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## SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

APRIL 13. JACOB AT BETHLEH.

Gen. 28: 10-22.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest."—Gen. 28: 15.

### POINTED SUGGESTIONS

By Rev. D. W. Solder.

When anyone wrongs another, tricks him, plays him false, descends to dirty circumvention, and deceit to overreach him, he may depend upon it that his conduct will force him into exile. And as a wrong done to any man is also done to God, the soul likewise is plunged by it into the darkness of an exile from God.

But as Jacob trusted upon his way, one, two, three days, he found that while distance might separate him from Esau, he had still to deal with himself and conscience and his future and one above. The great stair-like cliffs near Luz put a deep impress upon his soul of one all-powerful, to whom he was answerable. He found that he had to reckon with God.

The intense thoughts of the day, which had brought their forebodings and their smittings of conscience and search for repentance, projected themselves into the dream of the night, a his tired head sought rest upon a pillow, or stone. And God met him in his desolation and showed him how near heaven is to earth, and, with an object lesson suited to his need, pointed the way of their inter-communication.

Jacob was inspired to find how

ready the Lord is to deal with those who seek Him. That is the surprise of many. But the very spot where a soul hungers for God, that spot He will consecrate. With His presence, and it becomes a Bethel—a house of God, indeed.

And now we witness Jacob's real start in life. Face to face with God, he proposes to make the opportunity count. Why not? Jacob goes about it his way and another might take a different way; but this is a fact worth noting well; God is to be inquired of by those who seek Him and well-comes those who will reason with Him. No such opportunity should be lost. Jacob had insight and foresight enough to seize it.

And it is a thousandfold better to bargain with God as to your future than to stumble along in a losing fight with the world. When one has worn out with his gamble with the world what has he got?

The Almighty quickly discerned the steadfastness of Jacob's character, how true and absolutely unswerving from his purpose the source of his life would be. If he should challenge Jacob and Jacob should take it up, it would be binding and know no how halting to the end of the chapter, however long.

Doubtless Jacob received the promise which God gave him with amazement. The promises which flow from the compassion and power of the All-Father, are always an astonishment. They go infinitely beyond man's merit. But Jacob did not stagger at them. He took God at his word and pledged himself in return, even as it was said, "I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest."

### THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

April 20. JACOB'S MEETING WITH ESAU.

Gen. 32: 2 to 33: 17.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you."—Eph. 4: 32.

### POINTED SUGGESTIONS.

By Rev. D. W. Spider.

Several chapters of the intensely interesting history of the life of Jacob placed on record between the lesson and Sunday. Do not fail to study that history. Tarry as you closely read to think and pray your way into an understanding of the night scene and struggle and dawn light triumph at Peniel.

Jacob, the trickster and supplanter—nevertheless, Jacob the spiritually purposeful—with many interferences, obstacles, drawbacks and setbacks on the way to his goal. Some of them he had to suffer; from some of them he had to flee; others he had to meet and overcome. It is well for one to learn the course he must pursue with the difficulties which characterize, according to their character, while holding to his rights and seeing the development of his own character in righteousness.

Too many seek to flee from God as the antagonist of their wrongdoing. Jacob knew better than that. The most ordinary shrewdness ought to convince one that success does not lie where God does not bless. Jacob struggled to get Jehovah at his side. It took an all-night wrestle and a disjuncted thigh to teach him that it was for him, rather, to come on the Lord's side. He yielded, he surrendered, he clung—and prevailed.

Jacob fled from Laban. There are companionships, partnerships, conditions and alliances from which one must pull out. Jacob was opposed by one with whom he was not reckoning while on his way to the assumption of birthright purchase and privilege. Conscience taught him it was God. No finer lesson of the struggle of conscience with a guilty soul and of the impossibility of victory over conscience without surrender, with whatever humiliation may be attached, can be found anywhere than the scene at the Jabbok.

When God, who is the champion of those who have been wronged, has been met, and prevailing relations with Him have been established, other fears that may lie in the way of progress will vanish or will be found to be helpers of that which is sought. So Jacob discovered it to be when he met his brother Esau.

No doubt, and with good reason, Esau had all along been Jacob's fear and dread on his way of return from Haran to Beersheba. And Esau may be credited without unfairness with a full intention of riving Jacob a warm (?) reception should the opportunity ever come. Four hundred

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