

BY REV. F. B. MEYER.

## The Quiet Hour.

### The Council At Jerusalem.

S. S. Lesson.—June 8, 1902.

Golden Text—Gal. 5: 1.—Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.

Judas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren, v. 22. The task of making peace is one of the highest that can be assigned to us in the church. The gospel is the great force that makes for peace in the world. Sin is the most powerful enemy of peace. The unbridled lust of conquest has plunged whole nations into misery and destroyed the happiness of millions of homes. Bad temper and selfishness bring wretchedness into the family and the community. The aim of the gospel is to purify men's hearts from those things which war against peace. The most effective peacemaker in the world is the one who preaches the gospel. It is a noble ambition to promote peace in the home, in the church, in the neighborhood.

And they wrote letters by them after this manner, v. 23. This letter written by the apostles and elders has come down to us as a monument of the victory gained by those who contended for the liberties of Christians. We enjoy to day the freedom from burdensome forms and ceremonies which was purchased by the labors and sufferings of our fathers. We ought not to value our privileges less highly because they come to us without suffering or effort on our part, but we should accept them gratefully and make the best use of them for ourselves and others.

To whom we gave no commandment (Rev. Ver.) v. 24. An ambassador should act according to his instructions. He has no right to say or do anything in his official capacity contrary to the commands of the court which he represents. Each believer is in his own place and in his own way an ambassador for Christ. He is bound to take his directions from his Heavenly Master. He is responsible for the representation of Christ and His teachings which he presents to the world in his daily life. Men will form their judgment of Christ from the character and the conduct of those who profess to be His followers.

Men who have hazarded their lives, v. 26. The test of our devotion to Christ is our willingness to yield our lives to Him. Men willingly die for an earthly leader. Christ's followers must be equally willing to give their lives for Him and for His cause. The time is not yet past when men are required actually to die for Christ; witness the case of the many missionaries and native Christians in China, a year or two ago. More commonly, devotion to Christ means to serve faithfully and cheerfully, at whatever cost, in the ordinary duties of our daily lives. Each day will bring to us the opportunity and the responsibility of laying ourselves upon His altar, to be used by Him as He wills.

Necessary things, v. 28. There are different kinds of necessity. It is never necessary to do wrong, and it is always necessary to do what is clearly right; but there are many things which are lawful in themselves, and which we ought to avoid for the sake of others. In matters of principle we should be as unyielding as a rock, but, where no principle is involved, we ought to consider the opinions, and even the prejudices, of those round about us.

It shall be well with you (Rev. Ver.), v. 29. We have here a recipe for true happiness in

a home or in a church. When each one in a family or in a church considers the interests of all the others and is willing to deny himself or herself for their sakes, there will be fewer cases of disagreement. We should make it our most earnest care to act always with due regard to the rights and interests of others.

They rejoiced for the consolation, v. 31. The Bible, and especially the New Testament, is full of encouragement. It does not conceal from the believer that he will meet with hardships and sufferings in the Christian life; but it abounds with encouragements to face the ills of life with courage and cheerfulness. When Jesus spoke to His disciples of the trials that awaited them, He said, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh," Luke 21: 28. Paul encouraged the Christians at Rome by saying to them, "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed" (Rom 13: 11), and to the Philippians he wrote, "Rejoice in the Lord, alway; and again I say, rejoice," Phil. 4: 4. We misrepresent the religion of Christ when we speak in a tone of discouragement.

Being prophets, exhorted, and confirmed them, v. 32. It is those who live nearest God and know His will most perfectly who are best fitted to comfort and strengthen others. If we would be a source of help and encouragement to others, we must seek to know God, who has revealed Himself to us clearly and fully in Jesus Christ. In Him we shall find the unfailing fountain of grace and strength upon which we may ourselves draw, and so become channels through which the same grace and strength may be conveyed to others.

### Gratefully Rejoicing.

Robert Moffat, the great missionary to Africa, tells this story:—

Not long ago a woman came to me, having travelled fifteen miles, and said that she wished for a New Testament. I said to her, "My good woman, there is not a copy of it to be had."

"What! Must I return empty?"

"I fear that you must."

"Oh, said she, 'I borrowed a copy once, but the owner has come and taken it away, and now I sit with my family sorrowful, because we have no Book to talk to us! Now we are far from anyone else. We are living at a cattle outpost, and have no one to teach us but the Book. Oh, go and try to find a Book! O my elder brother, do go and try to find a Book for me! Surely there is one to be found; do not let me go back empty.'"

I felt deeply for her, for she spoke so earnestly, and I said, "Wait a little, and I will see what I can do."

I searched here and there, and at last found a copy and brought it to the good woman.

Oh, if only you could have seen how her eyes brightened, how she clasped my hands and kissed them over and over again!"

Away she went with the Book, rejoicing, with a heart overflowing with gratitude.

Every day in thy life is a leaf in thy history—a leaf which shall be turned back again.

Open your hearts to the living, risen, glorified Saviour. Let Him live freely in your life, and work unhindered through your faith; expect Him to pour through you as a channel some of those greater works which must characterize the closing years of the present age. Remember how the discourses and miracles of His earthly life even increased in importance and meaning; for such must be the law of His ministry in the heavens. According to our faith it will be unto us. The results which we see around us are no measure of what Christ would or could do; they indicate the straitening effect of our unbelief. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye low browed door of unbelief; and the King of Glory shall come in with His bright and mighty reinue, and shall go out through human lives to do greater works by the instrumentality of His people than ever He wrought in the course of His earthly ministry.

### Christ And Prayer.

BY REV. G.H.C. MACGREGOR.

All Christ's greatest experiences were received, and all His greatest works done in connection with prayer. It was by prayer that He cast out the most obstinate demons (Matt. 17: 21); it was after prayer that He recalled the dead to life (John 11: 41); it was in prayer that He overcame the fiercest assaults of the enemy (Luke 22: 41); it was after prayer that He chose those men who were to carry His gospel through the world (Luke 6: 12); it was as He prayed that He was baptized with the Holy Ghost (Luke 3: 21); it was as He prayed that He was transfigured till He shone with the glory of God (Luke 9: 29). So important was the place occupied by prayer in the life of the Lord Jesus, that it is not too much to say that until we have learned to pray we are incapable of knowing Him, or of having fellowship with Him in His most blessed experiences.

### The Touch Of His Hand.

She was the mother of a large family, and, being in plain circumstances, was required to do her own work. Sometimes, in the multitude of her tasks and cares, she lost the sweetness of her peace, and, like Martha, became troubled or worried with her much serving. One morning she had been unusually hurried, and things had not gone smoothly. She had breakfast to get for her family, her husband to care for as he hastened away early to his work, and her children to make ready for school. There were other household duties which filled the poor, weak woman's hands, until her strength was well-nigh utterly exhausted. And she had not gone through it all that morning in a sweet, peaceful way. She had allowed herself to lose her patience and to grow fretful, vexed and unhappy. She had spoken quick, hasty, petulant words to her husband and her children. Her heart had been in a fever of irritation and disquiet all the morning.

When the children were gone and the pressing tasks were finished, and the house was all quiet, the tired woman crept upstairs to her own room. She was greatly discouraged. She felt that her morning had been a most unsatisfactory one; that she had sadly failed in her duty; that she had grieved her Master by her want of patience and gentleness, and had hurt her children's lives by her fretfulness and her ill-tempered words. Shutting her door, she took up her Bible and