

SUNDAY  
SCHOOL

## The Quiet Hour

YOUNG  
PEOPLEJESUS THE SAVIOUR OF THE  
WORLD.\*

By Rev. P. M. MacDonald, M.A., Toronto

As Moses lifted up the serpent, v. 14. A little lad who was playing on a city street, saw a ladder against a tall building, and concluded to go up to the top. For the first part of the climb he was all right; but when nearly half way up, he tired, and wished himself down again on the solid ground. To see how far he had gone, he looked down, and his head turned giddy and he nearly lost his hold. What could he do but cry! Clinging to the rungs, he screamed for help. No one was in sight below. He seemed alone. But he was not alone, for above him he heard a voice gently saying to him, "Look up, my boy, and come up." He obeyed, and at once his giddiness went away as he saw at the ladder's top a kind face. Up and up he climbed, until the strong arm of the workman on the roof reached down and drew him to safety. When we look away from ourselves and all that is about us to Christ, we are drawn to safety.

God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, v. 16. In the days of Queen Elizabeth, a man wrote the Bible in such small letters, that the whole book could be put inside the shell of a walnut. We have in this verse the Bible in miniature. It contains the whole gospel. It shows the origin of man's redemption—God's love. It tells how great that love was—He "gave his only begotten Son." It shows how the fact of redemption was accomplished—by the sacrifice of Christ. It plished—by the sacrifice of Christ. It tells us how we may partake of this redemption—by believing on the Son of God. It defines, negatively and positively, salvation—escape from perishing and the possession of eternal life.

He that believeth... is not condemned, v. 18. The raiser of the celebrated Shirley poppy relates how he found in his garden a patch of common wild field poppies, one solitary flower having a very narrow edge of white. He preserved the seed of this one, and by careful culture, year by year, the successive flowers got a larger infusion of white to tone down the red, whilst the black central portion was gradually changed until the whole flower became absolutely white. So, divine grace, working through faith, turns a selfish, sinful nature that is under condemnation, into the rarest beauty of purity and righteousness.

Men loved darkness rather than light, v. 19. That is death in life, to love darkness rather than life, to live, and yet to be dead in trespasses and sinfulness. In Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, there is the awful vision of dead men standing up and pulling at the ropes and rigging of the ship. This is only too true a picture of many who live, and yet are dead. They are the puppets of pleasures that pollute; they are the victims of vices that devastate. They are dead while they live. But even unto them comes the word of God, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

Test his deeds should be reprove, v. 20. "Better a little chiding than a great deal of heart-break," says Shakespeare. But the foolishness that sin produces in us either denies this or is blind to it. How hard it is for some to see that it

is easier to extinguish a flaming torch than a blazing house. From dread of a deserved reproof for sin, men go on heaping up wrath against the day of wrath. David kept silent about his sin and long shunned the consequences of confession. But his misery was very great; until he came to the light with his faults, and then he found forgiveness. God will not always chide, and the little chiding we get when we come in penitence to Him, is as nothing compared to the heart-breakings of impenitence and continued wrong-doing. His reproof is a remedy to cure an ill, and not a rod to inflict vengeance.

He that doeth truth cometh to the light, v. 21. I once saw a fleet of yachts lying becalmed on a summer sea. Their sails were hanging limp and still. The only motion in the scene was made by the occasional wash of a passing steamer. Presently a sloop came along, threading her way among the becalmed boats. Her sails were as limp as any in sight, but she went on her way steadily and quietly. You know the secret of her progress. She had power within that propelled her on her course. Every Christian, by virtue of the indwelling Christ, does the things that truth requires, and so he goes independent of the winds and tides of life, from darkness to light, from strength to strength, until the light of home surrounds him.

## PRAYER.

Sabbath follows Sabbath in quick succession. The swiftness with which time passes should remind us of the hourless tranquility of eternity—the eternal Sabbath Day. O Lord, so plant the hope of a glorious eternity spent with Thee in our hearts, that our whole lives may be a straining after the high things which shall best qualify us for life and service with Thee. Amen.

## LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

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

Serpent—Nearly all ancient nations worshipped the serpent. In Egypt it was the symbol of healing virtue, as it was later among the Greeks. The fear of its deadly fangs made it an object of reverence, in the first instance, and it was but a step to believe that, as it had such power to kill, it must have unique power to cure. A living snake was kept in some temples as the representative of the tutelary demon, and a cobra in the act of striking, on each side of a winged globe, is often sculptured over the temple doors.

Light—Early in the history of religious thought men divided the universe into two divisions—evil and good. Darkness was the natural symbol of the one, and light of the other. Because of the joy which the natural light brings to almost all living things, it was made the emblem of every influence which strengthens the natural and moral life, and advances the highest interests of men. So, it came to be applied to truth which illuminates the darkened understandings of men, to the teachers who communicate this truth, to Christ as the greatest of all teachers, to God Himself, and to the surroundings in which God dwells as emblematic of His moral purity.

"Time is a parenthesis in eternity," says a fine old classic. When an earth-born man is baptized in the Spirit of Jesus the brackets are removed and he begins to live in the ageless state. "He that believeth on me hath ageless life." This in Jesus' prophecy of life.—Dr. John Watson.

## LEST WE FORGET.

Kipling wrote verses in "Lest We Forget" that will not be forgotten. They reach the hearts of men. Moses gave utterance to the spirit of Kipling's verses in his farewell address in Deuteronomy. He recognized the tendency of the heart to forget spiritual things in times of prosperity; the material thing looms up so large and is so close at hand. "Beware," Moses said, "lest ye be full and forget God" (Deut. vi. 12). The wells and fields and walled towns would bend their eyes to earth and they would forget to look up. What was true of the Jew in the long centuries before Christ is true of the Jew to-day in the presence of a material civilization.

New York City to-day is the greatest Jewish centre of the world. While London, the world's metropolis, has only 80,000 Jews, New York has 700,000. Do they crowd the synagogues, devour the Hebrew scriptures, keep by the old faith, worship the God of their fathers? It has been stated over and over again that the younger Jewish element has almost entirely lost the faith of the fathers. The older people frequent the synagogue, live the life of prayer. It was a characteristic answer that a young Jew made: "America is a place to make money; we have no time to read the Bible." What is true in New York is, to a large extent, true elsewhere.

A writer in a French Review recently gave a world survey of Judaism. He speaks of their leadership in public affairs, their large financial power in the money market. But he notes their loss of the spiritual element in their lives. He says: "In a relatively short space of time an extraordinary transformation has taken place in the essential character and characteristics of the Jewish race. Beyond his love of gain and his genius for business nothing remains to him of the traditional Jew. No longer will he recognize his Judaism; he is now particularly active in denying it. Alas for his religion, it has gone with the rest of his institutions, and he hardly knows, if he ever sees, his Talmud and the Old Testament. His synagogues are deserted."—O. P. E. in Herald and Presbyter.

## "STRIKE A LIGHT."

The world has too much of enticement for us all. Its riches and its festivities allure us. Our associates are busy in the pursuit of wealth. There is the rush on the trains and the trolleys and on the streets, and unconsciously we are sucked into the maelstrom and feel the materializing influence of our own spiritual life. What others read, we read; what others talk about, we talk about; the things in which they are interested we are interested, and so it comes about that closeness of touch with God is wanting. Fervor of spirit is gone, love of the Bible and of things relative to the Kingdom of God seems to have taken the wings of the morning. The vision is no longer upward; it is outward and downward. The awakening of this thought or the consciousness of this condition, is God's call to us to pull down the shades and light the lamps within. It is his reminder that we should turn our eyes away from the things which benumb and deaden the finer sensibilities and turn them inward. Strike a light; and see how the soul is flourishing.—United Presbyterian.

All men may have equal rights, but only a few get them.

\*S.S. Lesson, Feb. 2, 1903.—John 3: 14-21. \*Commit to memory vs. 14-16. Study John 3: 21. Golden Text.—For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—John 3: 16.