

SUNDAY  
SCHOOL

# The Quiet Hour

YOUNG  
PEOPLE

## DAVID ANOINTED AT BETHLEHEM.\*

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How long will thou mourn? v. 1. Too much sorrow is a sign of lack of faith in God. Christians "sorrow not even as the rest, which have no hope. There are, here and there, some people so ignorant and timid, so distrustful of all the business institutions of the country, that they will not put their money in a savings bank. They think that when the coin leaves their possession they have lost it. And other ignorant and fearful people, who have no confidence in the divine management of the universe, think that when their friends leave their sight they are gone forever. But those who know the love of God for men know, that, even as Jesus died and yet lived on, so shall all who trust God likewise gloriously conquer death.

A king among his sons, v. 1. There are future kings in many Sunday School classes to-day. The men who shall exert noble power in the next generation are training for their royal duties now. Perhaps nobody, when they were boys, would have picked out William Ewart Gladstone, one of Britain's most famous prime ministers, or William Booth, the head of the Salvation Army, or Dr. James Robertson, the apostle of our Western missions, or George Leslie Mackay, the fiery herald of the cross in Formosa, as leaders in the great battle of life. Yet they were princely boys, or they never would have become "kingly men. No one spends his boyhood in trifling, and then leaps into a wise, strong, brave and skilful manhood. "The boy is father of the man." What boy in this class is getting ready to be a king? Which of the girls is going to be a queen?

Comest thou peaceably? v. 4. The Oriental salutation, "Peace!" points back to times of constant danger, when every approaching traveller might prove to be a foe. In like fashion, the Chinese greeting, "Have you eaten rice to-day?" marks a country where famine is always imminent. Our own is "How do you do?" showing that we, being without fear of more violent evils, make our health the uppermost concern. Thus a salutation is a key word to the condition of the society using it. But "Peace!" in its deeper sense is a greeting that is never outworn. For we live in a world full of threatening cares and anxieties. And above all, sin is ever disturbing the quiet rest of our souls. What word can be sweeter than "Peace!" on the lips of One who, like Jesus, can not only wish us peace, but give it to us?

Sanctify—sacrifice, v. 5. There should be preparation for worship. No lady about to be presented at court, drives from her shopping to the palace. She spends time and pains, that she may appear in a suitable court costume. Should there not be preparation, of a far deeper kind, for coming before God? Yet we often go to church or Sunday School as carelessly unprepared as if we were merely strolling from one room to another in a house. It is a great and holy privilege to join in the worship of the Most High, and we should bring to it a thoughtful, reverent, earnest spirit.

Eliah, v. 6. The finest looking is not always the best. Like a splendid casket containing a stone of trifling value, bodily height and symmetry and coloring that excite the admiration of all,

may hide a weak and inefficient soul. On the other hand, the greatest souls have often dwelt in bodies of very ordinary, or even insignificant appearance. Kant, the great German philosopher, weighed less than one hundred pounds, the Emperor Napoleon was about five feet high, Queen Victoria was even shorter, the poet Byron had a small head, Socrates, the prince of teachers, was ugly. Don't be too anxious to look the part. If you can live up to it, you will do.

This is he, v. 12. David is a type of Christ. He, too, stood forth as God's chosen Prince. By His mighty words and deeds He proved Himself to be God's choice. David, with all his greatness, presented a blurred and imperfect sketch of the ideal king: in Jesus his portrait is seen perfect in every feature. By the royal powers of peace, humility, good-will, pity, service, sacrifice, He has established His sway in the hearts of men.

## FROM A VETERAN PASTOR'S PRAYERS.

Lord, command the rich blessings of Thy grace upon us now. Give strength and comfort to those who now and here confess Thy name and take their places at Thy table for the first time; and to those also who, coming from other communities and other communions, have asked and found a place in our immediate fellowship. . . . Father, we thank Thee for this privilege of fellowship. We give Thee praise for those whom Thou hast given us as comrades. May we ever be a blessing and not a hindrance to them, and they to us, and all of us to others. . . . It is of Thy mercy that our cold hearts and our indifferent or even selfish behavior have not robbed us of comrades, and left us each to his lonely way in barren and cheerless isolation. Correct in us those faults which still in too great measure threaten us with this isolation from our fellows. God give us warm hearts, and hands swift to serve! . . . At this Thy table, we devoutly pray Thee, bless the comrades we now have, with what ever they may need for their growth in Thy peace and joy, and in Thy service; and make us ever helpers of one another. . . . Bless those who have been our comrades in other days and places; in any sorrow or temptation succor them. . . . Yea also, bless those whom Thou hast appointed to be our comrades, though as yet we have not found them out: make us alert to see and seize even the slightest opportunity of getting into touch with men, though it be but for a passing moment; much more if this be for prolonged companionship. . . . God give us companions! And enable us so to walk among men that an ever increasing number shall have reason to thank God for knowing us, and shall be more like Thee for having known us. . . . Bless, also, those who in Thy name show kindness to us. Make us swift in appreciating all service rendered us by our fellows. Keep us from being unappreciative. . . . And make us so swift to serve others that each day shall be marked by some kindness done. . . . Thus, Lord Jesus, would we serve Thee, and extend Thy reign.

Always say a kind word if you can, if only that it may come in perhaps, with a singular opportuneness, entering some mournful man's darkened room like a beautiful firefly, whose happy convolutions he cannot but watch, forgetting his many troubles. — Arthur Helps.

## LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

Anointed—From the earliest times it was common in the East to rub oil on the hair; and on the exposed parts of the skin, to soothe the irritation produced by the burning sun. Amongst the luxurious, the oil used was highly perfumed. The use of oil in designating a man to the office of priest or king is also very old. On the monuments of Egypt two of the gods are represented as pouring oil on the head of their high priest, after he has been invested with his robes and the official cap has been placed upon his head. Amongst the Hebrews, the anointing not only designated and set apart officially the king elect, but symbolized the divine Spirit who was poured upon him on this occasion, to fit him for the work of the office on which he was entering. The oil for this purpose was made of olive oil, pure myrrh, cinnamon, cassia, and the root of the sweet cane, and its unauthorized compounding was forbidden. The King of Great Britain is still anointed at his coronation by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The custom is a relic of the time when the earthly sovereign was but the mouthpiece for God, the real King. It was the anointing oil which gave a sacred character to the King, and caused any violence to the Lord's anointed to be accounted sacrilege. It established a sacramental fellowship between God and the anointed person.

## JOY A CHRISTIAN DUTY.

There is a deeply rooted idea in the minds of many people that Christianity is a religion of gloom. More than one great thinker has called it the religion of sorrow, and poets, who delight in things bright and beautiful, sink into minor tones when they sing of religion. True it is, that in a certain sense Christianity may legitimately be called the religion of sorrow. Its founder, the Lord Jesus Christ, was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Its symbol is a cross, significant of suffering and shame. The condition of its service is, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Its triumphant disciples are those who have come out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Yet the joy of the Lord, underlying the sorrow of the Christian life and often bursting out with a radiance which changes the sky from a dull gray to glowing brightness, ought never to be forgotten. We are so apt to emphasize the sorrow as to obscure the joy. The sorrow is only accidental and transient, while the joy is essential and permanent. Even sorrow itself becomes the hand-maiden of joy when one learns the duty of being glad, for then we rejoice in the Lord always, knowing that in every experience perfect wisdom and love are present to make all things work together for good. — J. E. C. Sawyer, D.D.

The tragedy of many men is a good motive worn out. A motive is without power, not because it is not good enough, but because it is not big enough.

He that is with the King is not alone, though forsaken of all others. He on whom the sun shines is not without light, though all his candles are put out. If God be our God, He is our all. — Richard Baxter.

God has promised forgiveness to your repentance, but he has not promised a tomorrow to your procrastination. — Saint Augustine.

\* S. S. Lesson, August 2, 1908—1 Samuel 16: 1-13. Commit to memory vs. 11, 12. Read 1 Samuel, ch. 16. Golden Text — Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. — 1 Samuel 16: 7.