

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

GOD GIVES JACOB A NEW NAME.*

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And Jacob said, v. 9. The trouble drives the majority of us to prayer. The cry in pain, the screams in peril, of those who are usually careless and irreligious, is a form of prayer. There is a fabled fountain that was cold at mid-day and warm at midnight. It pictures very many persons. In prosperity they are indifferent to God's power to help; but when dark adversity comes, they begin to call upon him.

O God of my father Abraham, and God of my Father Isaac, v. 9. Every boy and girl should know—happily most of our boys and girls do know—that sweet hymn of Philip Doddridge's "O God of Bethel" by whose hand. The hymn has the rare quality of becoming grander and dearer as one grows older. The music of it appeals to the child heart; but its words come like food and drink to a worn, weary laborer, when the stress and strain of middle life are upon men; and the step of the aged pilgrim, nearing the end of his journey, quickens and revives as its strains recall God's guidance and grace granted to his fathers. We do well to learn, and to prize, the hymn, even as we do well to strengthen ourselves in our prayers to God by recalling the wonderful things He has done in all the ages for those who have put their trust in His grace and power.

I am not worthy, v. 10. The persons who think too highly of what they deserve, think too little of what they receive. God is anxious to satisfy our desires; but these desires must be right and there must be a proper sense of need. Matthew Henry said, "Those are best prepared for the greatest mercies that see themselves unworthy of the least."

Deliver me, I pray thee, v. 11. Conscience may sleep long and deep; but it will have its day and use its scourges. A number of shipwrecked passengers were floating on a raft in mid-ocean. One of them was dying. He was heard to say, "Yes, I did, and oh! won't you forgive me?" Another asked him what he meant, and the dying man said, "Thirty years ago I stole some grapes from my sick sister's room, and just now I heard my mother say to me, 'Johnny, did you take your sister's grapes?'" For twenty years his mother had been dead. Conscience had only been asleep. Luther says, "The voice of an evil conscience is a barking hell-hound, a monster vomiting fire, a tormenting devil."

I will not let thee go, except., v. 28. In Sir Walter Scott's, *The Heart of Midlothian*, the story is told of a girl's struggle with truth and honesty. A lie from her lips will save her sister from the gallows. The truth will condemn that sister. She is tempted to allow the angel of truth to go, but she puts the temptation aside and holds fast to the truth, in the belief that all will be well if she does simply what is right; and, because God has joined truth and mercy, she saves her sister through mercy following truth.

What is thy name? v. 2. In the childhood of the world the names of men were descriptive of their character. Our boys ignore the conventional names of their companions, and give them descriptive names. The best runner among them is "Swift," their best

jumper is "Toads," their best whistler is "Nightingale." Some boys have in their home the good name of John or James, and among their chums they are Sneak and Wolf or Haven. Look out for the name your comrades give you. Your name is just your nature labeled.

And he said, Jacob, v. 27. "Supplanter"; yes—a true name for the greedy, crafty younger brother who filched the inheritance from the brother to whom it belonged. A crooked stick, Jacob truly was: a man by no means to be admired, until by the grace of God he was transformed. What is to be admired is, the keen eye of God, the great Carpenter, who saw the straight man into which the crooked timber could be fashioned, and the skill and patience with which He brought about the transformation.

Thy name shall be called, Israel, v. 28. Napoleon's horse, a spirited creature, ran away at a review of the troops. Biting and striking, it dashed along the lines of soldiers who stood in the field. A private of obscure family, knowing how much his emperor valued the horse, resolved to risk all in an attempt to capture it. His effort was successful. When he led the subdued animal to Napoleon, he was greeted with, "Thank you, Captain of the Fourth Division of Infantry." The private's courage and display of attachment to his emperor earned for him a new name. For the name of aliens, God gives us the name of friends, yes, sons, when we, by faith, are received into His family.

My life is preserved, v. 30. Sir Oliver Lodge says, "There are two ways of overcoming sin and the sinful tendencies that war against life. One, the direct way, of concentrating attention on them by brooding and lamentation; the other, the indirect and, as I think, the safer and more efficacious and altogether more profitable way, of putting in so many hours of work per day, and of excluding weeds from the garden by energetic cultivation of healthy plants."

SATISFIED.

"When I shall wake in that fair morn
of morns,
After whose dawning never night re-
turns,
And with whose glory day eternal
burns,

I shall be satisfied.

"When I shall see Thy glory face to
face,
When in Thine arms Thou wilt Thy
child embrace,
When thou shalt open all thy stores of
grace,

I shall be satisfied.

"When I shall meet with those that I
have loved,
Clasp in my eager arms the long re-
moved,
And find how faithful Thou to me hast
proved,

I shall be satisfied.

"When I shall gaze upon the face of
Him
Who for me died, with eye no longer
dim,
And praise Him in that everlasting
hymn,

I shall be satisfied."

—H. Bonar.

Do you despise any opportunity be-
cause it seems small? The way to make
an opportunity grow is to take hold of
it and use it.—Bacon.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

Rev. James Ross, D.D.

Jabbok—"The luxuriant river," now the Zerkas, "the blue river," is one of the principal tributaries of Jordan on the east. One branch of it rises near Habbash Ammon, and flows almost in a semicircle northward. It then turns westward, and enters the Jordan about 25 miles north of the Dead Sea. Its peculiar course made it a boundary between Palestine and the Eastern desert and also the northern boundary of Zidon's kingdom (Num. 21:21-24). At the present time, it is the dividing line between the two Turkish provinces which cover Eastern Palestine. The valley has always been very fertile, and to-day its banks are a rich mass of oleanders, and on its upper waters much fine wheat is grown. "Along its whole course of sixty miles, one is never out of sight of sheep on the hillside, or cattle standing in the water, or fields of grain."

Peniel (also Penuel)—Was probably applied first to some mountain which had on its precipitous side the rude outline of a human face. About four miles from Succoth, the Jabbok flows between two sharp hills, one of which is crowded with the ruins of a very ancient and extensive fortification, which seems to have been erected as a barrier against the marauders from the east. This is probably the site of Peniel.

A MATTER FOR CONCERN.

A great many people are concerned over others' shortcomings, whose greatest shortcoming is their unconcern over their own shortcomings. Much earnest thought is given by us to the improvement of our neighbor's manners, or his habits, or his crude opinions, which might better be spent in squaring our own ways of thought and life with the ideals that we wish our neighbors might live up to. Perhaps if our own front yards were neat and clean the folks next door would listen with greater respect to our speeches at the meetings of the Village Improvement Society. Perhaps the children in our Sunday-school classes would be more quiet, if we were less noisy in getting them quiet. And perhaps our preaching, our teaching, our bits of well-meant advice by the wayside, would take hold with a more engaging grip than they now seem to have if we had a little more concern about living up to these things ourselves. How would it do to try it?

A PRAYER.

Almighty God, our Father, loving, tender, and true, we come to Thee because Thou hast bidden us in Thy word to seek Thee, to knock at the door of Thy grace, to ask for all things that we think we need. Thou hast given us in abundance the things that enable us to live happily and peacefully. Give us now, we pray, as abundantly, the things that make for our growth in nearness and likeness to Thee. We confess our sins and ask Thee to forgive, for we have the promise that "if we confess our sins God is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This is our prayer. Hear us, O Lord, hear us, and answer us in peace, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Man is alive to sin as long as he is disobedient to one of the commands. We can quit disobeying only by obeying unto death.

*S.S. Lesson April 14, 1907. Genesis 32: 9, 22-30. Commit to memory vs. 22-23. Read Genesis, chs. 29-35. Golden Text—Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.—Luke 10:20.