

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

*JOSHUA RENEWING THE COVENANT WITH ISRAEL.

By Rev. Prof. Mackenzie, B.D.

In sincerity and in truth, v. 14. The late Dr. Dale of Birmingham once said that there were three essentials of worship: first, be real; second, be real; third, be real. To worship God with the lips while the heart is far from Him is to be guilty of the basest mockery. When we pray, God wants the desires of our hearts. When we praise Him in some psalm or hymn, He requires that there should be love and gratitude in our hearts corresponding to the great words we utter.

If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, v. 15.—Many a time it has seemed "evil," according to the world's reckoning, "to serve the Lord." For the apostle James it meant death by the headman's axe, for Peter, so the tradition runs, crucifixion head downwards; probably for all the Twelve, a violent death. In the early days of Christianity, serving the Lord brought multitudes of men and women, youths and maidens, to a martyr's end. Even at this day, and in our own land, we must lay our account with the scornful sneer, the biting sarcasm, the clever ridicule of companions, the loss of popularity, perhaps injury to business, if we would serve the Lord. But over against this, there is the joy and satisfaction of living the noblest and best life possible on earth, and the rewards, more glorious than mortal tongue can tell, of the world to come.

Choose you, v. 15. At a religious conference, not long ago, a successful business man said that, as a young man, his ambition had been to build up the greatest business in its own line, in the country. He soon found out that, if he was to succeed in this, he must give up active work in the church. This he felt he ought not to do, and he therefore contented himself with a small measure of success. He deliberately faced the question whether God or business was to have the first place, and he decided for God, a decision which he never found reason to regret.

This day, v. 15. A thousand voices are telling us that "this day" is one of the most momentous importance in the history of our country. New districts of immense area are being opened up in the north and west. Immigrants are flocking to our shores in astonishing numbers. Soon our land will have taken its set for God or evil. Our time will tell tremendously on all future times in Canada. There is need for each one of us to line up on the side of the forces that make for righteousness. No earthly sovereign, but the King of kings, is calling us to enlist in His army, to fight His battles, to drive out, and keep out, of this fair land all that injures men's bodies and souls, and to establish all that makes life noble and true.

As for me, v. 15. The writer spent a Sabbath recently in a small town, where one of the churches has a beautiful set of chimes. In the quiet evening hour, before the evening service, these sweet bells peal out the tune of one gospel tune after another. All over the town sound the message and the invitation of the bells. Like those bells,

is a life that is sincerity and resolutely devoted to God. It bears continual witness to His power and grace. Without words, it rebukes sin, and calls men to a life of righteousness.

God forbid that we should serve other gods, v. 16. A recent story pictures a young minister listening, in one of the public parks of London, England, to an attack upon Christianity. Obtaining permission to speak, he challenges the assailant to mention the schools and hospitals and asylums which have sprung up in the soil of unbelief. In this way, the edge of the attack was completely turned, and the young champion carried with him the enthusiasm of the crowd. We have but to count up the blessings which Christian lands possess, and contrast them with the misery and darkness of heathen countries, to be convinced that the religion of the Bible rightly commands our heartfelt homage and our unreserved obedience.

This stone, a witness, v. 27. As one enters the mouth of the Niagara River from Lake Ontario, there looks down upon him from the stately monument on Queenston Heights the soldierly figure of Sir Isaac Brock, the hero of the war of 1812. That monument is an enduring witness to the splendid courage in leader and soldiers alike, which, at a critical moment preserved Canada for the British crown. That graceful shaft reared against the sky, and that silent figure of the hero who died for king and country, are a constant reminder more eloquent than words, of the loyalty required of each Canadian citizen. In like manner, when we read and hear the gospel, and especially when we come to the Lord's Table, we behold the cross, where the Son of God became "obedient unto death." That cross summons us, with a constraint more powerful than speech, to give our lives to the service of Him who has redeemed us at so great a cost.

HIS GOODNESS.

The wrong that pains my soul below
I dare not throne above;
I know not of His hate—I know
His goodness and His love.

I dimly guess from blessings known
Of greater out of sight,
And, with the chastened Psalmist, own
His judgments, too, are right.

I long for household voices gone,
For vanished smiles I long,
But God hath led my dear ones on,
And He can do no wrong.

—Whittier.

You will be happy by and by if you will take the time to learn to know a privilege when you see it. Far too often when we meet privilege on the way of life, we do not recognize it. We say: "Excuse me, I believe you are a duty—a hard, irksome duty. Stand out of the way. I am looking for privilege, not duty." And all the time we were face to face with privilege and did not know it. Surely, the morning of life is the very best time to journey the way of the cross. Then all the rest of the ways will be made brighter by the light that streams from it.—Kind Words.

It is wonderful what miracles God works in wills that are utterly surrendered to Him. He turns hard things into easy, and bitter things into sweet. It is not that He puts easy things in the place of the hard, but He actually changes the hard thing into an easy one.—Hannah W. Smith.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

By Rev. James Ross, D.D., London.

Other Gods—The Babylonians, amongst whom Abraham, the founder of the Hebrews, grew up, worshipped a triad, Anu, Bel, Ea—the god of heaven, the god of earth and the atmosphere, and the god of the watery element. With these were associated Ish-tar the goddess of fertility, Shamash and Sin, that is, the sun and moon, and a host of others. Abraham's native city, Ur, was a centre of moon worship. Some of their psalms show great devotional exaltation of spirit and are worthy of a purer faith, for example: "In heaven who is great? Thou alone art great. On earth who is great? Thou only. When thy voice soundeth in heaven, the gods fall prostrate. When thy voice soundeth on earth, the spirits kiss the dust. Who can resist thy words, O God? Who can rival thee? Among the gods thy brothers thou hast no equal. God, my Creator, may be stand by my side. Keep thou the door of my lips. Guard thou my hands, O Lord of light. O Lord, who trusteth in thee do thou benefit his soul." The hope of immortality appears in the following prayer for a soul: "Like a bird may it fly to a lofty place; to the holy hands of its God may it ascend. The man who is departing into glory, may his soul shine as radiant brass. To that man may the Sun give life. Grant him an abode of happiness."

A HEATHEN GOD.

The Chinese popular deity is "the kitchen-god," a picture of a god that hangs in every kitchen. Since all secrets of even the largest household eventually find their way to the kitchen, this god is supposed to know everything about the family. By a clever trick the Chinese outwit this deity. Once a year he is sent up to heaven in fire to report on the doings of the household. Before he is burnt, however, his mouth is smeared with sticky sweets; so that when called upon for a report he can only mumble "m-m-m-m" which sound resembles a Chinese word for good report. To us this sort of thing seems pure sill. Yet the same strain runs through all idolatry. The streets of Peking are indescribably tortuous, so that the spirits of the other world can not find their way through them. Paper images of food and equipment are burned at graves for the spirits will not know the difference. How infinitely loftier is the Christian conception of an Omniscent God, whose eye searches out the hidden depths of the innermost imaginings of the human breast. God knows all; and He, therefore judges righteous judgment.

The longer I live the less I think and fear about what the world calls success: the more I tremble for true success, for the perfection and beauty of the inner life, for the purity and sanctity of the soul, which is as a temple. As I grow older I feel the need of getting at the root of the matter—of being sure of the nearness of God, of being free from all the mistiness and doubts, and of throwing the increasing cares of life on him.—S. C. Armstrong.

The size of God's family does not affect the preciousness of the individual soul. The one sheep is not lost in the flock. "He calleth His sheep by name." He loved me and gave Himself for me.—J. H. Jowett.

*S. S. Lesson, November 10, 1907.—Joshua 24:14-23. Commit to memory vs. 22-24. Read Joshua, chs. 23, 24. Golden Text—Choose you this day whom ye will serve.—Joshua 24:15.