

SUNDAY  
SCHOOL

## The Quiet Hour

YOUNG  
PEOPLE

## DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

(By Rev. C. McKinnon, B.D., Winnipeg.)

Daniel knew that the writing was signed, v. 10. The result, to the outward eye, seemed so certain. On the one side was the whole power of the Persian empire behind a cruel decree that could not be changed; on the other a man who stood alone in his loyalty to God. But to the eye of faith the outlook was very different. To this inner vision the whole universe was on the side of the man who dared to do right. Like Elisha and his servant at Dothan, troops of bright and powerful angels stood around him for defence. Not less certain to-day than in those days of old is it, that the path of duty is the path of safety. Thronged with perils it may be, but those who tread it with steadfast purpose will be delivered out of them all.

He knelt upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, v. 10. In modern days there is a bomb-proof apartment. Here the harassed defenders can find protection from the storm of shot and shell bursting round them. In the Christian life the habit of daily prayer is the "bomb-proof" against the temptations that assail us. The brave Origen had once to choose between bowing down to an idol and suffering severe punishment. In a moment of weakness he yielded, and afterwards, in his bitter penitence, he ascribed his fall to his neglect of prayer on the morning of the fatal day. On the other hand, the great Gladstone tells us how, on the morning of a day that was to test his powers to the utmost, the message came to him, "Hold Thou up my goings in Thy path that my footsteps slip not." Strength and freedom of speech were given to him in a surprising measure. And he adds, "Many a prayer had gone up for me, and not, I believe, in vain."

And gave thanks, v. 10. Gratitude is ever linked with true petition. The quaint Puritan preacher, Goodwin, likened prayer and praise to the double action of the lungs, receiving the air from without and then breathing it forth. The gifts of God come to us in answer to our prayers, and we return to Him our grateful praises. And if Daniel, in the face of a fierce persecution and under the stern decree of a despot found reasons for thanksgiving, in the favor and friendship of God, how much should we in these happier days of peace and freedom in which our lot is cast.

As he did aforetime, v. 10. There is a straight path in life before each of us. It leads onward to safety and honor. We shall never miss it if we follow conscience. Other paths may seem to be more pleasant and promising. They allure us with their prospect of pleasure or profit or power. But there is no departure from the right way that does not end in shame and loss.

The king. . . was sore displeased with himself, v. 14. The boomerang of the Australian native rushes through the air, and returns to the feet of the thrower. So every sin, soon or late, comes back to the sinner, bringing with it the bitter fruit of remorse. A hard-hearted oppressor evicted from their lovely cottage a helpless widow and her four fatherless children. Afterwards he seemed to hear

S. S. Lesson, October 8, 1905—Daniel 6: 10-23. Study the chapter. Commit to memory verses 21-23.

Golden Text—The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.—Psalm 34:7.

the sobbing of his victims in the murmur of the stream while the rumble of the thunder sounded like the voice of approaching doom. The consequences of sin pursue us. There is no escape save in breaking with sin itself.

Cast him into the den of lions, v. 15. No real harm can come to the good man. For him the poison is extracted from every persecution, and the very den of lions is made a gateway to glory. "You have not yet tasted the bitterness of death," shouted a bystander to a prisoner for conscience' sake. "No, nor ever shall," was the reply, for Christ hath promised that those who keep His sayings shall never see death."

Thy God. . . he will deliver thee, v. 16. "Courage, till to-morrow," adds the Greek version of the scriptures, called the Septuagint. And in God's to-morrow there is always hope. "This, too, will pass," said one who was greatly tried, when some new affliction came. However dark the present, the future, for those who love and serve God, is radiant with promise and hope. The best things are yet to come. We have not left behind us, we are moving forward to, the golden age.

My God hath sent his angel, v. 22. Not always after the same manner does God deliver His people. He did not, to take an instance from English history, rescue Ridley and Latimer from the fires of martyrdom. But He used their death to do more than a long life could have done to further the cause of freedom and spread His truth. They were brought safely through the brief shame and agony, to be crowned with a glorious and deathless fame.

No manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God, v. 23. An old writer pictures a man, intending to kill another, pelting him with precious stones. So may God's people enrich themselves out of the very sufferings inflicted upon them; gathering the priceless jewels of confidence in God's promises, and a growing fitness for His glorious inheritance.

## WHEN THE DOOR IS SHUT.

I need not leave the jostling world,  
Or wait till daily tasks are o'er,  
To fold my palms in secret prayer  
Within the close-shut closet door.

There is a viewless cloistered room  
As high as heaven, as fair as day,  
Where, though my feet may join the throng,

My soul can enter in and pray.  
No human step approaching breaks  
The blissful silence of the place;  
No shadow steals across the light  
That falls from my Redeemer's face.

One hearkening even cannot know  
When I have crossed the threshold o'er  
For He alone who hears my prayer  
Has heard the shutting of the door.  
—Harriet McEwen Kimball.

## PRAYER

Let me not seek out of Thee what I can find only in Thee O Lord, peace and rest and joy and bliss, which abide only in Thine abiding joy. Lift up my soul above the weary round of harassing thoughts to Thy eternal Presence. Lift up my soul to the pure, bright, serene, radiant atmosphere of Thy presence, that there I may breathe freely, there repose in Thy love, there be at rest from myself, and from all things that weary me; and thence return, arrayed with Thy peace, to do and bear what shall please Thee. Amen.—Selected.

## THE CHANGELESS SAVIOUR.

This attribute of God is claimed for Jesus Christ. He also is the same yesterday, today and forever. He was subject to change, but he did not change. Changes often prove the changeableness of men. New conditions modify men's views, and sometimes radically alter a man's whole life. Prosperity has its influence in politics and religion. It may turn a fiery reformer into a respectable moderate, and make the religion that made him seem contemptible and mean. Increase of knowledge invariably modifies judgment, and tempers a man's habits of thought. Such changes test the foundations of life. If the man has built upon the unstable things of the world, then he finds the world and the fashion of it passing away. Jesus Christ passed through extreme changes of condition, but through them all he remained the same. He came from a throne to a manger, from the adoration and ministry of angels to the toil of a carpenter's bench, from the glory of the limitless infinite to the narrowed conditions of poverty and sorrow. It is impossible to conceive the immeasurable distance from the throne of his glory to the cross of shame, but through it all he remained the same. Now that he is exalted, he is the same Jesus men knew upon earth, and will come again unto his own. Who can measure his yesterday from the beginning when he was with God and was God? Who can declare his today from his birth in Bethlehem through all the ages of his indwelling in the hearts of men? Who can forecast his forever and unveil the hidden glory of the conquering Christ? Our comfort and confidence are in the assurance that through all the unknown we know that he has been, is and will be always unchanged and unchanging—in all things our Lord and Saviour.

## THE POETRY OF LONGFELLOW

What marvellous combination of splendid faculties has combined to make this man the most widely read poet of two hemispheres of English-speaking people? The probable answer is found in the household character, the tender Christian spirit of his poetry. Moreover, he is easily read. There are no obscure passages which might be construed backward as intelligently as forward. His verse is limpid as a running brook, and as full of music; it glorifies, but does not drown, the thought. He writes in clear, strong, nervous English; and his lines have the power of clinging to the memory. \* \* \* And this is the sort of poetry by which the universal heart is always won. The scholar loves the veiled meaning underlying classic forms; the intellectual reader ponders on the subtle beauty, the shadowy and suggestive grace of lines that fascinate by their very indefiniteness of outline; but the heart of the people will always turn to the troubador, the story-teller, the man whose clear and simple thought chooses for its raiment the clearest and simplest language.—W. J. Dawson.

## CRITICISM.

When we are severely criticised it is far better to try and profit by the criticism than to attempt to take vengeance on our critic. Criticism, as a rule, especially if it be just, will do us more good than flattery. The former is likely to stir us up to correct our faults; the latter tends to make us satisfied with ourselves and our attainments. Extreme sensitiveness to adverse criticism is an indication that we think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. He who is blind to his own faults is not likely to amend them.