

## The Quiet Hour.

### Joseph Exalted.

S.S. Lesson, Oct. 20; Genesis, 41: 38-49.

Golden Text: 1 Sam. 2: 30. Them that honour me I will honour.

A man in whom the Spirit of God is, v. 38. It is told of a great artist that he had been working at a portrait of Christ. At last the picture was finished and the painter brought a little child into his studio and asked him if he recognized the portrait. The child said No, and then the artist knew that he had failed. He put away the picture and commenced another. When the second portrait was completed, he showed it to the same child, who exclaimed as soon as he saw it: "Oh, that is the One who said, 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me,'" and the painter saw that his second effort had been successful. After one of our own missionaries had been preaching, an Indian boy asked about him, "Is that Jesus Christ?" It is the business of Christians to reflect the spirit of the Master. It would be a sufficient reward even for such sufferings as those of Joseph to have men see the stamp of the Spirit of God on all we do. This is possible, for it is said: "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you."

Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, v. 39. In a large manufactory there are multitudes of separate machines for different purposes. On one floor you may find a whole array of printing presses; on another, a large number of folding machines; on yet another, sewing machines, and cutting machines, and what not, each adapted for its separate work, but all moved by the same engine. Now of course men are not machines; but the analogy may help us to understand how, though there may be in each of us distinct aptitudes and abilities fitting us for different kinds of service, yet the Spirit of God may be in all of us, the energizing and operating principle.

See I have set thee over all the land of Egypt, v. 41.

"The heights by great men reached and kept  
Were not attained by sudden flight;  
But they, while their companions slept,  
Were toiling upward in the night.

Standing on what too long we bore,  
With shoulders bent and downcast eyes,  
We may discern, unseen before,  
A path to higher destinies."

His ring . . . vestures of pure linen . . . a gold chain, v. 42. Joseph was just as wise and discreet before he was adorned with all this finery as after he was so gorgeously arrayed. Success does not consist in outward recognition and reward, but in character. And "character," as Mr. Moody used to say, "is what a man is in the dark." Real success in life is good character, and "that character is the best which is real and thorough, true and genuine to the core, which has nothing underlying it of the consciousness of secret sin, which is as pure and unspotted as it is thought to be, and the moral and manly virtues of which are based upon, and inspired by, religious faith, by that love and fear of God which at once preserve from great transgressions and prompt to the cultivation of every personal and social virtue." Said the great Bishop Phillips Brooks. "To keep clear of concealment, to do nothing

which he might not do out on the middle of Boston Common at noonday, I cannot say how, more and more, that seems to me to be the glory of a young man's life. It is an awful hour when the first necessity of hiding anything comes. The whole life is different henceforth. Put off that day as long as possible. Put it off forever, if you can."

And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had, v. 43. This is a striking comment on Hannah's joyful song, on the model of which the Virgin's Mother composed her hymn of praise, Luke 1: 46-55:

"The Lord killeth and maketh alive;  
He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich;  
He bringeth low, He also lifteth up.  
He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,  
He lifteth up the needy from the dunghill,  
To make them sit with princes,  
And inherit the throne of glory."

(1 Sam. 2: 6, 8, Rev. Ver.)

"All this happened because one day, for the sake of God, Joseph resisted a temptation to one act of sin. If he had yielded, we should probably never have heard of him again; he would have been slain by the siren who has slain so many more strong men, and would have gone down to the dark chambers of death. No happy marriage, no wife, no child would have fallen to his lot. No honor or usefulness, or vision of the dear faces of his kin, would ever have enriched his life with their abundant blessing. What a good thing it was that he did not yield!"—Meyer.

Joseph . . . stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt, v. 46. "He stood alone, and did God's will as Potiphar his owner's steward. He stood alone, and did God's will, when the wretched woman tempted him. He stood alone, and suffered for God's will, when the husband turned upon him. He stood alone, and did God's will in the dungeon, and let his solitary light shine there on his fellow-sufferers, in sympathy, and service, and truth telling. And then, in time, he stood alone before the awful Pharaoh. And then he stood alone as the hope, the pilot, the saviour of a starving empire, which leaned on him as he stood alone. And finally he stood alone amidst a smaller but yet more memorable circle of men who leaned hard on him, the steady pillar; he stood alone as the preserver of Jacob, and of his brothers, and of all their little ones." (Moule.) He will do best for himself and for others who has learned to stand alone in God's strength. This is one of the lessons of those years from seventeen to thirty in the life of Joseph.

### Death, Gain.

Death is not the end of life to a Christian, but the beginning of a glorified life at God's right hand in heaven. It is not a calamity, but a great good fortune. It is not an irreparable loss, but a great gain. "To die is gain." In death the Christian gains an enduring mansion in a house not made with his hands, eternal in the heavens. And all of this "God hath given us assurance in that he hath raised him (Christ) from the dead."—Religious Telescope.

### "The Preacher and His Message to the Age."

This was the theme of a timely and eloquent address by the Rev. Robt. Johnston, D. D., of London, delivered at the opening of the Montreal Presbyterian College last week. We are indebted to the Witness for the following report.

The lecturer commenced by referring to the criticism of the pulpit. Sometimes it was severe, but it was usually friendly and generous. He pointed out the value of the pulpit in counterbalancing the baneful effects of sensational journalism. There had been times when the sensational press had on a Saturday created such a commotion that the most terrible of wars were threatened. The Sabbath and the pulpit intervened, and on Monday the troubled waters had been calmed and disaster had been averted. Public sentiment had been revolutionized by the influence of calm judgment and a Christian spirit exerted in, and emanating from the ministrations of the pulpit. The present age was impatient under restraint. Perhaps indifference to religion was more alarming than an opposition. The great question was, "How can we reach the people?" There was a regrettable absence of true religion in business, social and political circles. The signs noted were sufficient to cause the thoughtful and earnest Christian much concern. The regeneration of all branches of society was a thing to be aimed at. What the Church was the people would be. This age might present difficulties heretofore unknown. Every age had its own peculiarities but Christianity had proved itself equal to all demands.

The thoughtful student of history could not be a pessimist. The philosopher might speak in doleful tones and the poet sing in a minor key, but the facts of history were encouraging. The Bible was to-day considered by the irreligious rather as obsolete than untrue. Stronger faith was needed to produce inspiration and prevent paralysis.

The preacher should have first of all a true conception and appreciation of his calling. It was rather a vocation than a profession. The Church recognized the necessity of a divine call to the office of the ministry. It was on an entirely different plane to the learned professions as the term was commonly understood.

One occasionally heard of 'sacrifice' in connection with the work of the ministry. Those who felt they had made a sacrifice when they entered the sacred office had got into the wrong place—they had never heard the call of the Master or known the joy of his service. Millions were needed to compensate those who missed the opportunity to preach the gospel.

The cherished purpose of the preacher was to be worthy of his office. The mere sacerdotal aspect of the office was unscriptural and unworthy of the Christian profession. The atmosphere of the preacher's life must be divine, and the true spirit of Christ would impel to faithful toil, Indolence was a sin charged against a large section of the Christian ministry to-day.

The consciousness of God in the soul was a necessity to a successful ministry and the principal object should be the revelation of God in men, through the ministry.

The Church should represent the Master in opposition to evil. God has led his chosen people to aggressive work in all ages. The gift of rallying men and leading them is a great gift and no men are so much needed as capable leaders. Preachers should be leaders in all good work so far as their influence could be exerted. Caesar was more