

SUNDAY  
SCHOOL

## The Quiet Hour

YOUNG  
PEOPLE

## GOD'S PROMISE TO DAVID.\*

By Clarence MacKinnon, B.D.

"I dwell in a house of cedars, but the ark . . . under curtains, v. 1. A faithful minister on enquiring from one of his parishioners whether he kept family worship regularly or not, was informed that he did so in summer, but not in winter, for then they could not see. "But you might buy candles," suggested the minister. "Ay, sir," was the reply. "but in that case I am afraid the cost might overgang the profit." This man would have accepted eagerly the offer of a rich neighbor to become a partner in his business and give him the benefit of his wealth. But he had the opportunity of beginning each day by entering anew into partnership with God, and refused it for the sake of a candle. We cannot afford to be without God's presence and help. Any trouble taken by us to make these more real will bring to us a rich reward.

God is with thee, v. 2. In the soft stillness of the night, when the fevered little head falls into a restle-ess sleep, who is it that hearkens to every breath and notes every moan of distress? Is it not the mother? Wearied with the long vigil, the most attentive nurse may become listless, the most devoted friend drowsy. But nothing escapes the mother. Her love is always present, her footstep quick at the suppressed cry of pain. But greater than a mother's love is God's, and nearer than a mother's help is His presence.

Since thy Father's arms sustain thee,  
Peaceful be;

When a chastening hand restrains thee,  
It is He!

Know his love in full completeness;  
Fills the measure of thy weakness;  
If He wound thy spirit sore,  
Trust Him more.

"I took thee . . . I have been with thee . . . I will ordain a place, vs. 7, 8, 9. "Mother," asked a little Sunday school scholar, "will Deacon Jenks go to heaven when he dies?" "I think so," said the mother. "Well," continued the boy, "I hope he won't." "Why, dear, do you have such naughty hopes?"

"Because if he gets there, he will want to run the whole place." We are prone to over-estimate our own importance, and to think that no undertaking can succeed unless we are directing it. "Deacon Jenks" is too apt to forget that God can plan His own work, and choose His own agents, and that even the venerated deacon himself, now a ruler in the church, was called, qualified and placed there by a Greater than himself.

From the sheepcote, v. 7. From sheepcote to throne, is an entrancing ideal of a successful career. Yet it is no chance luck nor accidental fortune that brings such promotion. We may be sure that the selected David for king, not because he was a dilatory and discontented shepherd, but because of the exceptional care with which he watched over the sheep and the little lambs. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much" (Luke 16: 10). The way to promotion is to do the present task with all diligence. "You have been idle," said a visitor to the studio of the famous Michael Angelo. "No," said the great sculptor. "I have added more strength

to this muscle, touched up this lip, softened this feature." "mere trifles," remarked the visitor. "It is attention to trifles," said the famous man, "that brings greatness; and greatness is no trifle."

He shall build me an house, v. 12. It is told of Sir Christopher Wren, the famous architect of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, that he heard that some workmen who were at work on this splendid structure, had been guilty of profane swearing. He immediately caused it to be posted all round the works, that any workman heard taking God's name in vain should be instantly dismissed. He believed that no one guilty of such irreverence was fit to help in building a house of God. But if that great man was so concerned that everyone who helped in erecting a material temple should hallow God's name on their lips, how much more should all who take part in church work, or missionary effort, honor God in their hearts. If we would enjoy God's blessing on our labors or if we desire to have influence with others, we must strive earnestly to keep ourselves unspotted from evil.

I will be his father, v. 13. Many thrilling events happened in the excited times of the French revolution. But one of the most touching, is the story of a father's love. His son was a young man of most winning qualities, and his arrest and condemnation to the guillotine affected deeply the hearts of a wide circle of friends. But all their love put together could not equal that of his father. On the day of the execution, when the lists were being called, the father, whose name was exactly the same as the son's, answered to the name, rolled in the gloomy tumbrel to the place of death, laid his head under the fatal stroke of the guillotine, and became the victim of the law as a substitute for his boy. Such is a father's love, and God declares that He will be to us a father: and has He not proved it by coming in the person of Jesus Christ, and suffering the penalty of sin for our redemption? Let us, therefore, be sons and daughters to Him, greet Him with filial love, render Him a just obedience, and place in His wisdom and goodness an unflinching trust!

## A PRAYER.

O thou Eternal One, I need thee for time. They are always telling me that earth is the robing room in which to prepare for heaven. Rather hast thou said that heaven is the robing room in which to prepare for earth. It is from within thy sanctuary that I am armed for the battle of life; it is in meeting my God that I learn to meet my brother. I am not fit for this world till I have seen the other world; I must go up to the mount ere I give laws to the people. It is from behind the veil of eternity that I speak to the things of time. I could not bear the fretting of the shore were it not for the sight of the sea. I could not stand the murmur of the crowd were it not for the murmur of the shell. I should sink beneath the burden of the heat of the day unless I were refreshed by the spray from the ocean of thy love. Roll in, then, thou great seal Roll in upon the hot sands of time, and lave the thirsty land Roll in upon the beach, and wash its impurities away! Let us hear the sound of thy wave, and we shall bear the rumbling of earth's chariot wheel! He who has lain one moment on thy breast is fit to tread the dusty courts of time.—George Matheson, in "Leaves for Quiet Hours."

## CAUSES OF DESPONDENCY.

(By Rev. W. J. Mosier.)

How happens it that Jacob, who had been so blessed and taught of God, came to be in this fearful state of despondency, discouragement, and despair where he boldly asserts, "All these things are against me."

1.—Mistakes of his early life. Doubtless they made an impress and left a weakness in his character which always manifested itself in times of special stress. Sowing wild oats in youth is always a doubtful expedient. Young Christians who patronize the theatre, and the dance, and the card table do not realize the dark days and testing seasons when they will need the very strength and power they have dissipated in these questionable ways. Most of the clouds of life are caused either directly or indirectly by our own sins.

Besides the remorse and loss that comes to the individual himself these mistakes also bring eternal loss to others. Dr. Munhall, the celebrated evangelist, says that before he became a minister he went one evening to the theatre just to please a visiting friend, and the next day met upon the streets a young man whom he had asked again, as he had asked him frequently, to become a Christian. The man looked at him and said, "I never want you to speak to me on that subject again. I saw you in the theatre last night, and I have little confidence in a man who professes to be a Christian and was found in a questionable place of amusement." "I never won him," said Dr. Munhall. "He gradually drifted away from the church and from Christ, and I met him in the West a hopeless wreck."

2.—Walking by sight and feeling and not by faith. God sees the outcome of the life that is passing through darkness, and He is calm and complacent. His followers, those who are partakers of His nature and trust Him, ought to have the same confidence. A sailor in a shipwreck was once thrown upon a small rock, and clung to it in great danger until the tide went down. "Say, Jim," asked his friends after he was rescued, "didn't you shake with fear when you were hanging on that rock?" "Yes, but the rock didn't," was the significant reply. Christ is the Rock of Ages. Cling to Him, and you will be at rest.

"Stayed upon Jehovah  
Hearts are truly blessed,  
Finding as he promised,  
Perfect peace and rest."

3.—Forsaking the Word and prayer. Jacob had forgotten the promises and the privilege of communion. No one can be feeding on the living Word and at the same time be dejected and cast down. When Dr. Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, was taken from the tower to be put to death for the testimony of Christ, as he beheld the scaffold a fearful trembling seized him, but he took out his Greek Testament and prayed. "O God, send me some particular Word that will help me in this awful hour," and he read, "This is Eternal life, that they might know Thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." He had read this passage hundreds of times, but now it was the living Word to his soul, and he exclaimed, "Blessed be God, this will suffice for all eternity." So God will give living me-sages from His Word to all that find themselves in seasons of doubt and darkness.

Again, no one can really pray and remain where Jacob was when he uttered

S.S. Lesson October 11, 1908—1 Chronicles 17: 1-14. Commit to memory vs. 13, 14. Golden Text—"There hath not failed one word of all his good promise."—1 Kings 8:56.