

## The Quiet Hour.

### Joshua's Parting Advice.

S. S. LESSON. Joshua 24: 14-25. Nov. 9, 1902.

GOLDEN TEXT—Josh. 24: 15. Choose you this day whom ye will serve.

Now, therefore, fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth, v. 14. God counts sincere service as blameless, covering all its imperfection with the mantle of love. If we will be blameless here, He will present us faultless there, Jude 24. To render such a service we must have no divided heart.

Put away the gods which your fathers served, v. 14. Idolatry is the weakness and besetting sin of mankind. Created to love, worship, and find his supreme satisfaction in God, man is ever choosing inferior and unworthy objects and setting his affections on them. This is one of the effects of the fall. Man's judgment is perverted, his choices are wrong, he judges that good which is evil. All who have not been born of the Spirit are idolaters. They may not bow down to gods of wood and stone, but they just as really worship the creation of their own hands, such as pleasure, self, fame and fashion. God calls upon us, as Joshua did upon Israel, to "put away these. Let the break come quickly and decisively. Let the blow fall at once which will kill the sin. The Lord's instantaneous method of uprooting the evil is the only effective method.

Choose you this day whom ye will serve, v. 15. God requires of us, (1) A voluntary service—"choose." None are saved against their will nor until they desire it more than anything else. (2) A personal service—"choose you." God's call is to individuals. We are not saved in the gross, but as individuals. (3) An immediate service—"this day." Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation. They found on the fly leaf of a little boy's Bible, after he had gone to heaven, "I take God this day to be my God and no fooling about it." (4) A deliberate service—"choose . . . whom ye will serve." There can be no compromise. Count the cost before you give yourself to the Lord. Weigh the "pros" and "cons" and then decide.

But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord, v. 15. If there be no one but himself and his house he will still adhere to the service of God; for "those that are bound for heaven must be willing to swim against the stream, and must not do as the most do, but as the best do." Moreover, Joshua does not say, as do many to-day, if we can judge by their conduct, "It is enough that my wife and children, my household, attend the services of God's house and serve Him." Nor again, as some seem to say by their carelessness in regard to the training of their children, "It is enough that I serve the Lord. It matters not as to my children." Joshua's decision here rebukes both of these attitudes towards Christ and His service. "Not my house without me" nor "I without my house" but "I and my house."

Therefore will we . . . serve, v. 18. Joshua's call and the people's choice were based on a review of what God had done for them. The memory of God's great goodness toward us in the past, His hand in our life and work as individuals and as a church ought to prove the most potent influence in

our future service to Him.

And Joshua said . . . ye cannot serve the Lord: for he is an holy God, v. 19. Matthew Henry says that here Joshua "drives the nail to the head." He acts upon the maxim, "Fast bind, fast find." No hasty, superficial promising will do in God's service.

If ye forsake the Lord . . . he will do you hurt, v. 20. If any nation might have looked for exemption from the operation of law it was surely the Jews, God's chosen people. But no, they came under its most rigid sweep. Just because the Lord had done them good, they were all the more severely punished for forsaking the Lord. We may see a similar instance in the seven churches of Asia (Rev. chs. 2, 3), who, with their rare privileges, failed to rise to their responsibility. And the same law holds true of individual churches and men to-day. God's goodness to us in the past gives us no right to presume. True it is, alas, "If we forsake the Lord, He will forsake us."

Now therefore put away . . . the strange gods . . . and incline your heart unto the Lord, v. 23. There is salvation for the guiltiest and vilest, if they will repent and return to God through Jesus Christ. Not that their repentance deserves the pardon without repentance. Jesus Christ will save no man in his sins, but he will save every man from his sins. These conditions are set down clearly in such passages—how lightsome to the guilt laden—as Isa. 1: 16-18; 55: 7; Acts 3: 19.

### In Christ's Name.

BY C. H. WETHERBEE.

Christian Bible readers are familiar with the truth that Christ, at the closing days of his earthly ministry, taught his disciples to ask in his name for the things which they desired the Father to bestow upon them; but it may not have occurred to very many Bible readers that Christ also taught that the Father's answers to the petitions of his people are made in Christ's name.

Here is a very significant sentence in Christ's sayings to his disciples just before his death: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, if ye shall ask anything of the Father he will give it you in my name." Ponder these words. They mean that the Father grants answers to believing prayers for Christ's sake. The words also mean that the Father answers no prayer outside of Christ's name. And remember that Christ's name stands for his character as the Son of God, his work as a divine Redeemer, his sacrifice as a divine Saviour. Christ's name is linked with Calvary. The Father will do nothing for anyone independently of Christ's cross and all that it stands for. It is because Christ was made an offering for sin on the cross that the Father forgives sin in answer to believing and penitent prayer. The Father never would have granted pardon to any soul if Christ had not died for sin. The Father's love for any sinner, as expressed in the gift of eternal life, is always in Christ's name on the cross. He who expects the love of the Father, unto his own salvation, without any regard for Christ's death on the cross, indulges in a vain expectation. Do remember that the practical gift of the love of the

Father to anyone must necessarily pass to that person by way of Christ's cross. It is a gift through blood. It is a gift through Christ's death. It is plain, therefore, that he who despises the death of Christ shuts himself out from receiving the Father's gift of eternal life. And yet there are thousands of professed Christians, claiming to have an adoring regard for the Father's love, who spurn the blood of Christ, who ridicule the doctrine that Christ is the sinner's substitute before the divine moral law. Bind souls!

They turn aside the love of the Father by their own false notions. Do not forget that it is in Christ's name, and only in his name that God saves and blesses.

### Dr. Armstrong on the Referendum.

Speaking from the words "Who hath woe, Prov. 23, 29," Dr. Armstrong referred in vigorous terms to this subject, now occupying so much of public attention. At the outset he explained the provisions and penalties of the Act and called attention to the nature of the Referendum. If the church has not to do with the liquor traffic—what has it to do with? The Referendum will at least compel us to show our colors.

This Ontario Act which would become law if the requisite majority were given on Dec 4—was a strong piece of Legislation and would be a great blow to the whiskey traffic and the bar-room.

People should remember when they vote that the result is not if there be the requisite majority Government will frame a law—but that the requisite majority will make it law. There is no doubt Government is within its right and function. Government should make it as easy as possible for people to do right and as difficult as possible for people to do wrong. Government is called upon to do all in its power to promote the welfare of the people.

Government already restricts the liquor traffic by means of the license system and government would add much to the prosperity and happiness of the country by suppression of the whiskey traffic altogether. The debasing desolating traffic has nothing to say for its existence. As a matter of economics it is easy to prove that it is hurtful to the best interests of the country. It destroys immense energy, it lessens greatly the power of production and lessens also the power of consumption of those articles which go to make the wealth of the nation. It is the potent ally of all forms of crime. It has been well called "the devil's water-power." Certainly much of his machinery would stand still if the liquor traffic could be effectually stopped.

There are some who still advance the oft refuted argument that this evil should be met by moral suasion only. We think much more might be done by moral and spiritual forces but law must also do its duty. Legal enactments are moral forces. The law against stealing not only compels people to be honest but preaches a perpetual sermon on honesty. A cage may not altogether change the nature of the tiger but it modifies it somewhat, and places the tiger where it can do no harm.

So would I have law deal with the liquor traffic. Then let sound economic and ethical principles be taught and preached; and pure and true ideals held up and humanity will make a great stride in happiness and virtue. Our church has pronounced strongly in favour of prohibition. Here is a chance to help the cause forward.

I am not expected to tell you which way you should vote. Each individual must de-