

## Paper 126 — The Two Crucial Years

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Most endnotes and Urantia Book cross-references have been deleted to enhance readability.

### Sources for Paper 126, in the order in which they appear

- (1) Robert **Norwood**, *The Man Who Dared to Be God: A Story of Jesus* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929)
- (2) George A. **Barton**, Ph.D., LL.D., *Jesus of Nazareth: A Biography* (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1922)
- (3) P. Whitwell **Wilson**, *The Christ We Forget: A Life of Our Lord for Men of To-day* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1917)
- (4) Walter Russell **Bowie**, *The Master: A Life of Jesus Christ* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928)
- (5) Rev. Alfred **Edersheim**, M.A.Oxon, D.D., Ph.D., *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (Volume One) (New York: Longman, Green, & Co., Eighth Edition, Revised, 1899)

### Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.
- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row, or parallelisms separated by yellowed parallelisms.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and the UB writer pointedly differ from each other.
- (e) **Blue** indicates original (or “revealed”) information, or UB-specific terminology and concepts. (What to highlight in this regard is debatable. The highlights are tentative.)

Work-in-progress Version 18 Oct. 2014  
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 Revised 17 November 2020

## PAPER 126 — THE TWO CRUCIAL YEARS

126:0.1 Of all Jesus' earth-life experiences, the fourteenth and fifteenth years were the most crucial. These two years, after he began to be self-conscious of divinity and destiny, and before he achieved a large measure of communication with his indwelling Adjuster, were the most trying of his eventful life on Urantia. It is this period of two years which should be called the great test, the real temptation. No human youth, in passing through the early confusions and adjustment problems of adolescence, ever experienced a more crucial testing than that which Jesus passed through during his transition from childhood to young manhood.

126:0.2 This important period in Jesus' youthful development began with the conclusion of the Jerusalem visit and with his return to Nazareth.

### VI: THE DISCIPLINE OF OBEDIENCE

(Norwood 71)

The heart of Mary was happy, for God had given back to her the son of her soul, the fulfilment of her body (N 79).

[Still, he was a dutiful boy. He went back to Nazareth with his parents and was subject to them as any other Jewish boy would have been (Barton 97).]

At first Mary was happy in the thought that she had her boy back once more,

that Jesus had returned home to be a dutiful son—not that he was ever anything else—

and that he would henceforth be more responsive to her plans for his future life.

But she was not for long to bask in this sunshine of maternal delusion and unrecognized family pride; very soon she was to be more completely disillusioned. More and more the boy was in the company of his father; less and less did he come to her with his problems, while increasingly both his parents failed to comprehend his frequent alternation between the affairs of this world and the contemplation of his relation to his Father's business. Frankly, they did not understand him,<sup>1</sup> but they did truly love him.

126:0.3 As he grew older, Jesus' pity and love for the Jewish people deepened, but with the passing years, there developed in his mind a growing righteous resentment of

Hell had invaded his Father's house because the **priests** were **political** impostors;

the presence in the Father's temple of the **politically** appointed **priests**.

Jesus had great respect for the sincere Pharisees and the honest scribes,

the scribes, foolish and fumbling **theologians**; the **Pharisees**, conservative and bigoted ritualists! Together, priests, scribes, Pharisees, had betrayed Israel and insulted God! . . . No wonder the land of his fathers was invaded by Rome (N 77).

but he held the hypocritical **Pharisees** and the dishonest **theologians** in great contempt;

he looked with disdain upon all those religious leaders who were not sincere.

When he scrutinized the leadership of Israel, he was sometimes tempted to look with favor on the possibility of his becoming the Messiah of Jewish expectation, but he never yielded to such a temptation.

[Contrast Norwood 77-78, 95-99.]

126:0.4 The story of his exploits among the wise men of the temple in Jerusalem was gratifying to all Nazareth, especially to his former teachers in the synagogue school.

Nahor [the Nazareth chazzan] boasted of Jesus' learning, and Nazareth more than ever took him to its heart... (N 81).

For a time his praise was on everybody's lips.

All the village recounted his childhood wisdom and praiseworthy conduct and predicted that he was destined to become a great leader in Israel; at last a really great teacher was to come out of Nazareth in Galilee. And they all looked forward to the time when he would be fifteen years of age so that he might be permitted regularly to read the Scriptures in the synagogue on the Sabbath day.

## 1. HIS FOURTEENTH YEAR (A.D. 8)

126:1.1 This is the calendar year of his fourteenth birthday. He had become a good yoke maker and worked well with both canvas and leather. He was also rapidly developing into an expert carpenter and cabinetmaker.

### XIV: THE SILENT YEARS AT NAZARETH (Barton 98)

During these years of silence it seems probable, as others have suggested, that Jesus often climbed to the top of the hill to the northwest of Nazareth which rises to a height of 1,600 feet above the Mediterranean Sea and from the top of which an extensive and beautiful view is seen (B 99).

This summer he made frequent trips to the top of the hill to the northwest of Nazareth

for prayer and meditation.

He was gradually becoming more self-conscious of the nature of his bestowal on earth.

Of course the worship of Baal on the hill above Nazareth was [discontinued after John Hyrcanus I's conquest of southern Galilee in about 109 B.C. and the forced conversion of its inhabitants to Judaism], but, like similar hills in other parts of Palestine, the hill remained sacred in the estimation of the people. The sanctity was, as in other cases, accounted for by supposing that some saintly Jew had been buried there, and people often resorted to his tomb to pray (B 99).

We cannot be wrong, therefore, in supposing that, when Jesus climbed the hill, its top was occupied by the tomb (or the supposed tomb) of a saintly Jew named Simeon, for the name *Sim'an*, by which the possessor of the tomb is still known is an Arabic corruption of Simeon, and names in Palestine persist through many centuries (B 99-100).

One can but think that he gazed much more often at Mount Carmel to the southwest [than at Sepphoris], and marked with his eye the spot on its summit where Elijah, centuries before, had had his contest with the prophets of Baal. Or he may have looked a little to the east of that to Megiddo,

where fifteen hundred years before, the armies of the great Egyptian king Thothmes had won their first great victory in Asia,

126:1.2 This hill, a little more than one hundred years previously, had been the "high place of Baal,"

and now it was the site of the tomb of Simeon, a reputed holy man of Israel.

From the summit of this hill of Simeon, Jesus looked out over Nazareth and the surrounding country.

He would gaze upon Megiddo

and recall the story of the Egyptian army winning its first great victory in Asia;

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and where nine hundred years later another Egyptian king had defeated and killed the good Judæan king Josiah.

Near it he could discern Taanach where Deborah and Barak had defeated Sisera.

In the same general direction he could spy out the hills that lay about the plain of Dothan,

where Joseph's brethren had sold him as a slave to be taken to Egypt.

Far to the south he could distinguish the peaks of Ebal and Gerizim,

about which hovered traditions of Abraham, Jacob, Shechem, Abimelech, and many others (B 102-03).

Possibly after the return from Jerusalem Jesus continued for a time to attend the synagogue school (B 98).

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and how, later on, another such army defeated the Judean king Josiah.

Not far away he could look upon Taanach, where Deborah and Barak defeated Sisera.

In the distance he could view the hills of Dothan,

where he had been taught Joseph's brethren sold him into Egyptian slavery.

He then would shift his gaze over to Ebal and Gerizim

and recount to himself the traditions of Abraham, Jacob, and Abimelech.

And thus he recalled and turned over in his mind the historic and traditional events of his father Joseph's people.

126:1.3 He continued to carry on his advanced courses of reading under the synagogue teachers,

and he also continued with the home education of his brothers and sisters as they grew up to suitable ages.

126:1.4 Early this year Joseph arranged to set aside the income from his Nazareth and Capernaum property to pay for Jesus' long course of study at Jerusalem, it having been planned that he should go to Jerusalem in August of the following year when he would be fifteen years of age.

126:1.5 By the beginning of this year both Joseph and Mary entertained frequent doubts about the destiny of their first-born son. He was indeed a brilliant and lovable child, but he was so difficult to understand, so hard to fathom, and again, nothing extraordinary or miraculous ever happened. Scores of times had his proud mother stood in breathless anticipation, expecting to see her son engage in some superhuman or miraculous performance, but always were her hopes dashed down in cruel disappointment. And all this was discouraging, even disheartening.

[The Apocryphal Gospels] love to represent Joseph as a clumsy workman, who was always making mistakes that ruined his work, and Jesus as coming to Joseph's aid and performing a miracle which saved Joseph from disgrace and loss.

We are beginning now to understand that that is not God's way.... We are to think of Jesus as helping in the simple parts of the carpenter's work, just as any other boy of his years might do (B 98-99).

The devout people of those days truly believed that prophets and men of promise always demonstrated their calling and established their divine authority by performing miracles and working wonders.

But Jesus did none of these things;

wherefore was the confusion of his parents steadily increased as they contemplated his future.

126:1.6 The improved economic condition of the Nazareth family was reflected in many ways about the home and especially in the increased number of

[Compare: In time Mary taught [Jesus] the Hebrew alphabet, writing the picturesque letters of that ancient tongue with a wedge of charcoal on a smooth bit of pine-board found in Joseph's shop (Norwood 31-32).]

smooth white boards which were used as writing slates, the writing being done with charcoal.

[See 123:6.5.]

Jesus was also permitted to resume his music lessons; he was very fond of playing the harp.

126:1.7 Throughout this year it can truly be said that

[And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men (Lk 2:52).]

Jesus “grew in favor with man and with God.”

The prospects of the family seemed good; the future was bright.

## 2. THE DEATH OF JOSEPH

126:2.1 All did go well until that fateful day of Tuesday, September 25, when a runner from Sepphoris brought to this Nazareth home the tragic news that Joseph had been severely injured by the falling of a derrick while at work on the governor’s residence. The messenger from Sepphoris had stopped at the shop on the way to Joseph’s home, informing Jesus of his father’s accident, and they went together to the house to break the sad news to Mary. Jesus desired to go immediately to his father, but Mary would hear to nothing but that she must hasten to her husband’s side. She directed that James, then ten years of age, should accompany her to Sepphoris while Jesus remained home with the younger children until she should return, as she did not know how seriously Joseph had been injured.

### XIV: THE SILENT YEARS AT NAZARETH (Barton 98)

Some years before Jesus began his ministry Joseph died

But Joseph died of his injuries before Mary arrived.



They brought him to Nazareth, and on the following day he was laid to rest with his fathers.

126:2.2 Just at the time when prospects were good and the future looked bright, an apparently cruel hand struck down the head of this Nazareth household, the affairs of this home were disrupted, and every plan for Jesus and his future education was demolished. This carpenter lad, now just past fourteen years of age, awakened to the realization that he had not only to fulfill the commission of his heavenly Father to reveal the divine nature on earth and in the flesh, but that his young human nature must also shoulder the responsibility of caring for his widowed mother and seven brothers and sisters—and another yet to be born.

and Jesus, the oldest son, became the sole support of the family (B 103).

This lad of Nazareth now became the sole support and comfort of this so suddenly bereaved family.

Thus were permitted those occurrences of the natural order of events on Urantia which would force this young man of destiny so early to assume these heavy but highly educational and disciplinary responsibilities attendant upon becoming the head of a human family, of becoming father to his own brothers and sisters, of supporting and protecting his mother, of functioning as guardian of his father's home, the only home he was to know while on this world.

126:2.3 Jesus cheerfully accepted the responsibilities so suddenly thrust upon him, and he carried them faithfully to the end. At least one great problem and anticipated difficulty in his life had been tragically solved—he would not now be expected to go to Jerusalem to study under the rabbis.

X: CHRIST THE QUESTIONER  
(Wilson 72)

Paul, when a boy, went to the Temple and sat as a disciple at the feet of Gamaliel, as if the only authority to be recognized by youth is the authority of the past. Jesus sat at no man's feet (W 73).

It remained always true that

Jesus "sat at no man's feet."

He was ever willing to learn from even the humblest of little children, but he never derived authority to teach truth from human sources.

126:2.4 Still he knew nothing of the Gabriel visit to his mother before his birth; he only learned of this from John on the day of his baptism, at the beginning of his public ministry.

II: THE THOUGHTS AND PASSIONS  
OF THE TIME (Bowie 47)

Instinctively he measured every institution of society and of religion, by this test,—

what does it do for human souls?

What does it do to bring men nearer God?  
(B 50)

126:2.5 As the years passed,

this young carpenter of Nazareth increasingly measured every institution of society and every usage of religion by the unvarying test:

What does it do for the human soul?

does it bring God to man?

does it bring man to God?

While this youth did not wholly neglect the recreational and social aspects of life, more and more he devoted his time and energies to just two purposes: the care of his family and the preparation to do his Father's heavenly will on earth.

126:2.6 This year it became the custom for the neighbors to drop in during the winter evenings to hear Jesus play upon the harp,

[Even in his boyhood Jesus was a master of stories. He made words live.... His mimicry was perfect. He saw what he said and, seeing, gave reality to the words that fell from his lips like drops of water poured gently from a jug (Norwood 64).]

to listen to his stories (for the lad was a master storyteller),

and to hear him read from the Greek scriptures.

126:2.7 The economic affairs of the family continued to run fairly smoothly as there was quite a sum of money on hand at the time of Joseph's death. Jesus early demonstrated the possession of keen business judgment and financial sagacity. He was liberal but frugal; he was saving but generous. He proved to be a wise and efficient administrator of his father's estate.

126:2.8 But in spite of all that Jesus and the Nazareth neighbors could do to bring cheer into the home, Mary, and even the children, were overcast with sadness. Joseph was gone. Joseph was an unusual husband and father, and they all missed him. And it seemed all the more tragic to think that he died ere they could speak to him or hear his farewell blessing.

### **3. THE FIFTEENTH YEAR (A.D. 9)**

126:3.1 By the middle of this fifteenth year—and we are reckoning time in accordance with the twentieth-century calendar, not by the Jewish year—Jesus had taken a firm grasp upon the management of his family. Before this year had passed, their savings had about disappeared, and they were face to face with the necessity of disposing of one of the Nazareth houses which Joseph and his neighbor Jacob owned in partnership.

126:3.2 On Wednesday evening, April 17, A.D. 9, Ruth, the baby of the family, was born, and to the best of his ability Jesus endeavored to take the place of his father in comforting and ministering to his mother during this trying and peculiarly sad ordeal. For almost a score of years (until he began his public ministry) no father could have loved and nurtured his daughter any more affectionately and faithfully than Jesus cared for little Ruth. And he was an equally good father to all the other members of his family.

126:3.3 During this year Jesus first formulated the prayer which he subsequently taught to his apostles, and which to many has become known as “The Lord’s Prayer.” In a way it was an evolution of the family altar; they had many forms of praise and several formal prayers. After his father’s death Jesus tried to teach the older children to express themselves individually in prayer—much as he so enjoyed doing—

but they could not grasp his thought and would invariably fall back upon their memorized prayer forms. It was in this effort to stimulate his older brothers and sisters to say individual prayers that Jesus would endeavor to lead them along by suggestive phrases, and presently, without intention on his part, it developed that they were all using a form of prayer which was largely built up from these suggestive lines which Jesus had taught them.

126:3.4 At last Jesus gave up the idea of having each member of the family formulate spontaneous prayers, and one evening in October he sat down by the little squat lamp on the low stone table, and, on a piece of smooth cedar board about eighteen inches square, with a piece of charcoal he wrote out the prayer which became from that time on the standard family petition.

126:3.5 This year Jesus was much troubled with confused thinking. Family responsibility had quite effectively removed all thought of immediately carrying out any plan for responding to the Jerusalem visitation directing him to "be about his Father's business." Jesus rightly reasoned that the watchcare of his earthly father's family must take precedence of all duties; that the support of his family must become his first obligation.

126:3.6 In the course of this year Jesus found a passage in the so-called Book of Enoch which influenced him in the later adoption of the term “Son of Man” as a designation for his bestowal mission on **Urantia**. He had thoroughly considered the idea of the Jewish Messiah and was firmly convinced that he was not to be that Messiah. He longed to help his father’s people, but he never expected to lead Jewish armies in overthrowing the foreign domination of Palestine. He knew he would never sit on the throne of David at Jerusalem. Neither did he believe that his mission was that of a spiritual deliverer or moral teacher solely to the Jewish people. In no sense, therefore, could his life mission be the fulfillment of the intense longings and supposed Messianic prophecies of the Hebrew scriptures; at least, not as the Jews understood these predictions of the prophets.

Likewise he was certain he was never to appear as

[In the prophecy of **Daniel** for the first time appeared the name which Jesus was afterward to take—*Son of Man* (**Bowie** 64).]

[In **Dan.** 7:13 the term [Son of Man] had been employed to designate a human being to whom the Messianic kingdom was likened. This was in contrast to the fierce beasts to which the earthly kingdoms, mentioned in the preceding verses, had been compared (**Barton** 107).]

the **Son of Man** depicted by the Prophet **Daniel**.

126:3.7 But when the time came for him to go forth as a world teacher, what would he call himself? What claim should he make concerning his mission? By what name would he be called by the people who would become believers in his teachings?

## VII: THE SON OF MAN (Norwood 83)

Through Nahor [Jesus] had access to the synagogue library,

which included the apocalyptic writings as well as the full texts of the Law and the Prophets (N 83).

[I]n the course of time there came to the synagogue of Nazareth a well-handled roll of parchment called "the Book of Enoch." Its theme was *salvation through Messiah* (N 88).

[Apocalypses] were written by teachers who, for fear of the Pharisees and scribes, sought to communicate their message under the supposititious authorship of famous men of the olden days (N 87).

[Of all the pre-Christian apocalypses known to us it alone applies to the Messiah the term "Son of Man" (see Enoch 46:1, 2; 48:2) (Barton 107).]

126:3.8 While turning all these problems over in his mind,

he found in the synagogue library at Nazareth,

among the apocalyptic books which he had been studying,

this manuscript called "The Book of Enoch";

and though he was certain that

it had not been written by Enoch of old,

it proved very intriguing to him, and he read and reread it many times.

There was one passage which particularly impressed him, a passage in which this term "Son of Man" appeared.<sup>2</sup>

The writer of this so-called Book of Enoch went on to tell about this Son of Man, describing the work he would do on earth and explaining that

In his [Jesus'] imagination he walked with Enoch along the golden highway of Heaven, past the patriarchs, prophets, kings, and saints, to the glorious throne of God, where he saw, lifted above even Michael and Gabriel, the Saviour of the world in the nature and likeness of a man, yet sharing the splendor of the Eternal (N 88).

this Son of Man, before coming down on this earth to bring salvation to mankind, had walked through the courts of heavenly glory with his Father, the Father of all;

and that he had turned his back upon all this grandeur and glory to come down on earth to proclaim salvation to needy mortals.

As Jesus would read these passages (well understanding that

The theme of these writings had its roots in Persian theosophy (N 87).

much of the Eastern mysticism which had become admixed with these teachings was erroneous),

he responded in his heart and recognized in his mind that of all the Messianic predictions of the Hebrew scriptures and of all the theories about the Jewish deliverer, none was so near the truth as this story tucked away in this only partially accredited Book of Enoch; and he then and there decided to adopt as his inaugural title "the Son of Man."

[Afterward, when Jesus entered upon his Messianic mission, he chose this term "Son of Man" out of all the titles applied to the Messiah as the one by which to call himself (Barton 107).]

And this he did when he subsequently began his public work.

Jesus had an unerring ability for the recognition of truth, and truth he never hesitated to embrace, no matter from what source it appeared to emanate.



126:3.9 By this time he had quite thoroughly settled many things about his forthcoming work for the world, but he said nothing of these matters to his mother, who still held stoutly to the idea of his being the Jewish Messiah.

126:3.10 The great confusion of Jesus' younger days now arose. Having settled something about the nature of his mission on earth, "to be about his Father's business"—to show forth his Father's loving nature to all mankind—he began to ponder anew the many statements in the Scriptures referring to the coming of a national deliverer, a Jewish teacher or king. To what event did these prophecies refer? Was not he a Jew? or was he? Was he or was he not of the house of David? His mother averred he was; his father had ruled that he was not. He decided he was not. But had the prophets confused the nature and mission of the Messiah?

[*Compare:* Then it came to him that his father was wrong, **his mother right**, concerning Messiah. Messiah must overcome death. To overcome death, he must renounce it. To renounce it, he must throw away the sword—the messenger and servant of death (**Norwood** 103).]

126:3.11 After all, could it be possible that **his mother was right**?

[?]

In most matters, when differences of opinion had arisen in the past, she had been right.

If he were a new teacher and not the Messiah, then how should he recognize the Jewish Messiah if such a one should appear in Jerusalem during the time of his earth mission; and, further, what should be his relation to this Jewish Messiah? And what should be his relation, after embarking on his life mission, to his family? to the Jewish commonwealth and religion? to the Roman Empire? to the gentiles and their religions?

Each of these momentous problems this young Galilean turned over in his mind and seriously pondered while he continued to work at the carpenter's bench, laboriously making a living for himself, his mother, and eight other hungry mouths.

126:3.12 Before the end of this year Mary saw the family funds diminishing. She turned the sale of doves over to James. Presently they bought a second cow, and with the aid of Miriam they began the sale of milk to their Nazareth neighbors.

126:3.13 His profound periods of meditation, his frequent journeys to the hilltop for prayer, and the many strange ideas which Jesus advanced from time to time, thoroughly alarmed his mother. Sometimes she thought the lad was beside himself, and then she would steady her fears, remembering that he was, after all, a child of promise and in some manner different from other youths.

126:3.14 But Jesus was learning not to speak of all his thoughts, not to present all his ideas to the world, not even to his own mother. From this year on, Jesus' disclosures about what was going on in his mind steadily diminished; that is, he talked less about those things which an average person could not grasp, and which would lead to his being regarded as peculiar or different from ordinary folks. To all appearances he became commonplace and conventional, though he did long for someone who could understand his problems. He craved a trustworthy and confidential friend, but his problems were too complex for his human associates to comprehend. The uniqueness of the unusual situation compelled him to bear his burdens alone.

#### 4. FIRST SERMON IN THE SYNAGOGUE

[?]

126:4.1 With the coming of his fifteenth birthday, Jesus could officially occupy the synagogue pulpit on the Sabbath day. Many times before, in the absence of speakers, Jesus had been asked to read the Scriptures, but now the day had come when, according to law, he could conduct the service. Therefore on the first Sabbath after his fifteenth birthday the chazan arranged for Jesus to conduct the morning service of the synagogue. And when all the faithful in Nazareth had assembled, the young man, having made his selection of Scriptures, stood up and began to read:

1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me;  
because the LORD hath anointed me

to preach good tidings unto the meek;

he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to  
proclaim liberty to the captives,

and the opening of the prison to *them that are*  
bound;

2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the  
LORD,

[to proclaim the *year of Jehovah's favor* (ARV)]

and the day of vengeance of our God;

to comfort all that mourn;

3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to  
give unto them beauty for ashes,

the oil of joy for mourning,

126:4.2 "The spirit of the Lord God is  
upon me, for the Lord has anointed me;

he has sent me to bring good news to the  
meek,

to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim  
liberty to the captives,

and to set the spiritual prisoners free;

to proclaim the *year of God's favor*

and the day of our God's reckoning;

to comfort all mourners,

to give them beauty for ashes,

the oil of joy in the place of mourning,

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the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;

a song of praise instead of the spirit of sorrow,

that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD,

that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord,

that he might be glorified (Isa. 61:1-3).

wherewith he may be glorified.

14 Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live:

126:4.3 “Seek good and not evil that you may live,

and so the LORD, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken.

and so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you.

15 Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate:

Hate the evil and love the good; establish judgment in the gate.

it may be that the Lord God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph (Amos 5:14-15).

Perhaps the Lord God will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

1 Wash you, make you clean;

126:4.4 “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean;

put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;

put away the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil

2 Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed,

and learn to do good; seek justice, relieve the oppressed.

[seek justice (ARV)]

judge the fatherless, plead for the widow (Isa. 1:16-17).

Defend the fatherless and plead for the widow.

6 Wherewith shall I come before the LORD,

126:4.5 “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord,

and bow myself before the high God?

to bow myself before the Lord of all the earth?

shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?

Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?

7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?

Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, ten thousands of sheep, or with rivers of oil?

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shall I give my firstborn *for* my transgression, the fruit of my body *for* the sin of my soul?

8 He hath shewed thee, O man, what *is* good;

and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? (Micah 6:6-8)

25 To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One.

[It is he that sitteth above the circle of the earth ... (Isa 40:22).]

26 Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created *these things*,

that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names

by the greatness of his might, for that *he is* strong in power; not one faileth (Isa. 40:25-26).

29 He giveth power to the faint; and to *them that have* no might he increaseth strength (Isa. 40:29).

10 Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God:

I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee;

yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness (Isa. 41:10).

13 For I the LORD thy God

will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee (Isa. 41:13).

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Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

for the Lord has showed us, O men, what is good.

And what does the Lord require of you but to deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God?

126:4.6 “To whom, then, will you liken God

who sits upon the circle of the earth?

Lift up your eyes and behold who has created all these worlds,

who brings forth their host by number and calls them all by their names.

He does all *these things*

by the greatness of his might, and because he is strong in power, not one fails.

He gives power to the weak, and to those who are weary he increases strength.

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God.

I will strengthen you and I will help you;

yes, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness,

for I am the Lord your God.

And I will hold your right hand, saying to you, fear not, for I will help you.

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10 Ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD,

and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I *am* he:

before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

11 I, *even* I, *am* the LORD; and beside me *there is* no saviour (Isa. 43:10-11).

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126:4.7 “And you are my witness, says the Lord,

and my servant whom I have chosen that all may know and believe me and understand that I am the Eternal.

even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no savior.”

126:4.8 And when he had thus read, he sat down, and the people went to their homes, pondering over the words which he had so graciously read to them. Never had his townspeople seen him so magnificently solemn; never had they heard his voice so earnest and so sincere; never had they observed him so manly and decisive, so authoritative.

126:4.9 This Sabbath afternoon Jesus climbed the Nazareth hill with James and, when they returned home, wrote out the Ten Commandments in Greek on two smooth boards in charcoal. Subsequently Martha colored and decorated these boards, and for long they hung on the wall over James’s small workbench.

## 5. THE FINANCIAL STRUGGLE

126:5.1 Gradually Jesus and his family returned to the simple life of their earlier years.

II, X: IN THE HOUSE OF THE HEAVENLY,  
AND IN THE HOME OF HIS EARTHLY  
FATHER—THE TEMPLE OF JERU-  
SALEM—THE RETIREMENT AT NAZARETH.  
(Edersheim 1 235)

The morning and midday meal must have  
been of the plainest, and even the larger  
evening meal of the simplest, in the home  
at Nazareth.... The same simplicity would  
prevail in dress and manners (E1 250-51).

[Deborah [the family cow] had died some  
years before, but her calf was now in her place,  
giving Mary milk, curds, and butter (Norwood  
89).]

There was not such separation between  
rich and poor as with us, and while  
wealth might confer social distinction, the  
absence of it in no way implied social  
inferiority (E1 252).

[Compare E1 250-54, re how Jesus was influenced  
by *Home, Nature, and Prevailing Ideas*.]

Their clothes and even their food became  
simpler.

They had plenty of milk, butter, and  
cheese.

In season they enjoyed the produce of  
their garden, but each passing month  
necessitated the practice of greater  
frugality.

Their breakfasts were very plain; they  
saved their best food for the evening  
meal.

However, among these Jews lack of  
wealth did not imply social inferiority.

126:5.2 Already had this youth well-  
nigh encompassed the comprehension of  
how men lived in his day.

And how well he understood life in the  
home, field, and workshop is shown by  
his subsequent teachings, which so  
repletely reveal his intimate contact with  
all phases of human experience.

## VI: THE SON OF MAN (Norwood 83)

Nahor [the Nazareth chazzan] now directed Jesus' reading, ... and more than ever sure of his destiny as a successor to Hillel, if not to the great Gamaliel ... (N 83).

126:5.3 The Nazareth chazan continued to cling to the belief that Jesus was to become a great teacher, probably the successor of the renowned Gamaliel at Jerusalem.

126:5.4 Apparently all Jesus' plans for a career were thwarted. The future did not look bright as matters now developed. But he did not falter; he was not discouraged. He lived on, day by day, doing well the present duty and faithfully discharging the immediate responsibilities of his station in life.

## V: DISILLUSIONMENT (Norwood 56)

Jesus' story will eternally comfort the idealists of the world (N 71).

Jesus' life is the everlasting comfort of all disappointed idealists.

## XIV: THE SILENT YEARS AT NAZARETH (Barton 98)

The carpenters of Nazareth were simple folk, whose work was probably confined to making yokes for oxen, the wood part of plows, making and putting up doors for houses and sheepfolds, and similar work.... It was humble work and the pay was small.

126:5.5 The pay of a common day-laboring carpenter was slowly diminishing.

By the end of this year

We know that the wages of unskilled laborers at the time were a Roman denarius (about sixteen cents) a day. We do not know whether carpenters were paid more, but probably they were not (B 104).

Jesus could earn, by working early and late, only the equivalent of about twenty-five cents a day.



By the next year they found it difficult to pay

Civil taxes were not fixed by law. The system known as tax-farming prevailed. An official was given the privilege of collecting the taxes. This official had to pay over to his superiors a certain amount, but was permitted to collect from the people as much as he could squeeze out of them.

the civil taxes,

[?]

not to mention the synagogue assessments

In addition to the political taxes, there were the Temple taxes of a half-shekel each year (B 105).

and the temple tax of one-half shekel.

During this year the tax collector tried to squeeze extra revenue out of Jesus, even threatening to take his harp.

126:5.6 Fearing that the copy of the Greek scriptures might be discovered and confiscated by the tax collectors, Jesus, on his fifteenth birthday, presented it to the Nazareth synagogue library as his maturity offering to the Lord.

[?]

126:5.7 The great shock of his fifteenth year came when Jesus went over to Sepphoris to receive the decision of Herod regarding the appeal taken to him in the dispute about the amount of money due Joseph at the time of his accidental death. Jesus and Mary had hoped for the receipt of a considerable sum of money when the treasurer at Sepphoris had offered them a paltry amount. Joseph's brothers had taken an appeal to Herod himself, and now Jesus stood in the palace and heard Herod decree that his father had nothing due him at the time of his death. And for such an unjust decision Jesus never again trusted Herod Antipas.

It is not surprising that

[And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell **that fox** ... (Lk 13:32).] [See 171:4.6.]

he once alluded to Herod as **"that fox."**

126:5.8 The close work at the carpenter's bench during this and subsequent years deprived Jesus of the opportunity of mingling with the caravan passengers. The family supply shop had already been taken over by his uncle, and Jesus worked altogether in the home shop, where he was near to help Mary with the family. About this time he began sending James up to the camel lot to gather information about world events, and thus he sought to keep in touch with the news of the day.

126:5.9 As he grew up to manhood, he passed through all those conflicts and confusions which the average young persons of previous and subsequent ages have undergone. And the rigorous experience of supporting his family was a sure safeguard against his having overmuch time for idle meditation or the indulgence of mystic tendencies.

126:5.10 This was the year that

It is altogether probable that the family of Mary also cultivated a **garden** or a **small farm**. Most dwellers in Palestinian towns had small holdings of land outside the village, and those who did not have land of their own could easily lease a small **plot** (B 104).

Jesus rented a considerable piece of land just to the north of their home, which was divided up as a family **garden plot**.

Each of the older children had an individual garden, and they entered into keen competition in their agricultural efforts.

It is not improbable that he who later became the sower of that seed which he defined as the word of God (see Mark 4:14) had often himself sown wheat, barley, and millet on some hillside near Nazareth (B 105).

Their eldest brother spent some time with them in the garden each day during the season of vegetable cultivation.

As Jesus worked with his younger brothers and sisters in the garden, he many times entertained the wish that they were all located on a **farm** out in the country where they could enjoy the liberty and freedom of an unhampered life. But they did not find themselves growing up in the country; and Jesus, being a thoroughly practical youth as well as an idealist, intelligently and vigorously attacked his problem just as he found it, and did everything within his power to adjust himself and his family to the realities of their situation and to adapt their condition to the highest possible satisfaction of their individual and collective longings.

126:5.11 At one time Jesus' faintly hoped that he might be able to gather up sufficient means, provided they could collect the considerable sum of money due his father for work on Herod's palace, to warrant undertaking the purchase of a **small farm**. He had really given serious thought to this plan of moving his family out into the country. But when Herod refused to pay them any of the funds due Joseph, they gave up the ambition of owning a home in the country. As it was, they contrived to enjoy much of the experience of farm life as they now had three cows, four sheep, a flock of chickens, a donkey, and a dog, in addition to the doves.

Even the little tots had their regular duties to perform in the well-regulated scheme of management which characterized the home life of this Nazareth family.

126:5.12 With the close of this fifteenth year Jesus completed the traversal of that dangerous and difficult period in human existence, that time of transition between the more complacent years of childhood and the consciousness of approaching manhood with its increased responsibilities and opportunities for the acquirement of advanced experience in the development of a noble character. The growth period for mind and body had ended, and now began the real career of this young man of Nazareth.

1. The father wore a worried expression, introducing the consultation with these words: "Doctor, I have come to see you about my boy. There must be something wrong with him; he is acting strangely. Frankly, his mother and I don't understand him, and we are not getting along well..." (William S. Sadler, M.D., *Piloting Modern Youth* [1931], p. 1).

2. Bowie (p. 64) quotes these passages (46:[1]-4, 51:5b-5d) from the Book of Enoch:

"A being whose countenance had the appearance of a man,  
And his face was full of graciousness, like one of the holy angels.  
And I asked the angel who went with me and showed me all the hidden things, concerning that Son of Man, who he was, and whence he was . . . And he answered and said unto me:  
This is the Son of Man who hath righteousness,  
With whom dwelleth righteousness,  
And who revealeth all the treasures of that which is hidden,  
Because the Lord of Spirits hath chosen him,  
And whose lot hath the pre-eminence before the Lord of Spirits in uprightness forever.  
And this Son of Man whom thou has seen  
Shall raise up the kings and the mighty from their seats,  
And shall loosen the reins of the strong,  
And break the teeth of the sinners . . .  
And the earth shall rejoice,  
And the righteous shall dwell upon it,  
And the elect shall walk thereon."