

THE KING'S RECALL

David Returns to Jerusalem.

STORY BY THE "HIGHWAY AND BYWAY" PREACHER

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Scripture Authority:—2 Samuel, chapter 19.

BERMONETTE.

"Why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?"—Said that the king has been forced to flee; but sadder still is it that the people are slow to bring him back.

What a picture we have here of the human heart and its relations to its Lord and King, Jesus Christ.

The alluring voice of self-indulgence and sin speaks in the ear and it steals away our hearts from loyalty to the true King.

The next step in the downward course is open rebellion against the rule of the true and rightful King.

The king is driven forth. One cannot read the chapter recounting David's departure from Jerusalem without an overwhelming sense of the sadness and shame of it all. But how infinitely more tragic and sad is it when the King of kings and Lord of lords is forced to flee from the rebellious heart!

And when the fires of sin have burned themselves out and the heart feels its desolation and loss, what reproach it is that there is no move to bring the King back and reestablish him upon the throne!

The King cannot come except by invitation. He may not be far away. Nay, Scripture giveth the King's own words:

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock," he says. He waits on the threshold. The heart must say: "Come in."

Think of what Jerusalem was without its king. The palace of cedar deserted, and the city without a ruler to whom they could turn for advice and help.

Think of the human heart without its King. The temple which God has created as his own peculiar dwelling place empty, or worse, occupied by self, and the whole life drifting without the master hand of the Pilot to steer clear of the rocks and the shallows upon which so many lives are shipwrecked.

Let us go, then, at once and call back our King.

How many times daily are we forced to do this very thing? Neglect, or conduct that is worse, drives forth the King, and we must turn and invite him again to enter, in order that we may sup with him and he with us.

THE STORY.

NOT until after the news of the death of Absalom and the utter failure of the rebellion which had at the first been managed so brilliantly and successfully did the people of Israel and Judah realize the enormity of their wrong doing. Then they wondered how they could have been so easily led astray, and contention arose among the people, each charging the other with responsibility for the misstep. They saw now how vain and ambitious a fellow the man Absalom had been; how little of real worth there was to be found in him, and they saw also

BEFORE THEY WERE HATCHED.

This Young Lady Proceeded to Count Her Chickens.

Perhaps she read the statement made by the department of agriculture that the value of the eggs laid by the hens of the United States in a year would be enough to pay off the national debt, or, anyway, she "just thought it up," but, anyway, this pretty little Baltimore girl was convinced that she had everything all fixed. She has been engaged to a very nice young fellow for some time, but to most people the amount of his present salary would appear an insurmountable obstacle to matrimony. This was the view of her father, but when expressed she met it with a happy smile.

"Oh, I have thought that all out," she declared.

"You have, eh?" papa asked, knowing something of his daughter's business abilities.

"Yes. And it was so easy," she bubbled. "I was passing the market the other day, and I saw a dear little polka-dotted hen for only 60 cents,

as never before the sterling qualities of their aged king, and appreciated how much was owing to him for the nation's greatness and prosperity.

During those days of darkness, and doubt, and uncertainty, memory was busy, and the people recalled David's mighty deeds, from the first encounter with the giant Goliath to the many brilliant campaigns, through which he had led his armies. When had the nation had such a deliverer as David had been? When had they ever had such a leader as David, since the time of Moses and Joshua? Where was there a ruler in all the nations about so faithful to his people, and so loyal to God? He had kept the nation free from idolatrous practices of the nations about. He had organized and solidified the nation as a whole as it had never been before. He had made the name of Israel to be honored and feared among the nations about.

And with the reaction which began in the nation following the collapse of Absalom's rebellion the memory of all these things swept over the minds of the people, and the question arose on every hand:

"What shall be done?"

The king had been driven forth. What was now to be done? Shame at their disloyalty, and anxiety over the consequences of their wrong doing gave rise to wranglings and disputings among themselves, and added to the confusion of the situation.

Some there were—perverse and rebellious spirits—who set themselves to plotting further mischief. Absalom was dead, to be sure, but the spirit of Absalom still was at work in their hearts and far from longing for the return of King David, they secretly set themselves to further insurrection. The king was old, and could not be with them many years longer. He had lost his grip on things. He had been driven out of the royal city. Why again saddle the aged king upon them? Let him remain in exile. They would seek out another who should rule.

This new conspiracy was strongest among certain of the tribes of Benjamin, prominent among whom was Sheba, the son of Bichri. But among all the tribes of Israel there were malcontents, who were only waiting the call of a leader to make fresh rupture in the nation.

Such was the chaotic state of the nation while the old and sorrow-stricken king remained at Mahanaim. And if in the hearts of the people the memory of David's greatness and goodness and power came crowding, into his heart there came likewise the memory of other days. Now that the first poignant grief over the death of Absalom was passed and he had time to contemplate his state and think on what the loss of the nation and the royal city meant to him, a deeper, more crushing sorrow came upon him. Jerusalem, the holy city of God, the place where with joy he had set up the tabernacle of the Lord and whither he had brought the ark of the covenant of the Lord.

When first he came upon the stronghold years before while it was still in the hands of the enemy the inspiration had come to him to conquer it for the Lord. What a glorious situation for the city which should become in a peculiar sense the habitation of the Lord, he had thought. And so in the strength of the Lord and at the peril of his life he had ascended by almost superhuman effort the precipitous walls and had after a fierce hand-to-hand conflict subdued the city.

And because of what that city had cost him, and because of what it had become in his thought and ambitions he longed with an intense longing to be back there once more. It was in that city he had planned and purposed to build the Lord a splendid temple, but God had said him nay, and had given him the promise that his son should build the Lord a house. And this thought of the future had made bright the late years of his life as he had set about gathering material which would be used in the construc-

tion of such a temple as he longed to see built.

But now he was an exile from his beloved city. Were his dreams for the future of the city never to be realized? Was he never more to dwell there? Thus in sorrow and doubt he waited. But no word came from his people looking to his return.

But one day a delegation came to Mahanaim from the northern tribes, bringing words of good cheer to the king and urging his return.

"While thou art absent, Sheba, the son of Bichri, and others are busy striving to cause further trouble," they said. "Come with us, and we will establish thy kingdom."

"But how can I return," David cried to his confidential advisers, after he had dismissed the delegation, "while the people of Judah, mine own brethren, and while Jerusalem, the holy city, speaks no word of invitation?"

So this proved a great sorrow to David that no word had yet come to him from Jerusalem, and those who served near to the king discerning the grief of his heart over this thing, sent messengers secretly to Zadok and Abiathar, the priests at Jerusalem, saying:

"Speak unto the elders of Judah, saying, Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house? Seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, even to his house. Ye are his brethren, ye are his bones and his flesh: wherefore then are ye the last to bring back the king?"

Now when this word was repeated in the ears of the elders by Zadok and Abiathar, after they had summoned them into their presence, deep sorrow seized their hearts that they had so forgotten and neglected their king.

"Why," they said, "we had feared his anger, and thought that he would return but to punish us for our disloyalty."

"Nay, but thou hast misjudged our king, for his heart is towards his people and Jerusalem, continually."

"Yea, and the tribes to the north have been first to send word to the king beseeching his return. However, if thou shalt send speedily and ask the king to return he will forgive thy neglect and return with joy to his land," urged the priests.

"Then we will send at once," they all exclaimed. "For our city and our land is desolate without its king."

So they sent this word unto the king:

"Return thou and all thy servants."

And the king returned, and came to Jordan. And Judah came to Gilgal to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan.

The Lesson.

A writer says that when he was a lad the standard of gentlemanliness was impressed upon him by his father—not with a strap—in a way that he never forgot. They were walking in the country, and as they reached a stile a workman, who was on the other side before them, and had the right of crossing first, stood aside until they had passed. The boy, thoughtless, after the fashion of his kind, got over first, saying never a word. Then his father got over and said, "Thank you" to the man. Turning to his son he said: "You did not thank the man who stood aside for you." "But he isn't a gentleman," answered the lad. "Perhaps not," was his father's crushing rebuke, "but I want you to be."

Will Test Foundations.

The dean and chapter of St. Paul's cathedral, London, acting under the advice of Mervyn E. Macartney, consulting engineer, are about to apply a practical test of the safety of the cathedral. Metal disks will be placed in the pillars in the crypt and other parts of the building, and by accurate measurement it will be possible to come to a definite conclusion as to whether the foundations and supports are stable or not.

Kept.

A man keeps bad company. Good company keeps the man.

Watches Baked and Frozen.

"I will be with you in a moment, I must finish baking this batch of watches first."

The speaker was a jeweler. He said, as he worked:

"I suppose you are surprised at the idea of watch baking. I will explain. The machinery of a watch is delicate; yet it must work the same in winter as in summer, the same in Russia as in Cairo, the same in the Sahara as in Iceland. There is only one way to accomplish this. The watch must be regulated to heat and cold."

"I am regulating these watches to heat. Afterward in a refrigerator I will regulate them to cold. Then, when they go out in the world they won't disgrace themselves in any climate."

"Chronometers must be regulated more carefully than watches."

Sea Furnishes Living to Many.

In Norway and Sweden 36 persons out of every thousand live by seafaring. The next best average in this particular is in England, where there are 17 in every thousand.

THE DEATH OF SAMSON

Sunday School Lesson for Dec. 1, 1907

Specially Prepared for This Paper

LESSON TEXT.—Judges 16:21-31. Memory verses 28-30.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Be strong in the Lord, and the power of His might."—Eph. 6:10.

TIME.—B. C. 1116-1096. During the last part of the period of the Judges, the 40 years of the Philistine oppression of West Israel, 1134-1094, and contemporary with the first 20 years of Samuel.

PLACE.—If we make Jerusalem and Hebron centers from which to measure, Zorah, the birthplace of Samson, will be 14 miles west of Jerusalem; the valley of Sorek, two miles farther west; Timnath, four miles south of Zorah; add Ashdod, 20 miles further west near the sea. Hebron is 20 miles south of Jerusalem, and Gaza 35 miles directly west. See colored map. The tribe of Dan bordered on the north of Judah and west of Benjamin, the line running through Jerusalem east and west.

Comment and Suggestive Thought.

The Samson Stories.—It seems strange, at first sight, that three chapters of the Bible should be given to the story of such a man as Samson—great, strong, jovial, good-natured, ready to fight, equally ready to play rough jokes and utter witty sayings, with an animal nature overshadowing the spiritual. It is still more strange that in the roll-call of heroes of the faith in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, Samson should be named with Abraham, Gideon, and David, among those "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions."

Samson and His Characteristics.—1. The name Samson is derived from the Hebrew word for "sun," and means "sunny" or "sun-hero." He was born at Zorah in the more southern of the two settlements of the tribe of Dan, on the borders of Judah, 14 miles west of Jerusalem. His father's name was Manoah.

2. Even before his birth his mission was announced. He was to be one who should "begin to save Israel out of the hand of the Philistines," and to this end was to be consecrated to God (Judges 13). It is a great thing for any person to be so endowed and so trained as to have a definite mission in this world. Only partially did Samson fulfill his ideal, but the presence of it influenced his whole life.

3. The consecration of Samson was through the Nazirite vow, which required (Num. 6: 2-6) total abstinence from grapes, wine, and all intoxicating liquors; that the hair should go uncut; and that all contamination with dead bodies be avoided. It was usually a temporary vow, but Samson and John the Baptist were perpetual Nazirites. The meaning of the vow was probably "entire consecration to God."

It is to be noted that, according to the record, Samson, with all his other failings, yet kept sacred the conditions of this vow. On the keeping of the vow his strength and prowess depended.

4. The first and most effective of the endowments of Samson for his mission was his great strength, which, in general, he used to deliver his nation from the power of the oppressor, although not always in the wisest way.

5. A second special endowment of Samson was his sense of humor, his impulsive practical joking, puns, and riddles. These were an advantage to him even in his efforts to overcome the Philistine oppressors.

6. "He was a born fighter. He knew his strength and loved to use it. Nothing stirred him like the joy of a battle, unless, indeed, the sweet rewards of victory, its spoils and pleasures. Such men commonly degenerate into mercenary brutes, fighting here and there, on whichever side inclination may be strongest or personal advantage greatest."—Rev. Ira S. Dodd.

But it was not so in the case of Samson.

7. His weakness was very great. His spiritual nature was not highly developed. He was not a leader or organizer of men. He did his work alone, and not by massing the nation against the oppressor. He was infected with the loose morals of his heathen neighbors. These were a hindrance to his mission, and brought him to blindness, slavery, and an untimely death.

8. But in the main he was firmly on the side of God's people and the fulfillment of his mission. He never broke his Nazirite vows. He was a total abstinence man to the end. "To appreciate the faith of Samson it is necessary to understand the temptations and difficulties in face of which he performed his task. If Samson had cared only for the satisfaction of his course and selfish impulses, the road to that infamous fame would have been wide open. But read his story. You will see that he always fought on one side,—the unpopular, the dangerous, the apparently hopeless side.

Celery and Cream Cheese Salad.

Mash a ten-cent cream cheese and work with a spoon, adding a little cream, until smooth. Mix with a half-cup fine chopped, crispy celery, season with salt and make into little balls. Put half of an English walnut on each side of the balls, arrange on lettuce leaves, pour over a French dressing and dust with paprika.

Cream Cheese with Red Peppers.

Cream cheese, by the way, is one of the most popular factors this fall in the salad courses. One of the newest ways of serving it is in combination with the little canned Spanish peppers. Chop the peppers fine, add to the cheese with salt to season, mix well, form into dainty balls and serve on lettuce leaves.

Be Polite.

Every lovely, kindly grace is worth cultivating and will add much to your happiness and usefulness when you are older. A rude, ill-mannered person is shunned and disliked in every circle, and unless the opposite habits are formed in early life they are seldom formed at all.

Want Women on Juries.

A movement is being made in certain quarters in France to bring about the representation of women on the juries. It long has been felt that to try women for crime before a court where the jury is composed entirely of men is an unnatural and unfair proceeding.

Why Robins Are Loved.

The belief that if a robin find a dead body it will at least cover the face with moss, and the immortal fairy story of Robin Redbreast's ministry to the poor little Babes in the Wood, have secured the protection of the whole robin race.

Need Better Transportation.

Grapes which sell for only a cent a pound in one of the southern provinces of Brazil, bring 20 or even 25 cents a pound in Rio de Janeiro. The lack of good facilities for transportation accounts for much of the difference.

Musical South Africa.

One of the greatest markets in the world for musical instruments is South Africa, which spends on an average \$1,000,000 a year, about \$500,000 of which goes in pianos.

Ancient Superstition.

In the days of Caesar, unless hard pressed, the Germans would not engage in battle before the full moon, knowing that if they did so they would be defeated.

Daily Thought.

The preservation of health is a duty. Few seem conscious that there is such a thing as physical morality.—Herbert Spencer.

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