

DAVID UNITES THE KINGDOM

STORY BY THE "HIGHWAY AND BYWAY" PREACHER

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Scripture Authority; — 2 Samuel 3-5.

SERMONETTE.

It was David's integrity rather than his military prowess which conquered Israel.

David knew how to forgive. Israel had shared with King Saul in the persecution of David, but David was ready to return good for evil. He had no scores to settle when the providences of God brought his former enemies under his power.

Selfish ambition David had not. On the contrary, his career strikingly illustrates the possibility of a human soul gauging his ambitions in harmony with the will of God. He wanted only what God in his own time and his own way was willing to give. Hence he escaped the pitfalls of human plotting and intrigue and his hands were free from the stains of the blood of his enemies.

David desired the kingdom because God had promised it to him and because his ambition was to serve God through such exalted office. He wanted to be king that he might lead the nation in the paths of righteousness.

There is no loftier or holier ambition in the world to-day than the desire for power and position that such may be exercised and used to the honor and glory of God and the blessing of mankind.

Schisms in families or in nations are sad and distressing, and the sooner they are healed the better. But reunion must meet the voluntary approval of both factions. David might have subdued Israel by force of arms, but he chose rather the method of righteousness and truth and justice.

God can give what human scheming and plotting cannot gain.

The question arises: "Would David have been justified in the use of force in gaining possession of that which God had promised should be his?" Is the injunction: "Suffer wrong rather than do a wrong" a safe principle to follow in our dealings with others.

David in the Twenty-third Psalm, declares that after the walk through the valley of the shadow of death the Lord prepared for him a table in the presence of his enemies. Such proved literally true in his experience. God laid the united kingdom at his feet after all the plottings of his enemies had failed. It is surely true that they that wait upon the Lord shall not be ashamed.

THE STORY.

JOAB with feverish haste adjusted his garments and started towards the palace of King David. The few who were in the market place at that early hour were startled and surprised to see the captain of the hosts of Judah abroad at such time, knowing that only the most important matters could take him to the presence of the king at that unseasonable hour. But Joab was too much absorbed with his own thoughts to notice the startled

glances which followed him, for that morning a secret messenger had brought to him alarming tidings from Mahanaim, the royal city of Israel, where Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, reigned. These tidings were to the effect that the king had been slain upon his bed.

"And now is David's opportunity," muttered Joab to himself as he hurried on. "Now will he be able to bring Israel under his hand. Will he but give his consent, I will start with the army this very day."

And arriving at that moment at the palace door, he knocked impatiently, loath to let one precious minute be wasted. Urging the surprised servant to hasten he entered the audience room of the king, and not long after David the king entered.

"What brings you here at such unseemly hour?" he exclaimed anxiously.

"What but the king's good?" responded Joab, reassuringly. "I seek the bidding of thy king to go and bring Israel under thy banner."

"Thou, who hast killed Abner, the captain of the hosts of Israel, just when I had made a league with him," excitedly demanded David. "Wouldst thou kill Ishbosheth, the king, also?" Joab winced at the words of David.

"Nay, another hath already performed that righteous act," he replied.

"Righteous act! Callest thou murder an act of righteousness? Whose hand is stained with blood? Surely it was not thy emissary which hath done this thing?"

"Nay, nay, I am guiltless of such charge. I know not who hath killed Ishbosheth upon his bed, but this Joab, the leader of thy armies, knows, and that is that thy opportunity hath come to spread thy rule and thy kingdom over all Israel. Bid me," Joab went on rapidly and with increasing enthusiasm, "bid me go, and I promise thee ere a fortnight hath passed to have all Israel under thy banner."

David's eye flashed and he took a step toward Joab.

"Think you for a moment," he thundered, "that David would take a mean advantage of the misfortunes of his brothers in Israel? Does David's kingdom increase through unholy intrigues? Has God left the heavens that David cannot still trust him?"

"But it is now or never," protested Joab. "Israel needs a leader. If it find not such in thee they will choose one from among themselves to lead them. There are many ambitious souls among the men of Israel."

"But this thing is not of God. If Israel seek me not as king, then will not I reach out for the kingdom."

Further protest on the part of Joab was prevented by the hurried entrance of a servant who announced the arrival of two messengers from Israel who demanded to see King David at once, and at a sign from the king they were admitted.

Bowing low before the king, they waited until he bade them rise, when they addressed him as follows:

"We be thy servants, O king. We are Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and are come with tidings of good things for our Lord. Behold the head of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul thine enemy, which sought thy life."

And as they spoke they unrolled before the startled eyes of David and Joab the ghastly head of the dead king of Israel.

David turned away his head in horror, while Rechab and Baanah continued:

"The Lord hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed."

But they got no further, for David turned upon them and in a voice which cut like steel he said:

"As the Lord liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, when one told me saying, Behold, Saul is dead, thinking to have brought good tidings, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, who thought that I would have given him a reward for

his tidings. How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed? Shall I not therefore now require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the earth?"

And turning to his young armor bearers standing near he commanded them to seize Rechab and Baanah and to take them out and slay them, which when they had done they cut off their hands and their feet and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron.

But David had the head of Ishbosheth taken and buried in the sepulcher of Abner in Hebron.

Now, when tidings of these things reached the ears of the people of Israel, they knew that David had not been concerned in the wicked plot, and that he was not trying in any way to force an extension of his kingship over Israel. For this reason when the people from all the tribes had come together it was quickly agreed that they should seek David out at Hebron and there request that he become king over Israel as well as Judah.

And so it came to pass that a few days after, even while Joab was speaking to his intimate friends of the folly of King David by which he had lost his chance of winning control over all of Israel, that the elders from all the tribes sought audience with David at Hebron, saying to him:

"Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh. Also in time past when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel."

And David made league with them in Hebron before the Lord, and there they anointed David king over Israel, and the rejoicing of the people exceeded the morning which had filled the land because of the wars which had been waged between the kingdoms of Judah and Israel.

WILLIE HAD HEADED ORDER.

Garment of His Friend Tommy Jones Came in Handy.

There is a certain little boy who will be known to fame as Willie Smith, simply because his name is neither Willie nor Smith. He has a friend whom we will call Tommy Jones for the same good reason.

Willie Smith is very fond of going swimming, and, tradition to the contrary, he goes with his mother's permission. His papa visited the "swimming hole," as such places are usually called when patronized by small boys, and certified that there was no danger, so Willie is allowed to go whenever he pleases. But one day not very long ago he developed a bad cold as the result of the bath.

"With what did you dry yourself when you came out of the water?" asked mamma, who vaguely remembered that she did not remember having seen her small son take a towel with him when he went on the swimming expedition.

"I used my shirt," he explained. And mamma realized that her young hopeful caught his cold by wearing the wet shirt the remainder of the day, so she told him never, never to do it again.

The next time he went swimming fond mamma noted that no towel was brought home.

"Willie," she said, severely, "I told you never to go without a towel. How did you get dried?"

"Oh, I used Tommy Jones' shirt."

New Wood Preservative.

The preservation of wood with sulphur, applied in liquid form, is gaining special favor in Germany. The material completely fills the cell spaces of the fiber, and at moderate temperatures it is little affected by water, acids and alkaline solutions, though it oxidizes readily at high temperatures. Poplar is best adapted for this treatment, results with oak and pine being less satisfactory.

at the worm holes if you think this isn't genuinely old."

Welsh Rarebit.

This may be made with milk, ale or beer, says a writer. Personally I prefer the Boston rarebit made with milk and eggs. Cut one pound fresh American cheese in small pieces. Put into chafing dish or saucepan with two butter balls. Stir until smooth and creamy, then add red pepper, salt and mustard to taste. When well mixed add one-half cupful cream, stir until smooth, then add two beaten eggs and stir very hard for a moment longer. Turn off the flame, let stand two or three seconds without stirring, then serve on toast.

Marvelously Woven Muslin.

At Dacca, India, muslin has been woven so light and fine that three pieces of cloth, each 20 yards long by one yard in width, weighed only ten and a half ounces altogether. The weight of a square yard is only about one-sixth of an ounce.

A man often finds himself when he looks misfortune in the face.

THE SCHOOLHOUSES

WHAT THEY MEAN TO THE PEOPLE OF THE COMMUNITY.

AND HOW THEY ARE BUILT

It is the Money That Stays at Home Which Makes Good Ones Possible — A Simple System That Works.

Your schoolhouses. Those of the town and those of the country districts. You know what they mean to you and to your children.

They represent the difference between ignorance and enlightenment. They mean to your children the difference between signing their names with a mark or in writing. They represent the difference between the civilization of the twentieth century, as this country knows it, and the barbarism of benighted Asia or Africa.

You want the schoolhouse, do you not? You would willingly make sacrifices to keep it, would you not?

You glory in the free educational system of this country, do you not?

But, Mr. Citizen, did you ever sit down and consider carefully what it is that makes possible the schoolhouses of this country; the schoolhouses that stand as beacon lights on the tops of a thousand hills; the schoolhouses that carry cheer and enlightenment to the heartstones of the homes of a thousand valleys?

It is the taxes that you and your neighbor, and your neighbor's neighbor, pay into the school fund year after year, is it not?

And why do you pay it?

Because you own property—real estate, bonds and mortgages—and because that property is valuable.

What makes your real estate valuable?

It is the prosperity of the community. As the community grows and prospers the value of your property increases. As your property increases in value and you write your wealth in thousands instead of hundreds, the amount you pay into the school fund increases. When the school fund increases the old building gives place to a new and more modern structure, in which your children and your neighbor's children secure their instruction. And, again, the erection of the new building but adds more to the value of your property.

It is an endless chain system that builds villages out of cross roads, and cities out of villages.

Who are you, Mr. Citizen, and who is your neighbor and your neighbor's neighbor, whose contributions to the school fund make the schoolhouses possible? You, and your neighbor, and your neighbor's neighbor, are the farmers, the merchants, the doctors, the blacksmiths. You are each and every man who go to make up the community in which you live, and it is only when you work collectively that you accomplish results—that you build up new schoolhouses.

And how shall you work collectively?

By a simple system of boosting one another. You, we will say, have oats to sell—your neighbor buys them of you. He, you will say, has dry goods to sell—you buy them of him. It is this system of mutual help that makes the town grow into the city, that increases the price of real estate in the town and in the community surrounding it, that builds new schoolhouses.

The dollar that is unnecessarily sent away from home never bought so much as a nail for a schoolhouse, never put a shingle on its roof.

But the dollars that are unnecessarily sent away from home send back to the community which they left only ruin. It is these dollars that prevent the replacing of the leaking

roof, the broken door hinge or the worn out desk.

It is the dollars that are unnecessarily sent away from home by you, and your neighbor, and your neighbor's neighbor that decrease the value of your, and your neighbor's, and your neighbor's neighbor's real estate. That makes the school fund grow less year after year. That forces the discharge of the competent teacher for a less competent one. That reduces the standing of your schools in the educational system of the country.

Work it backwards, send your money for the things you need away from home instead of spending it at home, and the system that builds villages out of cross roads, and cities out of villages, that increases the value of your real estate and permits you to write your wealth in four figures where previously three figures were enough, and you will make of the thriving little city but a village, and of the village but a cross road.

Do you not believe, Mr. Citizen, and do you think your neighbor and your neighbor's neighbor should believe, that it pays best to keep the dollars in the home community? Keep the system moving forwards, help to make a city of your village. Boost your town's interests and you boost your own.

WRIGHT A. PATTERSON.

GAMES OF SHARPERS.

Some of the Methods Used for Securing Money Dishonestly.

Millions upon millions of dollars are fraudulently taken from the pockets of the people year after year through the operation of confidence men. The schemes used by these men are numerous. Nearly all are based upon the fact that the average person is always willing to take the best of a bargain.

During the past few months swindlers have been operating in different parts of the country, and their method, while a modification of an old swindling game, has some new features worthy of notice. Their usual procedure is to locate farmers who are not well known to local bankers and loan men. They approach the farmer and under pretext of seeking to purchase farming land, manage in some way to secure his signature. This is generally done by inducing him to write a letter, or to sign some statement. Once the signature is secured, a fictitious deed to the farmer's land is prepared and this is fixed up in such a manner as to show the seal of some notary or other officer. Then with this deed the swindler is in position to negotiate a loan upon the land. This game has been successfully worked in a number of western states.

Residents of agricultural districts should be continually on their guard against the signing of receipts or any kind of contract which may be presented to them by strangers. Within the past year some smooth swindlers have succeeded in securing thousands of dollars on fraudulent notes, securing from farmers, who were foolish enough to take for trial washing machines, refrigerators, etc., and to give their receipts for the same. These receipts turning up later as negotiable notes.

The writer of checks cannot be too careful in filling in the amounts. The favorite methods of the check receiver is to insert after the words "six," "seven," "eight" or "nine" the letter "y" or "ty" and change the ciphers in the check accordingly. Thus it can be seen that a check written for eight dollars, by the addition of the letter "y" can be made to read for eighty dollars and the changing of the amount, if it be in numerals, by the addition of cipher, makes the forgery, when well executed, hard to discover.

The Reason.

"In this settlement," said the Billville farmer, "we call all the literary fellers we kin ketch 'leadin'' authors, because as a rule they're powerful handy at leadin' mules to water."—Atlanta Constitution.

SKY TELLS THEM MUCH.

Heavens Like an Open Book to Men Who Follow the Sea.

There is probably no class that can tell more as to what the weather will be from a glance at the sky than seafarers. This is the natural result of their constant observance of the heavens for the lack of something else to look at when at sea. Thus the sky becomes to the mariner an open book, which he reads by instinct as does a child the face of its parent. A navigator will tell you that a rosy sunset presages fine weather; a sickly looking, greenish hue, wind and rain; a dark or Indian red, rain; a red sky in the morning, bad weather or much wind, perhaps rain; a gray sky in the morning, fine weather; a high dawn, wind; a low dawn, fair weather. Remarkable clearness of atmosphere near the horizon, distant objects, such as hills, usually visible or raised by refraction and what is called a good "hearing day," may be mentioned among signs of wet, if not wind. A landsman is much more ignorant of

the signs of the sky, as he has so many other things to distract his attention that he seldom takes much notice of its different phases, which foreshadow so clearly what may be expected in the way of weather.

Papa's Occupation.

Recently a little girl applied for a registration blank in a New York school. The teacher wrote down her name, her address, her age, but at "Father's occupation" the child balked and hung her head. The teacher had visions of a parental burglar, and reasoned gently. "Tell me what it is, my dear, and I will see whether we shall put it down or not." "No'm, I won't tell," the girl insisted. "Just tell me," said the teacher, "and I won't speak of it to anyone else." The little girl hesitated and twisted her hands. "He's a worm eater," she finally burst out. "A worm eater!" cried the horrified teacher. "Yes'm, He's a worm eater in an antique." And it afterward developed that the father was daily engaged in boring imitation worm holes in bogus antique furniture, so that the dealers can say: "Look

TOWN BOOSTING TIPS.

The visitor who trips over your broken sidewalk will not have a very high opinion of your town as a place of business.

The home town is the best place for the boys if you will make the home town prosperous. Keeping the money at home will do this. It means home opportunities for your children.

Don't drive around the hole in the road week after week. Get your neighbors together and fix it.

The home market for the farm products is the saving clause in our system of government. Take away the in your community. Not necessarily home markets and the farms will soon become unprofitable and valueless.

No city mail-order house will extend credit to you when times are hard, or crops fail. Could you consistently ask it of your home mer-

chant when you send your money to the city during the days of prosperity?

Encourage small factories to locate by means of a bonus, but by keeping the children in the home town that they may become factory employes, and get a home opportunity to raise in the world.

Do not begrudge the money paid for taxes when it is used for road and town improvements. Such an expenditure is like bread cast upon the waters—it will return many fold.

Roof Gardens for Berlin.

It is proposed to introduce roof gardens in Berlin. A good many doctors and professors are doing all they can in favor of the scheme, and are agitating for the gardens, particularly in the narrower city thoroughfares. The idea would not be difficult to carry out, the houses being mostly all of one height, and it is already possible in many parts to walk from one street to the next along a good broad roof track.