

The Quiet Hour.

Israel Asking for a King.

S. S. Lesson. 1 Sam. 8 : 1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT—Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only. 1 Sam. 7 : 3.

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It came to pass, when Samuel was old, v. 1. Boswell tells us, that Dr. Samuel Johnson had engraved on the dial of his watch, "The night cometh," so that he might be stimulated to earnest effort every time he looked at the face of his time-piece. The example of Jesus teaches us to see in the rapid flight of time a reason for redoubled zeal, John 9 : 4. Soon old age will overtake the youngest and the strongest of us and compel us to lay down our work, for lack of strength to do it longer. We have not a moment to waste in idleness, or to spend on unworthy objects. The task of each day should be taken up and carried through with such diligence and fidelity, that when we grow old we can look back on life and not be ashamed.

Joel . . . Abiah, v. 2. The names embody, each of them, the name of Jehovah. The letters E. R. placed on certain buildings, show that they belong to the government of which King Edward is the head. The name of God should be stamped on ourselves and everything we have. We belong to Him. He has created us. He supplies our daily needs. Above all, He has redeemed us by the costly sacrifice of His Son. We rob Him of the honor which is His due, if we employ our powers or possessions in a way contrary to His will.

Turned aside, v. 3. Sometimes two trains on different tracks run side by side for some distance, and then when a certain point is reached, the two tracks begin to diverge. The distance between them constantly increases, until the train on the one track fades from the sight of the passengers on the other, and at last they reach widely separated destinations. Before choosing our path in life, we should be sure about whither it will lead. However little, at first, the wrong path diverges from the right, we should beware of entering upon it, because it unerringly leads, in the long run, to destruction and misery.

took bribes. An ancient practice, but none the less vile on that account. To accept a bribe is to acknowledge that one considers money worth more than his manhood ; and to be bribed to a certain course, makes every further step taken a lie. A country, where the leaders accept bribes and the people suffer them to do it unrebuked, is already far gone toward ruin.

Thy sons walk not in thy ways, v. 5. We may not be responsible for what others do ; but we are responsible for the example we set before them. Even the very young have companions who imitate them. How sad it is, if by copying our conduct, others are led to do wrong, and so evil in the world is multiplied ! And what a joy to know that those about us are helped to do right because they see in us what right is !

Samuel prayed unto the Lord, v. 6. God is just as near to us as our perplexities. To get into His presence, we do not need to build a ladder up to Him and then creep up round after round. All we have to do is to turn our faces towards him.

"Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet : Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, v. 7. Beware of rejecting an ambassador of God, in however humble guise he may come. Those whom God sends to speak in His name, He clothes with His authority, and to despise them is to offer an insult to God himself.

So do they also unto thee, v. 8. Strange, is it not, that those who toil unselfishly for the public good, often receive ingratitude and misrepresentation as their reward. It should be a comfort to such to remember that they are in good company. It was thus, as God reminds Samuel, that all His faithfulness with His people had been received. It was thus with God's own Son, when He dwelt among men. The people whom He came from heaven to save, nailed Him to the cross of shame.

Hearken unto the voice, v. 9. God gives us freedom of choice, but we shall have to give an account at the bar of conscience and of God of the choices we make. The noblest use to which we can put this godlike power, is to surrender ourselves to the service of Him who gave it to us.

"Our wills are ours, we know not how ; Our wills are ours, to make them Thine."

Howbeit, yet protest solemnly unto them, v. 9. Fair warning, is God's invariable rule. If woe befalls us for our transgressions, we can never say, "I did not know"; for conscience within us, and God's written word, as well as what we see with our own eyes all about us of the outcome of sin, afford warning that none but a blind man or a fool can fail to see. It will add, not take away from, the weight of punishment, when it fails, to remember that fair warning was given.

Samuel told all the words of the Lord, v. 10. We should be glad if we have a pastor, or teacher, or friend, who is kind enough and brave enough to tell us all the words of the Lord, whether they are pleasing to us or not. We need plain warnings and stern rebukes, as well as gracious promises and sweet encouragements, and to the former as well as to the latter should we listen with attentive ears and obedient hearts.

Bible Study, One Verse at a Time.

No. 10.

Psalms 103 : 10.

BY MRS. ANNA ROSS.

"He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." Is there discrepancy in God's accounts? The active anger of God which is the just and necessary response of infinite holiness toward wrong-doing is slow to move, restrained in action, and swift to cease.

There is a mighty discrepancy between our sins and God's dealings, and it is all on the side of tender mercy. The wages of sin is death, and these wages are paid not promptly and in full, but tardily and scantily. The Psalmist is studying and balancing the double statement made to Moses while sheltered behind the shadowing hand of the Most High, "*Forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin,*" and "*will by no means clear the guilty,*" but as far as he can see the first clause rejoices against the second.

Bible Reading.

BY MRS. (REV.) HARKNESS, CORNWALL, ONT.

Walking worthy of our vocation.

1. Unto what are we called?

(a) Called unto eternal life.—1 Tim. 6 :

12.

(b) Called out of darkness unto light.—1 Peter 2 : 9.

(c) Called unto suffering.—1 Peter 2 : 19-21.

This walk has reference to our conduct or manner of life. To walk, also bears with it the idea of moving or going ahead ; not standing or keeping still. In some things we are commanded to stand fast, for example

2. We are to stand fast.

(a) Stand fast in the faith.—1 Cor. 16 :

13.

(b) Stand fast in the Lord.—Phil. 4 : 1.

(c) Stand fast in the liberty.—Gal. 5 : 1. In these we are commanded to stand fast, immovable, for there is but one faith, one Lord, one Spirit. Stand that we may not be tossed about by every wind of doctrine.

3. We are to make progress.

(a) Walk in love.—Eph. 5 : 2.

(b) Walk circumspectly.—Eph. 5 : 15, 16.

(c) Walk humbly.—Micah 6 : 8.

(d) Walk as children of light.—Eph. 5 :

8.

(e) Walk in the Spirit.—Gal. 5 : 16.

(f) Walk pleasing to God.—1 Thess. 4 :

1.

(g) Walk as He walked.—1 John 2 : 6.

(h) Walk worthy of the Lord—Col. 1 :

10.

(i) Walk in good works.—Eph. 2 : 10.

God has prepared a pathway for every Christian, and this pathway is one of good works.

It is true we have not all the same gifts but in Eph. 4 : 7 we read that unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. He gave some &c., v. 11—for what? v. 12, 13, There is one God and Father of all, above all and through you all and in you all. Every member is expected to fill up the place given to him by the Lord. All this is for one great purpose, v. 15, 16.

My Sin.

My God, my God ! and can it be
That I should sin so lightly now,
And think no more of evil thoughts
Than of the wind that waves the bough ?

I walk the earth with lightsome step,
Smile at the sunshine, breathe the air,
Do my own will, nor ever heed
Gethsemane and thy long prayer.

Shall it be always thus, O Lord ?
Wilt thou not work this hour in me
The grace thy passion merited,
Hatred of self and love of thee ?

And make me feel it was my sin,
As though no other sin there were,
That was to him who bears the world
A load that he could scarcely bear.

—F. W. Faber.

Prayer.

O Lord, with whom is the Fountain of Life, give us all, we entreat Thee, grace and good will to follow the leadings of thy most Holy Spirit. Let the dew of thy grace descend and abide upon us, refreshing that which droops, reviving that which is ready to perish ; until the day when all thy faithful people shall drink of the river of thy pleasures. Amen.—Selected.