

The Quiet Hour.

Samuel Anoints David,

S. S. LESSON. 1 Sam. 16: 1-13. August 2, 1903.

GOLDEN TEXT.—1 Sam. 16: 7. Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.

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Connecting Links.—At the close of his interview with Saul, Samuel orders Agag, to be brought before him, and slays him, ch. 15: 32, 33. Saul and Samuel then part, never to meet again in life, the former returning to Gibeah and the latter to Ramah, ch. 15: 34, 35. After a short interval the Lord rebukes Samuel for grieving over Saul's rejection, and sends him to Bethlehem to anoint a son of Jesse as king, ch. 16: 1-3.

I. The Visit to Bethlehem, 4-5

V. 4. Bethlehem; the "house of bread," the place where Rachael, the beloved wife of Jacob, died (Gen. 35: 16-20), the adopted home of Ruth, the scene of David's early life, from whom it was afterwards named "the city of David" (Luke 2: 4), and the birthplace of our Lord, Luke 2: 11. The elders of the town; the officers who ruled its civil and religious affairs, Josh. 20: 4; Ruth 4: 2. Trembled at his coming. They feared lest the purpose of his visit might be to reprove and punish some wrongdoing; or possibly they had heard of Samuel's breach with the king and dreaded Saul's displeasure if they should welcome the prophet.

V. 5. I am come to sacrifice. There is no untruthfulness here, but only the prudent concealment of the main purpose of the visit. Sanctify yourselves; that is, wash yourselves and put on clean clothes, a preparation required by the law for sacrifice, Gen. 35: 2; Ex. 19: 10, 22. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons. Samuel attended personally to the preparation of Jesse's household, both because it was the leading family of the place, and because by so doing he would be able to have a private interview which would further his purpose. Called them to the sacrifice. The service consisted of two parts. In the first, the animal victim was slain and part of it given to the priests. In the second, the offerer feasted on the remainder of the flesh with his invited guests. The offering of the sacrifice must be placed between vs 5 and 6.

II. The Family of Jesse, 6-11.

V. 6, 7. When they were come; to the sacrificial feast, held doubtless in the house of Jesse. Eliab; probably the same as Elihu, whom David afterwards appointed ruler of the tribe of Judah, 1 Chron. 27: 18. And said. His words were spoken in silence to God. Surely the Lord's anointed is before him. Eliab by his height and countenance seemed to Samuel the natural successor to Saul, ch. 9: 2; 10: 23. I have refused him. There was other work for Eliab and the rest, but king's work only for David, for he alone was fitted for it. Not as man seeth. The people admired Saul because of his great bodily strength and beauty. The Lord looks deeper and is to choose a king after his own heart, ch. 13: 14; 15: 28. The outward appearance; literally, "the eyes," which, "as contrasted with the heart, are figuratively employed to denote the outward form." But the Lord looketh on the heart. He alone can infallibly discern man's true inward character, 1 Chron. 17: 18; Luke 16: 15.

Vs. 8-10. He said; that is, Samuel. Shammah; also called Shimeah (2 Sam. 13: 3) or Shimea, 1 Chron. 20: 7. Two of his sons are mentioned: Jonadab, celebrated for sagacity (2 Sam. 13: 3), and Jonathan, for courage, 2 Sam. 21: 21. Seven. Including the three already named. The Lord hath not chosen these. No reflection is made on the character of the seven; it is simply declared that they are not God's choice for the kingship.

V. 11. Are here all thy children? Samuel's faith must have been greatly tried. God, he knew, had directed him to find a king among the sons of Jesse, and yet all of these who were present had been rejected. There remaineth yet the youngest. He had been too little considered to be sent for. He keepeth the sheep. He was young, and so was left in the fields while his elders worshipped. We will not sit down; at the sacrificial feast "the ancient Hebrews sat around a low table, with their legs crossed as do the modern Orientals." The luxurious practice of reclining came at a later date.

III. The Chosen of the Lord, 12, 13.

V. 12. Ruddy; with auburn hair and fair skin; marks of beauty in southern lands, where the hair is usually black. Of a beautiful countenance, etc.; literally, "beautiful-eyed and goodly in appearance." Compare the description of Joseph (Gen. 39: 6) and Moses, Ex. 2: 2; Acts 7: 20. Arise, anoint him. In anointing, oil was commonly poured on the head of a person. This signified, (1) the setting apart for the service of God; (2) the gift of the Spirit to impart fitness for office, Ex. 40: 15; Lev. 8: 2; ch. 15: 1; 1 King 19: 16. Messiah (Hebrew) and Christ (Greek) mean "the anointed One."

V. 13. Horn of oil; the sacred oil, made as described in Ex. 30: 23. In the midst of his brethren; in their presence. They do not seem to have understood the meaning of Samuel's action, ch. 17: 28. It is not said that even David or Jesse understood what Samuel was doing. Keil, however, thinks that Samuel must have told the two latter the object of his mission. The Spirit of the Lord came upon David; to prepare him for his life work. "The Hebrew for 'came upon' describes a sudden and pervading influence." (Cambridge Bible). The name David means "beloved" or "darling," and may have been given to him as the youngest of the family, their pet and joy.

Happiness is to feel one's soul good; there is really no other; and one may have this happiness even in sorrow; hence there are some griefs that are preferable to any joy, and that would be preferred by all who have felt them.—Joubert.

Do you envy the fisherman who lent his boat to Jesus? He offers us the same honor and He begs us to do Him the same favor; He comes to each of us and asks us to let Him have our daily work as His preaching place—the office and workshop, the counter, the desk, the mother's work in the home, the servant's work in the house—this is the pulpit He seeks. Will you let Him have it to-day?—Mark Guy Pearse.

God's aim in all our experiences is to make us better and stronger.

Bible Study, One Verse at a Time.

No 14.

Psalm 103: 14.

BY MRS. ANNA ROSS.

"For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust."

The Psalmist is standing here where the faith of many staggers. He is looking upon man flourishing like a flower, but the wind passeth over it, and it is gone. Disease, disappointment, death. Shall these things dim his faith in the father heart of his God? They only make him rest down the more implicitly upon the Divine knowledge as well as the Divine tenderness. A wise father considers the youth and feebleness of his little child in determining a chastisement or a task, and as far as his wisdom goes, the peculiar nature of that child as well. Our Father knoweth our frame perfectly, for He made it and fashioned it; and in all that He lays on or permits, He remembereth—thank God for that word—He remembereth that we are dust, how frail we are, how little we can bear. There is a tender and considerate measurement in all His dealings with us. "Thou dost weigh the path of the just." The very path along which we are to tread, and every obstacle on it, is not only appointed, but "weighed," that it may be neither too light nor too heavy. Drugs must be dealt out in measurements that note the scruple and the grain, and God deals out trouble to those that fear Him with a nicety that takes into account the number of the hairs of their head.

With what joyful confidence may we commit our dearest and our tenderest to His management, for "He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust."

A Prayer.

Lord, grant us eyes to see, and ears to hear,
And souls to love, and minds to understand,
And steadfast faces toward the Holy Land,
And confidence of hope, and filial fear,
And citizenship where thy saints appear
Before thee heart in heart and hand in hand,
And alleluia where their chanting band
As waters and as thunders fill the sphere,
Lord, grant us what thou wilt; and what thou wilt
Deny, and fold us in thy peaceful fold;
Not as the world gives, give to us thine own;
Inbuild us where Jerusalem is built
With walls of jasper and with streets of gold,
And thou, thyself, Lord Christ for cornerstone.
—Christina G. Rossetti.

True Greatness.

Man is great enough to defy God, he is too great to be annihilated. The moral nature is the greatest part of man, but man cannot trust his moral nature. He may be very good or very bad. His moral nature is unreliable. Pity a man who has gotten where the weight of wrong does not trouble him. You cannot educate a bad man into a good man. Education is a drawing out. How much drawing out will a lemon take to get sugar? The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man have been misconceived by some interpreters. We are not lineal descendants of Jehovah; there is but "one only begotten Son." A new nature is demanded to make man right.

It is not said that after keeping God's commandments but in keeping them, there is great reward. God has linked these two things together, and no man can separate them—obedience and peace.