

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLEJACOB'S VISION AND GOD'S
PROMISE.*By Rev. P. M. MacDonald, M.A., To-
ronto.

And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, v. 1. The Gaelic "Good bye" means, "A blessing be with you." How cheering a word that is to timid souls who fare forth on a journey, when life lies before them "all dark and barren as a rainy sea." When godly parents say such a good by to their departing ambitious sons and daughters, and these set themselves to secure the blessing a good and propitious beginning has been made; for the blessing of Christian parents is above gold as a help to starters in the race of life.

And Jacob went out from Beersheva, v. 10. There is no place so dear as home; but young men are forever leaving home. The call of some other place fills their ears, or the wise foresight of parents lays plans which make the break with the old ties inevitable. And it would be a misfortune if this exodus ceased. The migration of young manhood keeps the world awake and active, and binds remote parts close together. When Geddie went to Aneityum, Grant and Morton to Trinidad, MacKay to Formosa, and McKenzie to Korea, the Canadian church followed in sympathy and self-denial, and the lands in which these men labored are sweeter because they, as young men, "went out from" home and country.

He took of the stones of that place, for his pillows, v. 11. The Romans loved to tell the legend that described the hardships of Romulus, the founder of the city of Rome. The wolf and the wild bird were his nurses in the desert where he lived as a child. The ease and luxury of palaces were unknown to him in his growing time. But by the law of compensation, these early hardships made him a man of iron strength, and fitted him for his great work. Stone pillows and blanketless beds are comfortable enough; but there are compensations—dreams filled with angels and daylight deeds that are heroic. Saul came by an easy way and David came by a rough road, to be king; and the law of compensation made David the greater.

The angels of God ascending and descending, v. 12. The sky is crammed with forces—gravitation, magnetism, the angels of God. Toss a snowball, and you find the first. Sensitize steel, and you find the second. A sensitive soul discovers the third. And the soul is made sensitive by a consciousness of sin, by the act of prayer, by sorrow, by thought of God's nearness. There are angels bright and fair ever around us; but only when we know our need and God's riches and love, do we have these angels as servants.

I am with thee, and will keep thee, v. 15. When the Britanny fisherman puts out to sea in his trim, strong boat, he sings:

"Keep me, great God, close to Thy side,

For the winds are strong and the seas are wide."

It is the unspoken prayer of every earnest soul. And God comes to us with His assurance of protection. Human help, material support and angel ministry are blessed realities, but the chief-est among our ten thousand comforts is

this word. "I am with thee." We can be calm and free from care on any sea or shore, if this assurance is laid hold of.

This is the gate of heaven, v. 17. In a church in Florence, there are doors famous for their beauty. Michael Angelo said they were so exquisite, that they might stand as the gates of heaven. Repentance, confession, prayer, forgiveness of those who offend us, service of those who wrong us are gates into the righteousness and joy and peace that constitute heaven.

This stone, which I have set for a pillar, v. 22. Sir Walter Scott kept in his desk some little articles his children had worn in their baby days, and he often looked at them to remind him of days beyond recall. The church has a memorial of Christ's great atoning work. When He instituted the Lord's Supper, He said, "This do in remembrance of Me." Dr. Dodds says, "He who despises the aid of external helps to perpetuate impressions, is not likely to succeed."

GOOD-BYE!

"Good-bye!" 'Tis but a little word,

Yet it breathes a tender prayer:

"May God be with you, dear,

And keep you in His care!"

"Good-bye!" Though many leagues apart.

Our separate pathways stray,

God's holy love will keep us near,

And guide us all the way.

"Good-bye!" I know no dearer word

To breathe my heart's fond prayer,

Then, "God be with you, dear,

And keep you in His care!"

—Margaret R. Scollard.

"BEHOLD THOU ART THERE."

The moral teachings of the Old Testament were inseparably linked with three or four articles of faith. A Jew was constantly reminded that a personal God is the author of the law of right, that He is always and everywhere present beholding the conduct of man, and that good conduct will be rewarded by blessings and evil conduct will bring punishment. There never has been found a better basis to inspire right living than such considerations as these. There was no escape from God. There was no possible evasion of His searching gaze. There was no hiding from the penalty of sin except through His mercy. Any departure from these first principles must be followed by a relaxation of moral obligation and an abandonment of conduct to low motives.—Central Baptist.

PRAYING AND SAYING PRAYERS.

Perhaps the chief element in prevailing prayer is consciousness of need. Many people say prayers who do not feel the need of prayer. They do not feel the need at all, or else they are not persuaded that the need can be met by prayer. For this reason many have given over the habit of regular prayer, and others are wont to repeat words which, though devotional enough in themselves, do not express the real thought of the suppliant. Dr. James Hamilton tells of a Scotchman, who had but one prayer, suddenly called upon by his wife to pray for their child that was seriously ill. The man went through his usual form and came at last to his petition for the Jews, "Lord, turn again the captivity of Zion." At this point his wife interposed, saying, "Eh, man, you're aye drawn out for the Jews, but it's our bairn that's deen!"

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

By Rev. James Ross, D.D., London.

Haran—Was an ancient city and territory colonized by the Babylonians at a very early date. It was situated in Mesopotamia, on the river Belias, a tributary of the Euphrates, about 150 miles east of the northeast corner of the Mediterranean. It was an important centre at the crossing of the great trade routes between the East and the South. The city is now represented by a long range of mounds and a village on the slope of the hill. The well where Eliezer met Rebekah is still shown.

Bethel—Originally Luz, now a village, is twelve miles north of Jerusalem and about fifty miles from Beersheba. Jacob's experience made it a tribal sanctuary, and during the time of the Judges it was one of the resting places of the ark, and a religious and military rallying point for the northern tribes. Jeroboam, trading on its former reputation, made it one of his sacred shrines, 1 Kgs. 13:26-29. It is now a village of miserable hovels, containing about 400 inhabitants. It was at the crossing of the roads from North to South and from East to West, and this doubtless gave it an early importance. It has four fine springs and an immense reservoir. Around it are the ruins of many early Christian and Crusader buildings.

PRAYER.

Almighty Father, we again rise to Thee our voice of prayer and hymn of praise. How great is Thy goodness to us so unworthy, and often so ungrateful. Thy loving kindness is better than life, therefore we would praise Thee with heart and lip. Lord be with us this day, and enable us to lead an uncorrupt life, to do the thing that is right, to speak the truth from the heart, and to follow peace with all men. Light of life shine o'er us on our pilgrim way. O God our King, may we use the talent Thou hast entrusted to us with care and diligence. Uphold us in Thy faith and fear, and keep us from sins of temper and tongue. Be our refuge from the storm, and hide us in Thy presence from the provoking of men. Amen.

HER GIFT SAVED LIVINGSTON.

The Rev. F. B. Meyer, in showing how life is linked with life in influence for good in work for the world said: "When Livingstone went to Africa, there was a Scotch woman named Mrs. MacRobert, quite advanced in life, who had saved up thirty pounds, which she gave to the great missionary, saying: 'When you go to Africa, I want you to spare your self exposure and needless toil by hiring some competent body-servant, who will go with you wherever you go, and share your sacrifices and exposures. With that money he hired his faithful servant, known as Sebalwe. When the lion had thrown Livingstone down, and crushed the bones of his left arm, and was about to destroy him, this man, seeing his critical position, drew off the attention of the lion to himself, thinking that he would save his master at the cost of his own life. The lion sprang at him, but just at that moment the guns of other companions brought him down, and Livingstone's life was prolonged for thirty years. Surely, through all these years, that noble Scotch woman, as well as the servant, should be credited with some, at least, of the results of the noble devotion of that great missionary.'"—Selected.

*S.S. Lesson April 7, 1907. Genesis 28: 1-5, 10-22. Commit to memory vs. 13, 14. Read Genesis 27:46 to 28:42. Golden Text—Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest.—Genesis 28:15.