

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

DAVID SPARES SAUL'S LIFE*

(By Rev. Jno. McMillan, M.A.)

My son David, v. 17. There are many likeable fellows who are full of generous impulses. These impulses riot in their bosoms like the chime of bells in a sealed up chamber. But the music never gets out. The sufferings of the beautiful heroine in the novel or the play excite their deepest sympathy. But some child may be in grave mortal peril before their eyes, and they think it is none of their concern. They go to church, and respond eagerly to the oratory of the preacher. They become indignant at wrong. They loathe impurity. They scorn meanness. They are specially disgusted with hypocrisy. Yet they are not clean-minded, charitable nor unselfish. The soil of their hearts is shallow ground.

What evil, v. 18. "Thrice is he armed, who hath his quarrel just." Socrates was once ordered by the thirty tyrants, then ruling over Athens, to go with some other persons to seize one Leon, a man of rank and fortune, whom they determined to put out of the way, that they might enjoy his estate. Socrates flatly refused, saying: "I will never willingly assist in an unjust act." Cherides sharply replied, "Dost thou think, Socrates, to talk always in this style, and not to suffer?" "Far from it," he replied, "I expect to suffer a thousand ills, but none so great as to do unjustly." Socrates was without fear because he was without baseness.

To seek a flea, v. 20. To find oneself ridiculous, is sometimes a very convincing demonstration of one's wrong-doing. Many a man has learned to quit his sin because it was making a fool of him. One teetotal sailor was explaining how he came to swear off from liquor. "I seen a pair of mates what was drunk," he said, "and they was makin' most awful asses of themselves, they was. They had each other round the neck and was weeping tears of affection down each other's backs. And I asked the bo'sun if I was like that when I was drinking, and he says, 'Why, Bill, you're ten times worse than that.' So I thinks its time to sign the pledge, and, thank God, I ain't making a free show of myself no longer."

I have sinned, v. 21. Every act of wrong is done against the authority of God. To the supreme Lawgiver it belongs to punish sin. In like manner, the law of the country takes punishment out of private hands. When a burglar breaks into a house, it is not the owner's business, but the business of the whole community to see that he does not escape the penalty of his crime. And so we learn a double lesson. First, that we shall account to God for every lapse and transgression. And, second, that we must not avenge ourselves, nor hate our enemies.

My life was precious in thine eyes (Rev. Ver.), v. 21. A traveler who lately passed across Canada said of one spectacle he witnessed in the mountains: "I saw the sun forgive the earth that morning. As the light broke, after the darkness of night, we saw a heavy veil of mist hanging low upon the sides of the Selkirk. Not one snow-wrapped peak was to be seen. Only the deep hollows of the valleys, dark and shaggy with the

pinus, and then a level curtain of grey mist, rolling back and forward and in and out upon itself. But the sun grew strong and fought the clouds till he conquered them, and chased them away from the face of the earth. Then, when the whole landscape lay basking in the bright warmth of the sun, it knew that it was forgiven. It was restored to the presence of its lord."

Behold the spear, v. 22. Near the end of the seventeenth century a Turkish grandee in Hungary made a Christian nobleman his prisoner, and treated him with the utmost barbarity, compelling him to perform the lowest and hardest of labors. Some years later the fortunes of war changed, and the Turk became the prisoner of the Christian. The Christian said to his servants, "Now take your revenge on your enemy." The Turk, supposing that he was to be tortured to death, swallowed poison. When he learned that the "revenge" was the permission to go in peace, he said, with his dying breath, "I will not die a Moslem: I will die a Christian; for there is no religion but that of Christ which teaches forgiveness of injuries."

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

(By Rev. James Ross, D.D.)

FLEA—Is a more formidable species of the same troublesome insect that we know. They are very plentiful in Palestine. In some places, especially where there has been an Arab camp, one's legs will be covered with them in a few minutes. The Arabs say, "The King of the fleas holds his court in Tiberias." All the monasteries swarm with them; hence the advantage of camping away from all dwellings.

PARTRIDGE—The word thus translated is used for several kinds of grouse or quail; but here it means the red-legged Syrian partridge, which makes its home among the dense underbush of the uplands. The nest is made on the ground, and is liable to be destroyed or robbed by carnivorous animals. They are hunted now, as of old, by falcons. The sportsman sits on his horse, with the hawk on his wrist, and his retainers beat the bushes with much shouting, to start the partridges and drive them towards the huntsman. When they are near enough, the falcon is launched from the hand and swoops down upon his prey, striking it to the earth. One of the keepers darts forward and seizes both the partridge and the hawk. He cuts the throat of the stunned bird, and allows the falcon to drink the blood, which it usually does very greedily.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.

M., Aug. 31—God everywhere. Ps. 139: 1-10.
T., Sept. 1—God working in us. 1 Cor. 12: 4-12.
W., Sept. 2—God dwelling in us. John 14: 15-18.
T., Sept. 3—His fullness in us. Acts 6: 1-6.
F., Sept. 4—His quickening. Rom. 8: 1-11.
S., Sept. 5—Abiding forever. 1 John 2: 14-15.
Sun., Sept. 6—Topic—Songs of the Heart. IX. A life lived with God. Ps. 91. (Consecration meeting.)

The life of every man is a diary in which he means to write one story, and writes another; and his humblest hour is when he compares the volume as it is with what he vowed to make it.—M. Barrie.

STARTING RIGHT.

Most days are made or marred at their very start. A day is a chain of events, and it calls for strong, well-wrought links at the beginning to carry the weight of the links that are to follow. When every hour in a day seems to be making that day more and more of a failure, it is usually easy to trace the failure back to the beginning. The commonest way to insure a bad day is to get up from fifteen minutes to half an hour later than we meant to. That means that there will be scant time, or more likely no time, for a "morning watch" with the One who is planning the day for us; no time for quiet Bible reading and prayer. Thus we start upon the day's march without any marching orders from the only One who is competent to make them or to give them. Breakfast, then, usually means a time of ill-humor and unlove, and hearts are sore and aching, or ugly and hateful, by the time the day's work is entered upon. From then on the Devil has easy control. By night-time the fifteen minutes' extra "rest" before getting up does not look like a good investment, if we are honest enough to face the truth at all and admit that the whole trouble began there. A good start does not insure a good ending, but it goes a long way toward doing so.—S. S. Times.

IT IS COMMON.

So are the stars and the arching skies,
So are the smiles in the children's eyes;
Common the life-giving breath of the spring;

So are the songs which the wild birds sing—

Blessed be God, they are common.

Common the grass in its glowing green;
So is the water's glistening sheen;
Common the springs of love and mirth;
So are the holiest gifts of earth.

Common the fragrance of rosy June;

So is the generous harvest moon,
So are the towering mighty hills,
So are the twittering, trickling rills.

So unto all are the promises given,
So unto all is the hope of heaven;
Common the rest from the weary strife;
So is the life which is after life—

Blessed be God, it is common.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

Let me offer two or three practical suggestions to those who are seeking a true Christian life. The first one is: Never seek easy paths or places. Peace of conscience, usefulness, spiritual growth and the joy of victory are never found there. Never choose any path in which you cannot discover the footprints of Christ and of all heroic men and women. To such a man as Paul the roar of lions became music to his ear; they proved to him that he was in the King's highway of holiness.

Every victory you win makes you the stronger. The strength of the conquered foe enters into your own soul. The vanquisher of Satan's lions becomes more lion-hearted. Faith as a mere opinion is only a straw; but faith, exercised, links you to Jesus Christ and becomes invincible.

Finally, when your Divine Leader commands a duty he gives you grace for that duty. For every fight he furnishes the weapons; his mastery of you will give you mastery of self and of sin. Faith will fire the last shot, and when the life battle ends you will stand among the crowned conquerors in heaven.—Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D.

*S.S. Lesson, August 30, 1908: 1 Samuel 26:17-25. Commit to memory v. 21. Study 1 Samuel, ch. 26. Read 1 Samuel, chs. 21 to 25. Golden Text—Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you.—Luke 6:27.