

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLETHE TEN COMMANDMENTS —
DUTIES TOWARDS MEN.*

By Rev. Clarence MacKinnon, B.D.

Honor thy father, v. 12. He was a poor man, but, by hard work, had contrived to send his boy to college. One day he hauled a load of wood into the city, perhaps to pay the boy's bills. He accidentally encountered his son walking down the pavement with some of his gay companions. So delighted was the father, that he slipped down from the load of wood and hastened to greet him. But the son turned his face the other way and pushed hurriedly on. He was ashamed of his father's shabby garments. Such pitiful ingratitude for all a parent's kindness deserves and will receive the censure of God. There is no promise for so unfilial a son, nor has any such one ever achieved real success in this life.

And thy mother, v. 12. The highest student of his year, the valedictorian of his class, had just been presented with the gold medal by the President of the college, amid the generous applause of his fellow students. When he stepped from the platform, he marched down the aisle to a seat where a poor, plainly-dressed woman had watched the proceedings with tears in her eyes, and pinning the medal on her dress, he said, "Mother, I should never have won it, had it not been for you." It is God's promise, that such noble spirits shall command in return the generous recognition of their fellow men, and enjoy a fullness of life and even a length of days not offered to the meaner and more unfilial character.

Thou shalt not kill, v. 13. In the Fiji Islands in the beginning of last century, a man could be bought for a gun, or, if money were paid, for seven dollars. His owner then could either starve, work, whip or eat him, and often he desired to do the last. But in 1835, the gospel was introduced amongst the savages of this group of 200 islands, and in an incredibly short time the whole life of the people was transformed. No place better than Fiji illustrates the words of Charles Darwin: "The march of improvement consequent upon the introduction of Christianity throughout the South Seas probably stands by itself in the records of history. Within twenty years, human sacrifices, the power of an idolatrous priesthood, profligacy unparalleled in any other part of the world, infanticide and bloody wars not sparing women and children, all these have been abolished, and dishonesty, intemperance and licentiousness have been greatly reduced."

Thou shalt not steal, v. 15. Is it as great a sin to steal an apple, as to steal a thousand dollars? Not from the standpoint of injury to society, not of transgression of those commercial interests on whose integrity business depends, but it is as great an injury to the purity of one's own conscience. To steal an apple is to get very little, but it is to get all the damage one would receive were it a golden apple. It is to be conscious that he has done wrong, that he has become a thief, that he has held his honor of lighter value than a trifle.

False witness, v. 16. When slander was spoken in the presence of Peter the Great, he would stop the slanderer and

say, "Well now, has not that man you accuse got a bright side? Tell me what you know good of him." It is easy to splash mud, but I would rather help a man to keep his coat clean." To know that people speak well of him, helps a man very effectively to do better; but give even a dog a bad name, and he will soon live down to it. Therefore they were not without excuse in heathen Siam when they had a law to sew up the mouth of the confirmed liar. This we should do with our lips, though not by needle and thread, but by the chivalrous spirit of the true knight who

"Spoke no slander; no, nor listened to it."

Thou shalt not covet, v. 17. A noted miser was converted, and immediately confronted with his besetting sin. A poor man was burned out, had no provisions, and came to him for assistance. He thought he would be liberal and give a ham from his smoke house. "Give him the smallest one you have," said the tempter. He had a momentary struggle, then took down the largest he could find. "You are a fool," said the devil. "If you don't keep still," the converted farmer replied, "I will give him every ham in the smoke house." The farmer's method was the right one. The way to overcome covetousness is to learn the joy of being generous, to find by experience that it is indeed more blessed to give than to receive. If a small sacrifice is not sufficient to cure, let us make a bigger one until completely successful.

Lord, in thy sky of blue,
No stain of cloud appears;
Gone all my faithless fears,
Only thy love seems true.
Help me to thank thee, then, I pray,
Walk in the light and cheerfully obey.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

By Rev. James Ross, B.D.

Thou Shalt Not.—Five years ago in the Acropolis of Susa, the ancient Persopolis, three large pieces of a block of black diorite were discovered, which, when fitted together, formed a monumental pillar, seven feet four inches high, and six feet three inches broad at the base. At the top there is a portrait of Hammurabi, the sixth king of the First Dynasty of Babylon, who began to reign about 2342 B.C. On the front, beneath the effigy of the king, there were originally twenty-one horizontal columns of the wedge-shaped, Assyrian characters, five of which are broken off, and twenty-eight on the back all of which are intact, with the exception of some breaks. The whole inscription contained about 8,000 words, and consists of a collection of the laws of the kingdom on agriculture, shipping, commerce, family life, and the administration of justice. There is a remarkable similarity between these laws and the Mosaic legislation, but the Babylonian code is more highly organized and more complex from a legal point of view. There, law had reached its highest development, largely independent of religion, and the offences were regulated altogether by civil penalties. There is no such majestic appeal to a man's personal relation to God, or to the eternal distinction between right and wrong, as we find in the Ten Commandments.

Christianity is God's way of getting man back to God.

THE BIBLE IN A KOREAN GRAVE.

Twoe-Sungie's grave is two miles from the walls of Seoul, and deep down in it, buried with him, is the New Testament he so much loved to read and the hymn book from which he so loved to sing. We can almost think of him coming up with his new body on the resurrection morning with those books in his hands, but, of course, they will have gone back to dust; and although the word that Jesus spoke will judge men at that day, it will not be necessary to bring forth this Testament from the grave.

Before I go on, I might say that the Old Testament is not yet translated into Korean, so that the New Testament might well be called the Bible, as far as the mass of the Korean Christians are concerned.

But to go back to Twoe-Sungie. He was a little boy twelve years old. His father's younger brother, Mr. Yang, had been a believer for several years, and although he had earnestly exhorted his elder brother (Twoe-Sungie's father) to believe and had prayed for him daily, he continued for some years in heathenism. About a year ago Twoe-Sungie's mother decided to be a Christian, and when she came to church she frequently brought her little boy with her.

Twoe-Sungie's father, however, was not converted, and, as they were poor people, he felt that he could not give up working on Sunday; and not content with working himself, he insisted on Twoe-Sungie's staying at home from church and working with him. The little boy, who had learned to read his Bible and who loved to go to church, was heartbroken, and felt himself a great sinner in breaking the fourth commandment. Some months ago Twoe-Sungie's younger brother died, and then, not long after, Twoe-Sungie was taken seriously ill. As his strength failed and it seemed likely that he would die, he said: "If I live on in this world father makes me break God's commandments and I will only add sin to sin in breaking the Sabbath day; so it is better for me to die and go to Jesus."

Not long before his death he waked one morning and said: "Last night my little brother came to me in a dream and told me that it was impossible to describe the glory of heaven and of what it was to live with Jesus, in the language of this world." At the last, when his parents and some Christian friends were with him, he called on them all to pray, and when they had done so, he said: "Father, pray."

Now his father was sitting there with his heart full of evil thoughts. He was saying to himself: "Here I am ruined through doing this foreign doctrine. I have lost both of my children." When he heard Twoe-Sungie with his last breath calling on him to pray he thought to himself: "Who knows; perhaps if I pray the boy's life will be spared;" so he bowed and prayed the best he could.

After his death the heathen relatives said to one another: "It is this book—the reading of it—which makes people do the foreign doctrine, and if we bury it in the grave with the body, Mr. Yang and his wife will give it up and come back to the old ways."

So they buried Twoe-Sungie's Bible with his dear little body, the parents not knowing it. Their plans were vain, for Mr. Yang now feels that "the must believe in Jesus if he is ever to see Twoe-Sungie again." So he has bought another Bible and hymn book and comes to church on Sunday.—Bible Society Record.

*S. S. Lesson, July 21, 1907.—Exodus 20:12-17. Commit to memory vs. 12-17. Read Exodus, chs. 20, 24. Golden Text.—Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.—Leviticus 19:18.