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Sunday School Lesson

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)
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LESSON FOR OCTOBER 8

THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF JESUS

LESSON TEXT—Luke 2:1-30; 40-52.
GOLDEN TEXT—And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.—Luke 2:52.

REFERENCE MATERIAL—Matt. 1:18; 2:23.
PRIMARY TOPIC—The Boy Jesus.
JUNIOR TOPIC—The Boyhood of Jesus.
INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Jesus at Home and at School.
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—The Religious Training of the Young.

I. The Birth of Jesus (vv. 1-7).
1. Time of (vv. 1-3). It was at a time when the Jews were coming under the Roman power. It was a most propitious time for the introduction of the gospel. The whole world was under one rule, making it possible for ministers to go from place to place easily and without molestation.

2. Place of (vv. 4-6). Bethlehem, as the prophet had foretold 700 years before (Micah 5:2). God moved the emperor to enforce the decree of taxation in time to cause Mary to be at Bethlehem.
3. Circumstances of (v. 7). His surroundings were of the most humble sort. The Almighty Creator condescended to take upon himself humanity—to be born in a manger, becoming the poorest of the poor that none might be hindered from coming to Him.

II. The Birth of Jesus Announced (vv. 8-20).
1. To Whom (vv. 8, 9). The shepherds who were watching over their flocks by night. The glorious gospel message was first given to laboring men.

2. By Whom (v. 9). The first gospel sermon was preached by the angel of the Lord. The angels have part in making known the gospel to lost men. These glorious beings no doubt deeply sympathize with fallen, sin-cursed men.
3. The Nature of the Message (vv. 10-14). It was good tidings of great joy. It was good tidings because the way of salvation was about to be opened for all—Jew and Gentile. So glorious was this news that a multitude of the heavenly host accompanied it with a song of praise. It is through Jesus Christ that God's kindness and good will are made known to man.

4. The Shepherds Witnessing (vv. 15-20). They made a prompt investigation of the angel's message.

III. The Child Jesus Growing (vv. 40-52).

Jesus Christ was divine, but His deity did not interfere with His development as a human being. The processes of His physical, mental and spiritual growth were the same as those of any normal human being.

1. Jesus Tarrying Behind at Jerusalem (vv. 40-43). At the age of twelve years a Jewish child took his place as a worshiper in the temple, for he was considered a "child of the law." Being conscious of His mission when His mother and Joseph were returning from attendance at the Passover, Jesus tarried behind to enter the temple and inquire into the meaning of the ordinances of God's house.

2. Jesus Found in the Temple (vv. 44-47). When His mother and Joseph had gone some distance on their journey they perceived that Jesus was missing and sought for Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances. Not finding Him there they returned to Jerusalem, where they found Him in the temple. (1) He was "sitting" (v. 46), showing that He was no passing visitor or sightseer. He was perfectly at home in His Father's house. (2) He was "hearing" (v. 46). He was hearing the teachers of God's Word. This shows that He was eager to learn God's will. (3) He asked questions (v. 46). His growing mind was inquisitive. It more than received what was taught; it inquired after. (4) He answered questions (v. 47). His answers showed great wisdom, such as to astonish those who heard Him. Yet we should not surmise that He was consciously displaying His wisdom. It was not an exhibition of His divine wisdom, but the expression of the workings of a perfect human mind suffused by the Holy Spirit.

3. Mary's Complaint (vv. 48-50). She remonstrated with Him for His behavior. To this He replied in a dignified, yet tender manner. He made no apology, showing that He was more than the son of Mary.

4. Jesus' Obedience (v. 51). Though He was fully conscious of His divine being and mission, He lived a life of filial obedience.

5. Jesus' Development (v. 52). (1) Mental. He "increased in wisdom." (2) Physical. He "increased in stature." (3) Spiritual. He "increased in favor with God and man."

Wisdom to Be Desired.
Wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.—Proverbs 8:11.

The Truly Valiant.
The truly valiant dare everything except doing any other body an injury.—Sir P. Sidney.

Happiness.
Action may not always bring happiness; but there is no happiness without action.—Disraeli.

SAVE THE SOILS BY GROWING COVER CROPS

By W. F. Pate, Agronomist in Soil Fertility, Division of Agronomy, N. C. Experiment Station.

A man built his house on the bank of a river. Soon after some heavy rains fell and the river rose so high his house was washed away. His neighbors were sympathetic, in the way that counts, and offered to assist him in rebuilding again with this proviso: That he build his house in such a place as the high water mark of the river had never reached. The man was attached to this particular spot and was also a trifle obstinate and refused to do so, and built his house on the same spot as before. After the heavy spring rains had set in, the river rose to such a height that the house was washed away again.

A large portion of the farmers of this State spend a part of their time and money in trying to make a soil for their crops to grow in and produce larger yields without very much success, as they do not insure the safety of the soil from being washed away to the creeks, rivers, and oceans by the very abundant rainfall that nature has blessed us with.

It is probably known by most farmers that the first eight to twelve inches of soil is the place in which crops feed. The first essential in any plan to increase their producing power is to keep the soil that was already made from being carried away.

As large areas of our land are sown to clean cultivated crops during the spring and summer, it is a good plan to sow crops in the fall on the same soil to occupy the land during the winter and spring. The roots of these crops will keep the soil from washing or being blown away, and also the available plant food that might be lost by leaching will be saved and changed into a form that can be used by crops; or if the crops are turned back into the soils in the late winter or early spring, the producing power of the soil will be increased by the added available organic matter.

The farmers have a great variety of crops from which to choose to sow as cover crops. These include rye, wheat, oats, barley, vetch, crimson clover, bur clover, red clover, sweet clover, and the different grasses. In case the legume crops are used, the soil should be inoculated with the kind of bacteria that thrives on their roots and take nitrogen from the air. Grow these crops and improve the producing power of the soil.

HOMEBUILDING

By Elsie Duncan Yale.
Vacation days are o'er at last; 'tis schooltime now, you see; The children bring their lessons home which means homework for me; For when I take my paper up to scan the evening news

The young ones start an S O S which father can't refuse.
"I've got to write an essay, dad. Oh won't you help me out?
The subject I must choose myself.
What can I write about?"
"Say, daddy, in our spelling class we're going to have review; I wish you'd hear me all my words and just see how I do."
"I'm stuck on this example; now please, daddy, have a heart; You needn't work the whole thing out; just show me how to start."
"I tried to draw a map of Greece; it looks all wrong, you see.
Please, daddy, take my pencil now and draw a bit for me."
Vacation days are o'er at last; ah, yes, 'tis very true;

The children have their homework now, and I have homework too. Put down the paper; close the book; no evening peace in sight Till I have worked an hour or two and got those lessons right!

Machines are now in use which make cigars at the rate of 50,000 an hour and pack them at the rate of 15,000 an hour.

NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS
Notice is hereby given that the County Board of Education of McDowell County, N. C., will receive bids at its office in Marion, N. C., at 12 o'clock m. on Monday, October 16th, for the construction of a school building in East Marion School District; the building to be erected in accordance with plans and specifications submitted by T. E. Davis, Architect, Asheville, N. C.

A certified check for \$500.00, payable to McDowell County Board of Education, must be submitted with each bid, to guarantee the execution of bond and contract.

Plans and specifications may be secured from the above named architect upon application, and a deposit of \$20.00, which will be refunded upon the return of the plans and specifications, is required.

The right to reject any and all bids is reserved.

This the 25th day of Sept., 1922.

McDowell County Board of Education,
By T. W. Stacy, Chairman.
N. F. Steppe, Secretary.

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