

Helen
Braun
Hojt

The story Jesus
the
CHRIST

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Helen Braun Hojt

The Story of Jesus The Christ

«Издательские решения»

Helen Braun Hojt

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The writer does not apply for originality, but, knowing that all children like to read or listen to good stories, she tried to tell about Jesus Christ so that everyone could fall in love with him. Absorb in the being elements of true life which only life and Christ's doctrines can give you.

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The Story of Jesus The Christ

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THE STORY OF JESUS THE CHRIST

Adapted for Children

PREFACE

The story of the life of Christ has been written time and time again, yet it is one that is ever fresh and attractive. Little children love to hear it if it is told in language which their minds are able to grasp, and the aim of this book has been to tell the story so simply that the youngest child can enjoy it because he can understand it.

The account recorded in the four gospels has been closely followed, and the order of events is that accepted by the greatest thinkers and writers. Many of the laws and customs of the times have been introduced to make the text more clear; and, that the lessons taught may be more attractive and better remembered, the book is abundantly illustrated.

The writer does not claim originality, but, knowing that all children love to read or hear a good story, she has tried to tell this old, old story in a way that will make them love it and absorb into their own beings the elements of true living which only the life and teachings of the Christ can give.

THE STORY OF JESUS-THE CHRIST

INTRODUCTION

Far away over the sea, on the continent of Asia, is the land of Palestine, which is also called the Holy Land. If you look for it on the map you will find that it is a very small country. Yet, though it is so small, such great things have happened there that all the world knows of Palestine. This story will tell you why it is called the Holy Land, and why so many people love it.

Very many years ago there lived in Palestine a man by the name of Jacob, who was the son of Isaac, and the grandson of Abraham. He had twelve sons, each of whom was the head of a large family called a tribe. The twelve tribes together made a nation which was known either as the Jews, or as the Children of Israel. Israel was another name given to Jacob after he was a man.

The Jews were better than any other people living at that time, just because they worshipped God. There were a good many people then, as there are now, who did not know about the true God in heaven. They made images, or idols, of wood or stone, which they called gods. They prayed to these idols, asking them to take care of them. They even thanked these gods for giving them life and health, and so many beautiful things. They were heathen, for that is what we call those who pray to idols.

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Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were not heathen; they knew and loved the true God, and taught their children to do the same. But the Jews were not always good. They did wicked things over and over again, but after they had done wrong they were sorry for it, and asked God to forgive them. Then they started over again, and tried to do better.

When Jacob was an old man, he and his children and grandchildren went to live in Egypt, and lived there happily a good many years. But the time came when the Children of Israel were not happy; for the kings who were then on the throne were not kind to them. They made slaves of them, and the Jews had to work so hard and so long that they almost forgot their God.

But at last a child was born who had a different life from the rest of his people. He was named Moses, and was brought up by the king's daughter, in the king's palace. He was very wise and learned. He thought a great deal about his people. He could see how badly they were treated, and how unhappy they were, and his greatest wish was to set them free and take them back to Palestine. The time came when God allowed him to do this.

It was hard to get so many people started, and harder yet to make them do as God would have them. They found fault with everything if things did not please them: with Moses, and even with God. There were many years of very hard work for Moses and their other leaders before they were at last settled in their own country, in homes of their own.

For a great many years God was really their king. He gave them laws through Moses, and all their leaders were chosen by God. They all talked with God, and learned from him what to do for the people. But the time came when they wanted to be like the other nations around them and have a king whom they could see, and who could go before their army when it went to war.

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The first king was not a good ruler; but after he died a young man named David came to the throne, and David was a good king. He tried to do as well as he could himself, and tried to teach the people to obey the laws of their God.

David belonged to the tribe of Judah, and was born in Bethlehem. He was only a shepherd boy when he was chosen to be king, and for that reason he is often called the Shepherd King. Although he left his country home and went to Jerusalem to live when he was quite a young man, he never forgot the lessons he learned in the fields of Bethlehem. He wrote beautiful songs that show that while he stayed with the sheep, hour after hour, his thoughts were about God and his goodness. It was thousands of years ago that David lived, yet ever since that time people have read and sung these songs, and we can read them now in that part of the Bible called the Psalms. One of them begins, «The Lord is my shepherd.» Perhaps you know it.

After David died, his son Solomon became king. He was very rich, and knew so much that he has been called the wisest man that ever lived. He built for the people a beautiful temple where they could meet to worship God. When this temple was built the people promised to always love and obey the God who had been so good to them and to their fathers. If they had remembered this promise, and kept it, they would have been a strong nation even now; but very soon they began to break God's laws. Some of them even began to pray to idols.

After King Solomon died things grew worse and worse, until at last the Jews were conquered by other nations, their cities destroyed, and the people carried away to other countries. After a time some were allowed to go back to Palestine to live, but there has never been a real Jewish nation since that time, and that was a great many years ago.

But the Jews kept up their courage; for their prophets had

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told them that they should have a king who should rule the whole world, and who should reign for ever and ever. Prophets are men who tell what is going to happen long before it does come; they foretell things. We have men whom we call weather-prophets. By studying the sky, the clouds, and the winds, they can tell what sort of weather we are likely to have. But these Jewish prophets talked with God, and he told them what to foretell, so they never made any mistakes.

These prophets did not all live at one time; nor did they all tell the same things about the king. One said he was to be born in Bethlehem, and was to belong to David's family. Another said when he should be born; and others told something else about his life. Still another said that before he came God would send a great prophet, who would teach the people how to get ready for the Christ, their king.

At the time of our story there had been no prophet for four hundred years; but the Jews, remembering and believing what the prophets had promised so long ago, were looking for their king. For, if the prophets had spoken truly, it was almost time for him to come. They had forgotten that some of the prophets had said that the king was to be poor, and a man of sorrows. They expected him to come in great power, and make them a strong free nation again.

Although many Jews were now living in Palestine, they were under the rule of the Roman Emperor. The Emperor had so large a country that he could not look after it all himself; but divided it into what were called provinces and appointed rulers to take charge of them for him. The Jews did not like to obey the Roman Emperor, they did not like the rulers who were sent to them, and they did so long for their own strong king.

Herod, one of the Roman rulers, who was called a king, was very much disliked, and he began to be afraid that he would lose

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his throne. So to please the Jews he built them a temple, even more beautiful than the one which Solomon had built for them. That one had been destroyed when the Jews were driven out of their country, and the one which had been built when they had returned was now so old that it was falling to pieces.

The temple was not much like our churches, nor was the service like ours. There was one building of two rooms. In the smaller of these only the High Priest went, and only once a year. In the other any priest could go.

Around this building were four large open spaces called courts, separated from each other by walls. The one next the building was for the priests alone; the next for the Jewish men; the third for the Jewish women, and the fourth for all who were not Jews. No one could go farther than the court in which he belonged. When we speak of people going into the temple, we mean they went into one of these courts.

The priests were the ministers, who did all the work of the temple, and, took charge of the services. In those days the people did more than pray to God to forgive their sins. In the temple was an altar, or sort of table covered with brass. On this altar a fire was kept burning day and night. Twice every day a lamb which had just been killed was burned on this altar, and while it was burning the people prayed to God, asking him to forgive their sins, and to destroy the memory of them as the fire was destroying the lamb. This was called offering a sacrifice.

Another thing the priests did was to offer incense. Incense was made of sweet spices, and was very fragrant. While it was burning the people in the courts outside were praying that their prayers might rise to God as sweet and pure and well pleasing as the incense.

One day, just about the time that our story begins, the work of burning the incense fell to the lot of a priest named Zacharias,

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who had a wife Elizabeth, but who had no children. Both were very sorry for this, and often when they prayed, they asked God to give them a little son.

On this day, as Zacharias alone in the temple was burning the incense, and praying to God, he looked up and saw an angel of the Lord standing at the right side of the altar. When Zacharias saw him he was afraid. But the angel said: “ Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; God will give you and Elizabeth a baby boy, and you must call his name John. He will bring you joy and gladness, and many other people will rejoice that he is born. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and will turn many from their wicked ways, and teach them to love God. This child is the one whom the prophets said would come to make the world ready for the Christ.»

Zacharias could not believe what he heard, and asked, “ How shall I know that what you say is true?» The angel answered, «God sent me to tell you about it, and because you have not believed my word you will not be able to speak again until the day when it comes true.»

The people outside in the courts waited for Zacharias to come back, and wondered why he stayed so long in the temple. When he did come out he could not speak to them. They knew that something had happened, for he made signs to them, but did not speak. When his week of service was over he went to his home in the hill country of Judea, and there, when the time came, the baby boy was born.

Little Jewish children were not named until they were eight days old. When it was time for this baby to be named, the friends called him Zacharias, after his father. His mother said, «No, he is to be called John.» The friends thought it was strange to call him that, for no one in the family ever had that name; and, too, it was the custom to call the first boy by his

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father's name. They made signs to Zacharias, asking how he would have him called. Zacharias asked for a writing tablet and wrote, " His name is John.»

The friends wondered still more when the father also chose that name, but they soon had still greater reason for surprise. Zacharias, who had not spoken for so long, began to talk again. Would you like to know what he said first? He thanked God for what had happened, and then told the friends who were with them that the Christ, the promised king, was coming very soon, and that this child of his was the prophet who would teach the people about their king. This story was told all through the hill country of Judea, and the people asked, " What kind of a child will he be?»

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THE STORY OF JESUS – THE CHRIST

THE BIRTH OF THE CHRIST

In Galilee, in the northern part of the Holy Land, is the little town of Nazareth. In this town lived a beautiful young woman, loving and gentle and pure. She was named Mary, and was the cousin of Elizabeth.

A little while before John was born, as Mary was sitting alone one spring day, the angel who was sent to Zacharias came to her and said, «God is very kind to you, Mary, for he has chosen you to be the mother of the Christ-child. You must call his name Jesus (which means Saviour), for he will save the people from their sins. He shall be great, and be called the Son of God, and shall rule the world for ever and ever.»

Mary believed what the angel told her, and gently answered, «Let it be to me as you have said.» Then the angel left her.

In the early part of the winter the Emperor of Rome, Caesar Augustus, commanded that all the people should be enrolled, which means that they should have their names written down on

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A CHILD'S STORY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST

a roll of paper. Every Jew of the same tribe must have his name written on the same roll. The Jews were very much

scattered, and to do this each had to go to the city or town where the fathers of his tribe had lived, because the tribal roll was there.

Mary and her husband were both of the tribe of Judah, and Bethlehem was the city of that tribe. You remember, do you not, that David was of the tribe of Judah, and lived in Bethlehem when he was a shepherd boy? Because the Jews were so fond of David they called Bethlehem the City of David.

Bethlehem was eighty miles away from Nazareth, and the roads between the two places were very rough and stony, up hill and down hill. It was a hard journey to take. Mary and Joseph could not travel very fast, and when they reached the city the houses were all full, for strangers from every part of the country had come to Bethlehem on the same errand as theirs. They were very tired when their journey was over, but they found no one there ready to welcome them. There was no room for them anywhere, except in a stable.

Arrival at Bethlehem

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There they found a resting-place, and there that night God gave to Mary the baby he had promised her, the baby that was the long-expected King of the Jews.

The poor people in that country often wrapped a long band around their little babies to clothe them, and this sort of dress was called swaddling clothes. Mary wrapped her baby in swaddling clothes, and since there was no other crib for him she laid him in a manger.

In the beautiful valley just outside the city, where David had taken care of his father's sheep so many years before, some shepherds were watching their flocks that night. They watched them day and night, for it was not

safe to leave them alone. Angels and Shepherds

Robbers and wild beasts

were about, and the sheep might come to harm if left without care.

The shepherds knew that it was time for the Christ to come, and this night they were probably thinking of him and talking one to another, when all at once a bright light shone around them, and the angel of the Lord came before them. They were very much afraid, but the angel said: 44 Fear not, for, behold, I

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bring you good tidings of great joy that shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign to you: you will find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.»

And suddenly there w[^]ere with this angel a great many more who sang, “ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men.»

When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the

shepherds said to one another, “ Now let us go to Bethlehem right away, and see this baby, of whom the angels have been telling us.»

They started at once and soon came to the city, for it was not more than a mile away. And there they found Joseph and Mary and the baby.

The shepherds were very happy. They had so longed to have the Christ come; now he had come, and they were looking at him. Do you not think that Mary was happy, too, when she learned from the shepherds how they knew of her baby’s birth? She did not talk much about it, but the thought

Adoration of Shepherds

THE BIRTH OF THE CHRIST

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was a comfort to her for the rest of her life. The shepherds went out and talked with every one whom they met about the wonderful child, and what the angels had said of him; and thanked God for what they had seen and heard, as they went back to their sheep.

When the child was eight days old Mary named him Jesus, as the angel had told her. When he was forty days old he was taken to the temple at Jerusalem. This was done in order to obey a Jewish law that said that a mother must take her child to the temple and offer sacrifices for him. If she could afford it she must take a lamb and a turtle dove for the sacrifice; if she were poor she could take two turtle doves or two young pigeons. As Joseph and Mary were poor, they took two turtle doves.

There was an old man in Jerusalem, named Simeon, who loved God, and who had so longed to see the Christ that God had promised him that he should not die until he had seen the child. Simeon was in the temple when Joseph and Mary brought in the child Jesus. He looked at the baby, and knew at once that this was the Christ he had so longed to see.

Presentation in the Temple

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He took Jesus in his arms, and thanked God that he had been allowed to see his Christ. 44 Lord, now I am willing and glad to go,» he said, 44 for I have seen thy Christ; the Saviour

who has come to make the world brighter and better.» Then he said, as he gave the child back to his mother: 44 This child is born to be a great help to many people, but others will not believe him. They will speak against him, and will bring much sorrow to him, and his trouble will cause you sorrow too.»

While these things were happening in Palestine, there were in another country in the East some wise men who saw a bright new star in the sky. These men studied the stars so much that they knew those that generally shone as they did old friends, and they knew that they had not seen this before. It seemed to tell them that some great thing had happened. They knew that the Jews were expecting a king, and they decided that this star was sent to tell them that he was born; and they thought they should go to honor him.

So, although they lived a long way from Palestine, they took splendid gifts in their hands and went to find the king. They followed the star until they came to Jerusalem, where Herod the king lived. They were sure that a king would be found in a king's house, so they went to Herod's palace and asked him : 44 Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him.»

Herod could not answer them. If he had ever heard of the birth of Jesus, it had not interested him enough to make him remember it. But he called together the learned Jews, and asked them where they expected the Christ to be born. They told him that the prophets had said that he should be born in the little town of Bethlehem.

After Herod had found out all he could about the child, he called the wise men and asked them how long it had been since

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they first saw the star. He wanted to know how old the child was. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying to them, u Go and look carefully for the child, and when you have found him bring me back word where he is, that I may go and worship him also.»

The wise men then left Herod and went to Bethlehem, following the star until they came to the house where Jesus was. And when they had come into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshipped him.

And when they had opened their treasures they gave him their gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Frankincense and myrrh are costly perfumes.

This is the first time that any child ever had a Christmas present. And when Christmas comes round year after year bringing with it gifts from those who love us, we will remember this story, will we not? And we will think with love of the little child whose birth we celebrate on Christmas Day.

After giving Jesus their presents, the wise men started home again. But they did not go back to tell Herod where they had

The Three Wise Men

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found the child, for God had told them in a dream that Herod did not mean what he said, that he did not want to worship Jesus, but to kill him. So they went home another way.

When Herod had heard the strangers asking him where they could find the King of the Jews he had been greatly interested, and a good deal worried. He was afraid that he would have more trouble than ever with the Jews if they had a king of their own. So he, too, wanted to find the child. He had expected the wise men to tell him when they went back to Jerusalem just where he could be found, and there would be no more trouble after that,

But the wise men did not come back to tell him. He waited and waited, till at last he found that they had gone to their homes without seeing him again. Herod was very angry when he heard this. “ I must find the child,» he said; “ it will not do to let him live to be king.» One of his plans had failed, but he thought of another.

He did not know how old the child king was, but he was sure that he could not be more than two years old. So, as he did not know where to find him, he sent his soldiers to kill every boy in Bethlehem that was two years old, or younger. (The word “ child ” in our Bibles really means boys; Herod did not need to kill girls in order to be sure of killing Jesus.) The soldiers did as they were told, and there were many sad homes in Bethlehem that day. This sounds even more cruel than it really was, for Bethlehem was a very small town, and there were probably not more than twenty or thirty boys there.

But even this plan of Herod's failed to harm the child Jesus. For on the night after the wise men had started for their homes, an angel of the Lord said to Joseph in a dream, “ Take the child and his mother and flee into Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will look for the young child to destroy him.»

THE BIRTH OF THE CHRIST

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So Joseph took the child and his mother that very night,
and left Bethlehem to do as the angel had told him. In
Egypt they were safe, for
Herod had no power there,
and could not touch them,
even if he had been able to
find out that they had gone
there. Probably he never
knew that he had not killed
the boy king when he sent
his soldiers to the city where
he had been born.

They lived in Egypt till
the wicked king Herod died.

We do not know what they
did there, or where they
stayed, although many sto-
ries are told about them.

They probably lived very
quietly.

After the death of Herod
Joseph dreamed again, and
again the angel came to him,
saying, “ Rise, take the child
and his mother, and go back
to your own land; for they are dead who sought to kill the child.»
Joseph obeyed this dream as he had the other.

But they did not go to Bethlehem to live; for they heard that,
although the king Herod was dead, yet his son Archelaus, who was
ruler there now, was a very wicked man. They went to Nazareth,
the early home of Joseph and Mary. There Jesus lived all the
years of his childhood, and all but three years of his whole life.

Flight into Egypt

THE BOYHOOD OF THE CHRIST

We do not know much about him when he was a boy. The Bible says that he was “filled with wisdom” and that he was in favor with God and man.» We know by this that he was a good boy, and was loved by every one who knew him.

The people in Nazareth were not thought to be very good, and sometimes, when Jesus was older, he was looked down upon because he had once lived in Nazareth. But if the people

were not good the country was beautiful. Jesus probably went to school with the other Jewish boys, and studied Jewish history and law, from the books of the Bible. We can also think of him as playing and working in his father’s carpenter’s shop, and with his mother in the house.

He learned, too, from other teachers than books. The mountains and lakes, the birds and flowers, the storms, the sunshine, and indeed everything he saw or heard, had lessons for him which he was happy in learning.

This was how he became filled with wisdom; because he saw something to learn in everything about him, and was willing to try to learn the lesson.

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Infancy of Christ

THE BOYHOOD OF THE CHRIST

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The Bible tells of a journey Jesus took when he was twelve years old. Every year in the spring there was a great feast in Jerusalem, called the Feast of the Pass-over; and Jews from all parts of the country went to it. The women and old men commonly rode on mules or donkeys; sometimes on horses or camels. The young men, with long sticks in their hands, walked beside

them and led the animals. Children were not generally taken till they were twelve years old; those who did go ran a part of the way, but when they were tired they were given a ride.

Ever so many people travelled together, and had such a good time on the way! They talked and laughed and sang together, stopped at the springs to get water when they were thirsty, and, as they walked along, picked the fruit and berries they found by the roadside. When they were tired they stopped to rest; for many of them had a long way to go.

Thousands of strangers were in Jerusalem when the feast began. Every house was full, and tents were put up for those who could not find room anywhere else.

When Jesus was twelve years old his parents took him, for

Jesus, Twelve Years Old, on His Way to Jerusalem

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the first time, to this feast. It lasted seven days, and then the

long procession started home again. Jesus was so much interested in what he was seeing and hearing that when the others left the city he stayed behind. His parents did not know this; they supposed that of course he was with some of their friends in the company, and did not look for him until evening. Then he was nowhere to be found, and no one remembered seeing him all day. Think how troubled his parents must have felt! The boy who had never been away from them was lost, and so far away

from home, too! They must go back to Jerusalem to find him.

It took them another day to get to the city, so it was the third day before they saw their boy again. Then where do you think they found him? In the temple, hearing the old, gray-haired men talk, and asking them questions so wise that they were astonished to find a boy of twelve years who knew so much.

Do you think his Christ in the Temple parents were glad to

see him? His mother hurried to him and said: “ My son, why did you leave us? Your father and I have been looking for you, and have been very sad.»

THE BOYHOOD OF THE CHRIST

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Jesus answered her: “ Why did you look for me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father’s business?» Jesus did not mean Joseph when he said “ my Father,» he meant God. He was a young boy, but he was very thoughtful, and he knew that there was work for him to do in the world; and that his work was to teach people how his Father wants them to live. He would have liked to have begun his work even now, but it was not yet time for him to do so. He went back to Nazareth with his parents, and was the same loving, obedient boy that he had always been.

Until a Jewish boy was twelve years old he was called a little boy; but after that he was a young man, and was expected to study and work as the young men did. Every one must learn some trade, or some kind of work by which he could earn his living. Joseph was a carpenter, and he taught Jesus to do carpentry work: to make houses, tables, yokes for oxen, or anything that is made of wood.

So, busy with his studies and his work, Jesus lived at Nazareth till he was thirty years old. We will leave him there for a while, and see what has become of the son of Zacharias.

John, too, grew to be a thoughtful, manly boy; for his father told him what his work was to be, and taught him what he needed to know, to be ready for it. As he grew older he knew that he could not do good work unless he thought, studied, and prayed much about it. To do this he left his home and his friends, and went to live all alone in the wilderness.

He could find enough to eat there: locusts, and the honey which the bees left in the rocks and the hollow trees. Locusts are something like our grasshoppers, and even now, in that country, people eat a great many of them. There were caves in the sides of the hills, where John could find shelter from the cold and storms, and from any wild beasts that might be about. His

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clothing was made of the coarse hair which grows on a camel and was fastened around his waist with a leather belt.

There in the woods he lived alone for many years with nothing to take his mind from his work. At last the time came for him to preach.

There is a river in Palestine called the Jordan, and it was to the banks of the Jordan that John came from the wilderness and began to preach. He was so much in earnest, and spoke so well, that people liked to listen to him; and before long great crowds from all around came everyday to hear him.

They all thought he must be the Christ; but John said: No, I am not the Christ. I am the prophet from the wilderness whose work it is to prepare the way for the Christ, and tell people about

John the Baptist in the Wilderness Ilim.

«He is to be so much greater than I am that I am not good enough even to be his servant. Your Saviour is coming very soon, but he will not save you unless you are sorry for your sins. You must not say to yourselves: ‘ God will love us because we are the children of Abraham/ You must be good yourselves if you want to be loved and saved/»»

THE BOYHOOD OF THE CHRIST

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Over and over again John said to the people, “ Repent, and be baptized, every one of you.» To repent is to be so sorry for something we have done that we will ask God’s forgiveness and try very hard never to do it again. After they repented he baptised them. You know how pure and clean water makes things that are Washed in it. So water is used in baptism as a sign that the one who is baptized wants his heart made pure and clean.

John baptized so many people that he is called John the Baptist, but he told them

John the Baptist Preaching

all that the baptism did not make them good;

it only showed others that they meant to try to be better men and women. “ When the Christ comes,” he said, „he will give you a new heart, and that is what you need to be really good.»

We should all pray just as David did so long ago: «Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.» This is not a very long prayer, but it means a great deal; for when we have been given new, clean hearts we will never again do wrong without being very, very sorry, and praying to be forgiven.

THE MINISTRY OF THE CHRIST

THE OPENING OF THE MINISTRY

One day John was preaching as usual, when a stranger came

to him and asked to be baptized. John looked at him for a

minute, and then said:
«I need to be baptized
by you. Why do you
come to me?» For in
that one look something
in the stranger's face
told John that it was
Jesus, the Christ, who
had asked to be bap-
tized. Although they
were cousins, their
homes were so far apart
that they had never
seen each other.

John knew that the
Saviour did not need to
repent, for he had never
done anything that was
wrong. He did not want
to baptize him, but Jesus
said: «I want you to do it. It is right that you should, even if
you do not know the reason why.» Then they both went into the
Jordan, and Jesus was baptized.

When he came up out of the water something in the form of
a dove rested on his head, and a voice from heaven said, “ This
is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.» It was God's
voice.

Baptism of Jesus

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THE MINISTRY OF THE CHRIST

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Jesus did not wait to talk to the people then; he went off by himself into the wilderness, where he could be alone with God. He wanted to think about the new life he had just begun. He had no home now, for he had given up his home and everything that was dear to him in Nazareth, to spend the rest of his life in doing good to others, and in teaching them how 'to be happy.

Forty days and forty nights he spent in this wilderness, thinking much of what others needed, but so little about what he himself needed that in all that time he had eaten nothing. Now he felt hungry. Round about him were some smooth stones shaped much like the loaves of bread they used in that country. They were something like our crackers.

Has not the wicked spirit Satan sometimes whispered in your ear, asking you to do something which you knew was not right? Well, that wicked spirit came to Jesus now when he was so hungry, and said: "If you are the Son of God, you can do anything you want to. Just turn these stones into bread.» Jesus was able to do this, for in a few days he did something just as wonderful; but he had been asking God for power to help other people, not to help himself. He did not turn the stones into bread, but answered Satan with a Bible verse which means that although we need to feed our bodies we also need to trust and obey God, w T ho has promised to take care of us.

Satan whispered to him again and said: "If you are the Son of God, why do you not throw yourself down from the high roof of the temple at Jerusalem? God will send his angels to take care of you, for he has promised to do so. They will hold you up in their hands so that you will not get hurt. And when the people see angels taking care of you, and not allowing you to fall, they will believe at once that you are the Christ, and they will worship you.» Again Jesus answered with a Bible verse. What he said means that although it is true that God has promised to

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A CHILD'S STORY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST

help us when we are in trouble, it is wicked to do things that are dangerous just to see if he will help us.

Satan now took Jesus where he could see a long way oh, and

as he thought of all the cities lying beyond the hills, filled with people and riches, Satan said: u All these you can have, if you

will obey me. The people will be glad to have you for their king if you will not find fault with their wicked ways. Never mind if they are wicked. Try to please them and me instead of trying to please God.»

But Jesus answered him:
«Go away from me, Satan, I will have nothing to do with you. It is written,
4 Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.» ” The wicked spirit found that here was a man whom he could not tempt to do wrong, and he
Temptation of Christ went away for that day.

Many other times the evil spirit tried to make Jesus do what was wrong, for the Bible says that he was tempted in every way just as we are, but never sinned. That is why our Saviour can help us conquer sin, if we ask him; because he knows just how hard it is for us to do right, and just what we need to conquer Satan. After Satan had gone angels came and comforted Jesus.

THE MINISTRY OF THE CHRIST

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Shortly after this Jesus went back to the Jordan, where John was still preaching to a great many people. As John looked up and saw Jesus coming toward them, he said to his hearers,» Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.» What did John mean? Just this. Before long, Jesus, a pure, gentle man who had never done a wrong thing, would be put to death like the lamb in the temple service, for the sins of other people. After this happened people need not offer sacrifices any more; for their sins would be forgiven if they asked God to do it for Jesus' sake.

The next day Jesus passed that way again. John the Baptist was there talking to two of his friends,

John and Andrew, and seeing Jesus coming he said again, “ Behold the Lamb of God.» This time the two men followed Jesus, who, turning round and seeing them close behind him, asked, “ What are you looking for?» They answered, «Rabbi» (which means master or teacher), “ where do you live?» He said, “ Come and see.» They went with him to the place where he was staying, and spent the rest of the day there. Andrew was so much pleased with his new friend that he found his brother Simon, afterward called Peter, and brought him to Christ.

The next day Jesus started on a journey to Galilee, and his

Jesus walking by the Sea

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A CHILD'S STORY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST

three new friends went with him. On the way they met a man named Philip, who lived in the same town as Andrew and Peter.

Jesus invited Philip to go with them, and he was very glad to do so. Before he went he found his friend Nathanael, and asked him to join them.

Nathanael did not wish to go when he heard that Jesus was from Nazareth. You remember that the people of Nazareth were not thought to be good, so Nathanael did not think a man from that place could be the Christ. But Philip asked him to go and see Jesus before he decided, and Nathanael went with him. After talking for a little while he said, 44 Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel.» He was as much pleased with the new friend as the others were, and was glad to join the little company on their way to Galilee. There were six in the company now, – Jesus, and the five men, John, Andrew and Peter, Philip and Nathanael, who were dear friends of Jesus the rest of their lives. They are called his disciples, or learners, because they listened to his teachings and learned from him.

On the third day that they were together there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and Jesus and his disciples were invited to the feast. When they came to the house, they found Mary, the mother of Jesus, there. The feast lasted several days, and before it was over the wine gave out. What should they do? It would not do to be without any, yet they did not know where to get more. Mary told Jesus that they had no wine, and although he seemed very unwilling to do anything about it, she was so sure that life would help them that she said to the servants, 44 Do whatever he tells you.»

There were six water-pots, or large stone jars, outside the door, filled with water. For it is so hot and dusty in that country that the people need to bathe often, and jars for that use are kept outside the doors of most houses. The tops of the jars are filled

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with fresh, green leaves, and these leaves keep the water clean and cool. Jesus told the servants to empty all the water from the jars, and then to fill them again with clear water. This they did, filling them to the brim.

Then Jesus said, u Draw some out now, and take it to the governor of the feast. This was the chief guest, who had the direction of much of the feast. The servants did as he told them. The governor took a taste of what they brought him, and said: 66 How is this?

At most feasts they serve their best wine at the beginning, and keep the poorest till the last; but here at the end of the feast they are serving their best wine.»

And it was so, for Jesus had changed the water in the six jars to the richest of wine.

You remember that although he was very hungry in the wilder- The Marriage Feast at Cana

ness a few days before

this he would not turn the stones into bread for his own use. Now it was different; other people were in trouble, not he himself. By using this power which God had given him, he could not only do a kindness to these people, but he could also show them that he was different from the other teachers they had

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A CHILD'S STORY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST

known; that he was the Son of God. And so he did what no one

else could possibly have done; it was a miracle. It was the first time Jesus had done anything of the kind, so far as we know; but we shall hear of a good many miracles after this, and we shall find that every time that he used this wonderful power, during all his life, it was for this very same reason; to do a kindness to some one. He never used it to make himself more comfortable; and, least of all, to make any one else uncomfortable.

No one was more interested in what he had done than his five new friends. They had known their Master only a few days, but in that time they had learned to love him; and now they were sure that they had made no mistake in believing him to be the Christ, for no one could do such things as this unless God gave him the power.

After the feast was over Jesus and his disciples went to Capernaum, a busy city on the shore of a lake which is known by three names; the Sea of Galilee, the Sea of Tiberias, and Lake Genesaret. It was a beautiful lake thirteen miles long and six miles wide; and on it were thousands of boats of every kind. There were the war-ships of the Romans, which were very tiny in comparison with those of our time. There were the little rough boats of the fishermen, and many gay pleasure boats.

The country around the lake was beautiful also. Mountains and hills sloped down to the shore, and on these mountain-sides anything that was planted would grow; for the soil was very rich. Scattered about were fields of wheat, groves of palms, olives, figs, and oranges. Where nothing else was planted, wild flowers sprang up in great plenty. There are a great many kinds of wild flowers in Palestine, many of them very beautiful, with rich, gay colors. A field of these flowers is said to be a wonderful sight that no one ever forgets who has seen it once.

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All along the shores of the lake cities and large towns had been built; and Capernaum was one of the busiest of these cities. Roman soldiers were always there on guard, and strangers were

coming and going all the time, for Capernaum was a central place, through which people passed in going from one country to another, and from every direction people came here to trade.

It was a place where Jesus could meet and talk with people of many nations. Later in his life he spent much time in Caperna-

naum; for, besides the work which he could find to do right in the city, it was easy to make short trips into the country around. But now Jesus stayed in the city only a few days, for it was time to go to the Passover Feast at Jerusalem.

You remember how delighted he was when his parents took him for the first time to the Passover, when he was twelve years old, and how he loved to stay in the temple? But this time when he entered the temple courts, he was not at all pleased.

Site of Capernaum, Sea of Galilee

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Instead of the quietness and respect which belong to the house of God, there was the greatest confusion. Money was being changed, doves and sheep and oxen were being sold, even inside the temple wall. Such a noise as there was! And all the while the temple service was going on!

Jesus saw some small cords which had probably been used to tie the animals. Out of these cords he made a whip, and drove

from the temple the sheep and oxen, and the men who had charge of them. He upset the tables of the money-changers, and their money rolled about on the floor. Then he said to those who sold the doves: «Take these things away from here, and do not make my Father's house a place of business.» His voice was stern, and no one dared to disobey him; so the temple court was soon cleared.

You may wonder why they ever thought of doing such things as buying and selling animals in the tem-

The Purification of the Temple pie. The reason Was that

many of the people who came to worship lived a long way from Jerusalem, and could not easily bring with them the animals for their sacrifices; it was better that they should buy them in Jerusalem and near the

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temple. Then, too, money had to be changed; for nothing but Jewish money would be taken at the temple, and people from different parts of the world had to bring the kinds of money that were used where they lived.

If these things were true, what was there wrong about it? Why was Jesus displeased? It was not because the things were done, but because they were done in the wrong place; for the temple, was built to worship God in, not for a place of business. There was plenty of room outside of the temple, and if they had cared about God's house, and keeping it sacred, as God had told them, they would not have wanted to do their selling there. The priests should not have allowed such things to be done; but probably they got a share of the money that was taken, and so they were willing.

These priests were astonished and angry at what was done. They might lose some money if the buying and selling in the temple was stopped. They had another reason, too: they were the rulers of the people, and they did not like to have this stranger come and take the control they thought belonged to them. So they asked Jesus to give them a sign that he had the right to do such things. He answered them in a way that no one understood then; but years afterward the disciples remembered the answer he gave, and then they knew what he had meant.

Jesus stayed in Jerusalem through the Passover week. The Bible says that many people believed that he was the Christ when they saw the miracles that he did, but it does not tell us what these miracles were. One of these men was a very prominent man among the Jews, named Nicodemus. This man wanted to learn more from this wonderful teacher, but he was afraid to have his friends know that he did so. So he waited till one night after dark. Then, when no one could see what he was doing, he came to the place where Jesus was staying.

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Jesus was always willing to teach those who wanted to learn from him, and now he was glad to tell Nicodemus about the new

life that every one

must live who wants to please God and make the best of himself. He said that because men did not know the best way to live, God sent his Son into the world to teach them; and whoever believes on him and obeys his teachings has this life that goes on forever and ever. He told him that the coming of the Son of God, like the sunshine, brought light into the world, showing people what was good Jesus and Nicodemus and what was bad. But

as people who have been doing wrong do not like to have the light show what they have been doing, but want to hide away in the dark, so these people would like their own wicked ways and thoughts better than those he had come to bring.

After the Passover was over, Jesus and his disciples left Jerusalem and travelled through Judea, until they came to the place where John the Baptist was still preaching and baptizing. Jesus, too, began to preach. At first only a few people listened to him; soon more and more became interested in hearing him

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talk. Before long the crowds who had been so fond of hearing John, left him to follow this new Rabbi, or teacher. He did not baptize any of them, but his disciples baptized more than John did. The friends of John did not like to have the crowds leave their master to follow this new teacher; they went to John, finding fault with Jesus and with the people. But John said: «It is just as it should be. I am not the Christ. My work is almost done, but his will be greater and greater. You must take him for your master, and believe what he tells you. He is the Son of God.»

Some of the Jewish teachers, too, were envious because he was winning so many friends. They did not like John very well, but they liked Jesus even less. This was because the people who had trusted them and come to them to be taught were leaving them to listen to these two men. Jesus knew that they did not feel kindly toward him, and he thought it best for him to leave Judea for a while and to go into Galilee.

THE BEGINNING OF THE WORK IN GALILEE

The shortest road between Judea and Galilee lay through the province of Samaria. Few Jews ever took that way, for there had been a quarrel between the Jews and Samaritans hundreds of years before this time, and they had never become friends again. They hated each other so much that the Jews were unwilling to have anything to do with them, and would much rather take a longer journey than to go through their country. And the few Jews who did go there were not always treated very well by the Samaritans.

After they decided to go to Galilee Jesus and the five disciples who were still with him left Judea early in the morning; for the days were so hot that they wanted to travel as far as they could before the sun was high. They took the shortest way, the one

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through Samaria. At noontime they came to a well, and Jesus, who was hungry, thirsty, and tired, sat down by the well to rest, while his disciples went into the city to buy food. The well was one which Jacob had built when he lived there hundreds of years

before, and it was still in use. It was wide and deep, and held water enough for all the people and their flocks.

As Jesus sat there, weary and alone, a woman of Samaria came to this well to get some water. Jesus spoke to her and

asked, “ Will you give me a drink? ” It was a little favor to ask, was it not? Yet the woman was so surprised to have a Jew speak to her that she said: “ How does it

happen that you, who are a Jew, are asking a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?»

This gave Jesus the chance he wanted, and he told her about the Living Water, which was the spirit of love and kindness which he had himself,

Jesus and the Samaritan Woman and which lie WOULD

give to all who would ask him for it. The woman asked him to give her some of this water; but she did not know what he meant by it. She thought that if she could have some of it she would never need to go to

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the well again. Jesus did not explain to her what he meant; he began to talk to her about the wicked life she was leading; for she was not a good woman. She was very much surprised that he should know all about her when he had never seen her before, and she was sure he was a prophet. So she asked him one of the questions about which Jews and Samaritans had often quarrelled, whether people ought to worship in Jerusalem or in a temple they had built in Samaria. But Jesus told her that neither was necessary; that if people prayed to God in their hearts they would be heard wherever they were. She was not satisfied, and said that when the Christ came he would tell them what was right. Jesus said, “ I, who am speaking to you, am he.»

The woman was so anxious to tell her friends that the Christ had come that she forgot her water and went right into the city. On the way she met some of her friends, and said to them: u Come and see a man who told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?»

The disciples had come back while Jesus was talking to the woman, and had been very much surprised; but they said nothing about it. They had learned that their Master had some good reason for everything he did, although they could not understand it. After she had gone they begged him to eat of the food they had brought him. But he was no longer hungry. The chance to help somebody to be better was more to him than food, or anything else. It was this that made him so lovable.

Very soon the Samaritans came to see him, and were so pleased with him that they asked him to stay with them, instead of going to Galilee. He was always glad to stay where he could do good, so he went with them and stayed there two days. In that time many of the people believed from listening themselves to his teaching that he was the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

At the end of these two days Jesus and his disciples started

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A CHILD'S STORY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST

again on their journey. They were together, however, only a short time. The disciples went back to their homes, and Jesus travelled alone through the towns of Galilee.

While Jesus had been doing these things John the Baptist had been getting into trouble. John was a preacher who spoke to any one whom he saw doing wrong, whoever he was, and wherever he was. One day he told King Herod that he was leading a sinful life, and that both he and his wife were wicked people. This was true, but they did not like to hear John say it. They were so angry that they would have killed John if they had dared. But the Baptist had so many friends that thought he was a great prophet that Herod was afraid to do this. So instead of killing him he took him and put him in prison.

Jesus, you remember, was travelling in Galilee. The people

there were glad to have him with them once more. Many of them had seen what he had done at the feast at Jerusalem, and others had heard so much about this preacher who talked so well and did so many miracles that they wanted to know him.

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In the course of his journey he came to Cana where he had made the water into wine. While there, one day at noon, a nobleman came to him in great haste. He had come twenty miles, from Capernaum, on purpose to see Jesus and ask him a great favor. He had a son at home who was very, very ill; it seemed as if he must die. But the father had known of the miracles of Jesus, and believed that he could make his child well.

So when he heard that Jesus was in Cana he went to him as quickly as he could, and begged him to go to Capernaum and heal the boy. Jesus said to him, “ Unless you see wonders you will not believe.» But the father only thought of his sick boy, and said, “ Sir, come down before my child dies.» The Saviour looked at the father who seemed to trust him so, and said, “ Go home, your son will live.» Did the man believe that Jesus had the power to cure a sick boy twenty miles away, without any medicine? Yes, he believed, and went home, sure that he would find him well.

When he was almost home he met his servants coming to tell him that his boy was well. He asked them when he began to get

The Appeal of the Nobleman

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A CHILD'S STORY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST

better, and they told him it was at one o'clock, just the time when Jesus had said, «Your son will live.» So the nobleman and all his family believed that Jesus was the Christ, and became hi?

friends.

Though the Jews had only one temple they had in every town places where they met to worship when they did not want to offer sacrifices. These were called synagogues. They had only one room. The men sat on one side of the room and the women on the other behind a screen. There was a raised seat for the preacher and ten «chief seats» where the leading Jews sat.

The service was much like ours. There were prayers and hymns, and a passage was read from the Scripture, or that part of our Bible which we call the Old Testament. The most of what our New Testament tells had not yet happened. Any one could read this lesson, and could explain it afterward, if he had permission from the ruler of the synagogue, who was the man who had the charge of the service. It was the custom for the reader to stand while he read the lesson, and to sit down in front of the people when he began to talk. The hymns they sang were not like ours, and they had no hymn books. What they usually sang were the Psalms, which we can read in our own Bibles. One man, standing in front of the others, led the singing, sometimes singing alone, while the people joined in the chorus.

Soon after healing the nobleman's son Jesus spent a Sabbath day at his old home, Nazareth. As his custom always was, he went to the synagogue, to read the lesson and talk to the people. They handed him the book from which the lesson was to be read, and he found one of the places where the prophet Tsaiah tells about the Christ that was to come, and what he was to do to help* the people. You can find just what Jesus read to them that day if you look in your Bibles at the first two verses of the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah.

THE MINISTRY OF THE CHRIST

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After reading a few words he handed the book to the man who took care of it, and began to talk to the people. He told them that these words that he had just read were even then coming true; that he was doing just the things that Isaiah said the Christ would do.

For a little while they were glad to listen to him, for he spoke very gently and lovingly. But soon they began to ask one another: "Is this not the son of Joseph the carpenter? We know his father and mother, and we know him.

He is no better than we are. What does he mean by saying that he is the Christ?

How can he do all these things?» They wanted him to do some miracle to prove that he was the Christ.

When they saw he would do no miracle, but only wanted to talk to them, they grew more and more

angry, till at last they Jesus rejected at Nazareth

were too angry to

listen any longer. They rose, took hold of him, and led him out of the room to a high hill, meaning to throw him down and kill him. But Jesus passed through the midst of them and went away, very sad.

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A CHILD'S STORY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST

Jesus went from Nazareth to Capernaum, and there the people made him very welcome. As soon as they heard of his being in the city they crowded around him to hear him talk. One morning as the people were pressing close about him he stood by the

Sea of Galilee. There were two fishing-boats on the shore of the lake belonging to his four disciples. The fishermen were not in their boats but were near by washing their nets. Jesus stepped into one of the boats, which belonged to Peter and Andrew, and asked Peter to push out a little from the land. He could talk more easily if the people were not so close about him. Peter did as he was asked. Then Jesus sat down and taught

Christ on the Shore of the Lake

the people.

When he had finished talking he said to Peter, «Now push out into deep water and let down your net for a haul of fishes.» Peter had seen enough of his Master to trust him, and obeyed at once. But when they came to the deep water he said, “ Master, we have been out all night, and have caught nothing. Yet, because you have asked me to do so I will let down the net.» And he let it down. When he began to pull it in it seemed heavy.

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He looked; the net was so full of fishes that it had broken. He and Andrew could not pull it in, and called to their friends in the other boat to come and help them. John and James came at once, and together the four men pulled in so many fishes that both boats were full, and began to sink. How surprised they were!

Peter, who had obeyed his Master because he loved him, but who had not believed that they would catch any fish, fell down at his Lord's knees and said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man,

O Lord.» He said this, not because he wanted Jesus to leave him, but because he did not feel good enough to be the friend of this wonderful Christ.

Jesus knew what he meant, and after they had taken their boats to land he asked Peter and the other disciples too, if they would not like to go with him and become fishers of men.

How could they be

that? By helping to Christ and the Fishermen

save men as their Master was doing; by throwing a net of love around them, which would draw them away from wicked places and wicked companions; then by teaching them to love God and keep his com-

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A CHILD'S STORY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST

mandments. When Jesus asked if they would do this, they

gladly left their boats and nets and followed him. They stayed with him all the time he was on earth, travelling through the cities and villages with him, hearing him teach the people, and learning many things from him in their long quiet talks. After

he left them they still tried to teach the people what they had learned from him.

On the Sabbath day they went together to the synagogue at Capernaum and Jesus taught the lesson. Most of the people of this city loved to listen to him; for he knew how to explain what he had read and made the service very interesting.

This day an insane man was in the synagogue. The Jews believed that if a person was insane it was because a wicked spirit got into him which was stronger than he was and so made him do these strange things. They thought that if the evil spirit could be driven out the man would be like other people.

The people were quietly listening to what Jesus was saying when all at once this insane man called out: "Let us alone. What

The Cure of the Insane Man

THE MINISTRY OF THE CHRIST

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have we to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are; the Holy one of God.»

Every one else was very much frightened; but Jesus looked at the man and said to the evil spirit, “ Be quiet, and come out of him.» The man fell to the floor where he tossed about for a few minutes. When he stood again he was like other people. The evil spirit had gone forever. He was insane no more.

Every person in the synagogue was filled with wonder, and one began asking another: “ What does this mean? Where does this man get his power? For he commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him.» And in all the country round about in Galilee people talked of what had happened here.

After the service was over Jesus and his four friends went to Peter's house, for they were all to take dinner there. Peter's wife's mother lived with him, and when Jesus reached the house he found her very sick with a fever. He went right into the room where she lay. Her skin was dry and hot, and she was in great pain. The Saviour stood over her, took her hand in his, and lifted her up. At once the fever left her, and she was well; so well that she was able to get up and wait on the visitors.

THE GREAT PHYSICIAN

The Jewish Sabbath ended at sunset on the day we call Saturday, and hardly had the sun gone down this Sabbath afternoon when men and women came in crowds to Peter's door. They had heard of what Jesus had done that day, and every one had brought with him some sick friend whom he wanted the Saviour to help. All sorts of people came; men and women, old and young, those who had been sick a little while, and those who had been sick so long that they never expected to be any better. There were also many with evil spirits, like the one who had cried out in the synagogue that morning.

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A CHILD'S STORY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST

Jesus was tired. Do you think he felt like seeing all these needy people and doing something for every one of them? He did not think of himself. He thought of their pain, and, laying his hands on all the sick ones, he cured them and drove out all the evil spirits.

Early the next morning, long before sunrise, he slipped quietly away from the house and walked out into the country where he

could be alone with God and pray. For Jesus, the Son of God, felt that he needed to ask his Father for help and strength to do his work. But he was not alone long. Peter and the other disciples came to him, and said, "The people have come again this morning for help and are looking for you." Jesus answered: "We must not stay here any longer, for people in other places need us. Let us go to the next towns that I may preach there also."

By this time many of the men and women who Healing the Sick had followed the disciples

joined them and begged
Jesus not to leave Capernaum. But he could not do as they
wished. He said, u 1 must go and preach the Kingdom of God
to other cities, also, for that is my work.»

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So he left Capernaum and went through other towns of Galilee, healing the sick and teaching in the synagogues.

While passing through one of these cities a man who was a leper saw him and kneeled down before him. Now leprosy is a very dreadful disease or sickness that people in hot countries sometimes have; and one who takes the disease almost never gets free from it. He is called a leper, and is not allowed to touch anybody, for a touch might give the disease to the one who did not have it. He must leave his home and live with other lepers, and if he sees any one coming near him he must call out so that they will keep away. The Jews always called out «Unclean! Unclean!»

But this leper did not cry “Unclean.» He went as near Jesus as he dared, fell down before him and said, «Lord, if you are willing you can make me well.» The Saviour felt sorry for the poor man; he put out his hand and touched him and said, “I am willing; you shall be well.» As soon as he spoke the leprosy left the man; he was well.

Jesus said, “Tell no man how you were cured, but go and show yourself to the priest.»

The Great Physician

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The leper must do that to obey the law of the country, which was somewhat like this: If a man who thought he had leprosy

found that it was a mistake and he did not have the disease, or if one who was a leper had been cured of his trouble, he must first go to the priest and prove that he was free from the disease. Then he must go through a form of cleansing, and the priest must offer sacrifices for him. After all this had been done he was called clean and allowed to live with his family again. The lepers went to the priests to be sure that they did not have the disease, because the priests were the ones who were taught to know the disease whenever they saw it; and they were the ones who had a right to decide. There were no good doctors, except among the priests, so the people always went to them for such things as this, just as we go to some doctor.

Jesus told this man to obey the law by showing himself to the priest, and being cleansed, but not to say anything about how he was cured. But the man was so happy and grateful that he could not keep still; he went out and told every one he met that the Lord Jesus had cured him, and he was well.

The news spread fast. People from far and near came to see the preacher who made more wonderful cures than any doctor they had ever known. Jesus needed rest, and for a few days he kept away from the crowded cities and spent the time in the wilderness.

But in a very few days he was ready for work again, and went to his friends in Capernaum. It did not take long for people to find out that he was there again, and crowds came to hear him from that city, and from all the towns in Galilee and Judea.

Scribes and Pharisees were often among his hearers. The scribes were lawyers; they spent much time in studying the Jewish law, and taught the people what they must do to obey it. They were the men who made the copies of the Scriptures. You

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know they did not know then how to print with machines as we do now. Every book had to be written by hand with a pen, and it took a long time. The books did not look like ours, but were on long rolls of paper, with a stick fastened to each end, so they could be rolled up smoothly. When any One wanted to read from a book he must unwind the roll until he came to the place he wanted.

The Pharisees were another very important class among the Jews. Jesus called them hypocrites, for they pretended to be one thing when they were something else. They made long prayers at the corners of the streets where people could hear them; and gave money and food to the poor when they would be seen doing it. They were very strict about some things, but their hearts were bad, and when no one was watching them they could not be trusted. They were dishonest and sly and very unloving. These Pharisees did not like Jesus because he had told them they were not honest men. They wanted to find something to say against him.

One day in Capernaum a number of these people had come to the house where Jesus was preaching. The houses of Palestine are not like ours. Many of them are only one story high, and are covered with a flat roof that can be reached from the outside by stairs. This roof is quite useful; for after the sun goes down in the hot summer days families sit on the roof, and even sleep there. A railing around the edge makes it safe. It is very easy to carry the beds up there, for the bed of that country is only a thin mattress or heavy mat which is spread on the floor when needed, but rolled up and put one side when not in use. In the centre of the house there is often a large room called the court, and the part of the roof over this court is made in such a way that it can easily be taken off. It was in the court of such a house that Jesus was preaching.

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The crowd had filled the house, and the doorway was blocked with those who could get no farther. Four men came bringing

with them a man who
was sick with the palsy.

Palsy, or paralysis, is a disease which takes the life from some part of the body. If one has palsy in his arm, he cannot use that arm to help himself; if it is in his throat, he cannot swallow; if it is in the leg, he cannot walk, or even move the leg.

This man had the palsy, and because he could not walk his friends were bringing him on a bed to see the Saviour. They tried to get in

The Man Sick with the Palsy through the door, but

the crowd would not make way. What should they do? They must see Jesus! Their friend must be healed. There was another way to get to him besides going through the door, and that they now tried. The stairs which led to the roof were usually on the outside of the houses in that country. They would have no trouble in going there, for all the people were crowding the door. So they took the sick man up to the housetop, and, uncovering the roof,, they let him down, still lying on his bed, to the court at Jesus» feet.

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The Saviour knew what trouble they had taken to come to him, and it pleased him to have them show such trust that they were willing to do so much hard work. He stopped his lesson and said to the man who was sick with the palsy, “ Son, be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven.»

You remember there were many scribes and Pharisees there who were trying to find something to say against Jesus, so that they could prove that he was a bad man, who was making the people believe what was wrong. Now they thought they had found something. They said to one another, “ This man pretends to be God; for no one can forgive sins but God.» They accused him of one of the very greatest sins that any man could commit. Pretending to be God, or to have the power that belongs only to God, or trying to make people think that God is not so great and good as He really is, was called “ blasphemy.» The Jewish law commanded that any man who spoke blasphemy, or “ blasphemed,» should be put to death. What Jesus said would have been blasphemy if any one else had said it. But Jesus was the Son of God, and to him God had given power which had never been given to any one before.

Jesus knew what they were saying, and he answered them. u Why do you think evil of me? ” he said; “ which words are easier to say, ‘ your sins are forgiven,» or 4 arise and walk ’? But I will show you that I did not say mere words, but that I, the Son of man, have the power to forgive sins.» Then he turned to the sick man and said, “ Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.» And immediately that man who was not able to get to Jesus without being carried by his friends rose, rolled up his bed, took it under his arm, and walked away. His heart was full of love and thankfulness to God. The crowd, filled with wonder, left the house soon afterward, saying, «We have seen strange things to-day.»

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After the people had all gone, Jesus went out to take a walk. While walking he came to the place where Matthew, a publican

or tax-collector, was sitting at his work. Jesus

stopped and spoke to him, saying, «Will you follow me?» Matthew probably knew Jesus, and was glad to be chosen a disciple of the great Master. He arose at once, left his work, and followed the Christ.

The publicans were the men who gathered the money which the Jews had to pay to the Roman Emperor. Some of them were Romans and some were Jews.

Calling of Matthew Probably many of them

were dishonest men, who tried to collect more money than they should, especially from the poor. The scribes and Pharisees thought no publican was honest, and never tried to make one of them a better man. They looked down on them all as wicked men, who should not be allowed to associate with any one who was good.

They hated to pay the taxes, and hated the publicans who collected them, whether they were Jew or Roman. But they hated the Jews who did this work the most, because they thought they should have more love for their country than to

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help the Romans get money from them. But Jesus did not think as the Pharisees did, and chose Matthew, who was sometimes called Levi, to be one of his disciples.

Matthew very soon made a feast and invited his publican friends to come to his house and meet the Master and the new companions he had chosen. It was the custom then to allow anybody who wished to go into a house where there was a feast, and look on while the real guests were eating. So the scribes and Pharisees followed Jesus to Matthew's house. When they saw Jesus at the table eating with these publicans, they said to the disciples, «How is it that your Master is willing to eat and drink with these wicked people?» Now Jesus heard what they said, and he himself answered them in these words: «They that are well need not a physician [or doctor], but they that are sick. I came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.»

The Pharisees knew what he meant by this answer. He called them the well and the righteous because they thought they were good enough, and did not need help to be better. He who had come to make people's souls well and happy could do nothing for them because they would not take what he offered to give them. That is why he did not work with them. But the publicans, who knew that they were wicked people and were willing to be made better, were the sick; and Jesus, the great Physician, went among them because he could do them good.

And now it was time again for one of the Jewish feasts at Jerusalem, and Jesus went to the feast. Many of the cities in those times were surrounded with strong walls, and in the walls were gates through which the people went in and out of the town. Jerusalem was one of these walled cities, and had five gates. Near one of them, known as the Sheep Gate, was a pool of water, called Bethesda, which means House of Mercy. Water

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was never very plentiful in Jerusalem, and all the wells and pools were much prized by the people. But they were especially fond of Bethesda, for the water there was supposed to cure disease.

Some one had built around the pool five stone porches, with steps leading down into the water. Here, sheltered from the weather, the sick people could wait until they could step into the pool. They could not do this whenever they wanted to. At certain times only there was a bubbling motion of the water* which they believed was made by an angel going into the pool. Then, as they thought, whoever stepped into the water first was cured of any disease he had. Of course every sick person wanted to be the first, and as no one could tell when the moving of the

water would be, the porches were usually filled with the people who were waiting for the time to come.

It was on the Sabbath day that Jesus, walking by this pool of Bethesda, saw in one of the porches a very feeble man, who had been sick thirty-eight years. His friends had brought him to the pool and left him there alone. The Saviour saw him lying there, and knowing how long he had been sick he felt pity for him.

The Infirm Man at Bethesda

the ministry of the Christ

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«Would you like to be made well?» he asked. The poor man did not know that the one who spoke to him was better able to cure him than the waters of Bethesda, and answered, “ Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool at the right time, and while I am trying to get there myself, some one steps in before me.» Jesus said to him as he did to the palsied man at Capernaum, «Rise, take up your bed and walk.»

Strange enough the man did not say: “ I cannot do it. I have not walked for thirty-eight years.» He felt as if he could walk now. He rose at once and walked away, carrying his bed with

him. The Bible does not say that he even stopped to thank the one who had done so much for him, who was soon lost to his sight in the crowd about the pool.

The man had not gone very far when he was stopped by some of the Pharisees, who thought it was wrong to carry anything in the hands on the Sabbath day. They thought it was wrong to cure the sick, or move them in bed, or even to do any of the little things that make sick people more comfortable. When these very strict Jews saw this man with the bed under his arm they said, “ Do you not know that it is the Sabbath day, and that it is against the law to carry your bed? ” The man excused himself by saying, “ He that made me well told me to take up my bed and walk.» It seems as if every one would have been glad that the man was able to do that, but the Jews were not. They asked, angrily, “ Who was it that told you to take up your bed? » The man could not tell them, for he himself did not know.

A little while after this they met again in the temple, and Jesus talked with the man about the kind of life he was living. If he had been a really good man he probably would not have had this trouble, so the Christ said to him, “ You are well now, but if you keep on doing wicked things something worse may happen to you. Go, and sin no more.» The man left the temple, saw

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the Jews again and told them that it was Jesus who had cured him. Then they crowded about the Saviour, and began to abuse him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath day.

Who do you think spent the day in the way best pleasing to God? The Christ, with a heart full of love, doing what he could to help some one who was in trouble, or the Jews whose hearts were so full of hatred to him because he had done what they called wrong that they wanted to kill him?

Jesus was not afraid of them. He told them that he was only doing his Father's work. It made them still more angry to have him call God his Father. He tried to prove to them that he was the Son of God; that he could not do such things as they had seen him do if his Father did not give him the power. He said that if they would trust him they would see still greater works, and asked them if they did not remember that John the Baptist had called him the Christ. More than that, his Father at his baptism had said, 66 This is my beloved Son.» “ You study the Scriptures, » he said, u because you think they will save you; and they tell of

me. Why do you not come to me and learn what I can teach you? I know why you do not come. It is because your hearts are not full of the love of God. How can you believe?» After he had said all he wanted to, he left them.

They did not dare to touch him then, but they did not forgive him, and they made up their minds that they would watch him, and see if they could not find something for which they could punish him. It seems very strange that they would not listen to him, and believe what he taught. Probably if they had been better men they would have been willing to listen, and would have learned to love the man who was always doing so much for others. But they liked to be the rulers of the people, and they were afraid that if Jesus were allowed to teach, the people would leave them, and they would lose their power. They were jealous.

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One Sabbath not long after this, Jesus and his disciples were walking through a field of grain in Galilee. The disciples were hungry, and as they walked along they picked some of the grain and ate it. It was perfectly right for them to pick this grain, for the Jewish law said that any one could pick the ears with his hands if he wanted to eat them, but that no one must cut the grain with the sickle and take it home unless it was his.

Wherever Jesus went now some of the Pharisees followed to see what he was about.

So when these men saw the friends of Jesus eating the grain they said to him, “ Your disciples are doing what is not right on the Sabbath.»

If the law gave the people the right to pick the grain in this way, why was there any reason why the Pharisees should blame them? You remember that these Jews were very strict about some things, although in other ways they were very bad. One of the things they were very strict about was the keeping of the Sabbath. Their law said that they must not work on the Sabbath, and they said that rubbing off the grain with the hands was work. So they did not allow it to be done on the Sabbath. They

The Disciples plucking Grain

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could not blame Jesus for breaking the law, because he had not picked any of the grain. But they blamed him for allowing his

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