

Sunday-School Lesson for January 7.

The Birth of Jesus.

LUKE II, 1-16.

BY REV. J. E. GILBERT D. D., LL. D.

Secretary of American Society of Religious Education.

Religious....

An interesting talk on "Foreign Missions" was yesterday afternoon delivered in the Sunday school rooms of the First Presbyterian church...

The following musical selections will be rendered for the first time at Elton Park church tomorrow, under the direction of J. Alfred Pannington:

MORNING. Organ, Prelude in G. Volkmann. "Come Into Him." B. Nevin. Organ, Offertory in C. Diether. Contralto Solo, "There is a Fold."

Draper. Mrs. Heitzman-Rundle, of New York City. Organ, "Gloria in Excelsis." Volkmann. Organ, Postlude in D. Volkmann.

EVENING. Organ, Prelude in A Flat. Smart. Organ, "Rejoice in the Lord." Lansing. Organ, Offertory in D. Calkin. Organ, "Jesus I My Cross Have Taken." Brown.

Contralto Solo, "Thou Art the Way." Schnecker. Mrs. Heitzman-Rundle, of New York. Organ, Postlude in F. Martin.

The beautiful Christmas music which was so delightfully rendered by the large chorus choir of the church, will, by a general request, be repeated at the North Main avenue Baptist church tomorrow evening.

Tomorrow's Services

Episcopal. St. Luke's Parish—Rev. Rogers Israel, rector; Rev. E. J. Haughton, senior curate; Rev. M. B. Nash, junior curate. First Sunday after Epiphany. St. Luke's church—7:30 a. m., holy communion; 9:45 a. m., morning prayer; 10:30 a. m., sermon and holy communion; 7:30 p. m., evening prayer and sermon; 8 p. m., Sunday school and Bible classes.

Evangelical Lutheran. Sunday after New Year. Gospel, Matt. 2:13-23; epistle, 1 Peter, iv:12-19. Vestment, white. St. Mark's, Washburn and Fourteenth streets, Rev. A. L. Ramer, Ph. D., pastor—Services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Luther league at 6 p. m.; Sunday school at 12 m. Holy Communion will be celebrated at morning service. Pastoral service Saturday at 7:30 p. m.

Methodist Episcopal. Elm Park church—Rev. C. M. Gilpin, D. D., pastor. Prayer and praise service at 9:30; sacrament of the Lord's Supper and reception of members at 10:30 a. m. at 12 m., one-half hour Bible study in Sunday school room; Sunday school at 2 and Epworth league at 7:30 p. m. Preaching at 7:30 by the pastor, topic, "How to Have a Happy New Year." Simpson Methodist Episcopal church, Rev. J. M. Sweet, pastor—Morning

PREVIEW.—The international committee has invited the Sunday schools of all lands to study the life of Christ until July 1, 1900, during the nineteenth and opening the twentieth century with the world's Redeemer. The book from which the lesson of the day is taken bears its author's name. As the companion of Paul (Luke iv: 14) Luke had the full knowledge of the early years of the Messiah, and he was in hearty sympathy with the missionary spirit of the apostle to the Gentiles. Master of Greek learning, he employed his scholarship to give finish to his writings. He began his sketch of Jesus by recording what the other evangelists omit—the annunciation to Mary, the visit to Elizabeth and her inspired song; the birth and infancy of John the Baptist, the great forerunner and herald of the Christ, the promised Elijah (Mal. iv: 5-6), who should prepare the way by calling men to repentance.

DECREE (verses 1 to 3).—Under what particular political conditions did the birth of Jesus occur? It has always been supposed that a man's career was dependent, to some extent at least, upon his surroundings. These might be favorable, they would certainly be interesting. Luke informs us that it was in the days of the taxing, Caesar Augustus, in the height of his power, conceived a plan by which he might become absolute monarch in all parts of his vast empire. He ordered a complete census to be taken, at which all heads of families would be enrolled, and tribute should be paid. In this way the treasury would be replenished and the sovereignty acknowledged. The plan was something like the survey made by William the Conqueror and compiled in the Domesday book. The first decree on this matter was made three years before. Now it is repeated. When completed the scepter would depart from Judah and all authority would rest in Rome. (Gen. xlix: 10).

OCCASION (verses 4 to 5).—What had this to do with the birth of Jesus? Intended by Caesar for one purpose, it was overruled by Divine Providence for another purpose. (Psalm lxxvii: 10). The decree required that all people in the province of Judea should return to their tribal home to be listed. This provision would be paralleled if all the tribes of Israel had been compelled to turn to the states and towns of their nativity. Accordingly there was a great movement of the population, some being put to great inconvenience. Responding to the edict, from which there was no escape, Joseph and Mary journeyed from their home in Nazareth to the city of Bethlehem in the land of Judah, to which tribe they belonged. (Matt. i: 16). There, soon after their arrival, Jesus was born, fulfilling the prediction that had been made concerning Him. (Micah v: 2).

SHEPHERDS (verse 8).—To whom prayer meeting at 9:30; preaching service at 10:30 a. m., sermon by the pastor, opening the services at 10:30 a. m.; Luther league at 6:30 p. m.; Sunday school at 12 m. St. Paul's, Short avenue, Rev. W. C. L. Lauer, pastor—Services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Sunday school at 2:30 p. m. Zion's, Millin avenue, Rev. P. P. Zieffman, pastor—Services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Christ church, Cedar avenue and Beech street, Rev. James Witko, pastor—Services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Sunday school at 2 p. m. St. Peter's, Prescott avenue, Rev. John Randolph, pastor—Services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Sunday school at 2 p. m. Grace Evangelical Lutheran church of the General Synod, corner Madison avenue and Mulberry street—Rev. Luther H. Haring, pastor, 9:30 a. m.; Sunday school, 10:30 a. m.; P. S. C. E., 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m., preaching service. Morning topic, "Glorious in Tribulation"; evening topic, "The Infidel's Text." A welcome to all.

Court Street Methodist Episcopal church—C. C. Lyman, pastor. Class, 10:30 a. m.; preaching service at 10:30 a. m., Sunday school, 11:45 a. m.; Junior Epworth league, 12:30 p. m.; Epworth league, 6:30 p. m.; preaching at 7:30 p. m. Welcome to all. Holy Trinity, Adams avenue and Mulberry street, Rev. C. G. Spelker, pastor—Services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Luther league at 6:30 p. m.; Sunday school at 12 m. St. Paul's, Short avenue, Rev. W. C. L. Lauer, pastor—Services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Sunday school at 2:30 p. m. Zion's, Millin avenue, Rev. P. P. Zieffman, pastor—Services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Christ church, Cedar avenue and Beech street, Rev. James Witko, pastor—Services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Sunday school at 2 p. m. St. Peter's, Prescott avenue, Rev. John Randolph, pastor—Services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Sunday school at 2 p. m. Grace Evangelical Lutheran church of the General Synod, corner Madison avenue and Mulberry street—Rev. Luther H. Haring, pastor, 9:30 a. m.; Sunday school, 10:30 a. m.; P. S. C. E., 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m., preaching service. Morning topic, "Glorious in Tribulation"; evening topic, "The Infidel's Text." A welcome to all.

First Presbyterian church—Services 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Dr. McLeod will preach "The Week of Prayer" will be observed, and special meetings will be held on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings of next week, beginning at 7:45 o'clock. These meetings will last only one hour, and all are invited to attend. The Second Presbyterian church—Services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Dr. Robinson will preach morning and evening. The evening sermon will be upon "What God Wants." All are welcome. Washburn Street Presbyterian church—Services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Bible school at 12 m.; Young People's Christian Endeavor at 6:30 p. m. Dr. Moffat will preach morning and evening. All welcome. Providence Presbyterian church—

shall be first announced that Christ has come? Shall it be to Herod at Jerusalem? No, he is jealous and cruel and will seek to destroy the babe. (Matt. ii: 11). Shall it be to the priests and scribes? No, they are haughty and bigoted, esteeming their prerogatives more than the cause of righteousness, persecuting any who turn the people from them. (Matt. xxv: 12). Besides, they forming the prophesies concerning the Messiah as descriptive of a temporal prince and they will not receive as such one of lowly birth. The dignitaries in church and state will only smile and put Jesus to death. (Luke xli: 23). Outside the city humble men are watching their flocks, possibly the descendants of the shepherds who were servants of Jesse. (1 Sam. xvi: 11). These shepherds shall be first to know of the advent. They have not been corrupted by court life, and they are unpolluted to hear the message. (Psalm xxvii: 2).

ANGEL (verse 9).—Who shall tell the story to the shepherds? Shall it be the porter (John x, 3) who keeps the gate, who admitted the travelers from Galilee? He cannot leave his post of duty, and it is doubtful if he knows anything of the manner and its previous occupant. Shall Joseph go? The young mother needs his company (Matt. ii, 11). Shall some one of the village be sent? The inhabitants are asleep, and know not the identity of the little stranger. An angel shall be employed. He knows that no mortal could understand of his home is the eternal habitation whence Jesus came (John xvii, 5), where countless ages the inexplicable glory has been displayed. On other errands angels had come to earth (Gen. xli: 17). Suddenly descending from the skies the celestial visitor was among the shepherds. The effluence of the world above attended him and lighted up all the plain, shedding an unearthly splendor over the face of nature. A similar visitation was granted to Saul on the way to Damascus (Acts ix, 3).

TIDINGS (verses 10 to 12).—What will the angel say to the shepherds? "Fear not" was his first word. The supernatural exhibition had overpowered them. Their vision may have been disturbed by the sight (Acts ix, 8). Strong men though they were, accustomed to danger, they trembled with alarm. Fearful of what they had understood that any one who saw celestial beings must die (Judges xiii, 22). The angel therefore assured his hearers that no harm would come to them. Instead he brought them good tidings. "A Saviour is born to you," he said, fulfilling the promise made to Joseph (Matt. i, 21), declaring the nature and mission of the child, human because born, Divine because a Saviour. The angel went on to associate the child with Israel's hopes, locating him in the city of David, calling him

Pastor, Rev. George E. Guild, D. D. The theme of the morning discourse will be "The Week of Prayer." This is the topic suggested by the Evangelical Alliance for the first Sabbath of the "Week of Prayer." Sunday school at 10:30 a. m.; Epworth league at 6:30 p. m.; Young Men's meeting at 7:30 p. m. Special request the choir will repeat the excellent music which was given at Christmas, with a short address by the pastor. Facing this week of prayer, the other churches in observing the week of prayer. Ash Street Methodist Episcopal church—Rev. J. Austin, pastor. Sunrise prayer meeting at 7:30 a. m.; Epworth league at 10:30 a. m.; Miss Katie Hartmann, superintendent, and Miss Bernia Corey, assistant superintendent, will give an illustrated talk, taking for his subject "Fishing." General class meeting, 11:30 a. m.; J. E. Macleod, pastor—Services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Sunday school at 2:30 p. m.; Epworth league at 6:30 p. m.; preaching at 7:30 p. m. Special meetings every evening this week, at 7:30 p. m. Seats free. All are welcome. Penn Avenue Baptist Church Mission—Prescott avenue, Sunday school, 7:30; praise service Sunday evening, 7:30; prayer meeting Thursday evening, 7:30 o'clock. First Baptist church—Rev. S. F. Matthews, pastor. The usual services in the basement of the Welsh Baptist church, Main avenue, at 7:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. In the evening the Lord's supper will be observed at the close of the evening service. Sunday school, 2:30 p. m. Evening subject, "Fruit of the Spirit." Christian Endeavor society, 7:30 p. m. Good singing; James Wilson, leader. All are welcome. Rev. J. H. Bell in charge. United Evangelical church, Capouse avenue—Rev. C. D. Moore, pastor. Sabbath school, 9:45 a. m.; preaching, 10:45 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Koyetone League, Christian Endeavor, 6:30 p. m. Revival services will continue during the coming week at 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to the public to attend these services. Rev. Dr. Hird, pastor. There will be no regular preaching service on Sabbath evening in Finn chapel, Green Ridge, on account of the pastor being called out of town. We expect to hold the regular service on January 14th.

All Soul's Universalist church on Pine street between Adams and Jefferson avenues—Rev. O. R. Beardsley, pastor. Residence, 629 Adams avenue. Morning service, 10:30; subject, "Man's Place, or Honesty and Truth." Evening service, 7:30; subject, "An Important Word." Sunday school after the morning service. Mrs. S. Benjamin, superintendent. Y. C. U. meeting, 6:30 p. m. sharp; subject, "The Christian Resolve." And there shall be a friend and one shepherd. Bring a friend with you. Railroad Y. M. C. A.—At 3:45 p. m. the secretary will give a talk on "Christ the Redeemer," illustrated by stereoscopic pictures. W. J. Long will sing a baritone solo. Come and bring the children. Christ's church (Protestant Episcopal)—Park street, Rev. F. S. Ballentine, rector. Sunday after Epiphany. Litany, Holy Communion, sermon at 10:30 a. m.; Sunday school at 2:30 p. m.; evening

prayer and sermon at 7:30 o'clock. All seats free. All welcome. Calvary Reformed church, Rev. M. L. Fior, pastor—Services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Sunday school at 11:45 a. m.; Christian Endeavor at 6:45 p. m. All are welcome. Adams Avenue chapel, New York street—Rev. James Hughes, pastor, will preach morning and evening. Time of service, 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Subjects, "The Great Need of the World, Met in the Advent of Jesus Christ." "Life in the Tensel." "Longings for the Eternal." A cordial welcome will be accorded all who desire to worship in this chapel. Plymouth Congregational church, Jackson street, Rev. E. A. Boyd, pastor—Preaching service at 10:30 a. m., subject, "Christ and the Church." Sabbath school at 12 o'clock; Sabbath school at Sherman avenue at 2:15; evening service at 7 o'clock, subject, "What Think Ye of Christ?" All are welcome.

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PULPIT EPIGRAMS BY D. L. MOODY. A man can no more take in a supply of grace for the future than he can eat enough today to last him for the next six months, or take sufficient oil in his lungs at once to sustain life for a week to come. We must draw upon God for grace from day to day, as we need it. God's best gifts, like valuable jewels, are kept under lock and key, and those who want them must, with fervent faith, importunately ask for them. For God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. When men go up in a balloon they carry with them what they call ballast; but that ballast is small bags of sand—and when they want to rise higher they just throw out some of the sand. So we, if we want to rise nearer heaven, must throw out some of the sand and cast aside every weight. We won't rise higher till we do so. There are three classes of people—the "wills," the "wants" and the "can'ts." The first accomplish everything, the second oppose everything, and the third fail in everything. Very often a man will hear a hundred good things in a sermon, but there may be one thing that strikes him as a little out of place, and he will go home and sit down at the table and when they want to rise higher they just throw out some of the sand. So we, if we want to rise nearer heaven, must throw out some of the sand and cast aside every weight. We won't rise higher till we do so. There are three classes of people—the "wills," the "wants" and the "can'ts." The first accomplish everything, the second oppose everything, and the third fail in everything. Very often a man will hear a hundred good things in a sermon, but there may be one thing that strikes him as a little out of place, and he will go home and sit down at the table and when they want to rise higher they just throw out some of the sand. 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