

The Quiet Hour.

The Resurrection.

S. S. Lesson. 1 Cor. 15 : 20, 21 ; 50, 58.

APRIL 12, 1903.

Golden Text.—Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. 1 Cor. 15 : 20.

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Now is Christ risen, v. 20. Christians are redeemed by the blood of Christ. His earthly life and His death on the cross are the price of their freedom. When one has paid the full price of a piece of land or other property, a receipt is given him as evidence that the payment has been satisfactory. The resurrection of Christ from the dead is God's declaration, written in letters large and clear, that the work of Christ is sufficient to deliver all who trust in Him from guilt and condemnation.

The firstfruits of them that slept, v. 20. There is such a real and close union between Christ and those who believe in Him, that His resurrection is the guarantee of theirs. Christ is the head and believers are the members of His body. Since the head has been raised, it is certain that all the members will also rise with Him and in Him.

Flesh and blood, v. 50. On many accounts we should reverence the body. (1) God has created it and we behold in it many proofs of God's power and wisdom. (2) Christ lived His earthly life in a body like ours. (3) We are told that our bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor 6 : 19. (4) We learn here that these bodies of ours are in some sense the seed from which a new and glorious body will one day spring. These are all reasons why we should keep our bodies pure.

Inherit the kingdom of God, v. 50. We become heirs of God's kingdom, not by birth, but by character. If we would enter into heaven we must possess the spirit of its inhabitants. In heaven the song of praise sung by those around the throne has in it no discord of sin; the hearts of all go out to their Creator and Redeemer with an undivided affection; and every will moves in perfect harmony with the divine will. We should not find ourselves at home in such a place, unless we cherished the same feelings and were moved by the same desires.

Immortality, v. 54. God has given us hearts which long after blessings more enduring than this world can furnish. If there were no reality corresponding to these desires, it would be as if God had made a fish with fins and given it no water to swim in, or a bird with wings and no air to fly in. Surely, if we do not find such lack of correspondence in the world of nature, we should not expect to find it in the spiritual world. Our very desires after immortality are evidence that life is more than the short span which we now enjoy. We cannot think that God would so mock His own creatures as to place such desires in their hearts only to deceive them.

O grave, where is thy victory? v. 55. "The hope of the Christian is living, because Christ is alive again from the dead. It springs with ever renewed life from that rent tomb. The grave is no longer a terminus. Life and hope endure beyond it. And more than this, there is a fresh principle of fidelity infused into the soul of the new-born child of

God. The Spirit, the Life-giver, has made His abode there, and death is swallowed up of victory."

The sting of death is sin, v. 56. The cause of sorrow and death is sin. The wages of sin is death. Sin begins to kill, even in this world. It kills joy and peace. It also makes the future very dark, since the sinner dreads meeting with a righteous and offended God, and each time the unfortunate sinner thinks of death, he must fear the judgment seat.

Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, v. 57. Sin, Death, Law—these are the three great enemies over which Christ has given us the victory. Sin no longer fills us with terror when we think of death and judgment, because He has borne our sins for us. He has taught us that behind the grim gates of death there is a place of happiness and joy, in which He dwells and to which He will one day welcome all who believe in Him. The law no longer threatens us with its penalties, because He has rendered an obedience to it which has been placed to our account.

Be ye steadfast, v. 58. We must be watchful and active now, if we are to receive the reward afterwards.

"No, No! the energy of life may be kept on after the grave, but not begun; And he who flagged not in the earthly strife, From strength to strength advancing—only he, His soul well-knit and all his battles won, Mounts, and that slowly, to eternal life."

Not in vain, v. 58. If there be no resurrection, what matters what you do or leave undone? But if there be a future life, then each labor will go on and leave its mark forever. "There shall be no lost good." Every worthy deed, every noble aspiration, will bring its reward in the world to come.

Bible Study : One Verse at a Time.

No. 1, Luke 11 : 1-13.

BY ANNA ROSS.

Luke 11 : 1. And it came to pass, that, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught His disciples.

"In a certain place." Does it matter what place?

Though not counted of sufficient importance to be definitely stated, this marked suggestion of definite locality warrants an interested study of text and contest, if haply we may gather something from these four inspired words.

The place mentioned immediately before is the Jewish mansion in the suburban village of Bethany, just about two miles out of the city, over the beautiful Mount of Olives. Here Martha had received Him as her honoured guest, and Mary had sat down at His feet to receive His words, with a simplicity and quickness of understanding probably beyond any other listener with whom our Lord had come in contact.

Mary's simplicity of faith and consequent quickness of understanding are proved by her action in the matter of the box of ointment, Christ Himself has testified that she poured that ointment on His head in view of His approaching death and burial. Mary alone of all His disciples, seems to have taken in His repeated statement that the cross, and not the crown, stood immediately

in front of Him. This was the sort of listener that unlocked the treasures of His heart in that Bethany mansion.

The time of that first Bethany visit was critical and significant. He had bidden farewell to His Galilian home, and entered Judea to attend the Feast of Tabernacles, just six months before His coming death. The Feast was now half over, and within a few hours He was to take His place in the Temple, and face the rulers of the nation with their officers and their fierce opposition, and the multitudes with their fickleness and their faintings and needs that were forever drawing out the mighty compassions of the Son of God.

Was this the time? and was this the place? Was it the great hall of that Jewish mansion, in the midst of His own disciples and the gathered household, with Martha and Mary, and Lazarus, as intent and reverent fellow worshippers—was this the "certain place" where He so poured out His soul in prayer that one of His disciples when He ceased, was stirred to make the ever-memorable request—"Lord, teach us to pray?"

The context certainly suggests, (though it does not prove) that such was the case, and that Martha listened as He gave Our Father, and the story of the poor man who asked bread for his hungry friend, the hungry child and his father, and the "how much more" with which the teaching closes.

If Martha was indeed present, her words when she met the Lord Jesus, after her brother's death, acquire a fresh significance. "But I know, that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee." She speaks as one who has been taught that prayer means power.

Let us in spirit reverently join the company of the disciples, whether the "certain place" was Martha's home or some grassy plot under the Olives of Olivet, and catch from the lips of our Lord, sentence by sentence His response to the petition, "Lord, teach us to pray."

The Bible and Music.

Atheism has no music of its own and the cheerless halls of infidelity never echo the sound of song. Perhaps it is because of this that we instinctively shrink from the man who despises music. In any case the dictum of our greatest poet appeals to most of us when he says:

The man that hath no music in himself
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils,
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus,
Let no such man be trusted.

There are many who think Shakespeare to be too strong in this famous piece of invective but we all understand that there is in ourselves a willingness to trust the one who hums and sings at his work and an unwillingness to company with the person whose "savage breast" refuses to be soothed by music's peerless charm.

Atheism has no songs because it denies God and therefore has no reason or capacity for music. The nerves of the higher sense have been atrophied and the capacity for the exhilaration of song has been chloroformed by unbelief. Hence the fearful silence and the chill despair of her temples. But religion is the very mother of music and her abodes are ever resonant with singing. Religion is the reflection of heaven in the soul and heaven is a continuous roll of symphony. Where there is unalloyed and unsullied joy the heart flows over in music and it is easier to sweep back the ocean tide than to repress that swelling wave of song.