

"God builds for every sinner, if he will but come back, a highway of golden promises from the depths of degradation and sin clear up to the Father's house."—*Beecher.*

When a pious old slave on a Virginia plantation was asked why he was always so sunny-hearted and cheerful under his hard lot, he replied, "Ah, massa, I always lays flat down on de promises, and den I pray straight up to my heavenly Father."

4. THE JOYOUS WAKING, vers. 16, 17. AWAKED—in joyous solemnity. I KNEW IT NOT. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place," (Prov. xv. 3.) Jacob here learns with glorious emphasis the old lesson of God's omnipresence. AFRAID. Doubtless both by reason of his past sins and by the wondrous nature of the vision. DREADFUL. Awe-inspiring. THE HOUSE OF GOD. . . . THE GATE OF HEAVEN. God's presence makes a rock a church, and a desert a heaven.

"And prisons would palaces prove,
If Jesus would dwell with me there."

"Where is Jesus Christ?" was once asked of a child. "He lives in our alley now," was the reply; for the boy had learned that Christ is where he has friends to serve him.

5. THE MEMORIAL STONE, vers. 18, 19. STONE. . . . PILLAR. He will not remember the hard pillow without beneficently giving glory to God for the heavenly vision. OIL was used among the ancients as a sign or means of consecration. BETH-EL. *House of God.* This place had probably been so called before. See Gen. xii. 8; xiii. 3. Jacob also renewed the name on his return from Padan-Aram. Gen. xxxv. 15; Hos. xii. 4, 5. LUZ. Bethel was a "place" near the "city" of Luz.

"Grace makes a good heart memory even where there is a bad head memory."

Jacob receives God's grace, and finds it easy to remember God's goodness.

6. THE PIOUS VOW, vers. 20-22. VOW. The first recorded in Scripture. A solemn promise to God, made with prayer for God's help. IF. Used in the sense of "since." THIS STONE. . . . GOD'S HOUSE. The place where God's glorious presence shall bless Jacob or any other true worshipper. OF ALL. No matter how vast his possessions might be! THE TENTH. He gives heart, worship, treasure. He who truly loves God gives him money as readily as promises.

President Lincoln, in reply to a question by Secretary Chase, remarked: "I made a solemn vow before God, that, if General Lee was driven back from Pennsylvania, I would crown the result by the declaration of freedom to the slaves." He paid his vow, and four million slaves were made free!

"Andrea", a Hungarian king, having vowed to go to the holy wars, went to Jerusalem with all his forces, and when there bathed himself, as if to wash off his promise, and returned home again without striking a blow. Such is the case of many at present."
Spencer.

III. HINTS FOR INFANT CLASS TEACHERS.

Whisper-Song.

From heaven above,
To the earth below,
The angels of love
Both come and go.
On ladder of light,—
O beautiful sight!
They sped their flight,
These angels of might.

This ladder of light
From the world of night
To the heavenly height,
To the world of bliss,
Our dear Jesus is!

A ladder drawn
upon the blackboard
will aid very much
in this lesson. Notice, 1. The sleeping traveller. 2. The wonderful dream. 3. The promise of God. 4. The feelings of Jacob on awaking. 5. His early morning worship. 6. His solemn vow.

Of course no teacher would think of making to an infant class formal numerical announcement of these divisions. They are given merely as helps to the teacher who desires to prepare a plan of the lesson beforehand.

Christ is in this lesson by his own assertion in the Golden Text. As the ladder was the way by which the angels went up and down, so Jesus is the way by which men may get from earth to heaven. There are some ladders the rounds of which are so far apart that children never could climb by their means. Then there are others in which the rounds are close together, so that even a little child can climb. By means of Jesus, not only grown men and women, but even little children, can rise to heaven. [Two ladders might here be represented on the board; one with the rounds far apart, the other having the rounds closer together. Be sure that the children get the impression clearly on their minds that *Christ* is the only way to heaven; for, absurd as it may seem, it is possible for a child to imagine a material ladder literally reaching from earth to heaven.]

IV. MISCELLANEOUS.

Prayer-Meeting Topic: God's presence always promised to his people. . . . *Texts:* Exod. xxxiii. 14; Matt. xviii. 20; xxviii. 20; Rom. viii. 11, 16. . . . *Foster:* 1632, 4743, 4751, 5799, 5955. . . . *Blackboard. . . . Blackboard Song:*

Though Jacob in a dream beheld
The shining ones descend to earth,
Yet brighter far the heavenly train
The shepherds saw on Bethlehem's plain,
And, wondering, heard the joyful strain
That told a Saviour's birth.