

VISIT OF QUEEN OF SHEBA

One of the Twelve Stories of Solomon.

BY THE "HIGHWAY AND BYWAY" PREACHER

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Scripture Authority.—Kings, 10:1-13.

SERMONETTE.

"Behold, a greater than Solomon is here." Do you hear the challenge of Scripture? A contemplation of this story of Solomon and appreciation of his wisdom and glory bring with them nothing but condemnation in that we can discern the splendors that marked his life and reign while at the same time we miss the beauty and charm of the son of God, the greater than Solomon.

"The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it." And the judgment will be just, for how can we escape when we have neglected so great opportunity of seeing and knowing him who is called "Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace?"

True it is of the world as Isaiah declares: "When we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised and we esteemed him not." It is not that the beauty and the glory and the power are not there, but it is that we turn our faces from him who would reveal all these things to us, and see only the temporal things of life.

Having ears we hear not. But not so with the queen of Sheba, the country far, far to the south, for when tidings came of a certain King Solomon, and of his wisdom and the splendors of his kingdom, she listened to the story, and determined that she would prove to her own ears and her own eyes that all she had heard was true. And so she came!

CAME! Do you grasp the significance of that word? Where you are now dwelling in ease and contentment you will never be able to know that these things which are spoken of the greater King Jesus are true. You have heard the reports. You have been told over and over again by those who have come straight from the presence of King Jesus that he and he alone can satisfy the heart of man, and yet you have been content to stay where you are in the far country of sin. Why not, like the queen of Sheba, come and prove whether the things you have heard are really so?

King Solomon received the queen of Sheba because she came as an honest inquirer. He was willing that she should see and hear and know. And the greater than Solomon invites the most searching kind of honest investigation and testing. "Prove me," is the invitation.

THE STORY.

BUT what if the story is true? and as the question kept pressing itself in upon her, she tapped her daintily-sandaled foot impatiently upon the polished marble floor, as though

she demanded answer from the very stones at her feet. But no answer came to her ears but the soft, muffled tap of her foot upon the floor.

"It all comes from listening to the idle tales of the wanderer and adventurer," she exclaimed at last impatiently; and then almost in the same breath she added:

"But what if the story is true? How I wish I knew."

"This King Solomon of Israel must be a wonderful person," she continued musingly to herself, as she threw herself upon the low divan and gave free rein to the thoughts which crowded into her troubled heart. "And his God must be even more wonderful than the gods of Sheba."

"But no," she added hastily, "this cannot be. Let me not be disloyal to my gods and my land. What fairer land could they give than the spice-laden fields, the golden sands of her rivers and the precious stones? Surely the God of Israel cannot have done more."

"But your gods never divided the waters of a mighty river, nor threw down the walls of a city," came back the answer as snatches of the story of the nation of Israel came to her mind as they had been related to her but a few days before by the traveler.

This traveler had come on one of the trading ships which had touched at a near-by port, and the wonderful stories of the land from which he had come had reached her ears and she had sent for him. And he had come, glad of the chance to tell to the beautiful queen of the land of Sheba his story. Eagerly she had listened while he had told of the people of Israel, of the God of Israel and his wonderful leadings and dealings, of the land which he had given to his people, and of the wonderful king whom God had established upon the throne. And when he had gone and the first thrill of the story had been spent, she found doubt creeping into her heart.

It was naught but the fair dream of a romancer. No land could be better than her land. No gods were better than the gods of her fathers and her fathers' fathers. She would not prove disloyal to them. But always while she sought thus to bring herself back to rest content with what she already possessed, there persisted this question:

"What if the story is true?" "And how shall I ever know whether it is true or not?" she asked herself at last.

"Why not go and see?" An incredulous little laugh burst from her lips at the very thought of such a thing, and to prove that it was impossible she began to run over in her mind the many seemingly insurmountable things in the way of such a long, hard and perilous journey. She might just as well give up her people and her kingdom as to undertake such a journey, for while she was gone, what might not happen?

"But what if the story is true?" came back the question again and again. And it gave her no peace. To every reason great and small which she could think of why she should not go on the journey, the question kept coming back with redoubled force: "What if it is true?"

"If it is true," she exclaimed at last, with an air of decision, "I want to know. And how shall I know save as I go and see for myself? Did I send a deputation to this King Solomon, I should have only their say-so. If Israel has such a King and such a God, I must see and know for myself, if I would be satisfied."

"And so would you go?" she asked herself at last. "Yea, I would," she exclaimed with an air of decision. Rising hastily as though that matter was now settled, she summoned her waiting maid.

"Go, Felice, and dispatch messengers to the port. I would see the traveler who came thither on the ship and who told such wonderful stories of the land from which he came. Make haste, for if I remember

rightly the boat was to have sailed this day."

Thus admonished Felice quickly had the swiftest runner on his way, and that evening he had returned, bringing with him the traveler whose stories had so aroused the fair queen. "How can one make the journey to thy land?" she demanded, eagerly.

"What," exclaimed the man, wonderingly, "would you face the fatigue and danger of so long a journey?"

"Yes, yes," the queen responded. "Thy stories have roused in me a spirit which will not be stilled. I must go and prove thy words."

"And thou shalt not be disappointed," was the confident response.

One month later found the queen of Sheba well on her way to the land of Israel. Her determination to make the long, perilous journey had come as a surprise and shock to her people, but when they realized her earnestness of spirit and desire to learn the truth of the wonderful things she had heard, they had at last heartily entered into her plans and had laden her camels with the richest treasure which her kingdom afforded, for, said they:

"Our queen shall carry off her best to the land where the great and mighty God rules."

But, oh, the wearisomeness of that long journey. Had not her desire been so great she would have turned back more than once. But it was when on the burning sands of the desert that the greatest test came. There was murmuring among her great retinue of servants and she was weary and faint, and their water was almost exhausted. Should she go on or should she turn back? Did not her own country offer all that her heart could desire?

"But I would know of this wonderful King Solomon, and of the God who has his dwelling place in the midst of his people," she cried almost in despair at last. "Yea, I will keep my face set steadfastly toward this land of Israel, though I perish in the attempt."

And with the final resolve and the putting away of the temptation to turn back there came peace to her heart and she said, softly: "Perhaps the God whom I seek will bring me back this way after I have seen all the wonderful things of which I have heard."

"Yes," said the queen, lifting her eyes and looking about her. "Yes, I thought I was not mistaken. This is the place. Ah, how near I came to turning back in my quest, and how glad I am now that I kept on. What wonderful things have I heard and seen. Truly the God of Solomon is the one and only God. Not half was told me of all the wisdom and prosperity which the God of Israel has given his servant Solomon. And now I go back to my land, and the God of Solomon shall be my God, and he shall be the God of my people, for I have seen and do know that there are no gods like to the God of Israel."

Aids Prison-Gate Work.

The Countess Von Boos-Farrar, a relative of the late Archdeacon Farrar, is deeply interested in the prison-gate work of the Salvation Army. The countess is gifted with a beautiful voice and has on several occasions sung to the prisoners in the tombs. She sang lately to the men of the Bowery mission, New York city.

Shows Gains.

The last report of the Presbyterian Congo missions says: "The work is gaining in quality and quantity. There has been a great increase in the intensity and extensiveness of the work. The results are worthy of all the sacrifices made. The government and the conscienceless Catholics are our chief source of embarrassment."

Pay 18,000 Men in Twenty Minutes.

At the Baldwin Locomotive works, Philadelphia, the clerks are so expert in handing out wages on pay-day that 18,000 men receive their pay in less than 20 minutes.

Industrial School for Korean Boys.

The Southern Methodist mission in Songdo, Korea, opened last year an industrial school for boys with 17 pupils, and now reports 120, which could be easily increased to 200 if they could be accommodated. The girls' school had last session 49 pupils, 23 of whom were boarders and 46 members of the church.

Antiquity of Beer.

The ancients had beer, but whether it was made from hops does not appear. It is known that the Egyptians made beer from barley, and Pliny writes of a beer that was made in Gaul and other parts of Europe from corn and water. Lager beer, or German beer, is probably of comparatively modern date.—N. Y. American.

True Manhood.

It should be the highest ambition of every man to possess true manhood—that divine attribute which distinguishes the human from the rest of the animal creation and makes him the best and noblest object beneath the skies, the crowning work of an almighty hand.

WHERE LINCOLN GREW TO MANHOOD

LANDMARKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE EMANCIPATOR'S EARLY LIFE IN KENTUCKY AND INDIANA



On February 12 of every year the mind of every American loyal citizen is momentarily turned to the thought that upon that day, just so many years

ago, Abraham Lincoln, one of the world's greatest men, was born. Some merely give the celebration a thought, but those who have made the life of Abraham Lincoln a study, and those people who live in Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois look upon the birthday anniversary as something more than the mere passing of a milestone. Each of these states claims a right to being the home of the man who has made for himself an immortal name in the history of the world's greatest men.

Historians say that Lincoln was born in Hardin county, Kentucky. In fact, he was born in La Rue county, which, however, is a subdivision of Hardin county. Chroniclers continue with their biographies and say that he, together with his father, mother and a sister, went to Indiana and entered a claim to a piece of land in Spencer county. As a matter of fact, he entered a claim to a piece of land in Warrick county, but which has been set aside and named Spencer county. The Lincolns went to Indiana in 1816, the same year that Indiana was admitted to the union as a state. He entered a quarter section of land, built a log cabin and lived there until 1830.

It was known that Thomas Lincoln, father of Abraham Lincoln, was in poor circumstances. To say that Abraham Lincoln was the son of a poor carpenter and farmer gives an insight into hard conditions that little Abe had to face when he was a youngster. When he went to Indiana he was just

and learn what he could in the real court, which was in session there several times during the year. The court house in Boonville, then a small hamlet of less than 300 inhabitants, in strong contrast to the beautiful new structure that now adorns the beautiful little town, stood in the very spot where the new one now stands, in the center of a large court square. It was a frame building; the architecture was, to say the least, very novel. A ditch, two feet wide and two feet deep, was filled with smoothly hewn logs, on which was built a stone wall 18 inches high. This furnished the foundation upon which the building proper rested. The building itself was never entirely completed. It was weather boarded, but neither plastered nor lathed. It remained in this condition until 1836, which was after the Lincoln family had moved to Illinois. It was capable of holding only a hundred people and could only be used in the summer. In the night the cattle which grazed about town would go there for shelter. Such was the structure where President Lincoln received his first impulse to become a lawyer. Here it was that he received his first rudimentary practice in pleading cases that afterward aided in making him the lawyer of the reputation he had.

Shortly after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln a picnic party from the little town of Dale went up to Lincoln City to the Lincoln farm and spent the day. The excitement was so high at that time that old people as well as young went to the farm and enjoyed themselves visiting the historical places in and about the Lincoln farm.

The cabin was still standing and but a short distance up on the hillside was a marble slab that marked the spot



OLD LINCOLN CABIN IN SPENCER COUNTY, INDIANA

seven, and remaining in Indiana until 1830 he spent 14 years of his life in Indiana, or until he was 21 years of age.

During Abraham Lincoln's 16 years of life in Indiana he had read and re-read this list of literary and historical books over and over again. His good nature among Lincoln City people was not unnoticed; all agreed to his honesty and good nature. Questions of dispute and petty differences were at first submitted to him in a joking way, and later on in a sincere way, until he was complimented for his honest and just way in settling disputes and differences. He was told more times than once that some day he would turn out to be a lawyer.

Having read all the literary books and what few there were of law in and around Boonville, Lincoln heard of the court at Boonville. He resolved to go down to that place, 20 miles distant,

where the good mother of Abraham Lincoln lay beneath the sod. While there the picnickers went through the cabin where Lincoln saw his mother pass away and from which place he returned to Kentucky to get a minister to come to Indiana and bury his mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln. A few old relics were found, among them being an old knot maul and an old fashioned mouldboard plow, both of which had been left there when the Lincolns moved to Illinois. The old plow was brought outside and an old man by the name of Gabriel Medcalf stood between the handles while one of the party caught a picture of the old Lincoln cabin. The old man carrying the pole was Joseph P. Haines, better known as Uncle Porter Haines. The picture of Lincoln's second log cabin was made from the original taken at the time this party went to the home along in the seventies.

Eager for Bible Knowledge.

Rev. W. M. Junkin writes from Korea of the Korea; Christians making sacrifices in order to attend the Bible teaching services and says: "Where but on the mission field can you find men clamoring for Bibles and running with them to anyone who can teach them saying: 'Tell me the meaning?' This is the case here and it is the most encouraging phase of the work in Korea at present."

Nature's Decoration.

During the past few months in Switzerland and France there have been brought to light several caverns in which petrification of water has wrought marvelous effects of crystalline decoration. The last of these to be announced is a magnificent grotto laid bare by a fall of rock at the Pointe du Taland, Canton of Belle Isle-en-Mer. The grotto is accessible at low tide.

Need Cotton Hand Looms.

The revival of the cotton hand loom is thought to be the solution of the question of the industrial regeneration of India. This year there were spun

213,057,534 pounds of cotton, a falling off of more than 14,000,000 pounds, but the yards woven amounted to 254,284,745, an increase of 23,000,000 yards. This has been due to the great increase in the number of hand looms in use.

Fortunes in Australia.

The commonwealth of Australia is still wide enough and undeveloped enough to offer those opportunities for which adventurous and ambitious men are ever seeking. It still holds enough of romance to give a zest to everyday life. There are still fortunes to be made by the man who begins with nothing but a stout heart and a ready wit.—British Australasian.

Bible in Dakota Schools.

There is at least one state in the union which does not seem afraid to teach the Bible in the public schools. In North Dakota a two years' course in Bible study has been made a part of the curriculum of the State Normal school. Recently 330 pupils attended these classes, which were given by officers of the Sunday School association.