

THE BOY JESUS.

– JAN. 12. – Luke 2:40-52. –

Golden Text – "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." – Luke 2:52.

THIS brief narrative gives us a single glimpse at the youth of our Lord; but it reveals all that is important for us to know concerning him before he arrived at maturity. It shows us the wonderful prodigy of wisdom and grace, so developed at twelve years of age as to be able to cope with the reasoning powers and the learning of men far advanced in years, in so much that he astonished them with his understanding and answers.

We observe also that his superior ability did not puff him up nor cause him to forget the respect and deference due to the advanced years and position of the Doctors and teachers. He was meek and lowly of heart, both as a boy and as a man. He was anxious also to learn of them from the law and the prophets. He did not miraculously know all that was in them; but he "*grew in wisdom.*" He acquired knowledge, but with that ease, rapidity and retentiveness with which only a perfect mind can grasp and hold it.

His tarrying in the temple to receive the instructions of his Father's Word evidently was not in wilful disregard for his parents; but rather, was an evidence of his zeal to do his Father's will, which motive, in his childish simplicity, he seemed to think his mother and Joseph would fully realize and approve. This is apparent from his question, – "Why did you seek me? Did you not know that I must be in the courts of my Father?" No, they did not know. They could not understand the wonderful child. Bearing in mind subsequent expressions of more mature years which showed that his memory extended back to his previous existence with the Father before the world was, we have no

reason to doubt that at the age of twelve his memory was active, and that he then knew what in after years he affirmed, saying, – "Before Abraham was, I am." "What and if ye shall see me ascend up where I was before?" "Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was," etc. – John 8:58; 6:62; 17:5.

But his mother and Joseph understood him not. How could they? Mary silently pondered these things in her heart; but how could she understand this mystery of God? Jesus, seeing that he was not understood and remembering his duty of submission to parents, was subject to their wishes, and returned with them to Nazareth. "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man." In the retirement of his early life of preparation for his public ministry and great sacrifice, his virtues commanded the admiration of all who knew him. Praise God for this testimony of the human perfection of his dear Son!
