

The Quiet Hour.

The Childhood of Moses.

S. S. Lesson.—17th Nov. Ex. 2: 1-10.

Golden Text.—Prov. 22: 6. Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.

BY REV. J. MCD. DUNCAN, B. D.

And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi, v. 1. No truly great man is ever ashamed of his parents because they are poor and obscure, as the parents of Moses were. Dr. Blaikie tells us of the famous David Livingstone, that on the tombstone of his parents in the cemetery of Hamilton, he had these words inscribed: "To show the resting place of Neil Livingstone and Agnes Hunter, his wife, to express the thankfulness to God of their children for *poor and pious parents*." He deliberately refused to change the last "and" into "but." Though we know little of the parents of Moses, we gather that there was no reason why he should be ashamed of them. They were brave enough or had a sufficiently strong affection to rear their home when the storm of persecution was rising. In Canada, many a man is living in a comfortable house on a well-improved farm because a generation or so ago some brave man and woman undertook to make a home in the unbroken forest or wide prairie. We do well to honor these pioneers and to imitate their virtues.

And when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him, v. 2. The parents of Moses acted out of natural impulse when they determined to preserve their child in spite of Pharaoh's cruel decree. Impulse has often been a great power for evil. In Cain the impulse of passion shaped itself into murder. In Peter the impulse of fear found expression in his craven denial. Evil impulses sweep away the restraints of reason and judgment and carry often on into guilt. But in good impulses we may hear the very voice of God stirring us up to noble and generous deeds. And it is not by accident that good impulses arise. They come, like the song birds, of their own accord, but they are attracted by the sunshine and quiet woods, while they shun noise and foul air. If our hearts are to become the haunts of good impulses, we must keep their windows open towards God, that the light of His face may shine into them. Every evil impulse points towards atheism and its origin. Every good impulse comes from God who is perfect goodness.

And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, v. 5. (Rev. Ver.) In the history of individuals and nations, the whole course of events has often been turned by some trifling circumstances. The arrow which pierced the brain of Harold lost the battle of Senlac to the English and gave England to the Normans. The death of the little maid of Norway, heiress to Alexander III. of Scotland, on her passage to the latter country, defeated the project of uniting England and Scotland by her marriage to the son of Edward I. and led to the long conflicts between these two countries. A mist crossing the battle-field of Lutzen made Napoleon victor over the allied Prussians and Russians. So here the coming of an Egyptian princess to bathe in the Nile led to the deliverance of the coming leader

and lawgiver of Israel. We say that such occurrences are accidental. In reality, the hand of God is in them all and each is a link in the great chain of His purpose.

This is one of the Hebrew's children, v. 6. Is there not a note of indignation in these words? The princess had a woman's heart, and in it there burned a righteous wrath against the king's cruelty. It has been said that every woman in Egypt was in a plot against Pharaoh. Already the midwives had defeated him, and now his own daughter helped to thwart his plan. There is a hatred that is noble. "And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." This is what Mark (3: 5) says of Jesus who was meek and lowly in heart. "Luther said that he never did anything well till his wrath was excited, and then he could do anything well." Paul said: "Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath." (Eph. 4: 26.) One of his friends said of Robertson of Brighton, "I have seen him grind his teeth and clench his fists when passing a man whom he knew was bent on dishonoring an innocent girl." Says the Psalmist "I hate every false way" (Ps. 119: 104). "I hate and abhor lying" (Ps. 119: 163). "I hate them that hate Thee" (Ps. 139: 21). Our hatred ought not to be for our own foes or our own wrongs. But we may rightly rejoice in the wrath that is zeal for truth and purity and for the glory of Christ.

Then said his sister, . . . Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women? v. 7. Miriam teaches us to be quick in recognizing and prompt in improving our opportunities. "There is a legend of an artist who long sought for a piece of sandalwood out of which to carve a Madonna. At last he was about to give up in despair, leaving the vision of his life unrealized, when in a dream he was bidden to shape the figure from a block of oak wood which was destined for the fire. Obeying the command, he produced from the log of common firewood a masterpiece." Our best opportunities are usually in little things and close at hand.

And she (his mother) brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, v. 10. She had received him to nurse as a weeping infant. She brings him back, no longer a mere babe, but a boy, young, very young, doubtless, but with the stamp of her own life upon him, a stamp which, far from being ever effaced, seemed to become deeper as he grew older. No more precious and no more abiding possession can any child begin life with than the lessons learned at a godly mother's knee and sealed with her kiss of love. They are gifts direct from the hand of God.

A number of college girls became interested in settlement work in a city near-by, and invited one hundred Jewish children to spend a day in the college grounds. A simple luncheon was prepared by the girls, consisting of milk and unlimited supplies of sandwiches. Unfortunately, the sandwiches were all made with ham, and a certain chill was thrown over the feast as one by one the conscientious but disappointed little Israelites opened them and laid aside the meat.

A Family Prayer.

Our Father which art in heaven. We thank thee for thy goodness in adopting us as thy children, and for the privilege of coming to thee with loving, reverent freedom, as children to a Father. We know that thou lovest us more than does any earthly father, and therefore we ask thee to give us, in answer to this our prayer, those blessings which will best promote our happiness. And help us, as trustful children, to receive the answer as dictated by the love and wisdom of our Father.

May thy name be hallowed. Help us to put first and foremost our desire and our prayer for thy glory. Keep us from the selfishness which would put our own welfare foremost; grant that in our hearts thy work shall have the first place. And give us grace so to act that men may see our good works and glorify our Father.

Thy kingdom come. Too long have we served the world and self; too long have we failed to give perfect obedience to the King of kings in the emotions of our hearts. Deliver us from the service of the world, we pray, and establish the kingdom of God in our hearts. And not in ours only, but in the hearts of all men, destroy the power and influence of Satan, and make Christ and righteousness to have the victory.

Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Make us all willing to know, obey and cherish God's will, even as do the holy angels.

Give us this day our daily bread. For spiritual food we pray; feed us with the bread of life. For temporal supplies we pray. "Give me neither poverty nor riches, lest I be full and deny thee, or lest I be poor and steal."

And forgive us our debts. Lord, we have sinned against thee many, many times. Forgive, we pray, for Christ's sake. God be merciful to us sinners. And help us from the heart to forgive those who have wronged us. And then grant unto us the consciousness that we are forgiven; that there is now no condemnation to us who are in Christ Jesus.

Lead us not into temptation. For we are so weak and liable to fall. But if it be necessary that we meet temptation, sustain us in the trying hour and deliver us from all the wiles of the evil one.

And as we feel the answer to these our prayers, as we receive food for body and heart, as we rejoice over pardoned sin and enjoy the victory over temptation, we will ascribe unto thee our God the kingdom and the power and the glory. Amen.—The Christian Observer.

Seed Thoughts and Illustrations.

Those sent out in prayer will be likeliest to return in triumph.—C. S. Robinson, D.D.

Count Zindendorff chose as his motto: "That land is henceforth my country which most needs the gospel."

The great commission, "Go, preach the gospel to every creature," is also a *great permission*.—The Missionary Review.

What are churches for but to make missionaries? What is education for but to train them? What is commerce for but to carry them? What is money for but to send them? What is life itself for but to fulfil the purpose of foreign missions, the entering of Jesus Christ in the hearts of men.—Dr. A. H. Strong.