

## The Quiet Hour.

### David's Charge to Solomon.

S. S. LESSON—1 Chron. 28 : 1-10. Nov. 29, 1903.

GOLDEN TEXT—Prov. 3 : 5. Trust in the Lord with all thy heart.

BY REV. W. J. CLARK, LONDON, ONT.

And David assembled all the princes of Israel, v. 1. What a splendid spectacle this great assembly must have been! There have been such gatherings in our own time, as when in 1897 from the various British possessions all over the world were gathered representatives to do honor to Queen Victoria. Though we may not have seen it, yet we read with interest day by day of the wonderful display of the empire's wealth and power, and our imagination took fire at the description penned of the great scene of beauty. So in this ancient day David gathered representatives of the whole nation, and addressed them. He had learned that, not even in such an army as he had assembled of loyal and valiant soldiers was confidence to be placed, but in the Lord God alone. Another lesson, too, he had learned, the importance of establishing friendly relations between a ruler and those ruled by him. He calls the assembly his brethren and his people. It is a fine thing when a king can speak thus to his subjects, and we may be glad that when good Queen Victoria died, she was succeeded by one who is wise thus to appeal to the hearts of the nation, as King Edward has done ever since he was crowned. Happy are the people who have such a monarch!

But God said unto me, v. 3. God sometimes denies his children, even though their desire may be a good one. But one thing we may be sure of, that He never denies them arbitrarily, or without a good reason. God showed David why He must disappoint him, but He does not always make plain to His children the reason of His dealings with them. Even so, we must trust Him and believe that there is some good reason for His action. "God never does, nor suffers to be done, but that which we would choose, could we but see the end of all events as well as He."

Howbeit the Lord God of Israel chose me, v. 4. If we would remember that God has chosen our place for us, we should not be so apt to find fault with our circumstances. When we have done our best to attain some place and have failed, then surely we should recognize that God's will was that we should serve Him where we are. It is thus recognising our place as the appointment of God, that delivers us from envy and discontent and like evil passions. And if we come to a high place, this keeps us humble as nothing else will. The man who remembers that all he has of wealth or power or place is the gift of God, will not grow vain or proud.

I will establish his kingdom for ever, if he be constant, v. 7. All God's promises are conditional, and where the conditions are observed He never fails those who have trusted Him. There is no case to be found, in which a man truly sought the will of God and testified that God was unfaithful. If the thing desired was not given, something better was given in its place, and those who have been true in their service to God have ever found Him true to them.

Now therefore in the sight of all Israel, v. 8. What a touching word is this from the

king to his people! He longs for their welfare, and the passion of love that sweeps through the heart of a true king for his people must be a very deep emotion. But the highest and best thing he can desire for them, is that they should serve God. For there is the conviction deep in his heart, that if they do this they will be blessed. Should we not pray that the same purpose may be characteristic of the Canadian people? We are all looking forward to great development of our natural resources, but, unless we seek to obey the Divine commandments, all worldly prosperity will only lead ultimately to ruin.

And thou, Solomon my son, v. 9. But there is a deeper and more tender touch still when he turns to his son Solomon. He has worn the crown himself so long that he knows its weight and the greatness of the temptations that will surround the path of the young king who is to succeed him. Both as king and father he greatly desires his welfare. And so desiring, the best he can do is to admonish Solomon to serve God with perfect loyalty. What better thing can we wish for those who are dear to us, than that they should seek to be God's servants. There are many other blessings we might wish for them. This is the one blessing that will never carry with it any disappointment or defect. But he who would possess it must be honest in the search after it, for the eye of the Lord is in every place, and there is no deceiving Him.

The Lord hath chosen thee, v. 10. Blessed is he who can say with confidence, concerning his daily work, that God has chosen him for this special duty. With this assurance, one need never fear failure. For, however human plans miscarry, the purpose of God always succeeds. And those who are working in line with that divine purpose, must in the end prosper.

### Living Bibles.

BY THE LATE JOSEPH PARKER, D.D.

Job has been read by countless readers. His, of course, was a public trial, a tragedy that was wrought out for the benefit of multitudes in all generations. Nevertheless it is literally and pathetically true that every man, even the obscurest, has his readers, fewer in number it may be, but equally earnest in attention. Think you that your children are not taking notice of you, seeing how you bear your temptations, and difficulties, and anxieties? Think you that your eldest boy is kept away from the table of the Lord because you are as atheistic in sorrow as Voltaire was? Do you know your daughter hates church because her pious father is only pious in the three summer months of the year? He curls under the cold and biting wind as much as any atheist ever did; therefore the girl saith, "He is a sham and a hypocrite—my father in the flesh—no relative of mine in the spirit."

You have readers: the little Bible of your life is read in your kitchen, in your parlor, in your shop, and in your warehouse; and if you do not bear your trials, anxieties, and difficulties with a Christian chivalry and heroism, what is there but mockery on earth and laughter in hell.

God give us grace to bear chastisement nobly, serenely; bless us with the peace that passeth understanding, with the quietness,

kindred to the calm of God; and help us when death is in the house and poverty on the hearth-stone, and when there is a storm blinding the one poor small window we have to say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. If I perish I will pray, and perish only here." That is Christianity—not some clever chatter and able controversy about metaphysical points, but noble temper, high behaviour, faultless constancy, invincible fortitude in the hour of trial and in the agony of pain.

Could Job now look over the ages that have been healed and comforted by his example, stimulated to bear the ills of life by the grateful memory of his invincible patience, surely even now in heaven he would be taking in the reward of his long continued and noble endurance of the divine visitation. It may be so with the poor man, poor woman; thou dost not get all the sweet now; this shall be a memory to thee in heaven, long ages hence; the wrestling thou hast now, may minister thee high delight, keen enjoyment, rapture pure, abiding.

### Sheltered by Service.

There is wonderful safety in the mere fact of Christian service. The deaconess, or Christian worker of whatever name, goes where she will unmolested, protected by the garb which marks her mission. No one insults her, and the roughest men become her defenders, doing honor to her for the work she does. Like the red cross floating from the masthead of the hospital ship in time of battle, it serves as an armor more effective than steel. It is not the garb alone that gives shelter and protection, but what the garb stands for, and the Christian worker without the distinctive dress, recognized as doing the Master's work, bears with him the same safeguard wherever he is known.

Some faces tell the story of the lives which their owners live. Purity and faith and peace are written on every feature; and, as the form of dress may save its wearer, so these stand as a bulwark against temptation. There are people to whom one would no more suggest evil than offer insult to a king. Their presence of itself forbids that which is impure, or untrue, or unworthy. Not that they are sinless—there is none such—but that the effort to live the Christ-like life is so manifest that men unconsciously do it honor. Doing Christ's work and obeying his will becomes a defense and a shelter stronger than anything else that can be devised.

Not only so, but Christian service gives to the one who serves a strength and power of resistance against evil, taking from it the power of tempting. The man who is fighting intemperance, and in his work goes into the places where drink is sold, feels nothing of the charm which such places hold for the weaker brother. Seeking the rescue of a loved one, or the salvation of souls, the Christian worker goes where he will, clothed as with an impenetrable armour, from which the most beguiling and enticing temptations glance harmless and unnoticed. He is too much in earnest and too much interested to be affected even if the special form of temptation had not lost all power to charm. An exchange tells of John Muir, the geologist, that when others were terribly frightened by a great earthquake, he, on the contrary, was intensely eager to watch every detail of the happening, delighted with the opportunity to observe for himself what occurred, and so to decide certain geological questions about which he had long disputed. His interest did not assure his safety, it only