the child?

What did he say he was now willing to do?

What had he been permitted to see?

To whom would the Saviour prove a blessing? (GOLD-EN TEXT.)

3. Mary the Mother, v. 33-38.

How did the words of Simeon affect Mary?

What did Simeon say to her about the child?

What about sorrow to herself?

When did this great sorrow come to Mary? See John 19. 25.

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That long life is God's gift?

2. That Jesus is the light of the world?

3. That our salvation costs much suffering?

Home Work for Young Bereans.

Find the passage in Numbers which gives the "custom of the law" concerning young children.
Name three prominent Bible characters consecrated to God in childhood.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What holy man lived in Jerusalem? Simeon.
For what was he looking? For the coming of Christ.

Who had foretold his coming? The prophets.
What had been promised Simeon? That he should see Christ.

Who had promised it? God.

What place did he enter one day? The temple.
By whom was he led to this place? By the spirit of the Lord.

Who were there that very day? Joseph and Mary.
Whom had they brought to the temple? The Child Jesus.

For what purpose? To make an offering for him.
What did Simeon see in the babe? The Saviour of the world.

Who showed him this? God.

What did he do when he saw Jesus? He took him in his arms and praised God.

What did he say? That now he was ready to die.

What had he now seen? The salvation of God.

Whom did Simeon bless? Joseph and Mary.

To whom will God show hidden things? To his true saints.

Words with Little People.

God has promised a Saviour to you.

Welcome him when you see him.

Look for him in the house of God.

Watch and wait for his coming.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. Who was Simeon? A just and devout man waiting for Christ's coming.

2. Under what influence did he speak? "The Holy Ghost was upon him."

3. What reason did Simeon give for his readiness to depart? "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

4. How did Simeon describe Jesus? "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

5. What did Simeon prophesy to Mary? That a sword should pierce her soul.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

8. How did the angels bear witness to him?
By singing praises to God at his birth, and by sending the shepherds to find the child Jesus in a manger at Bethlehem.

9. What witness did the wise men of the East bear?
Being led by a star to the house where the infant lay, they came and worshipped him.

A. D. 8.]

LESSON VI. CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH OF JESUS.

[Feb. 9.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. Luke 2. 52.

Authorized Version.

Luke 2. 40-52. [Commit to memory verses 49-52.]
40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him.

41 Now his parents went to Je-ru'-sa-lem every year at the feast of the passover.

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Je-ru'-sa-lem after the custom of the feast.

43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Je-ru'-sa-lem; 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 Je-ru'-sa-lem, 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

Revised Version.

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him.

41 And his parents went every year to Je-ru'-sa-lem at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up after the custom of the feast;

42 and when they had fulfilled the days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus tarried behind in Je-ru'-sa-lem; and his parents knew it not; but supposing him to be in the company, they went a day's journey; and they sought for him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance; and when they found him not, they returned to Je-ru'-sa-lem, seeking for him. And it came to pass, after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them,

43 and asking them questions; and all that heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.

44 And when they saw him, they were astonished: and

45 and when they saw him, they were astonished: and

46 and when they saw him, they were astonished: and

his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought these 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 favor with God and man.

his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be in my 50 Father's house? And they understood not the saying 51 which he spake unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and he was subject unto them; and his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

52 And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

General Statement.

To follow the narrative given in these verses one must imagine the divine Child amid his Nazarene surroundings; the delightful hopes which would arise in his heart when his parents promised him this trip to Jerusalem; the long journey there, occupying three or four days—or more—and probably made by crossing the Jordan near the south end of Lake Gennesaret, and slowly walking with the rest of the caravan from Nazareth through the rural towns of Perea, a region at that time rich with trees and fountains, and thickly populated; then the entry into Jerusalem; the days spent there in devout though formal worship; the steady pursuit of truth by Jesus; the hurry and excitement of the return; the anxiety of the father and mother over his loss; the rapid retracing of their steps to Jerusalem, and his discovery there; and the quiet return to Nazareth, where he again "became subject unto them."

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

40. **The child grew.** Body, mind, and soul grew in vigorous health. He was the Son of man—humanity's Consummate Flower—and his stainless childhood must have been indescribably attractive. He simply "grew." (1) *To grow is your highest and holiest duty to-day.* **Waxed.** Increased. **Wisdom.** Spiritual wisdom seems to have been the most noticeable feature in Jesus's development; "Strength" was John the Baptist's most noticeable trait. **Grace of God.** See John 1:14; Isa. 41:2, 3. The brief statements of this verse are incomparably nobler than the flimsy inventions of the apocryphal Gospels. An ancient writer has beautifully said, "His doing nothing wonderful is itself a kind of wonder." His growth was fourfold—in stature, in wisdom, in the favor of God, and in popularity. See verse 52. The sweet grace of the Spirit of God made him lovable. (2) *There is not a child or youth who might not live so that this verse would be true of him.*

41. **Went to Jerusalem.** According to the best authorities the poverty of the common people of Palestine in Jesus's time was desperate; but their religion exalted them at stated times to Jerusalem, and at great expense. (3) *Christianity makes no detailed demands on our time or money, for it claims all of both.* **Every year.** Every male Israelite was bound to make this pilgrimage, and many pious people believed women should go also. Only "the sick, the aged, boys under-five, the blind, the deaf, and lunatics" were permitted to remain at home.

42. **Twelve years old.** His twelfth birthday made him a "son of the law," and on it he began to incur legal obligations. Jewish customs were very precise. When Jesus was weaned, at the age of three, he began to wear a fringed coat. See Num. 15:38-41, and Deut. 22:12. Two years later he was set to memorize a small portion of the "law" as a daily lesson. Now, at the age of twelve, he must wear a "phylactery," for he was regarded as "grown up;" he must go to the passover feast at Jerusalem; and on his return he must begin to learn a trade. (4) *Christians, like their Master, must be careful to fulfil all proper religious customs.* **After the custom.** In the usual way; that is, by a caravan. A large number of families from Nazareth and vicinity would make the journey together.

43. **Fulfilled the days.** The entire festival was seven days long; but you might return home after the third day. It seems probable, though it is not certain,

that Jesus's parents set out for Nazareth before the close of the feast. **As they returned.** While the active men were preparing to get the caravan together. **Trarried behind.** A worthless legend tells how Jesus started with his parents, but left the caravan to return to Jerusalem. Probably the three or four days already spent there had been passed almost entirely within the temple courts. That was the center of interest for all devout Jews; and an endless succession of ceremony and interest drew the multitudes there. It united in itself all attractions for a crowd—the holiest shrine, the busiest mart, the most magnificent promenade, the most distinctively national of all the proud structures of the capital. More could be seen and heard here than in all the rest of the city. On the morning of this fourth or fifth day Jesus probably returned to the place where he had spent the greater part of every day since his arrival. **Knew not of it.** The male population of Jerusalem at the passover season was estimated at nearly three millions. "In such a crowd it was easy to be lost." In the caravans of Galilean pilgrims the children seem to have usually traveled together, and it is not strange that Joseph and Mary lost sight of Jesus for three or four hours. Whether Jesus intentionally remained behind to teach to his parents the lesson that we are ourselves to receive from this narrative, or whether he made a mistake such as any other child might have done in the same circumstances, depends on whether or not the divinity of his nature was perfectly revealed before his human powers reached maturity. It is a question of deep interest, but not of great practical importance. No sure answer can be given, and time spent upon it is wasted.

44. **A day's journey.** The first day's journey of a caravan was proverbially short, not more than six or eight miles. When fully under way they go about twenty-five miles a day. El Birch, six miles north of Jerusalem, is said to be the place where Joseph's caravan stopped. **Kin-folk and acquaintance.** Every member of this company was doubtless well acquainted with every other. Neighbors at the outset, their journey to Jerusalem must have brought them much closer together, for a caravan is almost as exclusive and inclusive as an ocean steamer. With the conditions of Oriental life every detail of this narrative harmonizes.

45. **They turned back again.** At this point their parental alarm begins.

46. **After three days.** On the third day. Lange

suggests that one day was spent in departure, one in return, and one in search. But they probably had not set out until late in the afternoon of the first day, and only three or four hours would be required to bring them back to Jerusalem from this first night's stopping-place. The search was probably long and tedious. An ancient city without street numbers or directories, with millions of pilgrims packed into an area less than quarter the size of New York city, would present unspeakable difficulties; then, too, Joseph and Mary very evidently had failed to understand Jesus, and would not readily look for him in the right place. **In the midst of the doctors.** Among wise men, professional students of the holy law.

CRITICAL NOTES.

Through the five preceding lessons from the opening chapters of Luke's gospel we have been told of preparations made and predictions uttered concerning the Messiah. We have seen him lying, like any other little passive human babe, first in the manger, then in the arms of his mother, and then in those of the aged Simeon. He has as yet, in this period of speechless infancy, discovered no trait of individuality, either by act or articulation. But what of the period of childhood that next succeeded? Was this boy, according to our popular saying, father to the man? After he had ascended, could any one recall any deed or sentence of his boyhood which seemed prophetic of his subsequent life-work? Certainly his mother, if any one would have treasured up such reminiscences. Out of many such remembered incidents, the one that forms the subject of our sixth lesson alone remains on record. No one who is acquainted with the attempts of the apocryphal writers to picture the boyhood of Jesus can fail to be impressed with the contrasted simplicity and strength of this incident in Luke's gospel.

40. The general statement of this verse is meant to introduce the incident that follows, by saying that his childhood had begun. **Grew.** In physical stature and proportions. Hitherto he has been only an infant in arms. **Waxed strong.** His physical strength increased with his growth. **Filled with wisdom.** The Greek represents this as a continuing process. As a true human being, he gained knowledge, not by miracle, but by observation and reflection, as every other child does. He went abroad in the village streets; he asked the questions that every child asks. He learned the language of his people by hearing it talked and using it. He learned the Hebrew alphabet by dint of application. He gained the use of carpenters' tools, not by intuition, but by imitation and use. **The grace of God.** These words relate to his spiritual development. In the realm of religious and spiritual knowledge he also advanced and developed.

41. Every year. A glimpse is given here of the religious régime of the Nazareth home. Other Galilean households have been neglectful of their public religious duties, but this one was not. The original requirement that every male should appear three times in the year in the temple (Exod. 23. 17) had from the time of the captivity been relaxed.

42. Twelve years old. At the end of his childhood period. He would now begin to wear the phylactery in the synagogue and be called a "son of the law." He was henceforth regarded as a member of the congregation. **After the custom.** Went up as a matter of religious obligation.

43. The days. The seven days. Exod. 12. 1. **The boy Jesus.** This Rev. ver. translation is preferable. **Tarried behind.** Absorbed in what he saw and heard on this his first visit to the holy city, he did not observe that his parents had gone. According to Josephus, the

44. Thy father. This was the only possible way in which Mary could speak to her son of Joseph. Notice what a singular contrast occurs in the next phrase, when he tells her he must be about his Father's business.

51. Subject unto them. The only perfect child the world has ever seen was a model of submission to his parents.

32. Increased in wisdom. His beautiful development up to twelve went peacefully on, after the incidents given in this lesson, to manhood. His youth continued in a natural, normal increase of every thing that is beautiful in body, mind, and soul.

city had as many as three million inhabitants during passover week. An accidental separation from his company would be nothing strange under such circumstances.

44. Company. The word means a company that travel together; one of the caravans that had come from Nazareth. The caravan may have been a large one, moving along the winding road in various groups. His parents supposed they should find him in one of these groups when the whole company had gathered at the appointed halting-place at night-fall. **They sought.** The Greek word represents a prolonged search.

45 They returned. The next morning, while the caravan pursued its northward way, **seeking for him.** The original represents uncertainty and eagerness in their quest. They were not sure that they might meet him on the highway.

46. After three days. The day of leaving Jerusalem is included, after the Jewish manner. They may have continued their search during a part of the second day. **Sitting.** In the customary attitude of a pupil. In Mohammedan mosques pupils may frequently be seen sitting on the floor in semicircles at the feet of an instructor. **Doctors.** The rabbis, the professional expounders of the Mosaic law. **And asking them questions.** His questions were suggested by their teaching. The rabbis were fond of discussing subtle questions, such as the minutiae of Sabbath observance, and the comparative importance of various commandments.

47. Understanding. Not at his learning, for he had had no technical training (John 7. 15), but at his native insight. Here was the first public appearance of that quickness and keenness of mind which years afterward silenced the subtlest of his foes. **Answers.** The rabbis questioned him after their manner and were astonished at the replies he gave them. There was here, already, a manifestation of that mental readiness which told him what to say when asked as to the lawfulness of giving tribute to Cæsar.

48. Astonished. To find him so employed in such a place. The rabbis demanded and received very marked deference from the common people. Her child's boldness in presuming to hold discussions with these learned men was in strange contrast to the modesty he had hitherto manifested. It is probable that Mary did not wait to hear what her child was saying, but in her agitation addressed him at once as soon as she saw him. **His mother.** She would naturally, perhaps unconsciously, assume greater authority over him than would Joseph, owing to the peculiar circumstances of his birth. **Son.** She does not call him by his own name, but uses a term that gently asserts her authority. O ye mothers! What a scepter has God put into your hands! **Thud-dalt.** Tarried behind in Jerusalem and obliged us to seek for thee. **Behold.** Another way of saying, "Consider how anxious we have been about thee." A woman's instinctive appeal for sympathy. **Sought thee.** The Greek is more vivid, "are seeking thee." **Sorrowing.**

last. He goes over the old road to Jerusalem, his boyish imagination deeply impressed by the old associations of song and story gathering about the way. What a moment it is when Jerusalem bursts upon his view—"the joy of the whole earth," "the city of the Great King!" With what eagerness he presses after the throng crowding into Jerusalem's hoary gates! The streets, how animated and fascinating! And the temple! How hushed are his feet, but how loudly throbbing is his heart, as he steps within the sacred walls! He sees the priests in their vestments. He hears the rich voices of the Levites singing. He beholds the red flames crowning the altar. How stilled and reverent is his soul! And passover—wonderful festival! The round, white moon of the passover rolling on in its glorious way above Olivet, and then the sacred festival-rites in this, the holy city! It is all over at last, and Joseph and Mary have passed out of the city gates, their faces set joyously toward their distant home.

It is true that Jesus is not with them, but that does not give special alarm. He is somewhere in the company. Doubtless he is among his kinsfolk. But a day's journey has been traversed, and he does not appear! Joseph and Mary are alarmed. They turn back. They retrace the way. They inquire. "Any one seen a boy of twelve, a boy of Nazareth? You can tell him by his bright, handsome face, his locks so luxuriant, his look as into strange things afar. Any one seen such a boy? He may have the Galilean peculiarity of speech, and you may tell him, this lost boy of twelve, by that sign." They go through the gates of the city, looking eagerly, inquiring anxiously. They hunt in the streets. "Any one seen a boy of twelve from Galilee?" They go to the place where they had been guests at passover. Nobody has seen this boy of twelve. With anxious hearts they come to the temple. They look along its courts. O, if they could find him! For three days they have been hunting, asking if any one may have seen a boy of twelve: but they have asked in vain.

But what is that temple-crowd over at the right? They may know some of the people in it. They may remember old Simon, the Pharisee, and there is old Nathan, the Sadducee, and other learned heads are there. Hear the deep bass of their voices. How busily they argue! But hush! What high, melodious childlike voice is that in the very heart of the crowd—a voice replying to the grave doctors? Why kindles Mary's eye? Why does Joseph look up so startled? They are asking—but no matter what they are asking; their voices are drowned in the applause that follows this eager boy-voice.

"Why, it is our son!" Joseph and Mary are saying in amazement.

He is drawn away from the crowd. He is led apart. He is questioned by his mother.

Why has he so dealt with them?

He? Why, are they ignorant? Must he not be about his Father's business? he asks.

What does he mean?

They look wonderingly at one another. His Father's business! How strange!

He goes with them to Nazareth. He is subject to them; but how strange his words! Mary hides them, like Jewels strange and rare, in memory's treasure-box. His Father's business!

What did he mean?

Ah! has Mary forgotten that the son of Mary is the Son of God also?

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Jesus as a Child.*

Jesus at home. Describe the home of the Eastern

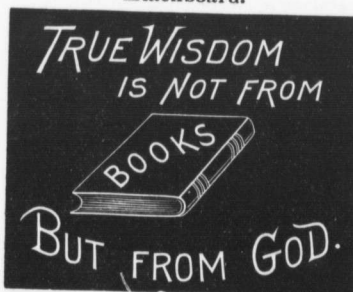
peasant—a one story house without windows or floor, very little furniture, and that the simplest. In such a house Jesus lived in Nazareth. He was poor, yet he was the Lord of glory! Let us never be ashamed of poverty. This little home, though poor, was rich, for Love was there, and love is heavenly riches. Here Jesus grew up. How did he grow? Show two plants, one strong and healthy, the other pale and sickly. Talk about them, letting children tell which growth is a picture of the way Jesus grew.

Jesus in the temple. Draw the lesson-story from the children. Jesus was twelve years old now. He looked like other boys, but he was different in one thing from all boys who ever lived. See if children can tell in what he was different. Tell what he said of himself. "I do always those things that please him." Does any boy always do the things that please God? Show that there was no sin in Jesus. It is sin that makes frowns, hard words, unkind acts. None of these were seen in Jesus, and we are to try to be like him. Have enough of a map on the board to enable you to follow the route from Nazareth to the Jordan, so southward to Jericho, and then over the hills to Jerusalem. See if children understand what the passover was, and make a little picture of the days spent there. Tell how Jesus went to the temple to listen and learn. Where others sought pleasure, he sought wisdom. Why? He had a work to do for his Father, and he wanted to get ready for it.



Jesus, our Pattern. Tell of a boy who wanted to make a peculiar kind of kite. He could not do it until a pattern was given him. God knew that we could not become true and strong and beautiful until we had a pattern. So he gave us Jesus. We must look at him if we want to grow like him. Use cut, and teach that love and wisdom must grow together in us if we are to be like Jesus. Talk about the kind of boy Jesus was—obedient, truthful, earnest, conscientious—getting ready for work. Sing "We'll try to be like Jesus."

Blackboard.



This lesson teaches how Jesus increased in wisdom as well as stature, and the blackboard makes the application by showing how true wisdom is attained. The foundation, or first step of true wisdom, is the knowledge we get by giving ourselves to God. The heart first and then the intellect. Book-knowledge alone will never cause any one to "increase in favor with God." Read I Cor. 1. 20. "Hath not God made foolish the

wisdom of this world?" If one of the scholars should devote his life to the scientific study of the Bible, and be able to read it in the original tongue in which it was written, and correct every error of the translator, but yet not give his heart to God, it would not save his soul. How, then, shall one grow in knowledge and in favor with God?

GET CLOSE TO GOD.
RECEIVE AND BELIEVE.
OBEY HIS WORD.
WORK FOR HIM.

To be a fruit-bearing, growing tree, you must be planted, rooted, trained, and pruned in the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.

Berean Methods. The Teachers' Meeting.

Make sketch-map of Palestine. Let the teachers trace the journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem.... Brief word-pictures of scenes of journey, and of probable characteristics of the caravan.... Make clear the occasion of this visit: what this feast stood for; who ordinarily participated in it; how it was celebrated; studies of the "doctors," etc.... The customs connected with a Hebrew boy becoming a "son of the law,".... This lesson might be effectively studied in four scenes: 1) The caravan; 2) The festival city; 3) The departure; 4) Discovery of Jesus in the temple.... Lessons from the growth of Jesus. (See Thoughts for Young People.) Every youth should grow as he grew, in stature, wisdom, strength of spirit, general favor, and the grace of God. Emphasize this. At no period of his life was he more really an exemplar than when he thus combined scrupulous attention to his heavenly Father's business with subjection to his parents.... The accounts of Jewish child-life in Farrar, Edersheim, and Stapfer should be read if possible.... Spend no time on doubtful questions, such as whether Jesus intentionally stayed behind.... Make plain how easily a boy might stray away from his parents in such a city at such a time without blame attachable to either.... A good opportunity to impress the duty of obedience to parents.

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 44: Caravans, 69; a "day's journey," 315; the first day's journey, 753. Ver. 46: Scribes and doctors, 648; the "king's porch" of the temple, 704; doctors and disciples, 754.... FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Ver. 41: Poetical, 3854; Prose, 10607. Ver. 47: Poetical, 3272, 3273. Ver. 48: Prose, 10001. Ver. 51: Prose, 4035, 4036, 4051. Ver. 52: Poetical, 370; Prose, 2732-2736, 9239-9275.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE. The Child Jesus.

I. A HUMAN CHILD.

Grew and waxed strong. v. 40.
"Partakers of flesh and blood." Heb. 2. 14.
"The Word was made flesh." John 1. 14.

II. A GODLY CHILD.

The grace of God was upon him. v. 40.
"Grace is poured into thy lips." Psa. 45. 2.
"Spirit.... shall rest upon him." Isa. 11. 2, 3.

III. A THOUGHTFUL CHILD.

In the midst of the doctors. v. 46.
"Happy.... that findeth wisdom." Prov. 3. 13.
"Add to your faith.... knowledge." 2 Pet. 1. 5.

IV. AN INTELLIGENT CHILD.

Astonished at his understanding. v. 47.
"Wondered at the gracious words," Luke 4. 22.
"Never man spake like this man." John 7. 46.

V. AN EARNEST CHILD.

I must be about my Father's business. v. 49.
"I delight to do thy will." Psa. 40. 7.
"I must work.... while it is day." John 9. 4.

VI. AN OBEDIENT CHILD.

Was subject unto them. v. 51.
"Children, obey your parents." Eph. 51.
"Hearken unto thy father." Prov. 23. 22.

VII. A POPULAR CHILD.

Increased.... in favor with.... man. v. 52.
"So shalt thou find favor." Prov. 3. 3, 4.
"Serveth Christ.... approved of men." Rom. 14. 18.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Lessons from Jesus's Youthful Growth.

1. *Jesus's physical growth has his lessons for us.* It is an old proverb that a sound mind needs a sound body to maintain it. Young people who are careless of nature's laws inevitably suffer the penalty. No one can wrong his body, or even suffer from any physical infirmity, without a lessening of his intellectual vigor and his moral force. Our bodies are talents intrusted to us by our heavenly Father, and we should hold them as sacred to his service as our minds or our souls.

2. *Jesus's intellectual development is a model for us.* God might have endowed him at the outset with infinite knowledge. His increase in wisdom is a beautiful illustration of the divine purpose that the Messiah should be in very truth the Son of man, developing from the weakness and ignorance of infancy to the strength and wisdom of maturity. Your mind has been intrusted to you by the same kind God. Develop your intellect.

3. *Jesus grew in his spiritual nature.* He had no sin to repent, no faults to amend; but his youth was formative as our young days are, and as really probationary as ours. His temptations were as real. His youth presented a threefold growth to the eyes of God and man. Let yours do the same.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Childhood and youth of Jesus. Luke 2. 40-52.
Tu. The sojourn in Egypt. Matt. 2. 13-23.
W. The passover. Deut. 16. 1-8.
Th. The Father's business. John 5. 17-24.
F. Obedience to parents. Col. 3. 14-20.
S. The wise Child. Prov. 23. 15-25.
8. Growing in grace. 2 Pet. 3. 11-18.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 261, New Canadian Hymnal.

Oh, happy is the child who hears
Instruction's warning voice;
And who celestial Wisdom makes
His early, only choice.

No. 276, New Canadian Hymnal.

Saviour, while my heart is tender,
I would yield that heart to thee.

No. 279, New Canadian Hymnal.

God has said, "Forever blessed
Those who seek me in their youth;
They shall find the path of wisdom,
And the narrow way of truth."

TIME.—A. D. 8.

PLACE.—In and near Jerusalem.

RULERS.—Emperor Augustus at Rome; Herod Antipas in Galilee.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Growth in grace.

QUESTIONS.

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Within God's temple.
Majestic sweetness sits enthroned.
Come, Christian children.
Holy Spirit, faithful Guide.
Almighty Spirit! we confess,
How precious is the book divine.
Grace, 'tis a charming sound.
Wondrous words!
Come, said Jesus' sacred voice.
O God, my youth is thine.
Glowing up for Jesus.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- To the Temple, v. 40-42.**
What indications are here given that from infancy Jesus's extraordinary nature asserted itself?
Were women compelled by the law to accompany the men on these festive occasions?
What stage in the training of a Jewish boy was reached at twelve years of age?
- In the Temple, v. 43-50.**
What method of travel made such oversight as this easily practicable without any carelessness on the part of the parents?
How were the caravans probably organized?
About how far was "a day's journey"?
Explain the Jewish method of reckoning days.
About how many hours may have been reckoned in these "three days"?
Who were the doctors?
What topics were discussed usually by these men?
Was Jesus here in the attitude of a teacher or a pupil?
What sort of ability did he display?
Were Mary's words intended as a reproof?
To whom did Jesus allude as "my Father"?
What reason did he give for his lingering?
- In the Home, v. 51, 52.**
Did the boy Jesus assert his superiority to his parents?
How did his mother regard these astonishing circumstances?
What is meant by the fourfold growth here mentioned—
(a) What does growth in wisdom imply?
(b) Did Jesus differ in exterior conditions from his youthful companions?
(c) What was the reason for his increase in favor with man?
(d) How could he increase in favor with God?

Practical Teachings.

The Godhead, as well as manhood, grew in Jesus Christ. His youth was formative, as our young days are. We never can solve the mystery of the incarnation, nor understand the holy nature of the God-man; but it will not do to forget that Jesus's life, as well as ours, was probationary—that his temptations were real, and that his youth was a growth in the eyes of both God and man.

Our heavenly Father's business should command our earliest and most active energies. If we seek his cause first all good things will be added.

Hints for Home Study.

- Read, if you can, some description of child life in ancient Palestine from Farrar and Edersheim.
- Find out the probable course which Joseph would take from Nazareth to Jerusalem and back again. Make a list of some notable sites and structures which Jesus would now for the first time see.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- To the Temple, v. 40-42.**
What is said of the growth of the child Jesus?
Whose favor rested on him?
To what city did his parents journey?
For what purpose did they go?
What did the passover recall? Exod. 12, 11-14, 15.
Who were required to attend it? Exod. 23, 14, 15.
At what age did Jesus first go up to this feast?
- In the temple, v. 43-50.**
When did Joseph and Mary start homeward?
Who of their company was missing?
Where did they suppose Jesus to be?

- How far did they go before seeking for him?
Where then did they go in search for him?
How long was it until they found him?
Where did they find him, and how engaged?
What did the doctors think of him?
What did his parents think when they saw him?
What did Mary say to him?
What answer did he make?
How well did they understand him?
- In the Home, v. 51, 52.**
Where did Jesus go with his parents?
What shows that he was an obedient child?
What treasure did Mary keep, and where?
What L. said of Jesus's growth? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where are taught in this lesson—

- That we ought to remember God's mercies?
- That we ought early to engage in God's work?
- That we should honor our parents?

Home Work for Young Bereans.

Find out how Samuel grew in childhood. What were the characteristics of Timothy's childhood?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What do we learn of Jesus the child? **He grew and was strong in spirit.**

- With what was he filled? **With wisdom.**
What was upon him? **The grace of God.**
Why was this? **Because he loved and obeyed God.**
Where was the passover feast held each year? **In Jerusalem.**
At what age did Jesus first go? **At the age of twelve years.**
With whom did he go? **With his parents.**
How long did the feast last? **A week.**
Who stayed behind when the others returned? **Jesus.**
Where did the parents go to look for him? **To Jerusalem.**
How long did they seek him? **Three days.**
Where did they find him? **In the temple.**
What was he doing? **Talking with the wise men.**
What did he say he was about? **His Father's business.**
Where did he go with his parents? **To his home in Nazareth.**
What are we told of him there? **That he obeyed his parents.**
In what did he constantly grow? **In wisdom and goodness.**

Words with Little People.

Jesus, the child, teaches—
Love for the worship of God.
Love for the truth of God.
Love for the work of God.
Love and respect for parents.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

- How did Jesus grow in boyhood? **Strong in spirit, wisdom, and grace.**
- When he was twelve years old where did his parents take him? **To the passover feast in Jerusalem.**
- After they had lost him, where did they find him? **In the temple, in the midst of the doctors, studying the Scriptures.**
- What did Mary say? **"Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing."**
- How did Jesus reply? **"What ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"**
- How did Jesus grow in young manhood? **He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."**

CATECHISM QUESTION.

- What honor did Simeon do him in the temple?
Simeon was assured that he should see the Saviour here he died; and paid honor to Jesus by taking him in his arms, and acknowledging him to be the Christ.

A. D. 26.]

LESSON VII. THE MINISTRY OF JOHN.

[Feb. 16.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. *Mat. 3. 2.*

Authorized Version.

Luke 3. 7-22. [*Commit to memory verses 16, 17.*]

7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have A'bra-ham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto A'bra-ham.

9 And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

10 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

11 He answereth and said unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

12 Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your wages.

15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

16 John answered, saying unto *them* all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

17 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

18 And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

19 But Her'od the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Her'od'is-as his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Her'od had done.

20 Added yet this above all, that he shut John up in prison.

21 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Je'sus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

Revised Version.

7 He said therefore to the multitudes that went out to be baptized of him, Ye offspring of vipers, who

8 warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have A'bra-ham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto A'bra-ham.

9 And even now is the ax also laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

10 And the multitudes asked him, saying, What then must we do? And he answered and said unto them,

11 That he hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath food, let him do like-

12 wise. And there came also publicans to be baptized, and they said unto him, Master, what must we do?

13 And he said unto them, Extort no more than that which is appointed you. And soldiers also asked him, say-

14 ing, And we, what must we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither exact *any* thing wrongfully; and be content with your wages.

15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether

16 haply he were the Christ; John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but

17 there cometh he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

18 Whose fan is in his hand, thoroughly to cleanse his threshing-floor, and to gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn up with unquench-

19 able fire.

18 With many other exhortations therefore preached he good tidings unto the people; but Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Her'od'is-as his brother's wife, and for all the evil things which Her'od had done, added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

21 Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that, Jesus also having been baptized, and

22 praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily form, as a dove, upon him, and a voice came out of heaven, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

General Statement.

Thirty years had passed since the angel's revelation of the birth of Jesus made to the shepherds—years which had brought many changes to Palestine. Archelaus had been banished. The semblance of kingly authority possessed by Herod the Great had been taken away, and Judea was ruled directly by the Romans by a governor (called a procurator), Pontius Pilate. Galilee continued under the rule of Herod Antipas, and all of Jesus's life was lived under the civil administration of these two men—Antipas and Pilate. An intense longing for moral relief pervaded Palestine, and was felt far beyond its bounds. The people who sat in darkness were searching for light, when suddenly John's voice was heard. We should thoroughly understand the stormy background against which the rugged figure of this "greatest born of women" stands out in bold relief. Public and personal depravity, oppression of the poor, subservience to a despotic foreign power, a formal and hypocritical hierarchy, all combined to make the common people eager to hear and attend to his words. Brought up in the wilderness, he became an ascetic, dressed like a barbarian, and lived with the utmost simplicity. His rhetorical figures were homely, taken from the coarse simple life in which he had been trained. The thousands flocked to hear him—people of every class. He condoned no vice, feared no authority, taught no new doctrine. "Live justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God" was his message to high and low. When in Herod's presence he softened no tone, but denounced his luxurious vice. As a consequence John was put in prison, and eventually murdered. The most remarkable day in John's life was that on which was revealed to him "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

7. He. John the Baptist. See General Statement. The multitude. No throngs equal to these had ever assembled in Palestine. This specimen exhortation, re-

ported by Luke, shows how cosmopolitan was the audience. Every rank was represented. "All that was noble and all that was base in Israel; the holy and the

worldly; false; that the crowd tially the must be eloquence ology wo profound symbol v better in its form mony comi he in lar to the them, and the aver the intro God" as plain the altar," or in a moded administr Brood of addresses Saddlecuse remorsele rusalem c singular that even not dare violence. nation war pected spe

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worldly; the pure and the corrupt; the earnest and the false; the friends of Rome and its enemies, mingled in the crowd." **Baptized.** John's message was substantially the same as Jesus's statement to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again;" but it was delivered with fiery eloquence amid environments which in modern phraseology would be termed "sensational." The nation was profoundly stirred. John felt the need of an impressive symbol which should help his converts to a permanent better life—a symbol that should be at once familiar in its form and novel in its application. No other ceremony could have suited his purpose as well as the baptism he inaugurated. Ritualistic washings were familiar to the Jews. The stricter rabbis had made much of them, and their spiritual meaning was well known. To the average intelligent Jew John's baptism symbolized the introduction of its subject into the "kingdom of God" as readily as the assumption of the red cross made plain the purpose of a Crusader, or "coming to the altar," or "standing for prayers," indicates penitence in a modern prayer-meeting. As to its precise method of administration authorities differ. **Generation of vipers.** Brood of serpents. A fitting characterization. This was addressed not to the populace, but to the Pharisees and Sadducees. There probably never was a hierarchy more remorselessly depraved than that which reigned at Jerusalem during the time of John and Jesus. And it is a singular evidence of John's overwhelming popularity that even two years after his death its representatives did not dare to deny his divine authorization for fear of mob violence. **The wrath to come.** The iniquity of the nation was so distinctly recognized that all men expected speedy and awful judgment.

8. Bring forth therefore fruits. Their presence was a kind of politic approval of John's appeals. But he says, Show your repentance by your reformed lives. (1) *Every thing you do and say is the fruit of your life.* (2) *Men judge by the outward appearance; God judges the heart. We have Abraham.* These hypocritical people claimed that because their ancestor was "the father of the faithful" they could read their title clear to all good things in this world and the next. John simply says, it matters not who your father or grand-father was; what sort of a man are you? **These stones.** With which the desert was flooded.

9. The ax is laid. The first stroke of the divine Woodcutter is about to fall. **Root.** Not the branches merely. **Every tree.** The threatened destruction is to be both national and individual. These prophecies had awful fulfillment in the life-time of many people who heard John.

10. The people. The crowd—not the self-righteous governing class. They continued to thank God that they were not like others, and went straight to destruction.

11. Two coats....meat. The spirit of this exhortation pervades all of Christ's teachings also. Changes in forms of civilization make literal obedience in some details practically impossible; but he that in both heart and practice does not constantly seek harmony with this injunction has not partaken of the spirit of Jesus.

12. Publicans. A despicable set of hireling Jews, who sub-rented the privilege of collecting the Roman taxes. They were systematic extortioners and fully deserved their evil name. But they too had become alarmed and penitent.

13. Exact no more. John tells no man to leave his occupation, for none of these were intrinsically wrong. John's gospel was a holy fear of God, integrity, practical benevolence, and expectation of the Messiah.

14. Soldiers. May have been Herod's soldiers

marching to Arabia, or Roman soldiers from Judea, or Jewish police. **Do violence to no man.** Extort from none by violence. Do no injustice to the defenseless. **Neither accuse any falsely.** Cheat not by false accusation. Neither "terrify the poor by violence nor undermine the rich by acting as informers." **Be content with your wages.** Dr. Farrar considers it remarkable that the Baptist does not bid even soldiers to abandon their profession, but to serve God in it. And Dr. Whedon observes that "war as an act of government is allowed by divine law." This can hardly be denied. Nevertheless, there is hardly a war recorded in history that was not the direct outcome of unholly passions, hardly one but could have been avoided. The military heroes of history stand responsible in the sight of God for the carnage, lust, and pillage their underlings have wrought. In the millennium, there will be few monuments erected to soldiers. It is especially hard to apologize for war in the nineteenth century, and a Sunday-school class is hardly the place to begin the attempt.

15. The Christ. Every-where—even in heathendom—the coming of a divinely appointed Reformer was expected. Here was the strangest Preacher ever seen or heard. Was he the Christ?

16. John answered. A deputation had come from the Sanhedrin to ascertain his claims. John 1. 19-28. **Baptize....with water.** I indeed induct you, as far as I can, by a simple ceremony, into the kingdom of God. **Mightier than I.** "Mightier to effect what my baptism is powerless to produce." **The latchet, etc.** This mightier One is so much greater than I that I am unworthy to unfasten his shoes. As one might say nowadays, I am not worthy to be his bootblack. **Baptize you with the Holy Ghost.** As I ceremonially cleanse you with the water, he will cleanse your hearts by contact with divine "life, holiness, and wisdom." **With fire.** The emblem of purification.

17. Fan. The winnowing fan, a small tool like a wooden fork, with which the Jewish farmer separated the wheat from the chaff. Christ was to winnow out the people, keeping the good, but rejecting the bad.

18. Many other things. He discussed all "hive issues." His was applied Christianity. This practical, aggressive, personal characteristic of John's teaching finally resulted in his imprisonment and murder.

19. Herod....Herodias. Son of Herod the Great. His title "tetrarch" came from the fact that he ruled the fourth part of the Roman province of Syria. His adulterous connection with his niece shocked the Jews. **Being reproved.** The father of Herod's first wife espoused her cause and declared war. To be "reproved" at such a time may have seemed politically "dangerous." From Mark 6. 17-20, and Matt. 15. 3-5, we learn that "John had reproved Antipas for many crimes, and that Antipas was so convinced of his holiness and justice as habitually to listen to him with pleasure, and after paying earnest heed to him was greatly at a loss about him. We learn, further, that he resisted the constant urgency of Herodias to put him to death."

20. Added yet this. The Jews regarded this as Herod's worst crime. **In prison.** In Machærus, a splendid royal castle, with gloomy, underground dungeons.

21. When all....were baptized. When for that day the ceremony was over. **Praying.** Jesus himself needed prayer. It was when he prayed that the heaven was opened; two years later, when he prayed, the great transfiguration occurred; later still, when he prayed in the dark garden of Gethsemane, angels came and comforted him. What Jesus experienced in his life we may

experience in ours. When we pray the heavens will open, though not, perhaps, in the same way.

22. Bodily shape. Probably the general understanding is correct, that the form of a dove hovered over the head of Christ; although the other interpretation

—that "like a dove" alludes to the manner of descent and not to the form—may be correct. **Voice.... from heaven.** An articulate voice. **Thou art my beloved Son.** Literally, "Thou art my Son, the Beloved." This implies the doctrine of the blessed Trinity.

CRITICAL NOTES.

The gracious events connected with the birth and infancy of John the Baptist had led some of the people in anticipating his future to exclaim, "What then shall this child be?" Luke 1. 66. The glimpse which our evangelist gives us of the priest's son in the wilds of the Judean desert, developing into spiritual and intellectual manhood under the molding influence of some unnamed but divinely chosen teacher, quickens our interest likewise in the public life thus foreshadowed.

Luke has his own unique way of telling how that public life began. He fails not, first of all, to accurately note the secular rulers to whose sway the new spiritual kingdom to be announced by John presented so notable a contrast (Luke 3. 1, 2), and recognizes in John's emergence from obscurity the divine summons to a divinely chosen prophet, 3. 2. To the conventional picture of John's preaching given in Matthew and Mark, he adds graphic and instructive examples of his method of applying the principles of his teaching to individuals, Vers. 10-14. Indicating briefly the outward occasion which brought John's work to a close (18-20), he traces the divine occasion of the cessation of that work: the open declaration and indowment of the mightier One with that Spirit by which he should impart, as John himself had prophesied, a spiritual baptism to the penitent. Luke here dismisses John from his Gospel. Though he has dwelt on his birth he does not tell us, as the other evangelists do, where or how John's life ended. He pauses with like abruptness in his account of Paul's work. Acts 28. 31. He is preoccupied with the Gospel itself (Luke 1. 1-4) rather than with the messengers thereof.

The following outline may prove useful: 1. How John Preached Repentance, vers. 7-14. 2. How John Preached Christ, vers. 15-17. 3. How John's Preaching was Interrupted, vers. 18-20. 4. How John's Preaching was Divinely Confirmed, vers. 21, 22.

7. Therefore. In harmony with the character claimed for himself in the quotation, Vers. 4-6. **Multitudes.** Matthew (3. 7) applies these words to the Pharisees and Sadducees only. **Went out.** From the towns and cities in which they dwelt. **Offspring of vipers.** A viper hiding itself in one's path and inflicting mortal injury without provocation or warning is an impressive symbol of human depravity. To call men the offspring of vipers is to say they have a venomous nature. Our Lord applied this vigorous epithet to certain Pharisees, Matt. 11. 34; 23. 33. It was to people who came to be baptized that these words were addressed. There are no honest souls who, when alone with God, will deny the appropriateness of such words to unregenerate human nature. **Who warned you? Was it man? Has not the Searcher of hearts brought you to this place? Rom. 2. 4.** A pertinent question. The sinner's uneasiness, whence comes it? From poor health? Nay, from the Spirit who reproves of sin. **The wrath to come.** It was a common place in the religious teaching of that day that troublesome times should precede the advent of the Messiah, Mal. 3. 2; 4. 1.

8. Therefore. In view of their want of readiness for the righteous Lord's coming. **Fruits worthy of repentance.** Make such changes in your outward life as will correctly betoken a true change of inner nature and intention. His baptism had no value apart from

such a moral change; it was "the baptism of repentance," Ver. 3. **Begin not to say.** As a reply to the exhortation to repentance. It was natural for a Jew to begin such a reply. John 8. 33. **We have Abraham, and not vipers, for our father.** Our father. It was the current belief that circumcision, which identified a Jew with Abraham, would save him unconditionally in the day of judgment. It was commonly supposed that Jehovah was bound by his promise to save every covenant child of the patriarch. **God is able.** The Greek emphasizes these words. **Of these stones.** The divine promise is not confined to your interpretation of it. It was unanticipated by you God can fulfill his word. It is probable that John did not mean to indicate that the Gentiles would be brought in, but only to reprove Jewish presumption. Paul addresses the same temper in Rom. 2.

9. Even now. In the days immediately at hand. **The ax.** The divine judgment on the nation and the individual. **Every tree.** Every nation, every soul. **Good fruit.** Righteous action. **Hewn down.** The ax did fall on the nation in the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70.

10. Asked him. The Greek here and in verse 11 suggests that this inquiry was frequently made, and as frequently answered, in the same way. **What then.** In view of the impending judgment, what are the fruits worthy of repentance?

11. Two coats. The garment here referred to was the one worn next to the skin. Like Jesus, John knew how to embody great principles in pithy sayings easy to be understood. He here teaches that repentance means the slaying of selfishness, and not merely the feeling of transient emotion. See John's teaching, 1 John 3. 17, and James in Jas. 2. 15-17.

12. Publicans. As representatives of a hated government and the embodiment of rapacious greed, this class of officials were the most despised of all. Jesus recognizes the popular estimate of them in Matt. 5. 46, which classed them with thieves and cut-throats. **Master.** They recognized the authority of John as a religious teacher. **What must we do? In what way shall we show a change of heart and life?**

13. Extort. The extortion and pocketing of an extra margin was the common treatment of the tax-gatherer. Honesty in office would be a genuine moral change to the great majority of them. One of their chiefs thought of the new life as beginning at this very point—Zaccheus, Chap. 19. 8. **Appointed.** The amount of tax imposed by the government.

14. Soldiers. Literally, soldiers in active service, for whom John's teaching should have immediate application. **And we.** The Greek shows that they expected different instructions from those given to the despised publicans. They would not put themselves on a level with tax-gatherers. They find, however, that John knows their characteristic sins. **Do violence to no man.** It is natural for the soldier to take advantage of his military authority. Accustomed to take human life, it is easy for him to ignore human rights in the interests of selfishness. **Exact.... wrongfully.** An old word borrowed from the Grecian customs service, meaning to extort money by threats of complaint to the government. Soldiers and public officers would have many opportunities to exact bribes from timid citizens. Felix hoped

to obtain could be the kindlier's to your in-soldiers frequent

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to obtain such a bribe from Paul. Acts 24. 26. A soldier could be prepared for John's baptism and the coming of the kingdom of heaven by resisting by divine help a soldier's temptations. **Be content.** Do not try to increase your income by illegal and immoral means. The pay of soldiers in all times has been proverbially small and a frequent cause for complaint.

15. Expectation. They looked for some open declaration from John to the effect that he himself was the Messiah. The stern righteousness of this new leader of the people supported the notion that he was the long-expected deliverer. **Reasoned in their hearts.** These words point to the deep impression which John had made. The subject was one for devout and silent meditation.

16. Answered. Luke represents John as withholding the announcement of the Messiah until the people were ripe for it. No, he was not the Messiah; the Messiah, however, was coming, and greater far than he, for he would do a greater work than he could do. **Mightier.** Mightier, both to cleanse the penitent and punish the obdurate. **I am not worthy.** John's head was not turned by his popularity. His Lord alone was great; he was not worthy to perform the lowliest personal, much less any official, service to him. **With the Holy Ghost.** He shall show his greatness by what he shall do. The human John could only apply water, the outward symbol; the mightier and worthier One could impart the divine Spirit to men. Such a baptism came upon the multitude at Pentecost. Acts 2. Such a baptism comes upon every Christian at his conversion. Gal. 3. 2; Rom. 8. 9. **And fire.** Fire is contrasted with water as a more effectual element of purification. The indwelling spirit which Christ gives becomes a source of abiding moral purity. John 7. 39; Rom. 8. 10.

17. Whose fan. A huge wooden shovel used to separate grain from chaff by throwing the same aloft in a windy place. **In his hand.** Compare "into the root." Ver. 9. The coming Messiah is all ready to begin his work. **Cleanse.** Judge and condemn unworthy nations and individuals. The chaff-like Israel was in that very period visibly removed from the threshing-floor. **The wheat.** The repentant and the righteous. **The chaff.** The people who do not bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. **He will burn up.** A vivid and impressive figure representing the righteous and abiding wrath of God upon his obdurate and impenitent children. John 3. 36.

18. Exhortations. John put heart into his preaching. The versatility seen in verses 10-14 constantly appeared in his preaching. Like Paul, he became all things to all men that he might by all means save some. I Cor. 9. 22. **Therefore.** In view of the nearness of the Messiah's advent and the necessity of preparation for it. **Preached.** Was preaching when the event next narrated took place. **Good tidings.** By warning and pleading he made the people acquainted with the Gospel; to wit, that the Messiah was coming.

19. But Herod. Luke pauses a moment to tell what interrupted this preaching. **Reproved.** The word used indicates not so much the boldness as the success of the arraignment. **His brother.** Not the Philip of 3. 1, but Herod Philip, a private citizen.

20. Added yet this. Luke regards John's arrest, which soon led to his cruel murder, as the climax of crime in Herod Antipas's wicked career. **Shut up John.** In the castle of Machærus, east of the Jordan, away from the eager crowds of hearers.

21. Came to pass. Luke calls attention to the sequence of events. John's work, though interrupted, led the way to an identification of the Messiah from heaven.

All the people. Luke significantly connects the Lord's baptism with that of the people. As they entered on a new moral life, so he with his baptism entered on a new official life. **Praying.** Luke alone unveils the heart of Jesus at this important hour. As in his twelfth year, his mind is pre-occupied with his Father's business. Luke tells more about the prayers of Jesus than the other evangelists. John 17 gives us a notion of the Spirit, though not of the contents, of this prayer.

22. The Holy Ghost descended. To permanently equip him for his work. Acts 10. 38; John 1. 38; 3. 34. **In a bodily form.** Peculiar to Luke, whose attention is fixed upon the supernatural behind the outward appearance. **As a dove.** It was not a real dove. Weiss thinks the gentleness of descent as contrasted with a violent seizure is intended. On another occasion the Spirit descended in a form like that of dividing tongues of fire. **Thou art.** Luke, like Mark, seems to see in this heavenly testimony a revelation to Jesus, while Matthew looks upon it as a revelation to others. The human consciousness of a unique relation to the Father which he had perhaps begun to feel at twelve years of age, is now divinely confirmed to him. **My beloved Son.** Not "my servant;" not "the Messiah." Sonship includes more than either. As a beloved Son he enjoys especial divine favor, and can speak and act with more than Messianic authority. **In thee I am well pleased.** "The Father loveth the Son." John 3. 35. All that John had prophesied concerning his successor is fully sustained by the heavenly witness.

The Lesson Council.

Question 7. What is the meaning of the word *repentance*?

Repentance is a change of mind with reference to sin, so radical and absolute as to lead to a change of conduct and life. It is preceded, therefore, by a deep conviction of sin, followed by a godly sorrow on account of it, resulting in a total abandonment of sin, and a surrender of the heart to God, in faith, for cleansing from its guilt and power.—*Rev. Henry Spellmeyer, D.D.*

A complete change in the way one thinks concerning life, and therefore a change in habits and feelings as marked as that in which John Newton the profligate sailor and slave-trader by the grace of God became John Newton, the preacher, and the author of

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,
In a believer's ear." —*Rev. W. I. Haven.*

To repent is to change one's course. A man sees that he is going wrong, he repents; that is, he turns around and goes another way. In a religious sense this implies not only that he stops doing what is wrong, but that he goes to doing what he knows is right. It is not enough to stop sinning, but he must begin at once to do that which his conscience and God will approve. This is doing "works meet for repentance;" that is, such works as will show that the repentance is genuine.—*Rev. C. W. Cushing, D.D.*

Repentance is an act of the whole soul. The intellect gives attention to the sad facts of transgression and apprehends them by the revelations thus made; the sensibilities are quickened to feelings of self-reproach, shame, sorrow, and hatred of the evil deeds; and the will determines to transgress no more, and to repair, if possible, the damages already done. All these soul-movements are included in an act of true repentance.—*Rev. D. C. Knowles, D.D.*

The Greek word translated "repentance" means, from its derivation, "a change of mind;" but, like the En-

glish word, it denotes more definitely a moral change of mind, involving sorrow for sin and a turning from it to a righteous life.—Prof. Charles F. Bradley.

Lesson Word-Picture.

Where and when will the forerunner make ready the way for Messiah?

In Jerusalem, at the temple, on some great festival day? Not there, not there!

Hark!

Down by the Jordan is a lonely but commanding cry. It has burst out of the wilderness. It has echoed amid the fields and among the villages. It has come now to Jordan's banks, and how the people have followed him that crieth! There he stands by the river-side, his dress of camel's hair enveloping him, a leathern girdle bound about his loins.

Hear that strong, sharp, echoing cry, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

Hear it again, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord! Make his paths straight!"

How many there are to listen by Jordan's rippling stream! They have poured out of Jerusalem, gathered from all Judea and the country about the Jordan. See how black with people are the roads leading to the river!

There has been no such preacher in Judea for generations, for centuries. His rugged voice towers above the crowd. How those sharp, piercing eyes look men through and through! Who will repent? Who will go down to Jordan's tide and be baptized? Men hear in that voice the blows of an ax cutting down to the roots of the tree. They tremble. They fear. They hear in John's words the crackling of the flames destroying all sinners' hopes because of righteous Abraham their father. They turn to the Jordan. They ask for its baptism. What, publicans come? Yes, they have left their benches and their money-bags, all extortion, too, and injustice, and, hurry to Jordan's waters. And this clanking of armor, what does it mean? Soldiers come for baptism? Yes, they have sheathed their swords, quit their violence, and come to the cleansing stream.

But who is this man, bringing publicans to penitence and soldiers to self-sacrifice? What mighty one heard the voice of God in the lone wilderness and came out to cry "Repent!" Is this Messiah? If not, when will he come? When will appear that baptizer with the Holy Ghost and with fire?

Men saw him one day. A stranger stood by John the Baptist's side. Men saw in the stranger's face one of heaven while from earth. No other has John received as he receives this one.

Who is it? What mighty one may it be—unknown prince, hidden conqueror? The people are hushed. The crowd is eagerly expectant, each one pressing forward to see clearly and hear distinctly. As John baptizes, what a solemn stillness! And lo, the heavens break above that sacred, bowed head of Jesus, the Holy Ghost descends.

There is a voice of benediction from the Almighty Father.

Messiah has come. Jordan has witnessed his solemn consecration.

And John the forerunner?

One day, the bloody and wanton power of Herod will lay hands upon him. Soldiers—O not those he baptized—will hustle him away and sink him in Herod's dark and loathsome dungeons.

Blackboard.



Look at the blackboard, and let us see what lesson it teaches. Here is a pathway, and in it there appears a great and rugged stone obstructing the way. There seems to be, partially beneath the stone, a lever, which, if handled rightly, will overthrow it, and clear the way. What is the stone? [Sin.] And what is the lever? [Repentance.] What is the pathway? [My life.] This, then, is the lesson. In every one's path lies sin; it must be removed by repentance, grounded on faith. This was the keynote of John's ministry, and it is the first step toward a holy life. When John was imprisoned, Jesus in his first ministry "preached the gospel of God... Repeat and believe the Gospel." [See Mark 1, 14, 15.] Let each one of us "prepare the way, and make the path clear."

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT.—God's Call.

Recall the first and third lessons of the quarter. Who was the messenger? Whose son was he? Who foretold his coming? What was his work to be?

Make straight marks on the board, letting children count up to eighteen, to show how many years have passed since the last lesson, when Jesus was twelve years old. Add to these enough to show how old John was now.

Where did Jesus live? Tell how he lived in Nazareth and worked in the carpenter shop. John lived in the wilderness, a desolate part of the country near the head of the Dead Sea. Many people now were looking for the coming of Christ, but they thought he was coming as a great king. No one thought that a lowly carpenter could be the Christ.

John's Call. You know John was sometimes called a voice. God had something to say to the people, and he sent John to say it. Down by the river Jordan he began to preach. He wore a dress of camel's hair and a girdle of rough leather. He talked as strangely as he looked. His words were sharp and strong. The people who heard him trembled, and said, "What shall we do?"



Use lesson symbol, printing "Put away sin" in large letters. John told the people what sin was and what it would do. He said that a holy One was coming, and that the trees which did not bear good fruit would be cut down and burned. By this he meant that sinners who did not

repent would be destroyed.

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John's Three Words. What John said to the Jews so long ago he says to us to-day, "Put away sin;" "Do right;" "Look for Jesus." Teach that we can never see Jesus while we love sin and give it a place in our lives. When shall we put it away? Now; to-day.

Talk about sin. You know some of the special temptations of your little ones. Make the truth very clear that sin makes a high wall between our hearts and Jesus, and that we must not only be sorry for it, but actually stop doing the wrong things before we can know that Jesus is our Saviour.

**Berean Methods.
Teachers' Meeting.**

This lesson requires careful management because of a certain "lack of unity." It includes many persons, places, and incidents. Do not permit side discussions to efface the lesson of the GOLDEN TEXT. Group all the incidental facts and lessons about the great duty of repentance....Spend a minute or two on "synchronisms:" The ages of Jesus and John; changes in rulers—Pontius Pilate, Herod Antipas, etc... Have the geography of the lesson clearly in mind: Characteristics of the wilderness of Judea near the river Jordan; the castle of Machærus; the great political divisions of Palestine, etc.... Study in close connection with the parallel passages in three other gospels....Trace parallel between Elijah and John the Baptist....The meaning of John's baptism. (See Explanatory Notes.) Avoid much discussion about its form....Constituency of the "multitudes" to whom John preached...Analysis of this sermon: a) Distinct characterization of his hypocritical hearers, "broods of vipers" (Matt. 23, 33); b) Distinct statement of the "wrath to come;" c) Clear understanding of their baseless confidence; d) Exhortation to such repentance as would lead to rectitude, humility, and brotherly love; e) Clear announcement of the coming Saviour; f) His figures taken from desert life. (See Explanatory Notes.)... Show how direct preaching and teaching always produce direct results. Study John's methods, and learn from him.... Lessons from Herod's sin....Lessons from baptism of Jesus: a) Reasons for his baptism; b) Reasons for John's reluctance (see Explanatory Notes for both of these); c) God's recognition of Christ's divinity; d) Effect of this recognition on John, on Jesus, on the Jews in general....A good method of grouping this lesson will be, I. John's sermon; II. Jesus's baptism; III. John's imprisonment....Notice Thoughts for Young People.

References. FREEMAN. Ver. II: The tunic, 821. Ver. 12: The publicans, 759. Ver. 16: The shoe-latchet, 791; sandals, 832; carrying sandals, 633. Ver. 17: Winnowing grain, 634. FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Prose, 3965, 3967, 3968, 3970, 4962-4982, 10555, 11399-11415. Ver. 2: Prose, 10557. Ver. 7, 8: Prose, 4899-4908, 11361, 11363.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Preacher in the Wilderness.

I. A POPULAR PREACHER.

- Multitudes... came forth, v. 7.
- "Jerusalem and all Judea," Matt. 3, 3.
- "A burning and a shining light," John 5, 35.

II. A BOLD PREACHER.

- O generation of vipers, v. 7.
- "Fear them not, neither be dismayed," Ezek. 3, 8, 9.
- "That I may open my mouth boldly," Eph. 6, 19, 20.

III. A FAITHFUL PREACHER.

- 1. Bring forth... fruits, v. 8.
- "Cease to do evil; ...do well," Isa. 1, 16.

- 2. The ax is laid unto the root, v. 9.
- "Beareth not fruit....taketh away," John 15, 2.
- IV. A PRACTICAL MINISTRY.
- 1. He that hath two coats... impart, v. 11.
- "Love... in deed and in truth," 1 John 3, 13.
- 2. Do violence to no man, v. 14.
- "Love worketh no ill," Rom. 13, 10.
- 3. Be content with your wages, v. 14.
- "Food and raiment....content," 1 Tim. 6, 5.
- V. AN EVANGELICAL PREACHER.
- One mightier than I cometh, v. 16.
- "Behold the Lamb of God," John 1, 29.
- "Not... save Jesus Christ... crucified," 1 Cor. 2, 2.
- VI. A WARNING PREACHER.
- Chaff... burn with fire unquenchable, v. 17.
- "Which the wind driveth away," Psa. 1, 4.
- "We preach, warning every man," Col. 1, 28.
- VII. A PERSECUTED PREACHER.
- Herod... shut up John in prison, v. 19, 20.
- "Fear not them which kill the body," Matt. 10, 28.
- "Faithful unto death... crown of life," Rev. 2, 10.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

How and Why to Repent.

1. We should repent because there is a wrath to come. Wisely did Mr. Wesley make desire to flee from that wrath the condition of union with his societies. Eternal justice punishes sin. We are all sinners, and should flee from its power and its penalty.

2. We should repent because the kingdom of heaven is at hand. By repentance only may we enter. Christ winnows human souls. His fan is in his hand. By every moral responsibility we meet we are placing ourselves among the wheat or the chaff, among the citizens of the kingdom or its enemies.

3. We should repent, for by that means only can we be endued with the Holy Ghost. All human beings are informed, "possessed," by the Spirit of God or the spirit of evil. By repentance we turn away from all evil influences, and then comes the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire.

4. We should manifest our repentance by doing our daily duties with new zeal, as unto the Lord. John told neither publican, nor soldier, nor priest to leave his daily vocation, but to do the old duties from new and lofty principles. No penitent can be a lax or impure man.

5. We should manifest our repentance by living for others. He who does not, with free heart, contribute to the welfare of others, not only lacks the spirit of Christ, but has not even got as far as John the Baptist.

6. We should show our repentance by turning from the forerunner to the mighty One whom he announces. Some of John's followers failed to become disciples of Jesus. And there are not wanting members of our modern churches whose zeal seems to slacken when the personality that aroused them to repentance is withdrawn. Let us follow our ministers and teachers as they follow Christ.

HOME READINGS.

- M. The ministry of John. Luke 3, 1-11.
- Tu. The ministry of John. Luke 3, 12-23.
- W. John's confession. John 1, 19-28.
- Th. His mission acknowledged. John 3, 22-31.
- F. The witness of John. John 5, 30-36.
- S. John's humility. Matt. 3, 11-17.
- S. Christ's testimony to John. Matt. 11, 7-17.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 100, New Canadian Hymnal.
With broken heart and contrite sigh,
A trembling sinner, Lord, I cry.

No. 103, New Canadian Hymnal.

Lord, I despair myself to heal
I see my sin, but cannot feel.

No. 98, New Canadian Hymnal.

Depth of mercy, can there be
Mercy still reserved for me?

TIME.—A. D. 26. The opening of the year preliminary to Christ's preparatory work, called the Year of Preparation.

PLACES.—Wilderness of Judea, and the banks of the Jordan not far north of the Dead Sea. The castle of Machabrus.

RULERS.—Tiberius, emperor of Rome; Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea; Herod Antipas, tetrarch in Galilee.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Repentance from sin.

I'm poor, and blind, and wretched.

Hasten, sinner, to be wise.

Depth of mercy.

God calling yet!

Now is the accepted time.

So near to the kingdom.

Weeping will not save me.

Why do you wait?

Just as I am.

O happy day!

When Jesus comes.

Rescue the perishing.

The call for repairs.

Gather them in.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. The Fruits of Repentance, v. 7-14.

1. What was the general condition of morals at the time of Christ's advent?

Were the true transgressors hostile or friendly to the Church of that day?

Of what "wrath to come" may John have had prophetic vision?

What did John demand of men who professed repentance?

What simple ceremony did he perform?

Of what was this typical?

Was it novel among the Jews, or familiar?

By what figure did he make plain the nearness of God's judgment?

How did he tell all his hearers to act?

Who were the publicans?

What was their usual character?

What did John command them not to do?

Who were the soldiers of that time?

What was John's threshold instruction to them?

2. The Forerunner of the King, v. 15-22.

1. What did some of John's hearers imagine concerning him?

How did he say the mightier One should baptize them?

How did John's worth compare with that of Jesus in John's estimation?

To what does "fire" here allude?

What sort of fan is here referred to?

How do Oriental farmers "purge their floors"?

How old was John now?

Amid what surroundings had his youth been spent?

What was the character of Herod the tetrarch?

What relation did he bear to Herod the Great?

How was Jesus engaged when the Holy Ghost descended upon him?

When was a similar utterance again heard from heaven?

Practical Teachings.

No repentance is valid that does not show ready fruits. Pious fathers and mothers cannot save us. We can only become children of God by the new birth of which Jesus has told us.

If all the axes that are already "laid unto the roots of the trees" could be seen by the rising generation, many a bad habit would be suddenly broken. God's judgments are infallible.

The gist of practical Christianity is doing good. He that has more than he needs of this world's goods should at once impart them to him that hath none. Every one asks, What shall I do? and John answers, as every Christian minister is forced to answer, Do your duty; your simple routine duty.

The holiest mortal is infinitely below God. Let us, in our studies of the life of Christ, never forget that he whom Jesus declared to be the greatest born of women was not worthy to unloose the latchet of the shoes of Jesus.

The world divides itself on the question of Christianity; the sheep and the goats range themselves on the right hand and on the left instinctively. The presence of the mighty One, whose fan is in his hand, divides the wheat from the chaff.

Herod's imprisonment of John is paralleled by the instinctive action of every bad man. If he cannot put the preacher in prison who calls attention to his vice, he seeks his conscience in prison. He seeks to avoid guilt by forgetting sin.

Hints for Home Study.

Make a list of John's figures of speech as given in this lesson, and find out their true meaning:

Brood of vipers,

Fruits,

Stones,

AX at the root of the tree,

Coats,

Shoe-latchet,

Farmer's fan,

Garner,

and many others. When these Oriental articles are clearly understood by the student his apprehension of John's message will be much more vivid.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. The Fruits of Repentance, v. 7-14.

Of whom did the multitude seek baptism?

What question did John ask of them?

What did he demand that they should do?

What did he say about Abraham's children?

What about trees and fruit?

What question did the people then ask?

What was John's reply?

What Roman officials came to be baptized?

What did John bid them to do?

Who else asked a question about conduct?

How did John answer the soldiers?

What universal duty did John proclaim? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

2. The Forerunner of the King, v. 15-22.

1. What were the people thinking about John?

How did John baptize the people?

What did he say of one who would come after him?

What would this one do with the wheat and the chaff?

What else did John say in his preaching?

What ruler did he rebuke?

Why did he rebuke Herod?

What did the ruler do to John?

What noted person came to be baptized by John?

What was Jesus doing as he was baptized?

What wonderful sight appeared?

What message from heaven was heard?

On what other occasion was this voice heard? See chap. 9, 35.

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in the lesson are we taught—

1. That we ought to repent of sin?

2. That true repentance means ceasing to do wrong?

3. That true penitence will lead us to do right?

Home Work for Young Bereans.

Find how the Herod of this lesson was related to the Herod who slew the babes of Bethlehem.

How did John resemble Elijah—in dress, place of abode, manner of preaching?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Where did John the Baptist preach? In the wilderness of Judea.

What did he tell the people to do? To put away sin.

What does sin do? It separates from God.

What did many ask John to do? To baptize them.

What fruits did he tell them to bring forth? Good fruits.

What did this mean? Right actions.

What did he say about evil fruits? That they would be destroyed.

Who knows what kind of fruit we bear? God.

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What did some people think? That John was Christ.

What did John tell them? That the mighty One was coming.

With what did John baptize? With water.

With what did he say Jesus would baptize? With the Holy Ghost and with fire.

What does the coming of Jesus do? It separates the good from the bad.

Who was angry with John the Baptist? Herod.

What did he do with John? He put him in prison.

Whom did John baptize before he stopped preaching? Jesus.

What came upon Jesus? The Holy Ghost.

Who spoke to him out of heaven? God, his Father.

Words with Little People.

God's children who love and obey him bring forth good fruit in their lives.

But careless, self-loving, self-pleasing people bring forth evil fruit, which must be destroyed.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Whom did the multitudes throng to hear? John the Baptist.

2. How did John describe Jesus? "One mightier than I cometh."

3. What wonder happened when Jesus was baptized? "The heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended."

4. How did the divine Spirit descend? "In a bodily shape like a dove."

5. What words were spoken from heaven? "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

CATECHISM QUESTION.

11. What do we know of our Lord's youth? That in his twelfth year he was in the temple: "in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions."

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.—Luke ii. 46.

A. D. 27.]

LESSON VIII. THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS.

[Feb. 23.]

GOLDEN TEXT. In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted. Heb. 2. 18.

Authorized Version.

Luke 4. 1-13. [Commit to memory verses 1-4.]

1 And Je'sus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jor'dan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

2 Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.

3 And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

4 And Je'sus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

5 And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will, I give it.

7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

8 And Je'sus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

9 And he brought him to Je-ru'sa-lem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence:

10 For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee:

11 And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

12 And Je'sus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

Revised Version.

1 And Je'sus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jor'dan, and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness during forty days, being tempted of the devil.

And he did eat nothing in those days: and when they were completed, he hungered.

And the devil said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command this stone that it become bread.

And Je'sus answered unto him, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone. And he led him up, and showed him all kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

And the devil said unto him, To thee will I give all this authority, and the glory of them: for it hath been delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

If thou therefore wilt worship before me, it shall all be thine.

And Je'sus answered and said unto him, It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

And he led him to Je-ru'sa-lem, and set him upon the pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, to guard thee:

And on their hands they shall bear thee up, lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.

And Je'sus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

And when the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him for a season.

General Statement.

Temptation is a condition of spiritual success. Our Saviour, especially, must be tempted at all points as we are, and stand the test. All the Satanic arts were employed to divert him from the work assigned him by God. If Satan could now succeed, the mission of Jesus would be a failure. All the conditions added to the severity of the test: the bleakness of the wilderness; the neighborhood of the wild beasts; the acute hunger after forty days' fast; the temptations themselves, which were doubtless directed as adroitly as those which beset us. But the firmness of Jesus in resisting each thrust was such that the victory was complete. From the nature of the case this account of the temptation could not have come from an eye-witness: it must have been related to his apostles by our Lord himself.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

1. Jesus. Now thirty years of age. He was doubtless well-known in Nazareth as a carpenter, and we have had a glimpse of the popularity which seems to have attended his youthful life until he began his public career as a Reformer. But there is no indication that any one in Nazareth understood his holy mission, or measurably appreciated his divine spirit. But ap-

preciated or not, the spiritual insight which eighteen years before had astonished the "doctors" in Jerusalem was doubtless still his leading characteristic. Full of the Holy Ghost. At his baptism he had probably entered into a full consciousness of his Messiahship. Returned from Jordan. In what direction we cannot say. Was led. Doubtless, as Mr. Westley says, by "a

strong inward impulse." **By the Spirit.** God himself. **Into the wilderness.** Some region where there was not even a scattered human population. Wild beasts were the only living creatures about him. Mount Quarantana, near Jericho, is the traditional scene of the temptation.

2. Forty days. This number occurs repeatedly in Scripture, but always, as Canon Farrar points out, "in connection with the facts of temptation and retribution." See Exod. 24, 18; Deut. 9, 9; 1 Kings 19, 8; Num. 14, 34; Judg. 13, 1. **Tempted of the devil.** During all the forty days; but only the three assaults made at the close of this time are recorded. **Did eat nothing.** Probably to be understood literally. **He afterward hungered.** Was starved; suffered physical exhaustion.

3. The devil said. Whether in a physical form or not we cannot say; it is idle to conjecture. **If thou be.** A suggestion of doubt. **This stone.** The wilderness was full of stones the shape of which suggested loaves of bread. Our Lord afterward used this resemblance in illustration of a blessed truth.

4. It is written. Dr. Plumptre calls attention to an interesting fact: "The words of all three answers to the tempter came from two chapters of Deuteronomy, one of which (Deut. 6) supplied one of the passages (6, 4-9) for the phylacteries or frontlets of the Jews." **Bread alone.** "Man has something nobler than stomach."

5. This second temptation is given, as the third by Matthew. **A high mountain.** Unknown. **All the kingdoms of the world.** A magnificent panorama. China and India were then in their glory; Egypt, Rome stretching out its dominion beyond the pillars of Hercules, central Europe, and central Asia—we cannot imagine the splendor of this collected vision. Some such dream came, in after days, to Mohammed, and Genghis Khan, and Napoleon Bonaparte.

6. Delivered unto me. Such Satanic sovereignty is not justified by Scripture; but during all the centuries Satan has largely exercised it.

7. Worship me. Expressing the homage offered an Oriental sovereign rather than the adoration due to God.

8. Get thee behind me. This command seems an assertion of authority over Satan as well as detestation of the suggestion.

9. This third temptation is mentioned second by Matthew. **Brought him to Jerusalem.** Probably in vision. **Pinnacle.** Josephus says that if one looked down into the Kedron valley from the top of the royal gallery he would become dizzy, his eyes being unable to reach so vast a depth. **Cast thyself down.** A temptation to presumption. A similar suggestion comes to all souls that are liable to spiritual pride.

10. Charge over thee. "In the ninety-first Psalm," says Dr. Whedon, "a description is given of God's care of the ideal holy man, true in its degree of all saints, but absolutely true only in the case of the absolutely holy One, the Messiah."

12. Thou shalt not tempt. (1) "We cannot claim miracles if we court temptations."

13. All the temptation. Rather, every sort. Every chord of Jesus's nature had been strained during the forty days. **For a season.** To come again. (2) "He was tempted that he might help the tempted." There are many temptations which, from the character of Jesus's life, he of course could never have suffered. He was never a "business man," nor a college youth, nor a soldier; parental and domestic cares were never his; he never endured the dreary monotony of a sick bed; but though many of our daily experiences were not passed through by him, it is nevertheless a comforting truth that in all points he was tempted as we are, for all the sensitivities that are strained in us were strained in him.

CRITICAL NOTES.

Jesus, believing himself divinely called to the Messiahship, has confessed that belief by submitting himself to John's baptism, has been vouchsafed a confirmatory testimony from on high and a supernatural spiritual endowment for his sacred work. He has reached a great crisis: the end of his private and the beginning of his public life. Now that the Messianic office is unmistakably committed to him, he naturally desires and seeks a season of retirement for prayer and meditation upon the policy he shall adopt in the great career which he is about to begin. He must settle for himself once for all the principles by which his Messianic work is to be governed. As he ponders the possible courses of action, he must inevitably entertain some which are attractive from a human, but impracticable from the divine, stand-point. As truly human, he will wish he could pursue certain policies which his spiritual allegiance to his Father distinctly forbid. Jesus will thus reach a decision with reference to three great questions of Messianic policy: first, never to ask for miraculous interference without an indication from his Father that such is his will; second, never to accept the popular Messianic ideal of temporal sovereignty, but to adhere to the spiritual ideal; third, to proclaim this spiritual ideal openly before the people and not ask to be delivered from the fatal consequences of such assertion. The watch-word of his Messiahship is to be Obedience. With this resolution all the glorious sequel of his life and work are made possible. He who, at twenty years of age, feeling the charm of new intellectual powers had yet submitted himself to the will of his earthly parents,

now again conscious of unspeakable spiritual gifts and privileges, subjects himself to his heavenly Father. To Jesus himself we owe in the first instance this account of his temptation, told in his own graphic way. Luke seems to arrange the temptations after their logical rather than their temporal order, as they occur in Matthew's gospel.

1. Full of the Holy Spirit. This expression, a favorite one with Luke, may be understood to imply that the Spirit which had just descended and rested upon him quickened all his mental and spiritual powers. His mind, like that of Paul when called to his work (Gal. 1, 17), was preoccupied with the great vocation which now opened before him. By the Spirit's aid his human mind discovered the full significance of the great event just past and the difficulties of the problems soon to be met. **Led by the Spirit.** With Paul, to be led by the Spirit is to have proof that one is the Son of God. Rom. 8, 14. Jesus felt an impulse to go into the retirement of the desert to meditate and pray over his public ministry so soon to begin. Moses, Elijah, and Paul had like impulses, under similar circumstances. **In the wilderness.** Not "into," as in the Authorized Version. The Spirit led him during all the days of his meditation and testing. The same blessed spiritual companionship is vouchsafed to us.

2. Tempted of the devil. The enemy of all good suggested from time to time to the human soul of Jesus methods of performing his Messianic work which, while contrary to the will of God as revealed by the indwelling Spirit, yet seemed humanly desirable. We should

conclude from the end of the they continue plicity "every whole period came to him n Did eat not and spiritual literally here He hungered and became t and for establ had been por

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5-8. Show ing powers of vivid image o sovereignty. inspired Alex earth. In al people from t on the part of special Messie sired to re-est tend its bound Jesus had rec which re his Father ca world. The could only be tion of it wou God.

9-12. He tual kingdo openly proplem, the nat temple, and how will the not he be fig himself by su event may he interfere and obedience to sages of Scrip gestion was s us, but the s once more to the first time Gethsemane of God he ca pass from hi miraculous a

conclude from Matthew that the temptations began at the end of the forty days; but from Luke we learn that they continued with greater or less severity and multiplicity ("every temptation," ver. 13) throughout the whole period. Jesus recognized in the thoughts that came to him a personal evil influence outside of himself. **Did eat nothing.** A physical symptom of his mental and spiritual absorption. This need not be taken more literally here than in Matthew, who says he "fasted." **He hungered.** His physical wants asserted themselves and became the occasion for testing his spiritual loyalty and for establishing a precedent for the future work he had been pondering.

3. The devil said. It is not well to dogmatically maintain that Satan spoke audible words here, any more than in Luke 10, 18 it can be thought that Satan was seen to literally drop from the clouds to a definite spot on the ground. It is better to say that Jesus recognized the personal Satan as suggesting this temptation. **If thou art the Son of God.** Jesus had lately been given this title by the heavenly voice. A right to ask for displays of divine power might seem to be thus implied. His physical hunger suggests to the mind of Jesus, filled as it is with spiritual illumination, the question, When should a Messiah ask for miraculous interference? He is at no loss for the answer. It is when the Father indicates his willingness thus to interfere. The Spirit has led him into the present situation, but has given no sign that he is to escape from it by miracle. Jesus sees Satan behind this suggestion of miraculous deliverance.

4. According to the best manuscripts the words "but by every word of God" do not belong here as they do in Matt. 4, 4.

5-8. Showed... in a moment. Mentally the reigning powers of the world came before him, presenting a vivid image of the possibilities of a political Messiah's sovereignty. This was the very vision that haunted and inspired Alexander; a kingdom coterminous with the earth. In and of itself a wish to redeem the Jewish people from their oppressors would not have been sinful on the part of Jesus. If he had been conscious of no special Messianic mission he might have laudably desired to re-establish the empire of David, and even extend its boundaries far and wide. But the training which Jesus had received, together with the divine illumination which rested upon him, made it clear to him that his Father called him to establish a kingdom not of this world. The acceptance of the human and popular ideal could only be urged upon him by Satan, and the adoption of it would be paying homage to him rather than to God.

9-12. He led him. In thought. His ideal of a spiritual kingdom and a spiritual Messiahship must be openly proclaimed not only in Galilee but in Jerusalem, the nation's religious center; nay, more, in the temple, and the most conspicuous part thereof. But how will the people receive such a proclamation? Will not be figuratively, and perhaps literally, destroying himself by such a course? It may be. And in such an event may he not hope that his Father will miraculously interfere and save him from the fatal consequences of obedience to his own convictions? Do not some passages of Scripture warrant such an inference? The suggestion was an attractive one to the human heart of Jesus, but the Spirit that rested upon him enabled him once more to recognize the agency of Satan in it. For the first time possibly Jesus now foresaw the shadows of Gethsemane and Golgotha. He now knows that as Son of God he cannot insist that the cup of death itself shall pass from him. It is clear to him that to require the miraculous aid of angels (Matt. 26, 53) to save him from

the consequences of testifying to the truth would be an unwarranted presumption. He shrinks from this possible result of his preaching, but resolves that in all his Messianic work he will be obedient unto his Father's will even unto death, Phil. 2, 8. The subsequent chapters of the gospel show that Jesus was faithful to the fundamental principles he fixed upon in the desert. He wrought miracles for spiritual ends alone; he preached a spiritual gospel; he voluntarily suffered the death to which his teaching exposed him.

13. Every temptation. The comprehensiveness of the preparation for his public work which Jesus made in the desert is brought to our notice. He was tempted in all points like as we are. **For a season.** Jesus would have many opportunities for again reviewing his fundamental principles. So late in his career as the conflict in Gethsemane he would be compelled to decide for himself the question of obedience. Luke 22, 42; John 12, 27.

The Lesson Council.

Question 8. How was it possible for such a personality as that of Jesus Christ to be susceptible to temptation?

Because he humbled himself and became a part of a race that God allows to be tempted for its moral development. To be susceptible to temptation is, however, not in the least inconsistent with perfect purity.—*Rev. W. I. Haven.*

How was it possible for a personality not to be susceptible to temptation? I cannot conceive how it is possible for human nature, in a vigorous human body, and in a world where it is surrounded with evil, to be free from temptation. If we claim, with Romanists, that the mother of Christ was absolutely holy, and therefore without any tinge of impurity, and that his Father was the Holy Spirit, then there might be some ground for the claim that there was nothing in his nature which would make him liable to temptation. But, even then, his mother was human, and must of necessity, by a law of generation, transmit to him a human nature. And, so far as we know, all human nature is susceptible to temptation. More than this, is it not certain that all created moral beings are susceptible of temptation, as were Adam and the angels who fell? If moral nature implies the power to do right or wrong from choice, it also implies a susceptibility to evil influences; and the presence of evil, with its influence upon the individual, is the occasion for exercising this power of choice. But this presence and influence of evil is temptation. Hence if Christ was a moral being, he, in his human nature, must have been susceptible to temptation.—*Rev. C. W. Cushing, D.D.*

Jesus possessed all the endowments of human nature. His intellect perceived facts, his feelings responded to them, and became motives soliciting him to act accordingly—Satan appealed to his sensibilities with ideas of personal good. These ideas involuntarily stimulated desires for immediate gratification. Almost instantly his perfect intellect perceived the method of gratification presented to be inconsistent with absolute right, and as instantly his will rejected the appeal, and his desires vanished. Had he dallied with the desire after he perceived the method of its gratification wrong he would have entered the enchanted ground of sin.—*Rev. D. C. Knowles, D.D.*

It is less difficult to believe the temptation possible than to explain how it was possible. There is no virtue in resistance unless the tempted one is susceptible to

failure. God cannot be tempted; but man can be. Christ was God-man. On the human side the temptation was not only possible, but actual. The battle in the wilderness was not a spectacular display. Christ conquered Satan in his humanity, and for humanity. But the mystery of it, like the mystery of the Trinity—three persons in one nature—and the Incarnation—two natures in one person—shall be solved only when the entire mystery of the God-man is revealed.—*Rev. Henry Spellmeyer, D.D.*

He was tempted as a man, just as he was hungry and weary and died as a man. Like every other man, he was influenced by motives, was attracted by objects which from a human standpoint appeared desirable. He wished food to satisfy the cravings of hunger. He longed to succeed in his appointed mission. Hence he was affected by the plausible presentation of methods to secure these. But, while these motives for doing wrong to obtain proper ends solicited and attracted his human nature, they did not win in the slightest degree the consent of his will.—*Professor Charles F. Bradley.*

Lesson Word-Pictures.

A great victory is to be gained by Messiah, this Prince of God, this Lion of Judah, this Conqueror of the world.

Where will he go to gain it, and over what enemy? What forces will he marshal for the great fight? Shall he, in his heavy war-chariot, thundering out of Jerusalem's proud gates, a mighty host of Israelites around him, go against the Roman oppressor? Not this! O, how small is his visible array of strength! No army is marshaled heading for Rome. Just one—the solitary Jesus—goes into the wide, lonely wilderness. There he will meet an enemy mightier than Rome or any world-power. There he will show that he is the strong Son of God.

But when will he meet this enemy? He wanders day after day. He hears the sweet call of the birds in the air as if voices to win him back to the world. No, he cannot, will not, go. Night comes. His shelter is a cave or a cleft in a rock. He hears the savage threat roared by some wild creature as if to frighten him away from the battle-ground. He cannot be frightened. He must stay.

What is this mysterious enemy coming one day? When will it come? How will it come? Will a murderous onset be made by a rushing horde, with spears set or swords drawn? And when? At dawn, at noon, at set of sun?

There is no answer. There is only this mysterious, protracted waiting. Day succeeds day, and all are lonely. Night follows night, and none are friendly. Forty days have gone.

O, how weak and faint is the body! How sharp are the cravings of hunger! If the stone before the Saviour could become a loaf of bread, how acceptable it would be! Suddenly an ugly voice, more dreadful than the roar of furious armies, utters the temptation to distrust God and make the stone bread. That assault of temptation goes by harmless.

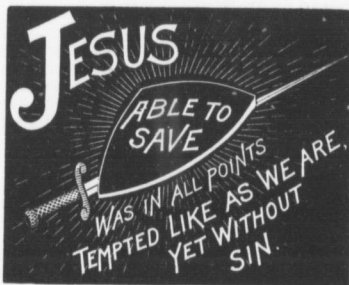
When will this dreaded enemy come again? Suddenly before the Saviour is a vision of the world. Under him is the lonely mountain-top; over him the wide and solitary sky. Far below are all the kingdoms of the world spread out in one bright, impressive, fascinating, tempting picture. Fields and forests; cities and hamlets; navies and armies; palaces and marts of business; crowded granaries and coveted treasures!

And then comes the hissing voice of temptation proffering all this for prostration at the devil's feet! How surmised is the solicitation!

Once more the enemy comes. There is a looking down from a temple-pinnacle into the shuddering depths below. O, how dizzy that altitude! How far down that descent! And now that insidious voice hissing again its temptation, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from thence!" No, no! It cannot be! God must not be tempted.

And now we seem to catch a flapping of hideous wings. There is the lifting of shadows, as if a storm-cloud had passed. What peace, serenity, sunshine, triumph! And lo! the angels of God have come to minister unto him who has met and vanquished the greatest of enemies, and shown himself the greatest of conquerors.

Blackboard.



The lesson having been reviewed from the stand, the superintendent can use the blackboard for the purpose of making the application. Are you tempted and tried? Jesus knows all about it. Is the way rough and hard to climb? Jesus has walked the same way before me. Am I helpless and almost hopeless? Jesus is able to save. Why? Because "he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Open your heart to him; keep nothing back; neither be ashamed to tell him all your troubles, for "he careth for you." The Bible tells us to cast all our care on him, not a part, but all, for he is a sun and a shield, and the sword of the Spirit will protect the evil one that tempts the believer.

DIRECTIONS FOR COLORS. The shield and sword of light blue; the rays bright yellow; the words on the shield in red or pink; the words in the rays all to be white.

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Jesus the Strong One.*

Print in large letters, "Temptation." Find out how much children understand of its meaning. Tell some simple story to illustrate it. Print "Deliverance," also in large letters. Over the first print "Satan"; "Jesus" over the last.

Make picture of an open Bible. Then tell the lesson story very simply.

Satan, the bad spirit—the very same that tries to get us to do wrong, did not want Jesus to help men to be good. So he came to tempt Jesus. First, he tried to get him to be selfish, to look out for himself as if his Father had forgotten him. Read from the Bible what Jesus answered, and explain that it is better to obey

god and obey.

Satan is wrong a next time before God him, if how strong and urge to tempt!

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References. STONES, 647. ... FOSTER 5661, 5663, Poetical, 38 1163, 1871 Ver. 10: Pr 713.

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God and be hungry, than to have all we want and disobey.

Satan is not discouraged when he cannot get us to do wrong at first. He keeps on trying. Tell what the next temptation was. He wanted Jesus to choose self before God. Tell what fine, pleasant things he offered him, if only he would be his servant. Did not know how strong Jesus was! Read the answer Jesus gave, and urge children to send Satan away, when he comes to tempt them to do wrong, as Jesus did.

Show a picture of the temple. Describe the lofty tower, and tell what Satan wanted Jesus to do. Teach that we must never expect God to take care of us when we do things that he does not want us to do. We may trust God when we do his will. When we take our own way, we do not trust him. When we take our blackboard: Who comes to tempt us? Yes, Satan.



Jesus has come to bring deliverance from Satan's power.

Print across the open Bible "The Sword of the Spirit." Teach that God's word, the sword—is the weapon we must use to drive Satan away. Urge the value of texts stored away in the mind. We must have the sword near us, ready to use, if we would be safe.

Berean Methods.

The Teachers' Meeting.

Draw from class vivid pictures of the lesson surroundings, but do not spend too much time upon them: a) life in "the wilderness;" b) loaf-like stones; c) "pinnacle" of the temple, etc. Refer to all the Old Testament texts quoted in this singular dialogue, and find their original connection. . . . The devil's panorama (See Notes). . . . Notice the different order in which Matthew gives these temptations. . . . These three are typical: we have few temptations which are not prompted either by physical desires, ambition, or presumption. . . . PRACTICAL LESSONS: 1. The strongest forces in the world to-day are not physical; not bread, nor money, but sentiment and principle. 2. Homage to the devil will secure to many an adroit man power and glory in this world—and eternal death. 3. The stronger the human soul, the stronger and the more frequently are the temptations likely to come. (See also Thoughts for Young People.)

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 4: Bread resembling stones, 647. Ver. 9: The pinnacle of the temple, 635. . . . FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Vets. 1-13; Prose, 729, 5561, 5563, 7546, 11930, 12041, 11887, 11583, 11584, 11929; Poetical, 3205, 1053. Ver. 4: Poetical, 3267; Prose, 11630, 11871. Ver. 7: Prose, 9080. Ver. 9: Prose, 11853. Ver. 10: Prose, 4788, 7706, 11267, 11270, 11278, 7926, 7927, 7713.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

Christ's Temptation and Our Temptations.

I. THE TEMPTED ONE.

Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, v. 1.

"Tempted like as we are," Heb. 4, 15.

"Trial of your faith. . . precious," 1 Pet. 1, 6, 7.

II. THE TEMPTER.

Forty days tempted of the devil, v. 2.

"Your adversary the devil," 1 Pet. 5, 8.

"Stand against the wiles of the devil," Eph. 6, 11.

III. THE TEMPTATION.

1. To doubt. "Stone be made bread," v. 3.

"Yea, hath God said," Gen. 3, 1.

2. To ambition. "All shall be thine," v. 7.

"To be desired to make one wise," Gen. 3, 6.

3. To presumption. "Cast thyself down," v. 9.

"Ye shall become as gods," Gen. 3, 5.

IV. THE TRIUMPH.

1. Faith. "It is written," v. 4.

"Thy word. . . hid. . . might not sin," Psa. 119, 11.

"Sword of the Spirit. . . word of God," Eph. 6, 17.

2. Reverence. "Worship the Lord," v. 8.

"I am the Lord thy God," Exod. 20, 2.

"Prepare your hearts unto the Lord," 1 Sam. 7, 3.

3. Humility. "Not tempt the Lord," v. 12.

"Not my will but thine," Luke 22, 42.

"Fear the Lord thy God," Deut. 6, 13.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Lessons from Christ's Temptation.

1. "Full of the Holy Ghost." This experience may be yours and mine. It is only because men shrink from contact with the divine being that they are not consciously and delightfully led, step by step, in all their secular as well as their spiritual life.

2. Man's extremity is Satan's opportunity. After tempting Jesus unremittingly for forty consecutive days, when physical exhaustion had reached its culmination he made his fiercest attack. We are constantly watched by the enemy of our souls, and "when heart and flesh are failing" we expect his evil suggestions. But God is our strength and our portion forever.

3. The best resource of every tempted soul is the word of God. Without this we cannot successfully resist Satan's attacks. The Bible furnishes the "way of escape" which the apostle spoke of.

4. Satan can use Bible texts as fluently as the best Christian. Few sins have been indulged within the limits of Christendom which have not been supported by some misinterpretation of the word of God. Let us "prove all things, and hold fast to that which is good."

5. The devil has more to do with this world's politics, even to-day, than we like to give him credit for. The statement of the sixth verse may not have been quite so great a lie as it sounds. He whose great object in life is "power" and "glory" cannot attain them without homage to Satan.

6. Christ was in all points tempted as we are. This does not mean that he passed through every experience that each of his followers has had. It means rather that he suffered from the strain of every fiber and cord of his manifold nature. From physical desires, ambition, and presumption, the three temptations mentioned in this lesson include nearly all the evil solicitations which embarrass us. There is no pressure or tension to which any of us can be subjected which was not also endured by Jesus.

7. Only for a season does the devil depart until the day of eternity dawns.

HOME READINGS.

M. The temptation of Jesus. Luke 4, 1-13.

Tu. The first temptation. Deut. 8, 1-6.

W. The second temptation. Psa. 91, 1-12.

Th. Answer to Satan. Deut. 6, 12-18.

F. Enduring temptation. Jas. 1, 12-29.

S. "Tempted like as we are," Heb. 4, 12-16.

S. Able to succor. Heb. 2, 10-18.

LESSON HYMNS.

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Come, every soul by sin oppressed,
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From every stormy wind that blows,
From every swelling tide of woes.

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Saviour, more than life to me,
I am clinging, clinging close to thee.

TIME.—A. D. 27.

PLACES.—The wilderness, probably beyond Jordan. The temple at Jerusalem.

RULERS.—Same as before.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The authority of holy Scripture.

In thy cleft, O Rock of Ages,
Nearer, my God, to thee.

When peace, like a river,
Guide me, O thou great Jehovah.
Come unto me,
My Jesus, as thou wilt.
Come, thou Fount,
I need thee every hour.
He leadeth me.
LUX BENIGNA.
Pain's furnace heat,
If on a quiet sea,
Yield not to temptation.
Dare to do right,
My Father is rich,
Must Jesus bear.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- 1. In the Desert, v. 1-4.**
Where was Jesus when filled with the Holy Ghost?
In what direction, probably, was the wilderness into which he was led?
What other biblical character fasted forty days?
Is there any intimation that this was the only temptation that Jesus suffered?
What is plainly set forth by the phrase "afterward hungered"?
Why, probably, are stones and bread so often used in connection with each other?
What is meant by the statement that man lives by every word of God?
From what book did Jesus here quote?
- 2. On the Mountain, v. 5-8.**
Is it known what mountain is here alluded to?
What did Jesus see on this mountain by the devil's mystic arts?
Did Satan tell the truth when he said that the glory of these nations was delivered unto him?
From what source did Jesus make his quotation?
- 3. On the Pinnacle, v. 9-13.**
What is meant by a pinnacle of the temple?
From what book did the devil here quote?
From what book did Jesus reply?
What is the force of the remark, "departed from him for a season"?
To what three motives did Satan appeal?

Practical Teachings.

To be led by the Spirit is within reach of every Christian. The forty day temptation did not stand out in Jesus's life as a solitary experience; before and after that severer temptations came. But these forty days were an unexampled test.

Let us never forget that men cannot live by bread alone; that the social and intellectual and spiritual natures have a life as real and distinct as the life of the body, and that if these lives are not properly nourished they must die. A man who has no social intercourse, and no intellectual development, is practically dead in those departments of his nature. A man who does not develop his spiritual life is dead while he lives.

To-day the devil gives much of the power and wealth and glory of this world to his servants. It is hard to understand that our worship must be rendered to the Lord our God only. We are willing to serve our Church, our political party, our family interests, but God's word commands, "Him only shall thou serve."
Only for a season does the devil depart until the day of eternity dawns.

Hints for Home Study.

1. Write out all the Scripture quoted in this singular dialogue between Jesus and Satan, giving chapter and verse of each text.
2. Write a list of the great independent and subject nations which were in their glory when the devil produced this panorama before Jesus.
3. Obtain, if possible, a glimpse of the peculiar sort of wealth and glory enjoyed by each nation.
4. How little the Psalmist thought, when God's Spirit inspired him to write these beautiful sentences, to what a dastardly purpose they would be applied some centuries later.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- 1. In the Desert, v. 1-5.**
With what was Jesus filled at his baptism?
By whom was he led into the desert?
How long was he there?
What company had he?
What did he eat during that time?
What did the devil tempt him to do?
How did Jesus reply to the temptation?
From what book did he quote? See Deut. 8, 3.

- 2. On the Mountain, v. 6-8.**
Where then did the tempter lead Jesus?
What was shown to him?
What offer was made to him?
What was asked in return?
How did Jesus reply to this temptation?
From what writing did he quote this time? See Deut. 6, 13.
- 3. On the Pinnacle, v. 9-13.**
Where then was Jesus brought?
Where was he placed?
What was he bidden to do?
What Scripture was quoted to tempt him?
From what book were the words quoted? See Psa. 91, 11.
How did Jesus reply to this temptation?
From what book were these words quoted? See Deut. 6, 16.
What did the devil then do?
Who came to Jesus when the devil departed? Matt. 4, 11.
Of what benefit to us is the temptation of Jesus? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

Teachings of the Lesson.

- Where are we taught in this lesson—
1. The real source of our temptations?
 2. That the best people may be tempted?
 3. The way to overcome the tempter?
- Home Work for Young Bereans.**
Find other Bible characters who fasted for forty days. Find the chapters and verses in the Old Testament which Jesus quoted in reply to the devil.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

- Where was Jesus led after his baptism? **Into the wilderness.**
By whom was he led there? **By the Spirit.**
For what purpose? **To be tempted by the devil.**
How long did the temptation last? **Forty days.**
What did the devil ask him to do? **To turn a stone into bread.**
Why did he tempt him to do this? **Because Jesus was hungry.**
By what did Jesus say man should live? **By God's words.**
Where did the devil then take him? **Into an high mountain.**
What did he show him? **All the kingdoms of the world.**
What did he offer Jesus if he would worship him? **All these kingdoms.**
What did Jesus answer? **"Get thee behind me, Satan."**
What did the devil then try to get Jesus to do? **To throw himself off a pinnacle of the temple.**
What did Satan tell Jesus? **That God would not let him be hurt.**
What did Jesus say we must not do? **Tempt the Lord.**
What did the devil then do? **He left Jesus.**
What does the example of Jesus teach us? **To resist evil.**

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The same evil spirit who tempted Jesus will tempt you.
Learn God's word so as to be able to answer him.
"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. When did the devil tempt Jesus? **During forty days' fast in the wilderness.**
2. What was the first of these three temptations? **To distrust God, and satisfy his hunger by a miracle.**
3. What was the second? **To conquer the earth by submitting to Satan.**
4. What was the third? **To tempt God by leaping from the pinnacle of the temple.**
5. How did Jesus conquer all these temptations? **By the word of the Lord.**

CATECHISM QUESTION.

12. What does this record teach us?
That he is a pattern to all the young, in saying, "I must be in my Father's house."
And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business.—
Luke ii. 49.

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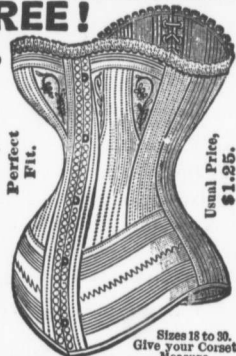
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have as fine a head of hair as when I was sixteen." Bessie H. Bedloe, Burlington, Vt., was troubled with a disease of the scalp, which caused her hair to become harsh and dry, and to fall out so freely that she scarcely dared to comb it. Ayer's Hair Vigor restored the scalp to a healthy condition, cleansed her head of dandruff, and made her hair beautifully thick and glossy. This preparation is approved and recommended by physicians.

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