

## The Quiet Hour.

### Abram and Lot.

S. S. LESSON—Aug. 4, 1901; Gen. 13: 1-8

GOLDEN TEXT.—Matt. 7: 12. Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.

And Abram went up out of Egypt, v. 1. He went up a wiser man, having been taught by God that it was not necessary to depart from truth in order to succeed. His falsehood to Pharaoh had failed. Is it not the case that double-dealing is unprofitable, and that when good people descend to such methods, sometimes the world, like Pharaoh, reads them a lesson in straightforwardness? A person learns a great lesson when he is convinced that he need not be dishonest in order to succeed. It is a coward's device, to lie.

And he went to Bethel... where his tent had been at the beginning, v. 5. How hard it sometimes is to get back to where we were! Many go out and make their mistakes, and lose the faith, and though they recognize that it was all an error, a sad failure, yet they delay to come back to the old place where they were at the beginning. They will not make the honorable confession and receive the word of pardon. A friend falls out with his friend. Once they went arm in arm; now they will not look at each other as they pass. Ought they not to be back where they were at the beginning? A man goes astray from God and wanders out, and he too should be back where he was at the beginning. Our friends are far more ready to forgive than we suppose; and God is waiting to receive each one who returns.

And there was a strife, v. 7. The difference arose over the increase of wealth; and they who could live together in harmony during the time of smaller revenue are now about to be driven apart because of the great prosperity that come to them. It is a sad commentary on the influence of prosperity, that it should be the cause of such disunion, and yet how many family differences have arisen over the deviation of wealth.

And Abram said, Let there be no strife, v. 8. How unseemly are family quarrels, and how pernicious in their effect on a home! They ruin all the happiness, and taint the springs of character; so that if strife be allowed to reign in any dwelling, we need not look for much profit to come from those who live in such a state of war. "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." (Jas. 3: 14, 16.)

If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right, v. 9. One of the magnanimous acts of the world. The words display a wonderful self-effacement. Generosity is a rare gift, because it grows out of a self-sacrificing will that is not anxious to exact its own. The grace is shown in the truly polite person; since courtesy is the fruit of generosity. It is the attitude of one who tries to enter into all the feelings of another. Courtesy comes from the

"Gentle soul, that no excuse doth make,  
But for its own another's wish doth take,  
So soon as that by any sign is shown."

And Lot lifted up his eyes, v. 10. He should have kept them down, or rather they should have been so filled with tears of gratitude that he could not have seen, if he had

tried. What a dreadful thing ingratitude is, and how hideous it seems in those who do not recognize what is done for them! We seem to feel an injury done us when there is no recognition or thanks for benefit received, and we may well believe that God misses our note of gratitude when we refuse to sing praises to Him.

"Blow, blow, thou winter wind,  
Thou art not so unkind,  
As man's ingratitude."

Then Lot chose the plan of Jordan, v. 11. The meadow land of Jordan and the prospect of a ready market in Sodom were too much for Lot, and he decided his fate. He acted from a purely worldly standpoint. He is the type of that very large class of men who have but one rule for determining them at the turning point of life. He was swayed solely by the consideration of worldly advantage. He recognizes no duty to Abram, no gratitude, no modesty; he has no preception of spiritual relations, no sense that God should have something to say in the partition of the land.

But the men of Sodom were wicked, v. 13. There is no worldly advantage without its disadvantage. Doubtless Lot intended to confine his dealings with these people to pure business; but he was to learn that, if he could resist the charms of dwelling in the presence of sin, his children could not. It is sure sooner or later to come about that they who choose this world choose the wages of sin.

The Lord said unto Abram, Lift up thine eyes, v. 14. If Lot chooses for himself, God chooses for Abram. The rough hills of Canaan seem to be a poor heritage, but as Abram rises higher and higher the vastness of his heritage breaks upon his view, and he finds that they who trust God's choice are sure of the best in the end.

### Pupils in God's School.

Let us enter into ourselves as pupils in the school of God's love; let us lay aside our own notions of the course of study; let us submit ourselves to be led and taught; let us be prepared for any lessons that may be given from the blackboard of sorrow; let us be so assured of the inexhaustible tenacity of his love as to dare to trust him, thought he slay us, and let us look forward to that august moment when he will give us a reason for all life's discipline, with a smile that shall thrill our souls with ecstasy and constrain sorrow and sighing to flee away forever.—Rev. F. B. Meyer.

There is no way for men to discern their names written in the book of life, but by reading the work of sanctification in their own hearts. I desire no miraculous voice from heaven, no extraordinary signs or unscriptural notices and information in this matter. Lord! let me but find my heart obeying thy calls, and my will obediently submitting to thy commands; sin my burden and Christ my desire; I never crave a fairer or surer evidence of thy elective love to my soul. And if I had an oracle from heaven, an extraordinary messenger from the other world, to tell me thou lovest me, I have no reason to credit such a voice while I find my heart wholly sensual, averse from God and irresponsible to all that is spiritual.—Flavel.

### The New Covenant—A Lost Secret.\*

BY ANNA ROSS.

#### The Terms of the New Covenant: Three Promises.

The new Covenant which Jesus Christ handed to His disciples as His last will and Testament, is all written out in intelligible human words in Jer. 31: 33, 34. It is also quoted in intelligible human words in Heb. 8: 10, 11, as the new Covenant of which Jesus Christ is now appointed mediator or administrator. It is made up of three terms, plainly worded and most explicit in meaning. These three terms are also given in Ezek. 36: 25-27. Here they are arranged in the reverse order, but they are the same terms. It is well to study them as they are expressed in both places.

Here are the three terms of the Covenant as quoted in Hebrews from Jer., with each corresponding promise in Ezekiel laid along side:

1st. "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they will be to me a people."—Hebrews. "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them."—Ezekiel. This, though given first in Hebrews and Jeremiah, is given last in Ezekiel. It is evidently the crowning promise of the Covenant.

Now, if there should be any one who has a heart to spiritual power, would it not be well to test seriously the statement, and see if it be fact or fancy, that he, as a believer in the dying Redeemer, has fallen heir to a covenant right before God to have fulfilled in his own heart and life all that this double promise expresses?

2nd. "They shall not teach every man his neighbors and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest."—Heb. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and give you an heart of flesh."—Ezek.

This is the central or efficient promise in both forms of the Covenant. The effectual teaching of the knowledge of our Lord by God Himself—this is life. This is that which shall ever prove the only and the adequate power for turning hearts of stone into hearts of flesh. "We love Him because He first loved us."

Now, if there should be any one who has a heart to genuine spiritual life, would it not be well seriously to test this statement, and see if it be a fact, that he, as a believer in our dying Redeemer, has really fallen heir to a covenant right before God to have fulfilled in his own soul all that this double promise expresses?

3rd. "For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."—Hebrews. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you."—Ezekiel.

This, though given last in Hebrews, is really and evidently the initial promise of the Covenant, unmistakably undertaking for an actual and an adequate dealing with the hitherto unconquerable difficulty—sin.

Now, if there should be any one who has a heart to Divinely-wrought spiritual health, or cleansing, would it not be well to test this statement, and see if it be an actual fact that he, as a believer in our dying Redeemer, has fallen heir to such a covenant as this, that he can claim a covenant right before God to