

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

THE QUARTERLY REVIEW: A MISSIONARY LESSON.*

Begin the conversation, with Samuel the Prophet. The scholars will tell you, in answer to questioning, that a prophet is one who speaks for God. Have some of the prophets of Israel named, as Nathan, in the days of David and Solomon, Elijah and Elisha, later on, and the "writing prophets," as they are called, whose books are in the Bible, beginning with Isaiah. These were God's mouthpieces. Bring out clearly that, before they could speak for God, they must know Him and be seeking to do His will. Then, they must speak to the people in a language understood by the people.

It will be easy to show how the modern missionary is like a prophet. He speaks for God and teaches the heathen about Him. And he, too, must speak in the language of the people. Point out how highly favored Israel was in having the prophets to teach them about God. In this regard we are like them. We have many teachers to tell us about God. Should we not be eager to share our knowledge with the heathen? Sing Hymn 562, Book of Praise.

Now turn to Saul the King, and David. The point to be made here is the very great care which God took in choosing a king. First Saul was selected, and when he proved a failure, David was chosen. Bring out, by questioning, the main points in Saul's career, as far as the Lessons for the Quarter follow it: his private anointing as king, his public election, his rejection for disobedience, and his jealous enmity against David. Question, too, about David: how he was chosen as king, his victory over Goliath, his service in Saul's army, his friendship with Jonathan, his sparing of Saul's life, his wanderings, and his election, finally, as king of Judah, and then of Israel.

Get the scholars to see that neither of these kings, or any other merely human king is without fault, and that God was, all through Israel's history, making ready for the perfect king, Jesus Christ His own Son. It is the work of missions to establish His kingdom all round the world. Sing Hymn 434, Book of Praise.

Jonathan, the most beautiful example of friendship in all the Old Testament.—the scholars will be eager to tell about his love for David, and the sacrifices he made, the perils he dared for his friend. Contrast Jonathan's unselfish friendship with Saul's jealousy and rage; it will not be hard to decide which is in accord with the spirit of Christ. Sing Hymn 404, Book of Praise, and urge the duty and the joy of making this heavenly Friend known to others. Picture the peace and good-will which He brings wherever He is known.

The chief interest of the Quarter's Lessons, of course, centres in David. Direct the conversation to his shepherd life. Picture his care for the sheep, and the dangers to which he was often exposed in protecting them. Remind the scholars how the shepherd in the East often has to risk his life in defence of his flock.

Ask now, who called himself the Good Shepherd. Point out what the Good Shepherd does for His sheep (see John 10: 1-13), for example, He provides food for them, protects them, and chiefest of all, He actually lays down His life for them. Have the scholars turn to John

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10: 16 and read it in concert. Where are those "other sheep"? Many of them are in heathen lands, and it is our work to send missionaries to them who shall gather them into the fold of the Good Shepherd. Sing Hymn 458, Book of Praise.

Emphasize our duty to go with the gospel to the heathen, or help to send others. Close with a prayer that God will provide more laborers for the world's harvest.

A VETERAN PASTOR'S PRAYERS.

Lord Jesus, teach us Thy secret, the secret of the beautiful life. We would tarry with Thee until we have absorbed it. All other satisfactions fail. Our wandering hearts have gone hither and thither and have found nothing that can satisfy. We turn again to Thee. Thou art our rest; Thou art our peace. . . . Teach us to live Thy life. Make us at home with the Father as Thou wast, as Thou art. Make us at home with nature, which Thou has fashioned and dost control and animate. Let us be no longer strangers,—strange before God, strange among men, strange in Thy woods and Thy fields, strange even with ourselves, and always ill at ease. . . . Teach us the life of trust. Show us the simple way of obedience and service. Teach us to care for people more than for things. Show us this day, from Thy cross, how to forget even our sorrows in little, timely services to our fellows. . . . Lord, put us in such quick touch with Providence that the passing panorama of events shall be full of sweet and holy meaning for us, full of opportunities to help others, that thus we may glorify Thy name. . . . Gracious Saviour, whom hast Thou for us to help today? . . . We would linger with Thee, at the mercy seat, in this house and hour of prayer, that we may be filled with Thy spirit, and thus be equipped to do Thy will, and to represent Thee among men.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Think not to find this Kingdom great,
Upon some distant star,
Or in the pomps of royal state,
Or favored land afar;

Where sunny skies bend low to kiss
The foliage's brilliant green,
And souls of men are soothed by bliss
In other climes unseen.

Invisible to light of Day,
Serene through Doubt's cloud-lifts,
Within thy heart His Kingdom lifts
Its never-ending sway.
—Francis Edward Marsten, D.D., in
New York Observer.

ALONE WITH GOD.

Alone with God. That is what many a man needs. The rush of the age is to the town and the rush of the town is to the place of trade. It is all dwarfing. The things that make the man great in mind, happy in heart, and joyful in life, are precluded. A steady and single-eyed vision of God is the one thing needful. It is in solitude, far from business and "the maddening crowd"—off in solitude we often get the sublimest thoughts and loftiest aspirations. A season in the closet, alone with God, every day, would bring a strength, hope, and happiness, unknown to thousands. Mark says in speaking of our Lord and His disciples: "When they were alone, He expounded all things to His disciples." Let us draw apart from the world offener that the Master may in secret expound to us His priceless truth.

FOUND EVERYWHERE.

He is very frequently not the man you take him for. It is not at all uncommon for him to be in good society, highly connected, honorably esteemed, eminently respectable, and more than ordinarily prosperous. He is not a man to be sneered at or relegated to a back seat. He has his admirers and imitators, and even boot-lickers. He is a man of consequence in the community, and parents are not above pointing their children to him as a model.

His portrait was once painted by one of the old masters, the greatest of all the old masters, one who laid his colors with divine skill. At that time the fool was a farmer, a prosperous farmer. He had fertile lands, and the seasons were propitious. He found himself embarrassed with his riches. His barns were too small and he "had no place to bestow his fruits and his goods." He was equal to the emergency. No harvests were to be lost for the want of storage room. The old barns must give place to larger. All his fruits and his goods must be housed. It did not require a genius to decide on this piece of economy. He would have been less than a fool to have suffered his crops to go to waste.

When he got the corn and wheat and hay and barley, and grapes and olives all under shelter, carefully protected from weather and from thieves, he said, "Soul, thou has much goods laid up for many years, take them ease; eat, drink and be merry." He has reached his goal; he has realized his ideal; he has come into possession of his summum bonum. He knows of nothing beyond, or above, well-filled barns worth striving after. He is a materialist, taking no thought for that which is spiritual and invisible. Soul and body are to feed at the same trough, and find the hunger appeased by the same provender.

This picture is true to life. We have seen the man a thousand times. He is a merchant, a manufacturer, a banker, a lawyer, a doctor, and occasionally he enters the ministry. He is always known by the one ear-mark—seeking for ease for his soul in "much goods laid up for many years," counting that life consists "in the abundance of things that a man possesseth." He is after money, first, last and all the time.

No matter who he is, nor how brilliant his parts, nor how great the fortune he gathers, he has already been christened by the Master, and his name is spelled with only four letters. It is not the name by which he is known among his fellows, nor is it the name that will be inscribed on his tombstone, but it is the name written in the text of the old family Bible. He has overlooked it, or thought it belonged to the other man. Perhaps it does belong to the other man, for it is a family name, and the family is very large. They can truly say, "Our name is legion."

The sad thing is that so many men have set before themselves as their ideal the picture under which the Master wrote for title, "Thou Fool." If they succeed in their aim, the utmost they will make of life is the realization of that picture. They will label it success, and this is the title that will catch the eye of their fellowmen, and excite their envy and stimulate their emulation; but beneath the superficial glitter and glamor the true title has been applied, that four-letter title, and it can not be effaced. "So is every one that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."—Presbyterian Standard.