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SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Lesson VI.—First Quarter, For Feb. 11, 1912.

THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

Text of the Lesson, Luke ii, 40-52. Memory Verses, 48, 47—Golden Text, Luke ii, 49. R. V.—Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

After the visit of the wise men, bringing their treasures of gold and frankincense and myrrh, Joseph was directed by the angel of the Lord to take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt and abide there till he should bring them word. It has helped me much to notice and to remember that before they were sent to Egypt the money was on hand to cover their need, and I do firmly believe that the Lord always provides for all that He wants done. The wise men presented their gifts to the child, so it was the child's money that took them all to Egypt and took care of them. They need have no anxiety as to when to leave Egypt, for the angel said that he would bring them word, and he did (Matt. i, 13-23). We may be sure of guidance also if we have no will of our own and are wholly submitted to God (Ps. xxxii, 8; Isa. xli, 21). Note in those verses in Matthew the three Scriptures that were fulfilled, and let us not forget that all things which have been written concerning Him must be fulfilled.

Our lesson today begins and ends with a statement concerning the child's growth both physically and in wisdom also. He was a partaker of real flesh and blood and grew in many respects as other children do, but we must always think of Him as being specially controlled by the Holy Spirit, for what was true of John the Baptist must have been true of Him also (chapter i, 15). There were three annual feasts at Jerusalem, at which all males must appear (Ex. xxiii, 14-17), and the passover was the first, and this was His first passover. It seems from I Sam. i, 7-9, that women went to these feasts also, and our lesson plainly teaches that Mary accompanied Joseph. We may not be able to say whether at this time He fully understood His own identification with this feast according to I Cor. v, 7, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," but my own conviction is that He always knew more than many are willing to believe. We cannot grasp the wondrous statement that all things were created by Him and for Him, that He created Adam and Eve, provided the coats of skins for them after they had sinned, walked with Enoch, talked with Noah, dined with Abraham, instructed Moses about the passover and all else; but, though we cannot understand, we can believe, and through faith we understand. There are wonderful things about the number twelve and every other number which will yet be unfolded to us (verse 42). In this case it may have been just the age when a boy kept his first passover, but we will see more when we know as we are known (I Cor. xiii, 12).

The feast being over, the people started for their homes in every part of the land, and probably a great multitude were together for the first part of the journey northward. At the close of the first day each company would make sure that their number was complete before starting farther on their journey, and then it was that Joseph and Mary discovered that their precious boy was missing. And we may imagine the eager but unavailing search among kinsfolk and acquaintances and the sorrowful hearts that probably could not sleep that night even if they sought to rest. It may be that they started back to Jerusalem immediately on ascertaining their loss and spent the night journeying. Only those who have ever had a child stray away can think how they felt and talked. Then the three weary days of searching for Him in the city and the hopelessness and heartache at the close of each day—we cannot but wonder if they prayed to Him who is perfect in knowledge, who knoweth even our thoughts (Job xxxvi, 4; Ps. cxxxix, 1-4). If they knew Him as they might have known Him we think they would have said, "Let us go right to the temple, for we will surely find Him there." Did He not imply that when He said to them after they did find Him in the temple: "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" (Verse 49). Revised version and margin, "In My Father's house" or "in the things of My Father." He certainly knew who He was, and we are not surprised that the rabbis were astonished at His understanding and answers as He sat in their midst, listening to them and asking them questions. How He must, even at that age, have opened to them the Scriptures. We would like to know whose home was honored with His presence and who was privileged to care for Him those two or three days, but it is more important for us to lay to heart those first words of His as Son of Mary, the first recorded words, "I must be about My Father's business." If we are not constantly in the things of our Father we are on the side of the enemy, for it must be the world or the Father, and they are opposed the one to the other (I John ii, 15-17). Contrast the "supposition" of Joseph and Mary (verse 44) with the "most surely believed" and "certainty" of chapter i, 1, 4, and let us have done with all supposition and "know" and "be fully persuaded" (II Tim. i, 12). Though they understood not His sayings, Mary kept them in her heart and pondered them (verses 19, 50, 51).

HE WAS CONSERVATIVE.

The Old Man Bitterly Opposed New Fangled Methods.

In Pennsylvania not many years ago dwelt the descendants of an ancient German settler. The farm had descended for generations from father to son, and the original customs had been faithfully adhered to. But a youth was born to the family who had inspired some of the modern racial ideas and was likely to come into conflict with his father's stolid conservatism.

One day Johannes was told to add die the horse and take the grist to the mill. It had been the practice from time immemorial to place the grist in one end of the bag and a large stone in the other end to balance it, and so throw it across the horse's back. But Johannes on the present occasion managed to get the grist divided between the two ends of the bag, so that there was no need of the stone.

"Oh, daddy, come and see! There ain't no use for the stone."

The old gentleman calmly surveyed the device, and with a severely reproachful aspect remarked to his exulting son:

"Johannes, your fader, your grand fader and your great-grandfader all went to de mill wid de stone in one end of de bag und de grist in de odder. Und you, a mere boy, sets yourself up to know more as dey do. Yust put dat stone in de bag and never lets me hear no more of such foolishness as dat."—Life.

A Doctor of Dancing.

In France during the reign of Louis XIV. dancing took a very prominent position among court festivities, and many members of the royal family took part in the complex ballets of the time. Louis himself, no mean performer, took lessons for twenty years from Beau-champs, who was called the father of all dancing masters and upon whom the king conferred the title doctor as a special mark of favor. Beau-champs had the honor of appearing as partner with the king in the minuet, a dance which was introduced in 1650 in France, and no court ball was opened in Europe for a century and a half without it. About the year 1691 a royal academy of dancing was formed under the auspices of Beau-champs, Lull, Mollere and others, the object of which was to elevate the art and check all abuses. Of this academy Beau-champs was chief, with the title of director.

Dogs That Eat Crabs.

There are crab hunting and crab eating dogs in Brazil. The dogs are half fox, but they do not seem to care very much for poultry. They have been known to turn up their noses at nice fat pullets and go fishing for crabs instead. The dogs hunt in parks along the banks of the rivers in the Amazon valley, and the crawfish and land crabs of that region are their especial prey. The crabs often put up a vigorous fight but the dogs have a way of turning them over and biting them in a vital spot just as the thoroughbred terrier polishes off a rat.—New York World.

Too Much For Him.

"Allow me," said the fresh young man in the Pullman dining car as he passed the sugar bowl to a shy young girl; "sweets to the sweet, you know." "Allow me," said the girl as she handed him a plate of crackers "crackers to the cracked, you know."—Ladies' Home Journal.

Gone, Perhaps.

"The professor is in the laboratory conducting some chemical experiments. The professor expects to go down to posterity."

From the laboratory—Br-r-r, bang! The Visitor—I hope the professor hasn't gone.—Harlem Life.

Worse Than Creditors.

Marks—Why do you allow your wife to run up such big bills? Parks—Because I'd sooner have trouble with my creditors than with her—that's why.—Boston Transcript.

Modesty should be the virtue of those who possess no other.—Lichtenberg

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