

The Quiet Hour.

Joash the Boy King.

S. S. LESSON, 2 Kings 11: 1-16. Nov. 6, 1904.

GOLDEN TEXT.—When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice.—Prov. 29: 2.

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She arose and destroyed all the seed royal, v. 1. The high, pure waters of the Swiss mountain streams are used for cleansing paper from metallic and chemical taint. Paper thus cleansed is largely used for photographic purposes. It takes the high polish that permits the best impressions. It is in those lands where streams of gospel influence flow that the rulers are humane and the laws kindly. The shock we receive in reading this story of savage cruelty helps us to realize how far we have travelled from the brutality of such times and practices. And the improvement is due chiefly to the life and teaching of Jesus Christ.

And they hid him . . . from Athaliah, v. 2. How many ways God has of saving those under his special care! Think of Joseph delivered from his brothers' jealous hatred; of Moses rescued from the death decreed by Pharaoh; of the infant Jesus snatched from the slaughter commanded by Herod; of Peter brought out of prison by the angels; and of Joash sheltered from the murderous purposes of the cruel queen. Against those who enjoy the protection of heaven the arrows of their foes fall harmless.

And shewed them the king's son, v. 4. How much depends on the boys and girls growing up in our land. The peace and joy of the home is largely in their hands: the church is looking to them for the carrying on of its work; the destiny of the nation is wrapped up in their lives. Who can estimate the importance of their possessing strong bodies, and sound minds, and pure hearts?

So shall ye keep the watch of the house, v. 6. There is a citadel for each of us to guard. The watchful enemy never slackens his efforts to get possession of our hearts. But for all his cunning and persistence, he will not succeed, so long as we are on the alert. For into every blow struck at him, there goes not our own strength merely, but the might of God, who fights for us and with us. We and God will surely triumph.

Be ye with the king as he goeth out and as he cometh in, v. 8. Going out and coming in—that covers the whole of our life. The morning bell calls us out from our homes to the work of the day. We need never go forth alone. The lifting up of our hearts to God will bring Him to our side, to be our Helper all the day long. And when the shadows of evening lengthen, and bring the time of rest, He is still with us. Through the day of work and the night of sleep, He will never leave us, never forsake us. Better His presence and protecting care than the body-guard of a prince! He is Guide, Defender, Helper, Friend, all in one.

Every man with his weapon in his hand, v. 11. Trouble is constantly being made in home and workshop and office, because some one person is not doing the work expected of him. This makes the burden of some one else heavier, and prevents the whole work from going on smoothly. The man who is always wanted is the man who can be depended upon to perform his appointed task, the man who puts his con-

science into his work, and therefore does it thoroughly.

God save the king, v. 12. We should remember our earthly sovereignty in our prayers. For he has very arduous duties and heavy responsibilities. On his wisdom and tact the welfare and happiness of his subjects, and sometimes the peace of the world in great measure depends. When we pray for him we pray for the prosperity of his kingdom. And surely we ought not to forget to pray for the progress of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the coming of the time when all shall own His blessed sway.

And Athaliah rent her clothes, v. 14. Athaliah rampant (v. 12) and Athaliah terror-stricken; what a contrast, and all in six short years. The terror and the humiliation, and the hideous death that followed, were all part of the scheme which she had unconsciously drawn out for her life. It is worth thinking how things will come out. To sow the wind, is to reap the whirlwind.

And there was she slain, v. 16. There are two sides to the holiness of God. It has a side of blessing that looks towards his friends, a side of threatening towards his foes. The pillar that gave light to the Israelites was darkness to the Egyptians, Ex. 14: 19, 20. It made all the difference which side of the pillar people were on. And our highest welfare depends on how we stand towards God.

How Beautiful the Feet.

And He hath said, "How beautiful the feet!"
The feet so weary, travel-stained, and worn—
The feet that humbly, patiently have borne
The toilsome way, the pressure, and the heat.

The feet not hasting on with winged might,
Nor strong to trample down the opposing foe.
So lowly and so human, they must go
By painful steps to scale the mountain height.

Not unto all the tuneful lips are given
The ready tongue, the words so strong and sweet;
Yet all may turn with humble, willing feet,
And bear the darkened souls the light from heaven.

And fall they while the goal far distant lies,
With scarce a word yet spoken for their Lord,
His sweet approval He doth yet accord,
Their feet are beauteous in their Master's eyes.

—Frances Ridley Havergal.

Happiness as a Duty.

There is no duty we so much under-rate as the duty of being happy, by being happy we sow anonymous benefits upon the world, which remain unknown even to ourselves, or when they are disclosed, surprise nobody as much as the benefactor. The other day a ragged, barefooted boy ran down the street after a marble with so jolly an air that he sent everyone he passed into a good humor; one of these persons, who had been delivered from more than usual black thoughts, stopped the little fellow and gave him some money, with this remark; "You see what sometime comes of looking pleased." For my part, I justify this encouragement of smiling rather than tearful children; I do not wish to pay for tears anywhere, but I am prepared to deal largely in the opposite commodity. A happy man or woman is a better thing to find than a five-pound note. He or she is a radiating focus of goodwill; and their entrance into a room is as though an-

other candle had been lighted. We need not care whether they could prove the forty-seventh proposition; they do a better thing than that, they practically demonstrate the great theorem of the liveableness of life.—R. L. Stevenson.

Prayer

O my Guide, Thou knowest the perplexities of my life. I do not wish to hurt myself or others by my freedom, nor do I wish to make them think religion a hard and narrow thing. So I come to Thee asking Thee always to show me what to do, what not to do. In all the world of joy let me never forget Thee. In every denial and hardness let me think of Thee. And make me free with Thy freedom and bound with Thy love. Amen.

Sitting Down With Jesus.

REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

Those who would feed their souls must often sit down with Jesus. In the upper chamber at Jerusalem, the disciples sat with their Master at the board as He blessed the bread and brake it and gave it unto them. Not for bodily nourishment, but for the feeding of the soul and the inbringing of spiritual strength and comfort, did Jesus give the bread unto them. Herein lies one precious significance of the sacramental supper—it is the nourishment of a Christian's faith and love through a "partaking of Christ's broken body," which becomes to him the very Bread of Life.

But not only on one day of especial service must the believer feed his soul; he must be constantly coming out from the world's empty table of mockeries and sit down in quiet heart communion with the Redeemer. Don't you remember the scene of the miraculous feeding of the five thousand on the cliff above Lake Gennesaret? There was the hungry multitude. The anxious disciples worry the Master with such questions as: "Whence have we bread for so many?" "Shall we go into the villages and buy?"

"No!" replies the omnipotent Jesus; "command the multitude to sit down." They do so, in long lines, upon the verdant grass. He takes the five loaves and two fishes out of the rustic lad's basket and begins to distribute. The meager provision grows and grows and grows, until not only are the thousands abundantly fed, but there is a surplus of broken food to fill a dozen baskets.

There is something akin to this in our spiritual experiences. We often worry like the disciples, about the best means of feeding our own souls or bringing the Gospel-Bread to needy souls around us. We invent new methods; we try all manners of devices we get up "attractions" in the sanctuary or the Sunday School; we go into all sorts of "villages to buy." Oh! if we could only sit down with Jesus and accept what He bestows, with His rich blessing on it!

The meek, the disinterested, the unselfish, those who think little of themselves and much of others, who think of the public good and not of their own, who rejoice in good done, not by themselves, but by others, by those whom they dislike as well as by those whom they love—these shall gain far more than they lose; they shall "inherit the earth" and its fulness.—Dean Stanley.

Do not make too much haste. Give everything the last touch.