

A Wise Choice

One of the Twelve Stories of Solomon.

BY THE "HIGHWAY AND BYWAY" PREACHER

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Scripture Authority.—1 Kings, 3: 3-15.

SERMONETTE.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."
Sacred and profane history can produce examples which absolutely prove the truth of this declaration.
The fear of God is the open door to the sure, safe pathway of God-given wisdom which leads unerringly through the maze of human life and conditions and lands the soul at last on the commanding heights of God's certainty.
Human wisdom at best is but partial wisdom.
It has its limitations inflexibly determined by the finite.
It can but partially grasp and understand the complex circumstances and conditions of the present, and as for the future, what can man do but guess?
How pitifully circumscribed is the life which has only human wisdom on which to rely.
But it is not so where the wisdom of God unites with the wisdom of man, for the wisdom of God not only understands all the mysteries and perplexities of the life of the present, but it sees with unerring vision into the future and knows the end from the beginning. Hence it is that the one who walks in the wisdom of God shall not err in vision or stumble in judgment.
Solomon was richly endowed with human wisdom. Naturally he had a keen and discerning mind, and trained, as undoubtedly he had been, in all the learning of the east, he was splendidly equipped from the human point of view to direct wisely and well the affairs of a kingdom, but all this did not blind his heart to the fact that he needed God more than anything else.
We know this because Scripture tells us that "Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father." Here, then, we discover the secret of Solomon's wisdom and greatness and power. He loved God and so feared God, for this second condition is but the corollary of the first. Love of God inevitably leads to Godly fear. The one finds its expression and its complement in the other. Fear of God then was the beginning of Solomon's wisdom.
There is no more beautiful picture in all the Bible than this one of the fair young king humbly bowing before God, and asking for divine help in directing the affairs of the kingdom. Read it, Solomon's prayer and God's answer are a sermon in themselves.

THE STORY.
A WORLD conquest! Why not? King Solomon asked himself the question. A vision of greatness and power had come to him, a vision of one scepter over all the world and that scepter his, a vision of conquest of the nations to the east and the west of his kingdom, and he the triumphant conqueror.
Benaiah, the captain of the hosts of Israel, had been the first to suggest the thought to him when the former had urged an expedition against Rezon, who was then ruling at Damascus, and who was to be feared because of the enmity which he bore King David. Solomon well remembered the stirring campaign of his father which had made of Rezon an unrelenting enemy. The latter had been one of the chief warriors of Hadadezer, king of Zobah, and had escaped with a company of men when David had conquered the land and had killed Hadadezer. At that time Rezon had sworn to be revenged upon King David, but the opportunity had not come, and Benaiah, thinking that Rezon might plan an expedition against the new king, Solomon, proposed that the armies of Israel proceed against him.
And as an outgrowth of the suggested campaign had come the broader vision of a world conquest. Why stop at the conquest over Rezon? Why not extend the borders of Israel to the very ends of the earth? Why not signalize the beginning of his reign with a brilliant series of military expeditions, such as had marked the first years' rule of the kings of other lands in former ages?
King David, his father, had left him a strong army, which was already feared by all the nations about, and it was but natural that he should be ambitious to have its powers further extended. And where was there a nation that had such a mighty warrior as was Benaiah? Had not the fame of his deeds gone abroad, so that it was known everywhere how he had met in single-handed combat and had slain two lion-like men of Moab? And was it not also known how he had gone down in the time of snow and had slain in its lair a fierce lion, which had terrorized the entire country

round and had destroyed not only sheep and cattle but women and children as well? And then the Egyptians had good reason to know of the mighty Benaiah, for had he not slain their strongest warrior, after a desperate combat, his only weapon being his staff, while the Egyptian was armed with sword and spear?
With such a leader and with an army which had not known defeat for years, where was the foe which could stand up against it? Where was the nation which could not be conquered? Such were the questions which came to the mind of the young King Solomon after Benaiah had proposed the expedition against Rezon, and the vision of world-wide conquest opened up before him.
"Better send for Nathan the prophet and Zadok the high priest, and talk it over with them," came the thought, which brought a temporary check to the glow of enthusiasm which thrilled his being as he had pictured all the magnificence and glory and power which would be his when he had brought the whole world at his feet.
"But why talk with them?" he impatiently ejaculated. "If it were a question as to the religious observances, or the laws of the nation, it would be well, but what know they about war and conquest?"
And turning with an air of decision, as though that matter was settled and out of the way, he summoned one of the servants and dispatched him with a message to Benaiah and the other chief warriors of Israel that they should meet him in conference that day at the palace, "for," said he to himself, "we must needs lose no time, for so vast an expedition will require long and careful preparation."
As may well be supposed, Benaiah and the other officers of the army were highly pleased at the promise of such extensive military operations, and the active work of preparing for the expedition soon aroused unusual interest and enthusiasm throughout the kingdom. Not a word of commendation or of condemnation had come to the king from either Nathan or Zadok, although Solomon knew that they must have heard of the plans. But he felt rather relieved and glad that they had not sought him out, for he did not care to go into too deep an analysis of the motives and desires which actuated him in seeking a world conquest. Somehow, he felt that it would not meet their approval, and he was glad he did not have to answer uncomfortable questions and enter into long explanations as to his plans.
"But you must have God with you if your plans are to be a success," came the voice of conscience from within, for Solomon loved the Lord, and desired to do all that the Lord required. "Yes," Solomon persuaded himself, "but would it not be to the honor and glory of God to bring all kingdoms and all nations under the dominion of the nation whose God is the Lord? I will hold sacrifices at Gibeon and all the nation shall know that the Lord is with me in this thing."
So saying, King Solomon gave orders that Zadok prepare for the services, and on the appointed day he went thither, with all his courtiers and the chief men of his army, that they might worship. Day after day the ceremonies continued until at last a thousand burnt offerings had been sacrificed upon the high place. During all those days of worship and service the heart of the young king had been singularly touched and stirred, and there had come to him a new realization of the need of and dependence upon God. He had come to Gibeon filled with the great ambition to send his armies out into the world and extend his scepter to every nation, and one day when the question had arisen in his heart whether he was willing to give up that ambition if God was not with him in the plan, a fierce, impatient spirit had seized him, and the impulse was strong upon him to forthwith leave Gibeon and plunge headlong into the completing of the plans of the expedition.
"But would you attempt to conquer the world while yet you cannot rule your own spirit?" came the voice from within.
With sudden horror and an inner revulsion of feeling, Solomon realized the awful crisis which faced his life. Was he ready for a world conquest while yet he had failed to conquer his own heart? Was he ready to rule over the world, while yet he had not proved that he could rule righteously over the nation which had chosen him as king?
With these questions uppermost in his mind, while yet he was shaping answer to them, he sought his couch that night, and in a dream thought God spoke to him, asking him what he should give to him.
It was all so real that during all the years which followed Solomon never questioned but that God had visited him in person and had given him the promise of his blessing because he had chosen the wisdom and understanding of God rather than all the kingdoms of the earth. And more than once, as the borders of his kingdom extended and riches and honor and power flowed into him, did he exclaim: "Verily, the Lord hath kept his word and hath given not only wisdom, but all else besides."

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Houses in Berlin are numbered in luminous paint.
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LITTLE TRAILERS.
It is a fine thing to make yourself needed.
The way to be always respected is to be always in earnest.
One may study and gain knowledge; one must live to gain wisdom.
There's a lot of romance about the good old times, but we would kick like steers if we had to have them back.
PROVERBS.
Who serves at court dies on straw.
Water run by will not turn the mill.
Where the will is ready the feet are light.
Try your skill in gilt first and then in gold.
Pride that dines on vanity sups on contempt.
True valor knows as well how to suffer as to act.
Wisdom doesn't always speak in Greek or Latin.
Words spoken in an evening the winds carry away.
We ought to weigh well what we can only once decide.
After all the man who tells his troubles may be preferable to the one who tells his jokes.
Giving advice to some people is like presenting a bald-headed man with a bush and comb.
There are two kinds of love—the beautiful worship that finds its reward in constant service, and the little selfish affection that rewards itself by demanding servitude.
If you expect a disagreeable thing, meet it and get rid of it as soon as you can; if you expect anything agreeable, you need not be in such a hurry, for the anticipation of pain is pain—the anticipation of pleasure, pleasure.
There are two good rules which ought to be written on every heart—never to believe anything bad about anybody unless you positively know it to be true; never to tell even that unless you feel that it is absolutely necessary.
Years know more than books.

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We act as TRUSTEE for corporate bond issues, hold and care for property for benefit of minors or aged people.
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NEBRASKA IN BRIEF
NEWS NOTES OF INTEREST FROM VARIOUS SECTIONS.
ALL SUBJECTS TOUCHED UPON
Religious, Social, Agricultural, Political and Other Matters Given Due Consideration.

Seward merchants report a very prosperous year.
Mr. and Mrs. David H. Lytle of Hastings celebrated their golden wedding.
The Missouri Pacific in Otoe county has not paid its personal tax for last year, amounting to over \$14,000.
The barn of Charles Confer at Beatrice was destroyed by fire, entailing a loss of \$300. Probably incendiary.
In a statement filed in the district court at Lincoln Fred Whittemore receiver of the Citizen's bank of Firth, asserts that the depositors have received 70 cents on the dollar.
The Sarpy County Agricultural society will hold its annual farmers' institute at the opera house in Papillion February 11-12. The women have been given one day on the program.
Ed Cramer, a young man of 21 years, who came to York from Grand Island, and who had been working at the Le Grand hotel, attempted to commit suicide by taking carbolic acid.
John Fredericks of Wisner was arrested and brought to West Point on a charge of insanity. He was adjudged to be a fit subject for treatment and was taken to the hospital at Norfolk.
Governor Sheldon has honored the requisition of the governor of Illinois for the return of "Bud" Brooks, who is wanted on a charge of burglary. Brooks was out on parole and violated his parole.
The city fathers of Nebraska City have become ashamed of the city jail and have ordered all of the old contents removed and burned and after the jail has been overhauled, painted, will refit the same.
By a popular subscription taken up among the Bohemians of the state, \$500 has been raised for the use of the state circulating library. The money will be used to buy books relating to Bohemian history.
The swine plague is devastating many herds of hogs in York county. Already many farmers have lost nearly every hog and those who have not lost by cholera are selling off and say they will not commence again.
The State Railway commission signed its order in the oil rate case and formally promulgated the 30 per cent reduction, together with a order that the railroads return empty barrels at half the rate now charged.
The Dempster Mill Manufacturing company, Beatrice, observed Christmas by presenting every employe with a fine Christmas turkey. The company also made the semi-annual dividend to employes, which amounted to \$2,116.
The appointments of George L. Carter to the position of chief game warden, W. J. O'Brien as superintendent of fisheries and E. Hunger as deputy game warden were announced by Governor Sheldon. Game Warden Carter has been in the department since his first appointment as deputy by Governor Dietrich.
In Omaha while Dr. W. H. Latey was extracting teeth for Mrs. George Dierk of Bennington the woman died from the effects of less than half an ounce of chloroform, given by Dr. S. N. Hoyt, who ascribed acute spasm of the heart as the cause. Mrs. Dierk was to have twenty-six teeth extracted and desired to take chloroform.
The great growth of York has kept the York Electric Light and Power company employes busy installing new service and at times they have been unable to wire the new houses and business blocks as fast as wanted. Owing to the great increase of business they have had to purchase a 200-horsepower engine and install a large new motor.
Oney Nanel, the two-year-old child of Mr. and Mrs. A. N. Nanel of Raymond, met death in a strange and startling manner. While the mother was busy the child got some pop corn designed for the decoration of a Christmas tree. A grain lodge in the child's windpipe and despite the frantic efforts of the mother the little one died before medical aid could be summoned.
As provided by section 8 of the terminal tax law the several county and city clerks shall prepare separate assessment rolls for the assessment of local railway property in the cities and villages. In order that the work may be uniform throughout the state George D. Bennett, secretary of the State Board of Assessment, has prepared blanks for the guidance of the clerks and will forward them at an early date, together with two copies of senate file 261, which is the terminal tax law.
The Norton-Gregson packing company has moved its headquarters from Chicago to Nebraska City and the offices are in charge of R. W. Barnes and A. Giring, and all business will be done there in the future, all eastern offices having been closed.
The Salvation army did a good work in Nebraska City for the poor. They took up a collection for the purpose of providing a Christmas dinner for the poor and were so successful that they were able to fill seventy-two baskets with Christmas delicacies which they distributed about the city.

QUITE AS BAD.



Griggs—The idea of your letting your wife go round saying she made a man of you. You don't hear my wife saying that.
Briggs—No, but I heard her telling my wife that she did her best.
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We offer One Hundred Dollars Reward for any case of Catarrh that cannot be cured by Hall's Catarrh Cure.
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"Yes, but don't you think it's about time you relieved your mind?"
Important to Mothers.
Examine carefully every bottle of **CASTORIA**, a safe and sure remedy for infants and children, and see that it bears the **Signature of J. C. Ayer & Co.** In Use For Over 30 Years. The Kind You Have Always Bought.

Clemency can never exist itself with more applause than when there is the justest cause for resentment.—Pliny.
Lewis' Single Binder straight 5c cigar is good quality all the time. Your dealer or Lewis' Factory, Peoria, Ill.
A word is a winged seed—none can tell when once it has gone forth what its harvest may be.—Sydney.
ONLY ONE "BROMO QUININE"
That is **LAXATIVE BROMO QUININE**. Look for the signature of **E. W. GROVE**. Use the World over to Cure a Cold in One Day. 25c.

When women borrow trouble they usually pay back double.
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PILES CURED IN 6 TO 11 DAYS.
PAZO OINTMENT is guaranteed to cure any case of Itching, Blind, Bleeding or Prolapsing Piles in 6 to 14 days or money refunded. 50c.

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Lewis' Single Binder cigar—richest, most satisfying smoke on the market. Your dealer or Lewis' Factory, Peoria, Ill.

Sweet are the uses of adversity—for our neighbors.



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Positively cured by these Little Pills. They also relieve Distress from Dyspepsia, Indigestion and Too Hearty Eating. A perfect remedy for Dizziness, Nausea, Drowsiness, Bad Taste in the Mouth, Coated Tongue, Pain in the Side, TORPID LIVER, &c. **75c "Guaranteed."**

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