

## The Quiet Hour.

### Worshipping the Golden Calf.

Exodus 32 : 1-6, 30-35.—July 27, 1902.

Golden Text.—Ex. 20 : 3. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Up, make us gods, which shall go before us. God called Israel to be a peculiar people. But it was difficult to be peculiar, and the people would have much preferred to be like other nations who could touch and watch and worship their blocks of stone or metal. It is always difficult to be "peculiar" in the sense in which God desires us to be such. The "peculiar" man is one who, going to a banquet where wine is freely used, can remain true to his temperance principles. He can be engaged in business and abstain from any form of injustice which offends against his conscience. God asks of His people that they should be separate from other people. Hence it is that the children of religious parents often feel that there is a difference between themselves and the children of homes where there is no religion. They cannot do all the things which others do. If they chafe against this restraint, it is evidence of the same fault that is revealed in this rebellion of the people against the laws of God. It requires moral strength to be peculiar.

And Aaron said, v. 2. Aaron had not the same power of resistance as his brother Moses. Aaron's forte was eloquence, which involved an emotional nature, and his ability to resist the demand of the crowd was small. He could not say, No. This Mosaic quality of resistance is a most enviable quality, for there are so many like Aaron, who yield to the popular call and cannot take a stand of independence. No boy or girl has been rightly trained in the problem of conduct who has not learned to withstand the wishes of a majority that clamors after a forbidden pleasure.

These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of Egypt, v. 4. In these days, the gold is run into a different mould than that of a calf. It takes the form of bank accounts and mortgages and shares in mines. People worship fine houses and elaborate decorations. They give costly entertainments, and say that these things have brought them out of Egypt. It is an age when the test of all things is wealth. Mammon rules the time. How frequently money is the test of success! People ask, "What is that man worth?" And instead of saying he is worth so many degrees of intelligence or character, the answer will be, he is worth so many thousand dollars. Children need to be taught that they do not live for the sole purpose of making money.

Moses said, v. 16. I have sinned a great sin, v. 30. In the words of Moses, we have the divine judgment concerning the action of Israel. God tells us that the golden calf can never bring us out of Egypt. Money may do much here below, but it cannot bear us across the sea into the promised land. At the gate of heaven we shall not be asked as to the amount of our possessions, but as to the peace of heart and the humility of spirit and strength of faith that are within us.

And if not, blot me . . . out of thy book, v. 32. The tender side of greatness. Moses had turned his back on the glory of the Egyptians in order to save his own people, and with noble self-forgetfulness he plead.

that God may not forsake this rebellious nation. He would rather be destroyed himself than have Israel rejected. Thus also had Paul wished to be anathema (Rom. 9 : 3. Rev. Ver.), if only the people were redeemed. This intercession, that takes no account of self, is a type of that complete intercession which Christ is making on behalf of the world. He pleads for us at the throne of God. The Church is to day filling the same place which Moses occupied. What would the world be, were it not for the faithful prayers of the saints who are pleading with God for the conversion of sinners and the destruction of evil! The interceding church saves the world from ruin.

"It is related that Chromatius, a heathen, sought a cure from one of the early Christians who was reported to have the gift of healing. As a condition thereto he demanded that all the idols in his house should be brought. The heathen gave his keys to the Christian who went about the house and destroyed all the idols he could find, and then went to praying for the desired cure. The sick man was as sick as ever. The Christian said, 'There is yet an idol in your house which must be destroyed.' The heathen confessed that he had one of beaten gold, which he wished to save. When it was broken, Chromatius was healed." (Illustrative Lesson Notes.)

God tested His people as an engineer tests a bridge before it is opened for travel to the general public.

### Prayer.

BY REV. O. P. GIFFORD, D. D.

The Bible is an art gallery whose walls are hung with pictures of men at prayer. Men in all ages, under all conditions, have prayed. The body is bound to the earth by the force of gravity, mind goes out to mind in thought, heart goes out to heart in love, the soul goes up to God in prayer. There would be no civilization without gravitation, there would be no mental life without exchange of thought, there can be no spiritual life without prayer. Prayer is the soul's gravitation towards God, prayer is the soul's exchange of thought and life with God.

Men doubting the force of gravity would not build but burrow; men shrinking from exchange of thought soon cease to think; men neglecting prayer burrow in the animal life, and become bankrupt in soul.

In prayer we do not so much seek to yoke God's will to the chariot of our purpose, as to find what God's will is concerning us and get strength to do it. We do not so much seek to get favors from God as to get God Himself. We seek electricity that we may use it for light and power; we seek God that He may use us, making us the light of the world, His power in the earth. We bring our needs to Him that He may satisfy them or show us how needless they are; we bring ourselves to Him that He may fill us with Himself.

When the sun rises even the foolish virgins need no oil. When the Sun of Righteousness arises and shines through the east window of prayer, we cast our empty lamps behind us to be forgotten. With sufficient grace the thorn in the flesh becomes a nail driven in a sure place on which to hang the wreath of victory. Holding the golden

chains that bind the round earth about the feet of God, our hands are empty of our own needs, but so full of God that we know not our own needs with which we came to pray.—Ex.

### Recreation As An Accomplishment.

BY CLARA DILLINGHAM PIERSON.

Among the children of our mission kindergartens we find many who do not know how to play—little ones who are silent and helpless in any game and whose participation is never voluntary. Only a few months ago one of our teachers had to try kindly coercion on a lad of eight who entered the primary grade of a village school. She said that it made her sad to see him trotting spasmodically but obediently around in a game of, "Tom, Tom, pull away," with great tears rolling down his cheeks. Now he is cheerful, active and normal.

This sort of thing strikes us all as deplorable, for we want our children to be like kittens, frolicking joyously on any or no provocation. We do not think much beyond that. Or, yes, we provide candy pulls and straw rides and all those diversions of the teens, and are content to look up as they flit past in sport. And there are tennis courts and golf links and other expedients of athletic youth. But after that, what? and besides that, what?

I know a successful lawyer who sends his wife and children off to summer in the northern woods, but stays in the hot city to work "because he is such a poor vacator." He comes occasionally to see how they prosper, catch a few fish, look the country over, and then goes back because "there is nothing more to do or see."

On that particular point of land are thirty-two different kinds of indigenous trees, flowers unnumbered, birds and little woodland creatures everywhere. There are stones almost covered with the gleaming green and gold chrysalids of the milkweed butterfly; there are queer beetles, the friendliest of chipmunks and the sauciest of red squirrels. On the beach waves of endless variety roll in foaming beauty; out on the bay shifting breezes and cloud shadows cause endless variations of blue, green, purple and gray water, with rolling white caps here and there. Sunset and sunrise are beyond the power of words to describe, and moonrise over the water is a sight never to be forgotten. And yet "there is nothing to see."

The geology of that region is especially interesting; the red jasper conglomerate is there, and so are scores of other less significant but more beautiful stones. Fossils, more or less wave-worn, are to be picked up on any stroll. The work of the glacial period is writ large for all to read.

Two Indian villages are within easy reach, where Ottawas and Chippewas cultivate their farnus and weave baskets. Good, sturdy industrious Indians are here—as well as some not so industrious. There is much to learn of the early work of the mission, whose buildings still stand. There are the tidy little Indian churches, Catholic and Presbyterian, to visit, besides the annual Indian camp meeting, where the spotless tents and good singing speak well for the red man's progress, and where fat little brown paposes are swung from many of the trees.

Now I maintain that a man who finds "nothing to do or see" (and there are legions of him) in a place of that sort has been poorly educated. It's too late to do anything with him now, of course, but every child should be trained to acquire and keep a