

The Quiet Hour.

The Time of the Judges.

S. S. LESSON—Nov. 16, 1902: Judges 2: 7-16.

GOLDEN TEXT—Ps. 107: 19. They cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses.

And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua and . . . of the elders . . . who had seen, v. 7. The remembrance of God's goodness to us in the gifts of His bounty, and especially in the gift of Jesus Christ, will keep us steadfast in our allegiance to Him. The experience of the Christian is his strongest shield against unbelief. No one else has ever been to him what Jesus is, or done to him what Jesus has done; and one may as well attempt to persuade a man at noonday that the sun is not shining overhead, as seek to shake the Christian's confidence in the Lord.

And Joshua . . . the servant of the Lord, died, v. 8. It should be our continual aim to finish the work God has given us to do. We may have no shining talents like Joshua, and we may occupy no place in the gallery of the earth's great ones; but if we be only "the servants of the Lord," we shall hear the Master say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." This will make life "a long life," whether it have "length of days" or not.

And the children of Israel . . . served Baalim, v. 11. They forgot God and turned unto idols. The human heart will have some object of worship. Doubtless the worship of "other Gods" was strange to the Israelites at first, yet it was no doubt with them as the poet has said:

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As to be hated needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

And they forsook the Lord God . . . and followed other gods, v. 12. There is great danger in making intimate friendships with the world, its customs, fashions, its haunts of vice, its selfish pleasures. The church in the world has been compared to the Gulf Stream, a warm stream flowing through a cold ocean; icebergs in it indeed, and itself not so warm as it should be, but far warmer than the chill waters through which it flows, and bringing a warm climate to American and European shores, which would be almost barren and uninhabitable without it.

And they . . . served Baal and . . . Ashtaroth, v. 13. The old Scotch lady was not far astray, when she said that most of those found backsliding had not gone very far forward. The top that spins fast stands firm; when it goes slowly it falls to the ground. Yet we need ever to remember the words of the inspired writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God," Heb. 3: 12.

And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, v. 14. The Lord is angry with the wicked every day. He, the Holy One, could not be otherwise. Yet His anger is not the anger of a tyrant, but the anger of love. Because He loves us, He is angry with us for our sin and disobedience, just as a parent is with his child because of disobedience.

And he delivered them into the hands of spoilers, v. 14. There can be no sin without evil consequences. "Whatsoever a man

soweth, that shall he also reap," Gal. 6: 7. Thus the Lord, through the punishment of His people of old, would teach us that it is an evil thing and bitter to forsake the Lord.

"Sorrow follows wrong,
As echo follows song;
On, on, on, on!"

Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, v. 15. Their only Hope was now their Enemy. They had forsaken God and had forgotten that He is a "jealous God" (Josh. 24: 19), and His "glory" He "will not give to another," Isa. 42: 8. Because of this the hand of the Lord was against them for evil. (Compare 2 Chron. 15: 2.) The great Napoleon once sneeringly said, "I perceive that the Lord is always on the side of the strongest battalions." Human history and experience give this the lie.

As the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them, v. 15. When God threatens, He means what He says, and He will bring it to pass. God is faithful who has threatened. Let then the promises of God win you to repentance, and the threatenings of Jehovah warn you from impenitency. "Turn and live"—so saith the Lord, Ezek. 33: 11. "If He turn not, He will whet his sword; He hath bent his bow, and made it ready," Ps. 7: 12. There is the threatening. Make your choice, and make it now.

Be Good Where You Are.

It was a naughty, mud-stained, sobbing little maiden, partly cross, but partly repentant, too, perhaps—who knows?—who was approached by a gentle relative with an offer to tell her "how to be a good girl and go to heaven."

"I don't want to be a good girl and go to heaven," emphatically responded the small tempter: "I want to be a girl that's good enough to stay where I are."

There might have been considerable petulance in the reply, but there was some sound wisdom also. The being good where we are is what the world most needs of us and what we most need for ourselves. It is not people who are ready to be translated, but people who are ready to conduct the affairs of this life on a righteous basis, who are in demand. The persons who are always anxious about "being good enough to go to heaven" are seldom the ones who are making a little heaven about them where they are.

It is not being ready to sing with the angels which comes first, but being ready to bring our voices into harmony with the voices round us here; not wings that we need, but steady feet, true hearts, and willing hands.

The being good enough for heaven will take care of itself if only we can learn to be good enough for earth.

The electrician cannot charge your body with electricity while a single thread connects you with the ground and breaks the completeness of your insulation. The Lord Jesus cannot fully save you while there is one point of controversy between you and Him. Let Him have that one last thing, the last barrier and film to a life of blessedness, and glory will come, filling your soul.—F. B. Meyer.

Our Toronto Letter.

It needs only the most cursory glance over the columns of the daily press to see that all the philanthropic, educational, social and distinctively Christian agencies, which, during two or three months in the height of summer suffer a partial stagnation, are again in full activity, and strenuously engaged in their beneficent work. And I think we may congratulate ourselves in Canada, and in this city of Toronto, that all such work receives so large a measure of recognition and sympathetic consideration at the hands of the press, taking the word in its widest sense. We venture the remark that, in no country either in the old world or the new, does this state of things more largely prevail than in our own Dominion. It would be an endless task to mention all the forms of activity which the agencies referred to assume. It is interesting and inspiring to note some of them from week to week.

Taking into consideration all that it implies, few of any of these forces at work are of more importance than that which has for its object the preservation of the Christian Sabbath as a day sacred to rest from common labor, to social worship and religious instruction. The Lord's Day Alliance which has these objects for its distinctive work, has been, during the last year or two, making marked progress. Its annual convention is to be held on Thursday and Friday of this week. The public meeting will be held on Thursday evening in the Jarvis street Baptist church, when a report, fully expected to be an encouraging one, will be presented, in which the policy and plans for work will be determined and officers for the ensuing year elected. It is fully expected that the meeting will be large and influential; several speakers will give addresses, but the principal one will be given by Rev. J. Edgar Hill, D.D. of Montreal, President of the Quebec Provincial Lord's Day Alliance, who has proved himself an able leader in his own province of the defenders of the Christian Sabbath. It is hoped that means may be forthcoming to warrant a forward step, in the appointment of a secretary to devote his whole time to the advancement of the work of the society in Ontario, thus leaving the General Secretary free to devote his whole time and effort to work in the Dominion at large. On Friday two sessions will be held for the consideration of such matters as may be brought before the convention in the report to be submitted by the office-bearers or other delegates of whom it is expected a large number will be present.

That arrangement by which it is impossible for the same person to be in two or three different places at the same time has been felt this past week to be a great hardship by philanthropic and church-going people. On Thursday evening General Booth of the Salvation Army arrived in the city, and on Friday morning Lady Henry Somerset. The former was met at the station by a force of his soldiers male and female, one thousand strong, who welcomed him with bands of music playing, banners flying, and a torch-light procession which conducted him to the municipal buildings, where, on behalf of the citizens of Toronto he was again given an official and most cordial reception by the Mayor and the city council. On Friday morning, Lady Somerset, the President of the World's W. C. T. U. organization, was welcomed by an enthusiastic and crowded gathering of delegates of the Ontario W. C. T. U. assembled in annual convention in the spacious schoolroom of the Metropolitan Methodist church. They both delivered addresses on Friday evening, the General in Massey