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THE MAN WHO LIVED AHEAD OF HIS TIME
By Elmer Ellsworth Shelhamer

Author And Publisher Of
Many Books And Booklets

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our
admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." -- 1 Cor. 10:11

God's Bible School
Cincinnati, Ohio

1933

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DEDICATED

To those, especially ministers, who have caught a vision, and insist on being at their best for God.

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PREFACE

"Another book? When will you stop?" Not as long as we have a vision. "Where there is no
vision the people perish." Daniel lived ahead of his generation, He said, "I alone saw the vision:
for the men that were with me saw not the vision: but a great quaking fell upon them so that they
fled to hide themselves." Visions come to those who like Daniel, practice self-denial and live on a
high plane.

One might naturally conclude that after the writer had passed three score years, and spent
about \$60,000.00 in publishing some fifty books, he then had a right to sit down, fold his hands and

quit. But no, this would be suicidal. The older we become, the larger and richer should be the outlook.

The study of Bible characters is very interesting and profitable. Human nature is about the same in all ages. Wherein our forefathers failed we ought to take warning, and wherein they succeeded we should be inspired. From the many characters in Holy Writ, we have selected twenty from which to draw lessons for our everyday life.

You will observe that these messages were delivered on various occasions in different parts of the world, hence an occasional repetition of thought. For this and any other idiosyncrasies we beg your forbearance. Had I waited to produce a "polished book," I might have accomplished what so many great and gifted men have so nobly done -- lived well, died poor, but produced nothing calculated to mold character for God.

Trusting that the perusal of this unpretentious volume may inspire the gentle reader to higher heights and deeper depths in God, I am, as ever,

Your Full Brother,
For A Clean, Rather Than A Big Work.
Elmer Ellsworth Shelhamer

God's Bible School
Cincinnati, Ohio
July 4, 1933

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01 -- THE MAN WHO TOOK THE WRONG STEP

Preached at Kirkenhead Liverpool England, in Emmanuel Bible School

Text: "And there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land" -- Gen. 12:10.

In studying these Bible characters, we aim at considering their chief characteristics. We readily concede that Abraham is the man who believed God, and is termed the "Friend of God." Much could be said in his favor along this line.

But, is it not strange that most men fail at their strongest point? They know their weakness and safely guard the same, not realizing that the enemy frequently attacks the citadel that is left unguarded. Abraham believed God, and then doubted His ability in time of famine. Moses, the meekest of all men, spoke "unadvisedly with his lips" and for this was shut out of Canaan. Peter the brave, cowered and denied before a maid.

When we study Bible characters we must be very careful, because this is a day of skepticism and it is easy to reflect upon them. We should tread softly, especially when they are recorded in Hebrews 11 as among the "worthies." And yet, though we want to be respectful, we are convinced that man is and always has been a failure without grace. This is one reason why I believe the Bible to be inspired: Those characters that show the weakness of humanity are given to us as warnings; and others, that show magnanimity and strength, as examples to follow.

Let us reverently study at close range this great and good man who took the wrong step. "And there was a famine in the land." Thank God for famines, pestilences and all adversities that either drive us to our knees and thus develop us, or show up the weakness in us that we did not know existed. I can see the hand of God back of this famine. If God had protected and provided for Abraham and his people up to that time, He was certainly able to do it right through a famine. Friends, He can do the same today.

I doubt seriously whether Abram and Lot ought to have been associated so intimately. Too much familiarity is not good. Later, they separated while under pressure, and doubtless it would have developed the nephew Lot, long before it did, had they separated earlier and in a friendly way. It is a wonderful privilege you students have to be associated with godly instructors. But I doubt if one will expand and develop as rapidly as when he is thrown out upon his own resources. When you get hungry or in trouble, you look to your superiors to help you out. But when you are out there a thousand miles from human counsel, and get into trouble, this will develop faith and confidence in God. Some people are victorious when they are associated with remarkable saints --

just as Lot was blessed when he associated with Abraham. Abraham honored God and became rich, and Lot caught the overflow from Abraham's cup, and he became rich likewise.

A boy will never learn to be a good swimmer as long as he paddles around the edge, or has a plank underneath him. He must be thrown out into the deep, where he will either sink or swim. When I get to heaven, if I do not forget it, I am going to ask Abraham "Why did you get frightened and leave Canaan and go down to Egypt? What a blessing you lost! Why did you not hold still and see what God would do?" God lives among impossibilities, though you may not have realized it. You look around for a human prop, but if you refused to lean on it, you would see God put His great arm down and say, "Climb up on that."

Dear Father Abraham got scared and started for Egypt to find support and comfort, instead of depending wholly upon God. No marvel that we read, "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help." This always takes things out of the hand of God and ends in disappointment. But do not be too severe on this remarkable character. I wonder if we have done any better.

I am satisfied that many of the best people in the world are out of Divine order. Of course, all sinners are out of God's will. But perhaps half of the best people in the world are more or less handicapped and crippled in their effectiveness for God. Yes, some of you dear people here today are not at your best. You are going to heaven. Sure! Saved and sanctified! But you are going on a freight, or a mixed train, when you ought to be on a limited. You will likely get through all right, but you may be behind time. Back there in early life you got out of Divine order in at least one of three respects -perhaps all of them.

Do you remember when you were young; you associated with the wrong company or attended the wrong college and there met the wrong boy or girl? Later your acquaintance ripened into a love affair and you married in a hurry. True, God, in mercy, tried to fix it up and overrule your hastiness; later you both were converted. But even though you were now saved, nevertheless you were mismated, more or less. Should this be the case, please do not at this late hour get a divorce and marry some one else. Nay, do not be mean enough to intimate to the other person, "I ought not to have married you." Do not allow such a thought get within a thousand miles of you and under no provocation ever make a statement that would wound the other. The thing to do is to forever bury those thoughts, make the best of it and try to live harmoniously. Your parents may have been to blame -and gotten out of Divine order in helping to mate two persons who ought never to have been united. We wonder why it is hard to have revivals! There is no wonder about it! Look at that rebellious, unclean child who is the unhappy combination of two parents who ought never to have been married; two dispositions that do not belong together! Two persons who are both very quick and naturally irritable ought not to be united; their offspring are likely to be high-spirited and unruly. Nor ought two slow, easy-going persons to be united, for their product will be so ambition-less that they will get nowhere. A calm person and one who is dynamic will make a good team. They will balance each other. But we are getting into deep water here and I must refrain. How wonderful, that mighty prayer, fasting and the grace of kindness will help correct a lot of mistakes that nature cannot change.

Another way in which many good people have gotten out of Divine order was in going into business with the wrong person; one got the cash, the other the experience. When you get in hurry

to go into business -- grocery business, meat market business or any kind of business -- you are likely to the wrong step. It will pay to go slowly; ask other people to advise you before you jump.

Yet another way that some good people mar God's original plan is by quitting one church and joining another while under pressure or temptation. I wish we had this motto in every home: "He that believeth shall not make haste." (Isaiah 28:16.) Listen, students and young preachers! There may come a time in your life when God will be pleased for you to change your church relationship, but never! never! never! in haste, or while, under trial! Shall I speak from the bottom of my heart and tell you what I fear? I am afraid that some of you who have been dug out of the depths, educated, and trained, as soon as you become a good teacher or preacher, will become independent and say to those who are your superiors: "I guess I will pull off and start something of my own."

John Wesley said, "Never suffer the first thought of separation from your brethren. Never think for a moment that you know better than they, but seek spiritual counsel and let there be in you that lowly mind which was in Christ Jesus." Oh, the multitude of people in China, India and different countries who at one time were pulling together, then some of them became ambitious and pulled off to themselves, a lot of the Lord's money, and afterwards their work was scattered to the four winds, and the devil chuckled over it!

Again, if you take the first step out of Divine order, later you are likely to do something you never thought you would be guilty of doing. That first step that Father Abraham took in going down into Egypt caused him to say to his wife, when he came near the border, "Thou art a fair woman to look upon. I am afraid they will kill me to get you. Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister." Now, there may have been some truth in that, but half truth is no truth at all. Beloved, you want to be perfectly frank in everything you say. Do not be deceitful or cover up; tell the plain facts and in the end you will be ahead. John Wesley said, 'When you are taxed or charged with anything, do not prevaricate or evade the truth in any way, but let it appear just as it is. You will thereby not hinder, but adorn the Gospel of Jesus Christ.'

A second time did this dear old patriarch take a wrong step, when Sarah, his aged wife, failed to patiently believe for an heir. She told Abraham to take her maid, Hagar, and thus raise up children, who of course would be theirs, since Hagar was her slave. This looked plausible, but it was simply human reasoning which always fails to depend wholly upon a miracle-working God. The result was that Ishmael was born, who later created a lot of trouble and persecuted Isaac, the true, though belated heir. And now, thousands of years later, we see the baneful result of a hasty and unholy act. Millions of superstitious Arabs and Moslems, who are a curse, rather than a blessing, pollute the Holy Land and other portions of the earth. Who can compute the sad outcome of one step in the wrong direction?

Friend, if you have taken the first step out of the will of God, make all haste to humble yourself, confess, and recover lost ground before you take a dozen other steps. I do not care how great a sinner you have been, or what kind of mean disposition you may have, if you can only humble yourself and confess, there is hope for you. But if you dare to act as though nothing had happened, or as if you are all right, the only place for you is defeat, then perhaps the penitentiary and finally -- outer darkness.

But I must give you a hopeful note in closing. Though Abraham for the time being marred God's plan, thank God, he recovered himself. "And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south. And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai; unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the Lord." -- Gen. 13:1-4.

Mark, he went up out of Egypt. Some men, when they fall, fall so hard that they smash all to pieces and there are not enough pieces left to make a man again. But Abraham and David, when they fell, were too big to stay down -- God made something out of them again. Brother, if there is absolute humility and sincerity in your heart, I care not if you did make a miscalculation, if there is a streak of honesty or integrity left, God will work upon that and rule and overrule the past.

Yes, when I get to heaven, if I do not forget it, I am going to ask Abraham, "What lesson did you learn when you went down into Egypt?" Evidently he must have capitalized that mistake. If a man loses \$500.00, he ought to capitalize it and get \$5000.00 out of it, in experience at least.

The scripture speaks about "knowing the joyful sound." Abraham must have known that joyful sound, and when he heard God call, off he went after God. When I was a boy we hunted coons. Sometimes the coon, when closely pressed by the dogs, ran up a tree and then crawled out on a limb and jumped from one tree to another, and then to another, and finally came down and disappeared. We had two dogs. One was just a young fellow learning to be a good coon dog. He would chase the coon to the tree and then sit down and bark up that tree, while he was doing so the coon jumped from one tree to another and finally escaped. But the other was an old dog. He would come and give a couple of yelps up the tree and then make a circle; then go to the next tree and make a still larger circle, until he found if the coon had come down; thus he traced the coon until he caught him.

This is a homely illustration, but in like manner a lot of people lose the trail and miss their way. They sit and waste a lot of time barking up a hollow tree, but say, you want to be like old, faithful Abraham, take a big circle out of Egypt and declare, "God is leading and back to Canaan I go!" If you are so unfortunate as to miss God's first plan, do not go into despair, do not blame other people, do not, commit suicide; but circle around until you strike God's track again, and He will surely bring you out of darkness into the clear light once more.

Let us pray and ask God to give us that holy instinct, that holy intuition, so that we can find out which way God is going. You are not to blame if you make a mistake, but you are to blame if you give up and die in despair. God proposes to make you a better man or woman for having had some bitter lessons.

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02 -- THE MAN WHO REFUSED TO QUARREL

Preached at Pasadena Preachers' Meeting

Sometimes preachers take a text and preach from it, then get so far away from it that they never get back to it; but I am going to try to reverse that order and take a text and preach to it. Here it is: "And they said, We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee" -- Gen. 26:28.

Much depends on who made this statement. If friends make a statement like this about you -- those who are your admirers, those who rate you perhaps a little higher than you ought to be placed -- then such an estimate is of little account. But if an enemy -- one who is looking to pick flaws, criticize and take exception to everything you do; yes, when an enemy is compelled to acknowledge that the Lord is with you, this is a pretty good endorsement to your standing. In this instance, the Philistines, who were enemies to Abraham and Isaac, were the speakers. And why did they make this wonderful statement? What did they see in Isaac that convinced them that God was with him? They saw four things, viz:

1. Prosperity
2. No resentment
3. He gave up his rights
- 4 A mighty revelation of God's approval.

We read, "There was a famine in the land, besides the famine that was in the land in the days of Abraham. . . . And the Lord appeared unto him (Isaac) and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of. . . . And Isaac dwelt in Gerar."

It is a wonderful thing to have a disposition that refuses to take offense, or stumble, over anything. In this world you will find enough to make you sour and critical if you will allow it to do so. We preach regeneration, and say this grace brings peace "that passeth understanding; while entire sanctification brings peace that passes by misunderstanding; refuses to look at it." Isaac must have had the blessing. He refused to quarrel. He refused to carry a "chip on his shoulder," or take offense at every little or great thing. Friend, you are to blame if you allow anything from anybody to disturb your peace.

1. Now let us study this man of peace a little more closely. First, the Philistines said that God was with him, because he prospered. "Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him." The Scripture speaks of the sower, and some seed producing "thirty", others "sixty" and a few "an hundredfold". I do not want to be speculative, but I wonder sometime what those different ratios signify. I wonder if "thirty fold" signifies pardon, "sixty fold", purity, and "one hundredfold", maturity. We hear a great deal these days about efficiency; being one hundred per cent efficient. In like manner I believe God wants us to be at our very best, one hundred per cent saved, and one hundred per cent efficient in getting other people saved.

Hear me! God does not want you students to be satisfied with meager results. He wants you to achieve as much as possible. If there could be such a thing as sadness in heaven (there is no sadness there), I believe I should feel sad if, after I had been in heaven a hundred years, an angel should come to me and reveal a blue-print or chart showing what God's original plan had been for me, then conclude by saying, "Had you been at your best for God there are five or six columns of souls you might have brought to heaven. But," says the angel, "God could not have His perfect way with you. You were headstrong, and stubborn. You pulled off from who would have instructed you. You were dry-eyed and prayer less. You finally reached heaven and brought a few souls with you; but see, there are two or three columns of names missing that you might have brought with you had you been as teachable and Spirit-filled as you might have been."

With this information, this sad information, it seems to me I would fall down before the angel and say, "Is it possible that a number of souls are in hell and will be there through all eternity who might have been here had I not been so carnal, so sensual or so careless? Why, angel! angel! Let me get out of heaven and go back to earth, or some other planet! Let me live my life over again and work out God's original plan for me and be one hundred per cent efficient,"

Isaac sowed and "received an hundredfold." When a merchant makes an hundred per cent profit it may be due to shrewdness or dishonesty, but not so with it farmer. When a farmer receives an hundredfold, we have reason to believe that it is not all due to his skill or ability to till the soil, but rather, it is a direct approval that God is blessing him. Oh, that God would stir you this morning to be ambitious, not to bring a little glory to Him, but as much as He sees is possible!

Read on; verses 13-17: "And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: for he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him. For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth. And Abimelech said unto Isaac; Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we."

2. No resentment or retaliation. I wonder how we would have acted had the Philistines spoken thus to us? I fear we would have said, "I guess I have some rights; I have broken up this land and tilled it, and now God is blessing me and my crops are one hundredfold. I am not quite ready to go to a new country and start life over again." But notice the man of peace! The 17th verse says, "And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there." He began life all over again -- no small task.

In Proverbs 16:7, we read, "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." This is the best way to get even with your enemies! Do not insist on your rights! No, by letting God work, soon or late He will make even your enemies to be at peace with you, and thus you will save a big law suit and a lot of hard feelings.

Have you ever learned this lesson -- that when you want to fight your own battles God will step aside and give you the job and you will have a hard job of it? But if you refuse to fight for yourself, God will take your case in hand and defend you, or raise up some one else to do so who will whip the other party better than you could have done. Have you ever taken a surf bath and one

of those big billows met you? Do not stand up and face it; you are not able. The best thing to do is to "duck" and let it go over your head.

3. He gave up his rights. It is wonderful to find a person who has such greatness of soul as to give up his rights, yea, "suffer himself to be defrauded" in order to have peace. Friend, when you say to another party, "I will get even with you," you have stooped to a very low level. There is such a thing as getting above him, by showing a better spirit than he shows. It does not require an ounce of grace nor a thimbleful of brains to be stubborn and hold out for your own rights. But it does take greatness of soul to give place and let the other fellow have his own way, if need be, rather than contend. Have you ever heard anyone say, "I gave him a piece of my mind! I told him what I thought!" Perhaps you did, and that may be one reason you have so little peace left. You gave away too many pieces!

Get the picture! Here was Isaac who opened the wells his father had digged, and then the Philistines came and said, "it is our well." He said, "All right. I have taken a lot of dirt and rubbish out of it and now the water is fresh and abundant, but you may have it and I will go and open up the other well that you stopped." Without a "thank you," the selfish Philistines took the well, and Isaac set to opening up the other. About the time he had it cleaned out, they again came along and said, "This also is our well." And again the peaceable man gave place and said, "All right, you may have it. I will go over and dig a new well." Naturally you would have expected him to say, "Now this thing is going too far! We will go to court and settle it there! Though it costs every last cent I've got, we will fight it out and see if I have any rights!"

Remember, digging a well in that country is no child's play. We were there and saw Jacob's well. It goes down through many feet of limestone rock, and is about six to eight feet across. It was a big job to dig such a well. But this magnanimous man gave up his rights, took his servants to another section of the country and undertook the great task. For this the Philistines ceased striving. Methinks I hear them say, "He is easy game. We have two or three big wells that we got from him without a cent of cost. Let him dig this new one, for it may be a dry hole."

Listen! It always takes two to make a quarrel. If you will let the other fellow quarrel long enough he will get tired and quit. But it is when you "chew-the-rag" with him that the quarrel continues; when you throw a bundle of wood on the smoldering fire, then it continues to blaze.

When I hear people jangling about little things, I am reminded of two puppy dogs. A puppy shaking an old shoe or an old rag alone will not injure himself; he will just tire himself out and quit. But when another pup comes along and takes hold of that same rag, there is danger. When two of them begin to jerk, they are liable to jerk their little teeth out so that they cannot chew beefsteak later on.

And that is exactly what you do when you go to jawing with your neighbor or wife. If you are not careful you will lose your power to masticate good truth. I believe that sometimes when the pressure is on and you are tempted to answer an unkind letter or tell some one what you think of him, God steps aside for the time being to see what you will do. What a pity if you step in and spoil His plan when He is waiting to defend you better than you could defend yourself. It was because Isaac was so submissive that God gave him a revelation.

4. A new revelation. "And the Lord appeared unto him the same night and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father; fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed. And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there."

There is a reason when your Bible becomes a sealed book and you cannot get special illumination out of it. There is a reason when your secret prayer becomes irksome and you do not love long seasons of communion with God. If you fail to get wonderful revelations from the Spirit it is because somewhere back in your life you have been fighting your own battles, and have been too contrary and contentious around home. You may have to wait quite a while to see your cause vindicated, but as sure as you hold still God will be around to look after your interests; and He is always on time.

It was after Job had been criticized by his "three friends", and had lost all his property and his children, that finally God came around and said something to him. And what did He say? Read that wonderful statement, "And the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before." -- Job 42:10. God waited for Job to get ready to pray without any vindication. In like manner when you refuse to defend yourself, God will take your cause in hand, take you out of captivity, and give you twice as much as the devil or your wicked neighbors took from you.

Read on; verses 26-28: then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army. And Isaac said unto them, wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you? And they said, we saw certainty that the Lord was with thee: and we said, Let there now be an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee."

Remember this, that sometimes the tables turn and the fellow who has been underneath gets on top and the fellow on top goes down. Here we have such a case. Isaac was now on top and the Philistines began to tremble when they saw his great blessing and power.

Listen to the wonderful conclusion. After Isaac had ceased to strive, we read in verse 32, "And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, we have found water!"

There is a reason why you have a dry well, a dry hole in your experience. When you stop defending yourself, it will not be long until you strike an artesian flow and all around the people will say, "He has struck oil." How many of you students and workers! have come to the conclusion that you are going to take Isaac's method in defending yourself?

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03 -- THE MAN WHO COULD DRIVE BIG BARGAINS

Preached at Seoul, Korea in the Bible School

Text: "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day" -- Gen. 32:24.

Here we are told that the angel wrestled with Jacob. In Hosea 12:4 we read that Jacob wrestled with the angel. I take it that God is always the aggressor and wrestles with us, desiring to conquer and subdue us.

You who know anything about sports know that wrestling does one of two things; perhaps it does both. It develops our strength, and it also discovers our weakness. If we only knew it, our struggles become our angels. We struggle with debts, disease, domestic cares, and devils. If we only could realize it, all of these struggles become our trainers for something bigger and better.

Take David, for instance, in fleeing before his enemies, living in caves and going hungry. We sympathize with him, but methinks if David could speak over the battlements of heaven, he would say: "Pity me? No! My struggles gave birth to my Psalms which have given comfort and blessing to millions down through the ages." Take Joseph for another example! We pity him because he was unjustly shut up in a dungeon for years. But if he could speak he would say: "Pity me? No! I was well born, but untried. I was innocent, but had never been tested, and it required that dungeon life to prepare me to be prime minister of Egypt." Look at Job! We feel like sympathizing with him when was covered with boils and his wife told him to curse God and die. But had it not been for Job's suffering we would not have on record the most beautiful poem that was ever written; had it not been for his affliction, we would not have had an example of patience for all time.

Not until we conquer self and selfish habits in ourselves can we successfully conquer Satan and wicked men. In Eph. 6:12 we read, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." It is no trifle to wrestle with angels and demons; for if a fallen angel could get permission from God, he could step upon Korea and bury it out of sight. Satan is called the "prince of the power of the air." and I verily believe (of course, he had to get God's permission) that it was he who created the cyclone that destroyed till of Job's property. Now think of feeble man being commissioned from on high to wrestle with such a power! I am here to tell you that it is no child's play. This angel in Jacob's case must have been a good angel -- perhaps the angel of the Lord, which might have signified the Lord.

Get the picture! Here is Jacob coming back after he had been in Padan-aram for more than fourteen years. Now he is returning to meet Esau, his offended brother. Jacob well knew that Esau had retained murder and revenge in his heart for the stealing of his birthright. This drove Jacob to desperation -- the thought that Esau was coming "with four hundred men." And Jacob said: "What shall I do? How can I meet and be reconciled to my angry brother?" Then he thought, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll divide my flocks, cattle, servants, and wives. I'll divide them into several companies, but I am going to take good care of old self. We are told that he first took "two hundred she goats." He put the cheapest things first, and decided to send those in the first company. A lot of goats to meet Esau! He said to himself, "If Esau vents his revenge on the first company, then there will be a second company -- this time something worth a little more, milk camels."

Then a third division -- this time his -- "servants." Next, the fourth division his two wives, and his two women servants, and his eleven sons." He put all of them ahead of him. "I will send them across the brook, but I'll stay here alone and try to wrestle it out with God." This was human nature, Give up the small things first, and then finally gets down to business, where it really hurts.

And now began the greatest wrestling match of all ages! I do not know what time in the night they began, but they kept it up until the breaking of the day. And the angel said to him: "Let me go, the day breaketh." And Jacob said: "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." I see him wrestle for one, two, three, or perhaps four hours, and the angel said, "I must go." And the angel said, "What is thy name?" In olden times names signified character. They did not name their children as we do these days so that you cannot tell whether the child is a boy or a girl. His parents named him Jacob, because his disposition meant "supplanter," "heel grabber," trickster, a bargain maker.

Do not be too severe on the Jews for selling you a suit of clothes, and beating you in the deal. They inherited that shrewdness from Jacob. He could get rich and at the same time make the other fellow believe he was getting a big bargain. No wonder Jacob was reluctant about telling his name! I can see him as he answers the angel, "Why do you want to know my name?" "Because when you tell your name, you confess your mean disposition. This is a hard thing to do, but it is the Divine plan."

When one gets saved he must break down and tell about his shrewdness. I wonder if that is the reason some of you dear people do not get a settled experience. Perhaps if you would go back and tell about the things you stole, confess your unkindness around home, and your wickedness away from home, you might get somewhere.

I can hear Jacob say to himself, this is like pulling eyeteeth, to tell on myself. I believe I will start in for another hour of wrestling, rather than confess it all." But, finally, when he saw there was no way around, no way over, and no way underneath, he said, "Here goes! I see I must go against self even if it is a killing process. My name is Jacob! I am the same fellow who put skins on my arms and deceived my good, old, blind father, making him believe I was Esau. Then when Esau threatened to kill me, I fled. That night, as I slept on the plain with a stone under my head, I tried to strike a sharp bargain with God Almighty and said, "If thou wilt bring me back again to my people and bless me and prosper me, I will give thee a "tenth" of all I get.'" (Friends, I believe with all my heart in the system of tithing, but I believe in it without the "if.")

Look at the wrestling! It is becoming more intense, and finally Jacob says "I am the fellow that married two girls, and for once in my life met my equal, for my father-in-law was just about as shrewd as I. I am the same Jacob that got rich even though I had to measure arms with Laban. I knew how to work the ring-streaked and speckled cattle and I got rich in spite of Laban." Notice! The wrestling is terrific now, and the angel is getting the better of him. It looks as though Jacob is about to fall!

"Tell me your name! I insist on that!" Then the collapse -- and the blessed answer. The devil told one truth if he never told another; one of the greatest truths that was ever told, when he said: "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life." This is a tremendous truth!

Most men will give anything rather than die physically. Not only do we cling to physical life, but we will give almost anything rather than die to our opinions; we do not like to die to our old, carnal nature. I can see Jacob when he came to the place where he was about worn out, then the angel touched him on the thigh and he went halting and limping -- but he got the blessing!

We are told that- the "sun rose upon him," He received a great illumination about daylight. And if you, dear friend, would get a blessing, you must break down at your strongest point. Where is a man's strongest point? On his hips and loins. If he can get a load there, he can carry more than on his shoulders, or on any other part of his body. After Jacob had made his confession and was broken in will and spirit, the angel dislocated his thigh. Oh, what physical suffering! But what wonderful peace!

God is the aggressor and we are on the defensive. He wrestles with us first, to conquer and subdue our stubborn wills. You know we are naturally full of prejudices, one nation against another. Not only between nations, but between religions bodies are there prejudice, and this is one reason why the work of God languishes. We are also full of rebellion against God for taking some of our loved ones; or, for the loss of our property, and as long as we are rebellious in spirit we make but little progress.

God not only wrestles with our wills, He also wrestles with our hearts. He discovers wrong tendencies in us, though we are converted. He sets in to conquer and eradicate these principles. Listen to John Wesley! He said -- speaking to a regenerated heart: "Now for the first time do you see the ground work of your heart, the depths of pride, self-will, and hell." According to Wesley's idea, God is compelled to allow the young convert to enjoy his first love for a while, before He discovers to him his depravity, when, lo, suddenly, yea, unexpectedly, he for the first time finds something ugly, deeply bedded in his inmost being.

Dear friends, have you ever gotten a real sight of carnality? If you do, you will find that it is the next thing to the strength of the devil. In fact, we have reason to believe that the carnal mind, or the "old man", is the begotten son of the devil, just as Jesus Christ is the begotten Son of God. And you know that any parent will fight to the last ditch to save his child. In like manner, when God begins wrestling with you, trying to deliver you from old carnal nature, the devil on the outside and the "old man" on the inside will put up a tremendous fight.

Jacob's wrestling was typical of every man wrestling to be delivered from himself. I remember when I was under conviction for sin. I struggled and wrestled to be saved. From what? From hell! Later, I had another big wrestling match. This time to be saved, not from hell, but from self. I had been preaching the Gospel for several years and had blessed success. Then the Holy Ghost revealed to me my carnality. I discovered something within that fed on the praise of men. On the other hand, I found an unpleasant feeling that made me dejected (though I did not say a word and no one could detect it,) when a brother minister had a bigger revival than I. Now I set in to wrestle with the ugly thing, and called in some of the brethren yea, big preachers, to help me. I was but a boy preacher, so asked these great preachers, "How shall I get rid of this carnal nature?" They said, "Lay all on the altar, and let the altar sanctify the gift." I obeyed their instructions and received a blessing, but not the blessing. In about six months I found that the "old man" was still on hand.

Then I heard a mighty preacher testify that he had been preaching holiness for about twenty-five years with out the experience. He said God's method of getting rid of the "old man was not to "consecrate him," nor "lay him on the altar," and give him a great blessing, but crucifixion, death! He said: "You can't kill the thing; you can't deliver yourself; but you can wrestle with it and turn it over to God for destruction." This is God's method, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed" (Rom. 6:6).

Friend, if you will give your case over into the hands of the angel, your name and nature will be changed, though you may go off limping, in brilliancy and physical appearance. But you had better be weakened and have the glory, than be robust and self-sufficient without power to "prevail".

Not only does God wrestle with our stubborn wills and our carnal hearts, but it is a continual wrestle all the way to glory, after you are well saved, you still have natural desires that in themselves may not be sinful, yet you must wrestle with them, lest they bring you again into bondage. You can give way to a natural desire, and thus bring back the old carnal nature. You can give way to the innocent pleasure of sight-seeing, etc., until you bring condemnation to your souls. Paul said in I Cor. 9:27, "I keep under my body, lest after I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." The original makes it stronger, "I beat my body." Again he says, "Mortify the deeds of the body!" "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

See little Mary climbing up on her high-chair in the kitchen! She reaches across to the big bread knife and is looking at it. The child sees the glitter, but the mother sees the awful edge. Now a wise mother does not yell at the little girl and threaten to whip her if she does not let go the knife. But instead she holds up an apple or an orange and little Mary desires the thing that is better. She lets go, that she may take hold.

In like manner we look at this and listen to that and say, "Isn't it beautiful?" We see the glitter, but God sees the edge, and He wrestles with us to take it from us. He is not trying to be hard, and rob us of any real or lasting pleasure, but He wants us to let go of the empty thing, that He may give us something better in its place. He cannot fill your hands with the best things, as long as they are full of earthly things.

O brother, sister! It is better to break down as Jacob did! You had better break than burn! Let us enter into a prayer now that God will take out of us everything that ought to be taken out, and burn into us everything that ought to be burned in.

"Come O thou traveler unknown,
Whom still I hold, but cannot see;
My company before is gone
And I am left alone with Thee;
With Thee all night I mean to stay,
And wrestle till the break of day.

"I need to tell Thee who I am;
My sin and misery declare;
Thyself hast called me by my name;
Look on Thy hands and read it there.
But who, I ask Thee, who art Thou?
Tell me Thy name and tell me now.

"In vain Thou strugglest to get free;
I never will unloose my hold;
Art Thou the man that died for me?
The secret of Thy love unfold.
Wrestling I will not let Thee go,
Till I Thy name, Thy nature know.

"What though my shrinking flesh complain,
And murmur to contend so long?
I raise superior to my pain;
When I am weak then am I strong;
And when my all of strength shall fail,
I shall with the God man prevail."

-- Charles Wesley

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04 -- THE MAN WHO OUTLIVED SLANDER

Preached at Johannesburg, S.Africa, during a great Missionary Convention

Only a few Bible characters were so consistent that we cannot recall one fault. Joseph was such a man. When I want to have a special time of weeping before the Lord, I read the account of his life, beginning with Gen. 37 (omit 38), and closing with chapter 45. This young man stands out in the Old Testament as a type of Christ. There are at least four great characteristics to be found in him:

1. Fidelity
2. Prosperity
3. Purity
4. Magnanimity

1. Fidelity. Here was a boy, at the age of seventeen, who could not be deceptive. It is remarkable to find a boy at this age who does not care to run with the crowd. He seemed to be

different from his brethren -- a child of destiny. He was not a tattler, but could not help bringing to his father the "evil report" of his brethren.

For some reason, perhaps because of his religious inclination, innocence, or beauty, he became his father's favorite. This was a very foolish thing on part the of Jacob and enough to spoil the boy. But young Joseph seemed to stand the test. Parents can help save or damn their own offspring by petting one child more than another. True, sometimes one child will be found to have a worse disposition than another, but the parents may be at fault more than the child. Had they been more lovely and devout during the prenatal period, doubtless the child would have reaped the benefit. One old writer said; "If you want to see a model child, morally, mentally and physically, you must begin two hundred years before he is born," What a pity that many of the parents of today are simply rearing incorrigible offspring to help damn others and finally be eternally damned themselves damn others and finally be eternally damned themselves.

2. Prosperity. "And the Lord was! with Joseph, and he was a prosperous! man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served! him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand. And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field" (Gen. 39:2-5).

Some men seem to prosper more than others. This may be due to several things, but in Joseph's case it was because "the Lord was with him." This then, should be our first concern, that we live so consistently that we can feel sure of God's approval, whether that brings prosperity or adversity. God is not "with" us when we are extravagant, when we are indolent, when we do not ask counsel, but rush into schemes and purchases hastily. It is blessed to feel that God endorses all our financial plans and domestic expenditures.

3. Purity. Here was a young man in good health, who had absolute self-control, He who would meet and overcome an open temptation must first practice in secret, overcoming the first thought of impurity. Remember, all sin begins with a tiny thought. Long before men go down in disgrace, they have fondled, rather than crushed, the temptation in its incipency. Here was not only a vigorous youth, but a "servant," and of course a servant was expected to obey his mistress. He could have excused himself under this solicitation. But, the greatness of the man it seen when he did not reason in favor of the flesh, though his mistress was wholly responsible. Mark you, he did not argue thus: "If this be known we must flee or die." But rather, see how he honored God when he said, "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" He who eyes God and His glory more than the flesh will surely see great things. He who stands the secret test will later stand as a fortress before men.

Some temptations must be withstood with a resolute argument. But this one was too keen for reasoning; hence he "fled and got him out." We read, "Flee youthful lusts!" Many a man has gone down because he failed to flee and "get him out." Better get out of a nice place of entertainment and preserve purity than stay one hour too long. Better shiver in the cold than burn in despair. A dungeon with a clear conscience is better than "limelight" and guilt. Better heed the

advice of a good bishop in addressing a class of young preachers, when he said: "Whatever you do, resolve that you will leave every home as pure as you found it."

4. Magnanimity. Here we find the crowning grace of this great man. After all his ignominy in being sold into slavery; after all his dungeon life and suffering without recourse to prove his innocence, yea after all these long and lonely years of humiliation, he now comes into his own rights. But see the man! He does not take revenge when it is his to take. He does not pity himself and recall his long night's heartbreaks, trying to accustom himself to the coarse life of the Ishmaelites, but hear him:

"Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.

"And he wept, aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, come near unto me, I pray you and they came near. And he said, am Joseph, your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

"Now therefore, be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

"Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not."

Notice he does not blame his brethren and tell them it was "through envy they sold him" into Egypt. He does not try to make them cower and "bow down" to his superiority. But see his humility and great magnanimity!

The ability to see God back of everything is a great gift. Jacob in a fit of despair said, "All these things are against me," when in reality they were working for his good. Joseph had the ability to patiently wait and let the miracle working God bring his inspired dreams to pass. Lord, give us this ability!

See that spider on the beautiful flower! What is he after? Poison, because his nature calls for poison. He gets what he is looking for. But after he leaves, a honey bee lights upon the same flower. What is it after? Honey, and it gets it, for it has a longer proboscis than the spider. Honey is not on the surface of things, but deep down. In like manner, some people get poison and bitterness out of the same circumstances where others get honey and heaven. Lord, give us the honey bee experience, so that we can get sweet out of bitter, light out of darkness, joy out of sadness, grow tall on a low bench, shine the brighter by giving up our own brilliancy, reign over others by letting them trample upon us; yea, "save our life by losing it."

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05 -- THE MAN WHO COULD BE BOUGHT OR SOLD

Preached at Capetown, S. Africa, in Y. M. C. A.

Text: "And the angel of the Lord said unto him, wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me." -- Num. 22:32.

Here we find a peculiar "mixture", for this is the true meaning of Balaam. He worshipped Jehovah, but was covetous and loved "wages" even though they came through "unrighteous" channels. His descendants are many. There are three things that stand out in his life.

1. God forbade him.
2. God permitted him.
- 3 God cursed him.

1. God forbade him. Balak, king of Moab, sent messengers to Balaam to come and curse Israel, for he said, "I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed." Balaam was influential and powerful, but was for sale or service to the highest bidder. However, on this occasion he was conscientious enough to ask of God permission. God answered and said unto him, "Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people for they are blessed."

"And Balaam rose up in the morning, and said unto the princes of Balak, Get you into your land; for the Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you." Notice, he did not tell all that God had spoken to him. He should have said, "These people are God's people and I cannot curse them." In return, the princes failed to report all that he had said unto them. This is according to human nature; for the tendency is not to tell an out-and-out falsehood, but rather shade the truth little by little. If deception is within it will eventually come to the surface. Absolute honesty will not evade or prevaricate, but let truth appear as it is. Moreover, a sincere man will be glad to align himself on the side of truth and righteousness, though it be very unpopular.

Here was Balaam's first offense. He was afraid to come right out and take his stand with the people of God. Had he been positive about it and nipped the thing in the bud, Balak would have denounced him and ceased enticing him by greater gifts. Here is the beginning of every man's downfall. He is not resolute enough to crush, as he would a viper, the first suggestion to evil. Remember this, friend, you must not only be negatively righteous, but positively so as well. You must have the courage of your convictions to take your stand with the cleanest thing you can find, even though this means ostracism. Many preachers and Christians have lost out because they could not, or would not, do this.

2. God permitted him. "And God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him, if the men come to call thee, rise up. and go with them: but yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shall

thou do. And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab" (Num. 22:2". 211. Balaam was on trial and did not know it. God often steps aside to see what is in man and then, as in the case of his rebellious people, gives them "their request but sends leanness into their souls." Oh, the multitudes who have done this very thing! God will not force anyone to do right. He wants a willing service. What a sad and fearful sight when He beholds in us a leaning in the wrong direction. Like the boy who wanted to go fishing with the other boys, but must ask mother first. Hesitant lest the others should run off and leave him, he first stands a stick in the path and if it falls toward home he must return and get permission, but if it falls toward the fishing pond he can go without seeing his mother. It is needless to say which way the stick fell. Balaam, and others since his day, have tipped the stick (their prayers), to suit their carnal desires. The result has been -- leanness of soul. Dear reader, how is it with thee?

3. God cursed him. "And God's anger was kindled because he went." God's mercy is great and has judgments come slowly, but they come surely. Long after Balaam had "Returned to his place" did retribution follow him. Had he cast his lot with the people of God, he would not have been slain in battle while fighting against them. We read the sad epitaph: "And they (Israel) warred against the Midianites, as the Lord commanded Moses; and they slew all the males. And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely Evi, and Bekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Beba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Bear they slew with the sword. And Moses said unto them, have ye saved all the women alive? Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord." Thus he died and went into oblivion.

But while alive he said some nice things, just as men do today while in a religious mood. "The Spirit of God came upon him." There is a vast difference between the Spirit of God coming upon one and taking up his abode within. Balaam could preach well while under the special illumination of the Spirit. As he beheld the children of God, in their innocence, he cried out, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." But this passing desire never came true.

Lessons: Like the angel that met Balaam's donkey, God meets men in the broad way, then in the narrower way, then in the narrowest way. Yes, God tries in various ways to head us off from making the leap into perdition. God and His providences try to stop us in the broad road to hell. When this fails, He tries again to close in upon us as we drive on furiously. Finally, He crushes our means of locomotion in order to slow us down and save our souls. When all that a good God and His instruments can do only fail, then destruction comes and that "without remedy".

But do not be too severe on Balaam. He was not the only man who loved money. This grasping spirit has gotten not only into the front pews and on the official boards, but into the pulpit as well. Preachers "regret" (?) to hand in their resignation and move from one conference to another, or from one church to another. They say they feel called to a "larger field of usefulness," but incidentally it is a larger purse that effects the change. Some preachers with the "sore throat," or a "nervous breakdown" can easily cease their activities in soul-saving, but at the same time be intensely active in painting, paper hanging, building houses, talking real estate, and selling worth less stocks in this or that concern. There are literally thousands of these floating derelicts all

around us, enough to bring the wrath of God upon the entire country. Occasionally there may be a legitimate reason, but as a rule it is lack of vision, cooled-off holiness and accursed covetousness.

Not only are inactive preachers guilty, but many of the so-called holiness evangelists know where to get the beat picking. Some of them are not in a revival five days before they become anxious and inquire, "How are the finances coming on?" If they do not get a certain amount they manifest displeasure. They seem to always want "a little more," for "extra car fare" or hotel bills. God help us! What are we coming to when the precious Gospel must be commercialized and every man must have his price?

We wonder why it is hard to see great revivals, as in former years, when there are those sitting on the front seats worth ten to fifty thousand, who do not begin to give their tithe. Many times poor washerwomen and day-laborers give more than those misers. I have noticed time and again that the children of these grabbers are not only unsaved, but do not care to associate with old-time preachers and pilgrims. No wonder! The curse of God is on them! In addition to all this, these parents are helping to damn their godless offspring deeper in hell, by leaving to them all, or most of their property, and the cause of God goes languishing. What a day of reckoning is ahead!

Another thing! We frequently elect, to the Annual and General Conferences, men of "means," or "brains," rather than those of deep piety. What is the result? Church politicians get into the saddle, eat in the diners, ride back and forth in Pullmans, and spend the hard-earned money of humble saints, while God looks on and says, "The priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so, and what will ye do in the end thereof?"

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06 -- THE MAN WHO WAS SYMMETRICAL

Preached at Antigua, British West Indies

Great and good men do not happen to be born. As a rule there is a history back of their lives. Parentage and ancestry had something to do with them. Of course, there are exceptions but, after all, prenatal influence is a great factor for good or evil. We could give numerous instances, like the Wesleys, Edwards, and Livingstones, to prove the power of a godly mother or father. In studying the life of this unimpeachable and imperishable character, (Samuel) let us notice at least four of his prominent traits:

1. Integrity
2. Honesty
3. Humility
4. Severity

1. Integrity. Samuel was a rare child, hence must become a dynamic force. His very name means integrity and fidelity. He was not the product of lust nor was he unwelcome; but out of the "bitterness of her soul" Hannah "asked of God" a child. Along with her plea she made a promise that this child should be "lent unto the Lord all the days of his life." Such a background must of necessity produce a remarkable character. It is a sad fact, but one noted physician declares that about only one child in ten thousand is sought of the Lord, and then properly trained, as was Samuel. We feel like weeping as we look at most children, for the poor little things just happen to come, and then grow up without prayer and proper training. At an early age they plunge headlong into sin, and finally, unless God intervenes, into hell. Not because God willed it, but because of hasty marriages, and the begetting of children without the thought of glorifying God.

Here was young Samuel living so close to God that he could hear His voice in the night season. Not only so, but he had the courage to tell his superior what he had heard, though the message contained judgment against Eli and his house.

The fact that his mother "made him a little coat and brought it to him from year to year" proves that he was a rapidly growing boy. Oh, that many of us today might outgrow our old clothes on spiritual lines and get new sermons, prayers and testimonies from year to year. It is a great pity when we look and sound "seedy."

He must have been a lovely and well-behaved lad, for we are told that he "grew and was in favor both with the Lord, and also with men." From his youth he was incapable of deception and evasiveness. This was a good foundation for strong character.

2. Honesty. Samuel judged Israel all his life, and when they desired a king so that they might be "like all the nations," the dear old prophet was greatly grieved. Hear him: "I am old and gray headed, ... I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day. Behold, here I am: witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken, or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you. And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand. And he said unto them, The Lord is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found aught in my hand. And they answered, He is witness." -- 1 Sam. 12: 2-5. Very few men could say this. He must have been an exemplary man, for God and all Israel to witness thus to his honesty.

3. Humility. Here his greatness seems to reach its height. After Israel had rejected perhaps the greatest of all judges and rulers, he did not sulk and become sour. But listen to his humility: "Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way." -- 1 Sam. 12:23. The natural tendency would have been: "Now since you have rejected me and desired a king, go to him for your counsel! You have depreciated all I have done in fasting and praying for you and you must henceforth learn some bitter lessons. I am clear before God." No; though he must now take a back seat, and die broken-hearted, he will not "cease to pray" for them. He will not lose hope for their final salvation as long as he has access in prayer. Parents and wives of unsaved loved ones should take courage here.

4. Severity. Samuel was not lopsided. Though he was humble and considerate, yet he was severe against unrighteousness. For instance, when Saul had failed to carry out the command of the Lord in "utterly" destroying the Amalekites and their cattle, hear the old eagle-eyed prophet: "Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said, surely the bitterness of death is past. And Samuel said, as thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal." -- 1 Sam. 15:32, 33.

This may at first seem inhuman and barbarous. But, remember, Agag is a type of carnality, "it was his people, the Amalekites, who were the first to hinder the children of Israel in their march to the Promised Land, at the waters of Rephidim where Amalek withstood Israel. For this, "The Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." -- Ex. 17:14.

Now, since King Saul had failed to carry out this command, Samuel under inspiration did what Saul and others from generations back had failed to do. This shows how God hates inbred sin. He wants us not to spare, but hew to pieces, as it were, the Agag of our souls. Few prophets and preachers deal thus with carnality. They urge people to seek a "blessing". Samuel would urge confession and death to this hateful thing that has hindered saints of all ages. Brother, will you through grace put an end to your old man, Agag?

HEW THE AGAG

Oh, this Agag, inbred sin,
I have long endured within,
Till he trembling saith, "Death's bitterness is past;"
But the hour of death has come,
And his evil course is run;
He shall die and from his resting place be cast.

Forth mine enemy I'll thrust,
Full of vile, corrupting lust,
Pride and envy, hatred, jealousy aflame;
Avarice and love of praise,
Fear and anger, dreadful maze,
Carnal mind, which man has tried in vain to tame.

Death, and only death for him,
Without pity, limb from limb,
Hew him with the Spirit's mighty flaming sword;
He to death our Lord pursued,
And his death with triumph viewed,
Hew the Agag with God's blessed living Word.

-- Vivian A. Drake.

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07 -- THE MAN WHO WALKED STRAIGHT

Preached on S. S. "Nerissa," Atlantic Ocean

In Genesis, chapter 5, we read of several very old men. But in each case we read the brief statement, "And he died", "And he died". Some had lived more than eight hundred years; nevertheless God's awful declaration to Adam and his posterity in case he disobeyed had really come to pass, "Thou shalt surely die." After the inspired penman had become monotonous in saying, "And he died", a new word must be coined to record the passing of Enoch. Perhaps the word "translated" was not then in use. So we read of him, "He was not, for God took him."

Notwithstanding the "great cloud of witnesses" recorded in Holy Writ, there were only a few who were wholly free from one or more grave faults. Even Father Abraham wobbled a little. But Enoch walked with God so long that he learned how to keep step and walk straight. They who would walk harmoniously together should do at least three things:

1. They Should be Agreed.
2. They Should Start Together.
3. They Should Keep Step

They should be agreed. We read, "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" Much depends upon being of the same mind. In the first place, we are out of harmony with God and all that is pure and good. We must get together and have the same objective. This can be realized only by a complete surrender on our part and becoming new creatures in Christ Jesus. Having thus been transformed by the renewing of the mind, it will be easy to see eye to eye.

Before Enoch's translation he had this testimony, that "he pleased God." Moreover, he had this assurance for "three hundred years." Now if one man could be kept above sin for so long, why cannot we have overcoming grace for at least three or thirty years? Do not get the impression that Enoch had no trials or domestic cares; therefore he could maintain an even, victorious walk for so long. No; we read, "He begat sons and daughters," and perhaps his children were much like other children (some of them redheaded, and others black-headed) both in appearance and disposition. We do not know what kind of wife he had, but doubtless he had his share of annoyances and misunderstandings as other people do. Yet he kept up his steady, unbroken step with God.

2. They should start together. Before anyone starts on a journey, especially a long journey, he looks up the route and plans in advance the necessary steps. If he is going with another person they agree to start together or meet at a certain place.

Most of us failed to start with God on time; hence we must hurry and catch if possible the fast "limited" for the skies. If this cannot be done, let us keep a steady pace and follow hard after, "redeeming the time for the days are evil."

Enoch's walk with God proved a physical as well as spiritual benefit. We read that he became the father of Methuselah who outlived all other men. Yes, he who honors God in his body, he who can restrain and conquer his natural desires, will likely hand down to his posterity something more than gold.

Enoch was a mighty preacher, in fact a prophet. He was the first to preach the "second coming". He waxed eloquent and fearless when he prophesied, "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

3. They should keep step. It is not enough to be agreed and start together, but to make rhythm and blessed harmony we should keep step. Soldiers who do so and do not break rank find it to their advantage on long marches. Even the poor prisoners do more and better work when they hum songs and pull together as one man. God loves order, and if we please Him in the highest sense we should know how fast or how slow to go. He is tender and not unmindful of our frame; hence He frequently adjusts His steps, fast or slow, long or short, to suit His child. "The steps (or stops) of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way."

Blessed is he who can keep step with his Lord, for he will succeed more or less in keeping step with his conscientious brethren. It requires no effort to break rank and be contrary, but it does require greatness of soul to "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit," and avoid unnecessary friction. Lord, teach us how to keep step with Thee and every one who is in perfect harmony with Thee! Something special must have happened when Enoch was "sixty-five". We read that he walked with God "after" he begat Methuselah. Perhaps the responsibility of parenthood drove him to seek a closer walk with God. Or, being a prophet, he may have foreseen the coming Messiah. Or, did he experience entire sanctification? Whatever occurred, he at least began a closer walk at that time than before. And he walked so far with God that at eventide he was nearer heaven than earth. So much so that methinks I hear God say, "Enoch, it is getting a little late, and since it is so far back, you had better come on home with me" -- and "he was not."

What a commotion and man-hunt took place the next day! Everybody was excited! All they found was perhaps an old hat and a pair of worn-out shoes; to this day some of his posterity cannot understand it. Why, if anyone now starts out with God and gets so far away from earth and earthly things that he seems to walk in air, he is not appreciated or understood.

Friends, shall we here and now enter into a covenant to walk close to God? By so doing we shall live holier, happier, and healthier lives. God grant that it may be so. Amen.

"O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road

That leads me to the Lamb.

"Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul refreshing view
Of Jesus and His Word!

"What peaceful hours I once enjoyed,
How sweet their memory still!
But they have left an aching void
The world can never fill.

"Return, O holy Dove, return,
Sweet messenger of rest:
I hate the sins that made Thee mourn
And drove Thee from my breast."

-- Cowper

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08 -- THE MAN WHO TRIFLED

Preached at Camp Meeting, Barbados, B. W. I.

Text: "And he awoke out of his sleep and said, I will go out as at other times before and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him." -- Judges. 16.20.

Here was Samson, a child of promise, well born, well trained, but he became a trifler. He had a fine start but he did three things:

1. Trifled with God
2. Trifled with a Woman
3. Trifled with Himself

1. He trifled with a covenant that he and his parents had made. It is a wonderful thing to make a covenant. Many times we receive great blessings, great manifestations of the Spirit. And yet they pass with the using. Not so with a covenant. A special covenant relationship with God may not be very ecstatic in itself, and yet there is an abiding, far-reaching outcome. You may receive a hundred blessings that, good as they are, may not equal one or two covenants. Samson's parents entered into a Nazaritish covenant that this boy should not drink wine, nor eat of those meats that were pronounced unclean, nor allow his head to be shaven. For some reason this peculiar covenant implied great blessing and especially physical power, I do not believe Samson

was a giant, but a man of just ordinary stature. This is why the Philistines could not account for his supernatural strength.

It is a great heritage to be well born. Samson's parents prayed for an heir. He was a welcomed child. It might be embarrassing to you if you were asked if all the children in your home were prayed for and gladly welcomed. Poor little things! Don't scold, slap, and jerk them around because they are given to irritability, thievery or sensuality! They cannot help it!! They are the unhappy combination of two dispositions that perhaps ought never to have been united. God in mercy has forgiven and perhaps sanctified you, but nevertheless some of your children are obstinate and rebellious because away back there during the prenatal period the parents were careless and prayer less.

I knew a lovely couple, well saved and sanctified. The man was a good preacher. They had four or five children, one of whom was a thief, a liar, and very unclean. The father told me he had whipped this boy more than all the other children put together, but he continued bad. I asked for an explanation. In reply he said that before this boy was born he and the mother spent the evenings reading that book, "Peck's Bad Boy", and roared and laughed while doing so. Later on it was not "Peck's Bad Boy," but "His -- Bad Boy." This was not the case with Samson; he had a good start, but he trifled.

Samson, being perhaps the only child, grew up doubtless to be more or less self-willed and spoiled. True, he delivered Israel; true, he did many remarkable things, not because he was eccentric or amative, but in spite of his inconsistencies. God does the same today: Uses some men mightily, not because they are odd and queer, but in spite of it. Perhaps he might use some of us in a greater measure if we were more evenly balanced.

But let us make the application! Do not be too severe on Samson. Brother, are you quite sure you have never trifled? Look back in your life and see how you promised God, if He would only help you get out of debt, you would do thus and so. He heard your cry and helped you in various ways. Did you keep your promise? Perhaps you became more careless and extravagant since you have had a little surplus than when you were poor. I heard Sam Jones say that when he was a poor circuit preacher and could scarcely buy food and clothes for his family, he was a much better man than later when his lectures brought him \$30,000 a year, besides his evangelistic campaigns. He died of "tobacco heart," smoking 25 cent cigars -- a big man, a wonderful man, but not big enough to quit tobacco.

Brother, do you remember back there when you or your property was in great danger from disease, fire, or flood? Do you remember how you covenanted with yourself and God that if you could only get well again, or if your child would be saved from death you would do thus and so? If God would only spare you or give you good crops, you would tithe, you would support a native missionary, you would let your darling child go as a missionary; yea, you would do a number of things. God in mercy heard your plea. Things turned and came your way, but you have forgotten all about those former convictions. Like Samson, you have trifled with your God.

2. He trifled with a woman not his equal, and irreligious at that. I tell you it is a serious thing to take advantage of the stranger, the orphan, the widow, or anyone who is more or less

helpless. Have you ever noticed how often God, in warning His chosen people, told them to be kind to the strangers, to the poor, to the fatherless, and then wound up by saying, "For ye were strangers in Egypt"? If we are not careful after health, wealth and popularity have smiled upon us more or less; we will cease to be tender, loving, and considerate toward our inferiors.

This is an age of trifling with human affections. Young lovers, yea, sometimes older ones, think it a light thing to have two or three on the string at the same time. Engagements and marriages are hurriedly entered into. Then because of the; slightest provocation a separation and divorce can be had. This is one reason I have taught my children not to think of getting married under twenty two or twenty-three. Yea, young people ought not even to keep company under eighteen or twenty. Why? Because they are going over fool's hill from about fifteen to eighteen, and they cannot properly judge at this age who will make a lifelong companion. A girl ought to keep that wonderful first kiss and embrace for the man with whom she expects to live the rest of her days. Too bad if she allows Tom, Dick and Harry too much liberty in slobbering over her and then, later on, hands her husband a peach with all the tender, delicate fuzz rubbed off. The same thing ought to apply to a young man. He has no right to demand of his sweetheart what he cannot furnish himself. If he demands that she give a clean bill of health that she always has been pure and unsullied, he ought to give as good as he demands.

I have known men, yea, preachers, to be over-anxious for a wife, and in so doing, seemed to lose all self-respect and honor. In nearly every town he honeyed around those of the fairer sex. He kept a number "on the string," so to speak, so that if one failed him, he was sure of another. Say, this is wicked and he who does it will surely be punished sooner or later, in one way or another. God help us to be consistent and behave in such a way that later on there would be no embarrassment if we should introduce our companion to a former lover. It is a wonderful thing to be able to demand full respect from that former sweetheart.

I well remember a beautiful young man and his sweetheart who attended my meeting. At first I thought they were newly wedded. Later, I found they were not, but I felt sure that they would soon be husband and wife. The courtship continued and finally, after months, the young lady was preparing to go a long distance to her northern home. We remarked to her that perhaps the next time we saw them together her name would be changed. "Oh, no!" she replied. "Why! aren't you engaged? Do you not expect to marry this young man?" "Oh, no! we're just friends." Then we became serious and said, "What is this thing yon are doing? Accepting presents, yea, costly presents from him and giving him reason to believe you love him and expect to live with him? This is dishonorable! You ought to tell him so."

Accordingly, she mustered up enough courage the day before leaving to have a plain understanding that the courtship was ended. What was the result? He went raving mad, had to be locked up and was finally taken to the insane asylum, where in three months' time he died of a broken heart. She, as far as I know, continues to profess to be saved and sanctified. Great God! What a settlement awaits some people when they come to the judgment seat of Christ!

3. Samson trifled not only with his covenant and a woman's affections, but he also trifled with himself -- his own personal strength. It is a wonderful thing to be blessed with beauty, or a fine physique, but it is more wonderful to always feel that this is the temple of God and we should

keep it clean and holy; the Holy Spirit does not want to dwell in an unclean house. How sad it is to see beautiful maidens and stalwart young men abuse the temple of the Holy Ghost. Medical statistics show that about 85 per cent of the young men today are not fit to marry, and were it not for the pure blood in the veins of the young mothers, in the next generation half the children would be blind or idiotic. What an awful state of affairs! But how long can we hope for the young maidens to be fit to marry? Look at them. See how bold, defiant and half nude they appear! I do not say that they are already fallen, but I do say that they have lost something very essential that belongs to pure womanhood.

Again I say, do not blame Samson too severely. In this age we put a premium on bestiality rather than on intelligence. If a young man can furnish bone and muscle so as to be a good athlete, his professors will give him better marks and pass him more readily than others. When a bunch of these "tough necks" board a street car or a train, everything is turned over to them and modest women and ministers must take a back seat.

Men trifle not only with their strength, but with time and money. Oh, the wasted evenings! Oh, the wasted money! We are a nation of spendthrifts! That is one reason we have so many divorces; these young people have never been taught to economize time, strength, or money, then later when they marry and expenses begin to pile up, the quarreling begins.

Samson said he would "go out as at other times before and shake himself;" he had done this many times before and had defied nearly everything under the sun. We are told that the "Spirit of the Lord came upon him." But, remember, there is a vast difference between the Spirit of God coming upon a person from without and the Spirit taking up his abode within. Preachers can pray and preach with a great deal of apparent unction, and yet it may not be because they are in Divine favor. But God is pleased to put His Spirit upon them, irrespective of their true heart condition.

"He wist not that the Lord was departed from him." According to this it seems possible that one can lose out unconsciously and hardly realize that he has broken step with God until a crucial test comes and down he goes. This is an age of respectable backsliding! One can continue to pray and testify so that his own companion, yea, he himself will hardly entertain the thought that he has severed connection with God.

They say that out on the level prairie, a railroad engine can run at high speed, at forty or fifty miles per hour, and then with the steam suddenly cut off, continue to run on its own momentum for fifteen miles. My Lord! I wonder if any of these upon this platform are praying or preaching or singing on past unction and past momentum! We can make a fair show in the flesh because back there when we were mightily anointed we learned how to do it, but I wonder if any of us have since then been running on the momentum we had while the fire of God was at white heat in the soul.

We continue to read the sad story: The "Philistines took him and put out his eyes and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house." See him! The mighty giant, once irresistible, but now in bondage, grinding and making "sport" for the unsaved. Poor Samson! Punished through the same channel through which he sinned. Two or three times are we told that he "went down to Timnath and saw a woman." "Went to Gaza

and saw there a harlot." We hope that Adam Clarke is correct when he says that this woman was not a bad character, but just an innkeeper. Be that as it may, poor Samson saw entirely too much, and now these eyes have been gouged out and we see him grinding like a horse in the prison house.

A sad picture! Let us get away from it! Listen to a hopeful note: "Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after that he was shaven." No doubt while he grinds, he has time to think and repent. I hear him say to himself and his God, "Oh, I'm so sorry that I trifled with Thee, my God! I'm so sorry I trifled with that wonderful covenant and considered it a light thing! I'm so sorry I was not obedient to my parents, when I grieved them by taking a wife from the unsaved, rather than from the people of God! I'm so sorry I allowed my eyes to wander! I'm so sorry I allowed my head to get into Delilah's lap! I'm so sorry that little by little I hinted the cause of my great strength!" While thus repenting and renewing his covenant, the old time vigor began once more to quicken his mortal body. Hallelujah!

And you, precious soul, you poor distressed and discouraged backslider, will you not here and now bemoan your wanderings? Will you not pledge yourself anew to walk in all the light and be His obedient child once more? If you, like the prodigal, will say, "I will arise and go to my father," I can see the Father of all mercies coming in your direction. An anxious God and an anxious penitent will soon meet each other, for He will take a dozen steps to your one. And methinks He will hardly let you finish your confession before He places upon your cheek the kiss of reconciliation. God grant that your sad failures may be capitalized, and enable you to profit, and cause others to profit in a way that would not have been possible had it not been for your bleak and bitter lesson.

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09 -- THE MAN WHO WAS RASH

Preached at Assuit, Egypt, before 5,000

Text: "I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering." -- 1 Sam. 13:12.

Sometimes the selfishness or saintliness of men is hidden in one unguarded expression. Little things, not only make, but reveal character. A straw shows which way the wind is blowing more accurately than does a telegraph pole.

As far as we know, the text is the first statement that reveals the weakness in the life of King Saul. Up to this time he was not only "head and shoulders" above the people, but his humility was very marked. Yet this one statement caused Samuel, the old eagle-eyed prophet, to read in the young king a dangerous streak. So much so that he announces, "Thou hast done foolishly, thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee."

Get the picture! The children of Israel were in a great "strait", for the Philistines with "30,000 chariots and people as the sand of the sea" had declared battle. The men of Israel lost their courage and some hid in "caves, thickets, rocks, high places and pits." Others deserted the army and crossed over Jordan. Any general like Saul could see at a glance that this meant defeat. He well knew that what he did he must do quickly, in order to hold his men. He was as yet very religious and waited patiently, then impatiently, for Samuel to come and offer a burnt offering, that they might expect the peculiar blessing of God upon them. After days of waiting for the prophet, the tension was so intense that the young general could wait no longer; and we hear him say, as he assumes the priestly office, "Bring hither a burnt offering to me." God in mercy did not strike him dead for this rash (some might say commendable) act, because of his sincerity. But he took an awful risk.

At first thought it would seem unnecessarily severe that, for this innocent offense -- yea, an act that was religious more or less -- the old prophet should pronounce such a severe sentence, especially so since there was such sweet fellowship between the young ruler and the "seer". Is not God merciful? Why then this judgment with one stroke? We answer; he who cannot hold still while under a great pressure is not safe to be at the head of a great cause or nation. He who will disregard the checks of the Spirit and "force himself" to do things on the spur of the moment has a rash streak in him that cannot be trusted.

But, friends, do not be too severe on King Saul. Perhaps you have likewise and on less important occasions "forced" yourself. Do you remember when against your better judgment you rushed into signing up for stock in a fake scheme? Did you ever, while under pressure, answer an unkind letter and say too much? Did you ever bring on leanness of soul by disregarding former vows and yielding to the demands of the flesh? Did you ever make a rash vow that you would do so and so to carry your point? Were you ever guilty of overeating or oversleeping? Be careful then how you hastily pronounce judgment on others.

King Saul is continued on trial! How good God is to give us repeated opportunities to redeem ourselves. Had the king proved himself worthy, perhaps his reign might have continued, at least much longer than it did. But that dangerous tendency came to the surface again, for in the next chapter (1 Sam. 14:44) he rashly decreed, "Thou shalt surely die, Jonathan." And why such an outburst of anger? Simply because his valiant son had tasted a little honey while routing the Philistines. He had been reconnoitering and had not heard his father's unreasonable decree, "Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, and that I may be avenged on my enemies." Hence, it was with difficulty that Jonathan, the victor, was rescued out of the hands of his rash father.

But again, I say, do not be too severe on King Saul. Friend, have you ever spoken rashly? Have you ever threatened, or punished your child while impatient? Have you ever censured another before hearing both sides? Have you ever made a rash vow that you would not eat or sleep until certain things happened? Have you ever become impatient with a window, a door, or a stovepipe because it did not open or fit readily?

St. Paul speaks of a high state of grace, in 1 Cor. 13, and among other things he declares that perfect love "vaunteth not itself," or "is not rash." Some of us would almost give our right arm

if we could only recall a rash word or act against a loved one years ago. See Moses, the wonderful lawgiver, the statesman, the historian, the general, the deliverer! Yet he was forbidden to go across Jordan into the Promised Land -- because on only one occasion he "spake unadvisedly with his lips."

He who is given to rashness will do other strange things. Next we see Saul disobeying the Lord in failing to "utterly destroy" the Amalekites, by sparing Agag and the best of the cattle. Now, Agag was a type of carnality. It was his people (the Amalekites) who were the first to withstand the children of Israel in their march to Canaan, at Rephidim (Ex. 17:8). And for this, God had sworn not to suppress them, but "utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." This shows how God proposes to deal with the carnal nature -- "utterly destroy it" More than one man, like King Saul, has lost the kingdom because he spared the Agag of his soul. It is easy to confess and destroy cheap things, but spare others. He who does it brings the curse of God upon himself. "Cursed is he that doeth the work of God deceitfully. Cursed is he that keepeth back his sword from blood." -- Jer. 48:10.

Saul had come now to lightly esteem the favor of God or man. We see him getting farther from God and it is easy to give way to fits of anger and jealousy. Next, he deliberately plans the killing of David. "And Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David." -- 1 Sam. 12:1. We can excuse the first offense in forcing himself to offer a burnt offering while under a great pressure. But not so now, when murder is coolly premeditated. He is now no longer teachable, but case-hardened. O brother! Be careful how you allow your spirit to become severe and unfeeling!

The sad and closing scene! God forsaken! Slain by an Amalekite who, according to the Divine command, ought to have been slain. Saul had a glorious beginning but an inglorious end! "I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me and answereth me no more." What could be sadder than a God "departed", just when He was needed most. A silent God! A God refusing to give counsel when enemies were pressing from every side, why? Because counsel in the past was unheeded.

O brother, do not lightly esteem the commandments of the Lord! Do not pull off from those who would reprove you. Do not entertain for a moment a spirit of jealousy and bitterness. Make all haste to seek God's voice, lest he turn away from you in a most crucial moment.

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10 -- THE MAN WHO FELL AND GOT UP AGAIN

Preached at Jerusalem before ten nationalities

Text: "But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord." -- 2 Sam. 11:27.

A man may climb to the top branch of a tree, but if he should lose his hold he falls and as a rule continues to fall until he is at the bottom. Sometimes he may regain his hold, but generally he keeps slipping until he hits terra firma. In like manner, when men begin to break step with God they

are so enamored by the temptation that they do not fully realize they are slipping, until they find themselves under guilt and condemnation.

No one falls into open sin all at once. Long before a man is known as a rascal, long before a woman is known as a loose character, they have allowed their thoughts and eyes, little by little, to wander and dwell upon the thing presented to their minds. No doubt Satan finds as much satisfaction when one listens to his suggestion, as, later, when this same person falls into open sin, for that disgraceful thing down the road ten miles distant cannot take place until the thought and suggestion is first entertained.

We saw, on one occasion, & beautiful butterfly alight for a second on a cabbage leaf, and then on another. We thought, "That butterfly does not remain long enough to get any nectar or food. Why, then, all this activity?" Upon close investigation, I found that every time she lit upon a leaf she deposited a tiny nit or egg. Nature did the rest and it was only a little while until the tiny egg had hatched out into a tiny worm. Immediately, this little worm began to feed upon the plant, and it was not long until it had become a large worm. Then, in turn, this large worm became another butterfly, and thus reproduced its kind a thousand fold.

Now, the process of temptation, and finally a downfall, is on the same principle. Satan, through the eye or ear, deposits the nit, or germ, in the form of a suggestion. If we dare to harbor and nestle this for a moment, it will be only a little while before we will have a serpentine brood on hand. Hence, the wise thing to do is to crush, as we would a viper or an ugly worm, the first intimation to do wrong.

Notice the four steps that David took downward:

1. He was idle.
2. He allowed his eyes to wander.
3. He became curious
4. He became oblivious to others' rights.

And then, thank God, he took one big step upward:

1. He acknowledged his sin

Here we have a full-sized picture of the "man after God's own heart" falling from a mighty pinnacle. Infidels in all ages have gloated over David's sin, though they have not "acknowledged", as did he, their transgression, nor written their penitential Psalm.

"Let us look at the facts. In 1 Sam. 13:14, David is mentioned as a man after God's own heart. More than a half century later, when corrupted by power and indulgence, and led astray by temptation, he sinned, repented, and suffered. When it was said that David was 'a man after God's own heart,' he was a lad with a stainless record, ready to take the place that Saul had failed to fill,

and do whatever God commanded him. (See Acts 13:22.) His life as a whole was marked by rare humility and nobility. The wrong things which he did were things which were done by other kings and monarchs in his day and in other days without rebuke and with little reproach. But for those things David was smitten with sore affliction, and doomed to perpetual trouble; while the account of them has been written down in all its details, without suppression, apology or defense, and sent down through the ages, giving infidels an 'occasion to blaspheme' (2 Sam. 12:14); and they read the record and denounce King David, forgetting that some of their own records, if fully unfolded, might be as dark as his."

In studying this sad picture we will see the steps other men have taken in getting away from God. David for the time being had conquered all his enemies, but we read, "After the year was expired at the time when kings go forth to battle, David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel. But David tarried still at Jerusalem."

1. He was idle. Idleness will ruin any man, family or nation. It has caused the downfall of kings and the overthrow of empires. David was invincible until he "tarried still at Jerusalem" and ceased to fight the battles of the Lord. Then when ease, luxury, and popularity came, he went down with a crash. It would put a stop to a lot of disgrace and divorce scandals if a host of idle men and women could be kept busy caring for a home with several children. They have too much time to gad about and meddle with the affairs and affections of others. This is what damned Sodom. We read, "This was the iniquity of Sodom . . . pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness were in her and her daughters."

2. He allowed his eyes to wander. "In an eventide (after an afternoon nap) David arose from off his bed and walked upon the (flat) roof of his house, and from the roof he saw a woman." Drop the curtain! It is too sad! The mighty Samson also "saw a woman," which led to his downfall. This seeing business is a serious, thing. Peter spoke of "having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin." The eye is the avenue to the soul. Most men, who have fallen into sin, first looked, then desired, then planned and yielded. It would have been a great blessing in disguise if some men had either been born blind, or been so thoroughly sanctified as to have power not to look the second time. It is wonderful to have self-mastery over your eyes and every other part of the body and to be able to say, "Stay at home and mind your own business." Temptation must be nipped in its incipency. Job realized this when he said, "I made a covenant with mine eyes, why then should I think upon a maid?" If this were necessary in Job's day, it is much more so today.

If you think you may look,
If you look you may think;
Take this first little step,
Then plunge over the brink.

3. He became curious. "David sent and inquired after the woman." An old writer said, "Idleness and curiosity married together beget envy." True! Let anyone be idle and curious and he will likely pry into the affairs of others where he has no business. All sin begins in thought. He who is able to call back and control his thoughts will never go into sin of any kind. No doubt we will get a higher reward in heaven for good thoughts than good acts; for our thinking determines our behavior. In fact, it is impossible to say an unkind word, or perform an unholy deed except as

one has first thought along a similar line. No marvel then that we read, "As he thinketh in his heart so is he." This then is the real man, regardless of what he professes. He is no better than his thoughts. Tell me what you think and I will tell you what you will do if you have the opportunity. Tell me your mental pictures and I will tell you your standing with God.

4. He became oblivious to others' rights. "David sent messengers and took her." Here he loses all sense of justice and deliberately becomes a high-handed robber. There was no domestic or physical excuse for this act. But when a man loses his footing and is swept into the vortex of evil desire, there is no telling how insane he will become. It is too late to reason with a man when he is half-crazed with passion or rage. The time for putting on the brakes was away up the road, before the declivity of the incline was so steep. Satan takes as much delight in getting one to inwardly consent under a whisper to let down just one rail and look over the fence for a moment as he does later on when the same victim is stone blind to a future good and ruthlessly tramples underfoot or throws to the winds all semblance of restraint. It is impossible for a collapse to come except for the slightest indiscretion up the road there.

One step leads to another. . Next, Bathsheba "sent" word to David that caused the cold sweat to come. Now he must cover up his deviltry as quickly as possible, so he "sent" to Joab, saying, "Send me Uriah the Hittite."

David was a great sender. Five times did he "send," then God began to send sickness, sorrow, and sedition upon him and his household. When a man takes the first step out of Divine order he does not look down the road and see an awful harvest awaiting him. This one step may require a thousand others to undo it if ever it is undone. Oh, the blindness and deception of sin!

1. He acknowledged his sin. This is a dark picture, but there is another side to it. David was a great sinner, but he was also great at confessing. The penitential Psalm (51) is one of the most sublime pieces of literature ever written... In it we find the personal pronoun thirty-five times in the first sixteen verses. This, perhaps, was the chief reason why David was "restored" to the favor of God and the throne, while poor Saul lost everything because he could not humble himself. Some men fall so hard and low that they cannot be gathered up and put together again. Saul, Absalom and Judas were such men. But though David and Peter went down, they were too sincere to stay down. There was something left out of which to make a saint. Their repentance was so genuine that God was moved with compassion to forgive.

Look at David! When Nathan the fearless prophet confronted him with his sin, instead of equivocating he prostrated himself in dust and ashes. . The prophet had hardly finished his burning reproof and left the king's palace until God told him to return and say, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die."

According to the Mosaic Law, anyone found guilty of adultery was to be stoned to death. But David so humbled himself that the death penalty was transferred to the illegitimate child. What a thought -- that we can so abase ourselves and plead the merits of Jesus that faith will seize and sheath the uplifted sword and, instead, receive the kiss of reconciliation.

True, like the Psalmist, we may be chastened for our sins, but if we can truly say, "I acknowledged my sin, and mine iniquity have I not hid," perhaps God will yet rule and overrule so that in the end others may take warning and profit from our sad mistakes. Amen and Amen.

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11 -- THE MAN WHO WAS THE CHAMPION COMPROMISER

(Preached at Trinidad, British W. I.)

Text: "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel. . . And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan." -- 1 Kings 12:28, 29.

The history of "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat," is very interesting. Solomon, the wise king, had thousands of valiant men, but he perceived that this young Ephrathite was "industrious" and hence made him "ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph." It takes wide-awake men to lead the way and become chieftains, either for good or for evil. "The son of Nebat" was such a man. It was while he was busy "in the field" that the prophet Abijah "found him" and proclaimed: "Thus saith the Lord the God of Israel. Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee." What a wonderful commission to an obscure young man! What a sudden opportunity was his! But as in all such cases, it was conditional. The prophet continued, "If thou wilt hearken unto all that I command and wilt walk in my ways and do that which is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee!" It would seem that such an unprecedented, unexpected promotion should terminate gloriously. But, instead, of this man we read more than a score of times the unenviable record: "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin."

The question arises, wherein did Jeroboam sin more than other kings? Ahab was a great sinner, Manasseh had "a most wicked reign," and other kings "did evil in the sight of the Lord," But none of these had the terrible distinction of this king, in "making others to sin." What did he do? He did exactly what many men and movements are doing today. He compromised. He was a "good mixer". He was a "policy man", a high class compromiser. Webster says that to compromise means, "A committal to something derogatory, hazardous, or objectionable; a concession, a surrender."

"And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made. So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense." -- 1 Kings 12:26-33.

Mark you, his great sin was not that of debauchery, like Belshazzar. He did not persecute and kill the prophets of the Lord, as did Ahab. He did not fall into adultery like David. But he was great on substitution. He did not oppose the true and the radical, but imitated it. He "devised of his

own heart" a scheme that satisfied in a measure the religious inclinations of those who wanted an eased conscience without old-time righteousness. He well knew that the children of Israel must worship something and so he said, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem." The strange part of his sin was that it did not stop with his death, or the captivity of Israel. It has extended down to our day. But suppose we let Jeroboam's name rest with his God and substitute some of the modern Jeroboams. We will avoid personalities, but hold to characters we have known.

A certain able minister "made others to sin" by setting the wrong example in going to the bathing beach; and in half-nude condition flopped around in the sand and taught young ladies to swim. This led to other familiarities and later a church trial and his expulsion. But he took others with him, and hard feelings have never been healed.

A prominent Christian lady "made others to sin" by dressing in a semi-worldly manner. She was not really gaudy, such as some who wear beads, gold, and curled hair, but just nice enough to feel at home with compromisers and be no rebuke to them. Hence, the younger women hid behind her and went a little farther toward the world.

Another Christian woman "made others to sin," not after this manner. Oh, no, she was not loose in dress, but worse, loose with her tongue. She felt free to talk about ministers and their "worldly wives", not realizing that the sin of backbiting is condemned ten times as often in the Scriptures as that of worldliness in dress. John Wesley called uncharitable conversation, or "evil speaking," the "universal sin of the world," the sin that nearly everybody commits.

We knew two strong holiness preachers, who made an entire conference to tone down. They were once plain in dress and unctuous in their ministrations, but they set the precedent in appearance, dressing so as to resemble business men rather than prophets of the Lord. They lost that holy seriousness and became "jolly good fellows," like the generality of men. It was not long until the underlings, one by one, did the same thing and now they cannot be distinguished from common, worldly men. Not only so, but the poor "sheep" became affected and now many of them mingle freely with "goats!" God will eventually inquire into this and require it at the hands of those leaders.

Brother H. C. Morrison, in one of his strong editorials, deplored the fact that many ministers could hardly be distinguished in appearance and manners from business men. What is the difference between bobbed hair, bobbed skirts on a woman, and bobbed mustache and bobbed coats on a minister? True, devotion does not inhere in a ministerial garb, but something ought to be different in his bearing from ordinary men. He should always be recognized as "the man of God." More than once have we been invited to conduct service on shipboard, because we were recognized as a minister. Other clergymen were left unnoticed because they looked like sports, or business men. Brethren, it pays to be out and out for God.

"He made Israel to sin," but how about laying up treasures on earth? More than one good man has cooled off because he followed the example of another in striving for more property. Wesley says, "Whosoever he is that, owing no man anything and having food and raiment for himself and his household, together with a sufficiency to carry on his worldly business, whosoever, I say, being already in these circumstances, seeks a still larger portion on earth: he

lives in an open habitual denial of the Lord that bought him. If you will add house to house, or field to field, why do you call yourself a Christian? You do not obey Jesus Christ. You do not design it. For He says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth."

"He made Israel to sin," but how about these parents who do not actually gamble, but at home teach their children to become familiar with cards, such as "flinch" or "lotto," etc? Later they desire something stronger. A mother visited her son who was behind the bars, having been sentenced for forging a check. The young man listened with bowed head to the sobs of his mother. Then with deliberation he said, "Stop your weeping! You are to blame for teaching me my first lessons in card playing in our parlor. Then later I played for smokes, then for money, and finally for big stakes. It all started with the 'innocent game' in our home."

"He made Israel to sin," but how about mothers who allow their little girls to expose their limbs and go half-naked to keep in style? They think that they must buy the clothes "ready made" and cannot wear anything else. Stop blaming the silly flapper! Had her mother had a real backbone she could have done as a few others -- gone against the crowd and set rather than follow the latest fashions.

"He made Israel to sin," but how about trusting more in a life insurance policy than in God? Many good men do this, feeling they owe it to their families to leave something in case they are suddenly cut off. But in some of these cases one must be connected with a secret fraternity in order to hold a policy. To say the least, it is questionable and looks like speculating on human life. Some men may do so without any apparent compunction of conscience, but with others it seems like taking things out of God's hands and "going down to Egypt for help." These substitutes may bring a feeling of security to feeble souls, but, on the other hand, leaning hard upon God alone is a great means of comfort and strength not to be despised.

"He made Israel to sin," but how about a man in this day who becomes "well-fixed" by dickering in business to the hurt of his soul? Covetousness is a subtle foe and is especially the sin of old age. Young people have their dangers. Sad indeed if, after they steer clear of this or that pitfall, then in later years they fall into the blighting sin of covetousness. Brother, you may be affected and not be aware of it! But are you not continually scheming (sometimes on Sunday) how you can save here, or make a little there? In stead of having precious seasons with your Bible, morning and night, do you not find more delight in thinking about finance? Come now, let us be frank. Do you not have enough income without further accumulation, if need be, to keep soul and body together? If so, why do you slave and act stingy as though you were about to land in the poor-house?

Wesley had three rules: 1. Make all you can. 2. Save all you can. 3. Give all you can. He said if it was found that he was worth more than five pounds (\$25.00) when he came to die, everyone should put him down as a thief and a robber. When the end came he had a little over \$20.00, and yet during his life he gave away more than \$150,000. What a rebuke to many today who call themselves Methodists! He said, "You will not get credit for a single penny that has passed through your hands except that which has been used directly or indirectly for the furtherance of the Gospel. Moreover, every penny found in your possession which has not been

thus used will be a swift witness against you in that day." O brethren, don't argue or justify yourself, but take these words to heart.

"He made Israel to sin." But how about self-indulgence in eating and sleeping. The early Methodists who had so much power were particular to keep certain days as "fast days;" especially on Friday before quarterly meeting. Example is strong, and when leaders nowadays seldom, if ever, fast and lay themselves out in self-denial on other lines, then the younger ministers and laymen do the same. It has become the exception rather than the rule to have a day of fasting and prayer at our camps and conferences; and if anyone dares to go against the crowd he is termed a "legalist" or an extremist. What are we coming to when these things that were prominent with the apostles and early fathers are ignored, if not ridiculed? God help us as ministers and leaders! We are more and more convinced that the responsibility for devotion or departure rests with the leaders.

Finney said, "Brethren, our preaching will bear its legitimate fruits. If immorality prevails in the land, the fault is ours in a great degree. If there is a decay of conscience, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the public press lacks moral discrimination the pulpit is responsible for it. If the church is degenerated and worldly, the pulpit is responsible for it. If Satan rules in our halls of legislation, the pulpit is responsible for it. If our politics become so corrupt that the very foundations of our government are ready to fall away, the pulpit is responsible for it. Let us not ignore this fact, my dear brethren; but let us lay it to heart."

Yes, this is an age of toning down and getting away from positive, specific preaching. Oh, that more men might get a commission like that of Jeremiah, "See," I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down and to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant." Notice, he was to do six things, four of which were destructive and two constructive. A compromiser invariably reverses this order. He deals in sweet oil, heals slightly, crying Peace, peace, when there is no lasting peace.

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12 -- THE MAN WHO GOT OUT OF HIS PLACE

Preached at F. M. Conference, Santo Domingo

In 2 Chron. the 26th chapter, we have an account of the rise and fall of a mighty king. Years ago when going to college we studied ancient history, and there we found the account of the rise and fall of the Roman Empire -- how it started from obscurity, rose to a high pinnacle, then fell and went into oblivion. Men are like kingdoms; they start in obscurity, and a few rise to great popularity, then--.

I have four leading thoughts in the study of this remarkable king, Uzziah, who reigned fifty-two years. These four divisions are:

1. Obscurity.

2. Prosperity.

3. Popularity.

4. Oblivion.

Let us study this character closely. Read verses 1 to 5 inclusive. "Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father, Amaziah. He built Eloth, and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers. Sixteen years old was Uzziah when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah did. And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper."

1. Obscurity. Here was a boy in great obscurity. We do not read a thing about him until he was sixteen years of age, when he came upon the scene of activity. He was evidently a very remarkable youth, for it is seldom you will read of a wealthy boy at this age who seeks the Lord; and takes delight in associating with the humble saints of God. We read that he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had "understanding in the visions of God."

Get the picture! Here is a young man: Instead of being found down town, on the street corners, or at the baseball grounds -- here is an exception: he would rather seek God, and associate with the old prophets. I do not care who you are, how humble or how homely has been your parentage, how obscure your life, if you associate with good people, especially the remarkable saints of God, soon or late the world will hear from you. It is a greater heritage for a boy or girl to be brought up with an old-time, conscientious saint than to fall heir to millions.

2. Prosperity. I do not want to invite criticism, but I must preach something that is contrary to the theory of many good people. We are told here distinctly that "as long as he sought the Lord --" which gives me reason to believe that we ought not to stop with being saved or sanctified. I believe in; two distinct works of grace. We ought to seek definitely until we obtain them; they should stand out in bold relief in our lives. But, oh, it is a pity when we crystallize around a certain blessing, great as that blessing may be. I am afraid that in the case of some of the dear holiness people, after they were saved and sanctified, they settled down and went to seed around a wonderful blessing.

God bless you! There are heights and depths, lengths and breadths after you have been sanctified, of which you have never dreamed. Some good people remind me of the nanny goat that we have in California where there is not much pasture land. We stake her out with a long chain allowing her a certain range. For the first few days she has a wonderful feed, and the result is we receive a wonderful supply of rich milk. But after a while she has eaten the nice alfalfa or clover off, down to the roots. Then, unless we give her a longer chain, or move her, she will suffer, and we likewise will suffer with a cheap supply of milk. A rather homely illustration, you say. Yes, but we read in Isa. 54:2, "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes." This is what many good

people need to do! Get out of that little treadmill! Lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes, then see if you do not grow more rapidly.

Yes, I thank God for two distinct works of grace, but I am still seeking God, for I believe there is advance ground that will make my yesterdays look cheap. Our mountain peaks today ought to become our valleys tomorrow, if we continually seek God and rise to higher heights.

Again, the record tells us that as long as Uzziah sought the Lord, "God made him to prosper." I do not know where some of us have gotten the notion that God puts a special premium on poverty. We think that if a man is poverty-stricken and can scarcely pay his rent or clothe his family, for some reason this goes with righteousness. Now, beloved, do not misunderstand me! I am not preaching that we should strive to gather the riches of this old world. We read, "The poor have the gospel preached to them," and we are glad to know that God is no respecter of persons. It is also true that the poor, as a rule, receive the Gospel more gladly than the rich who have so many comforts and luxuries that they do not feel the need of comfort from God. You are not to blame because you were born poor, or because for the time being you are hard pressed, financially. But I believe if you will seek the Lord as Uzziah did, tithe your income, and be careful in your home life, soon or late you ought to get to the place where you cannot only take care of yourself but turn around and help somebody else. My father-in-law was a great lecturer and I remember his making this statement, "When the struggle for existence begins, the opportunity for usefulness ends." The meaning is that as long as one is struggling for an existence, all he can do is to pay rent, feed and clothe his own family; in short as long as he can merely keep his own head above the billows he is not able to reach out and help another. He is busy taking care of himself. As long as this is the case he cannot be a benefactor to others.

Turn with me to Josh. 1:7, 8: "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

Again, we read of Joseph, in Gen. 39:23: "The keeper of the prison looked not to anything that was under his (Joseph's) hand: because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper." Again in Psa. 1:3, "Whatsoever the righteous man doeth shall prosper." I take it from these passages that if you are pure in your secret life, as was Joseph; if you stick to the good Book, as did Joshua; and if you are righteous in your dealings with your fellow men as you ought to be, God will bless and prosper you so that later you will be able to help, rather than be helped.

Please pardon a personal reference. We were born so poor that in the house where we lived we could make snowballs by reaching out of our bed in the old attic. We did not know what a suit of underwear felt like until fourteen. For a cap we wore one of mother's old stockings pulled down over the head with part of the leg flopping in the air. And since we grew up and became a preacher we have known how to drink the dregs of poverty. For a number of years it was all we could do to pay rent and take care of our little family. But God led us to tithe, though our tithe was

very small. Then He led us to start writing pamphlets and books, though we did not have enough money to get them published. But I kept on seeking God, tithing and humbling myself, and finally got ahead. Let me say it humbly, in the last forty years we have published over \$60,000 worth of books. And now, instead of having to look to other people to help me, it has become my great delight to give away hundreds and thousands of dollars in cash and books. Yes, I repeat, if you behave, and seek earnestly, sooner or later He will make you, like Uzziah, to prosper.

3. Popularity. At the third step in this king's life as he climbed, he reached a dangerous pinnacle -- that of popularity. This is such a dizzy tower that very few can keep properly balanced on it without toppling over. We read in the 15th verse, "And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and on the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. And his name spread abroad: for he was marvelously helped, till he was strong." Oh! The multitudes of men and movements that started in obscurity, and because they humbled themselves and sought God earnestly He prospered them. Then they became popular -- and now I must hasten and drop the curtain for the downfall is too sad to look upon.

Continue to read the sad epitaph: "But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction; for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense." Very few people can survive prosperity and popularity and keep truly humble. Adam Clarke gave some fine advice to young preachers. He said: "do not allow yourselves to be invited out frequently to rich dinners, and associate with people of fine clothes, fine carriages and fine homes." How different was this advice from the practice of a lot of young preachers of today, who think, "If I could only get my picture or name in the paper, or if I could dine with those of influence, or sit on the platform with men of renown, this would give me a start, increase my standing and put me in great demand."

Methinks I see the devil standing around the corner chuckling to himself at this young fellow who is climbing so fast and becoming so popular! Satan is saying, "I am just delighted to see you climbing so high and getting so popular, for the higher you climb the greater will be the fall!"

Brethren, I do not feel envious of any young preacher who climbs faster than I, but I feel rather a sense of pity, for in many cases -- up the road there I fear he is going to come to disgrace or an untimely end. O dear young preachers do not be ambitious to succeed, as compromising men count success! I would rather be on a green-brier circuit, out in the brush or woods, and have the peculiar blessings of God upon me, with new revelations from God upon my Bible, than be in a city, riding around and feel when I retire at night -- "The old-time glory has departed."

4. Finally, I come to, the saddest word of all, Oblivion. Here was a mighty man of God out of his place. He vainly thought that because he had rebuilt Jerusalem, fortified a number of cities and now had a standing army of over 300,000 men; that because he had put Judea and Jerusalem on the map and his fame had spread throughout all the nations round about, so that they feared him because of his riches and might -- he vainly thought that because he had done all these things he could go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. "And they (the priests) withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests, the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou

hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honor from the Lord God. Then while Uzziah was wroth . . . with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead. . . And they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because the Lord had smitten him. And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the Lord: and Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land."

See the sad ending! Here is that mighty ruler who got out of his place and nobody could deal with him; nobody could reprove him, for he was head and shoulders above his cabinet. He thought, "By my own sagacity and power I have brought Jerusalem to the top." And God alone had to deal with him. He was compelled to dwell in a separate house (the pesthouse) and there he remained until the day of his death -- a despised leper. See him! He dare not go outside of his own lot. No doubt they had a high wall around the enclosure, and if anybody dared to come inside the wall, the law demanded that as soon as a leper saw him he must throw up both hands and cry at the top of his voice, "Unclean! Unclean!"

See him! He is not riding down the boulevard with prancing steeds. He is hidden away, and not even his wife and children dare visit him: and if they want to give him a precious dish they must put it at the gate, and then flee as he comes out to receive it.

And why all of this? I answer because he did not keep humble; because he got out of his place; because he could not take a reproof. After he died they did not allow him to be buried in the sepulcher of the kings; he had to be buried in a separate burying-place. I think we all might take warning if we study the life of this young man, this powerful king, then this leper who died and dropped into oblivion. Better fall upon your face now before the Lord than have the Lord crush you with a sad calamity. Better live at everybody's feet and take reproof from the least person, than become exalted, then later die like a beast and go into oblivion.

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13 -- THE MAN WHO HATED TRUTH

Preached at F. M. Conference, Santo Domingo

Text: "And, the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, "by whom we may enquire of the Lord: "but I hate him: for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imla." -- 2 Chron. 18:7.

Here we have an account of King Ahab's downfall. If you will read 2 Chron., 17th and 18th chapters through, you will find a very pathetic account of this great man's damnation. I have three leading thoughts in regard to him and all other men who face truth.

1. God always has a man to declare His truth.
2. God always gives men a chance to know the truth.

3. If they refuse, He lets them believe error and be damned.

1. God always has a man ready, or in preparation, to declare His eternal truth. In this instance, He had Micaiah, a very obscure and perhaps a homely man, hidden away in the brush, waiting the appointed moment, to be God's mouthpiece.

Get the setting! Verse 1, "Now, Jehoshaphat had riches and honor in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab." This is where he got out of Divine order -- he joined affinity with wicked Ahab. Jehoshaphat evidently was a good king ruling over two tribes, while Ahab was ruling over ten. These two kingdoms had been at war with each other for years, and now Jehoshaphat who desires to be a peacemaker breaks the ice and says, "I will go up to Samaria and make friends with Ahab and if possible bring about a better relationship between our warring kingdoms."

But remember this: It is a dangerous thing to make peace with any man or nation on a wrong basis. You had better have no alliance with the other party whatsoever, than compromise principle and truth. This is the trouble with a lot of men today. They are trying to amalgamate, and in order to do so they give up original convictions (if they ever had any) and unite on a wrong foundation. Jehoshaphat had no business going up to Samaria and making affinity with a man whom God had appointed for destruction. It was after Ahab had killed sheep and oxen for Jehoshaphat in abundance and fed him with a big feed that Ahab knew just when to propose an alliance that would get them affiliated in a wrong way. Ahab was what we would call today a fine diplomat, a man of policy, who knew how to work the other fellow in order to get the game.

Read on, verse 3, "And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah. Wilt thou go with me to Ramoth-gilead? And he answered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war." But, methinks at this point God checked him and he said, "Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord today. Therefore the king of Israel gathered together of prophets, four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said; Go up; for God will deliver it into the king's hand.

"But Jehoshaphat said is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides that we might enquire of him? And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat. There is yet one man by whom we may enquire of the Lord; but I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said let not the king say so."

Now get the picture! Ahab had killed the true prophets of the Lord, and all that were not killed had fled and hidden in caves so that even Elijah became discouraged and said, "I only am left!" Yet God had this man Micaiah ready to reprove the wicked monarch. I imagine this prophet was a man of obscurity, not highly educated perhaps, a man whose personal appearance was not very commanding; yet he was a channel through which God wanted to revive backslidden Israel.

If you will study the Bible and church history you will find that, as a rule (of course there are exceptions), God's greatest prophets and messengers have not been university men, but self-made, plus Divinity. God seems to prefer to choose "the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." This ought to encourage you students who have come from behind the plow, and out in the brush. God has picked you out from among your fellow beings and has called

you to get the preparation, then go forth and be His mouthpiece to enlighten the nations. I tremble as I look at you, for I do not know which of you will be true and which will fail God in the trying hour. Ignorant and poverty-stricken young men and women are the material out of which God often forms polished shafts to drive His truth home. Oh, let us live so low at Christ's feet that, later, God can find us ready for something worth while.

If men, like pugilists and athletes, for a little bit of glory or money, will live in advance if they will apply themselves and deny themselves in order to win out on a final day, why can we not practice rigid self-denial, waiting for God to prepare us, then call us out upon the stage of action? The great champion pugilist, Gene Tunney, said that he could not afford to smoke, or drink, or stay out late at nights, or run with women. Why? Because he wanted to store up all his energy and strength in order to make a million dollars in one night, knocking the other fellow out. He did it for a temporal and earthly glory, but we should forego pleasing things for a heavenly glory!

Daniel Webster made a great speech on the floor of Congress and in that speech gave a certain illustration. When he finished he had made his point and Swayed the entire House. At the close, some one stepped up to him and said, "Webster, where did you get that illustration?" He replied, "I have had it stored away in my brain for twenty years and more than once was tempted to use it, but did not feel quite certain that the proper time had come until today." Think of it! There was a man who lived in advance for a great victory. He lived for that for twenty years. Oh, how the angels must look down over the battlements of glory and watch us as we either fit or unfit ourselves for a mighty victory!

2. God not only has a man prepared to declare His truth, but He gives men a chance to know that truth. He raises up prophets and preachers; then also there is the printed page that is supposed to enlighten men. We read, "He lighteth every man that cometh into the world." If you will take advantage of that little light that dawns upon you, it may be the entering wedge, the opening door to a greater light. No doubt Ahab had frequently come in contact with this despised prophet Micaiah. We know he had come in contact with Elijah. Elijah had reproved him more than once for his apostasy and trying to compel men to worship Baal. These multitudes (some raw heathen) in this wicked city (Shanghai), who go by the church, hear the singing, receive the tracts and hear the testimonies; all of those things are invitations to hear the entire truth and save their souls.

One thing makes me sad this morning as I look into your faces. You students have learned a lot of truth and been in this blessed atmosphere for months or years; sad indeed if, after all these years, some of you, like Ahab or Judas, fail to walk in all the light. There is a sad picture in the New Testament where Christ was preaching to the multitudes (who followed Him largely for the loaves and fishes) and in their enthusiasm they cried, "Hosanna! Hail King! Peace on earth and good will to men!" Then as suddenly they forsook Him and fled! Christ's heart was sad at their fickleness and He said to His disciples, "Will ye also go away?" Finally we see only one man (the beloved disciple) standing by his Lord when He is being mocked and spit upon. All could be brave and shout with the crowd, but only one stood by in that trying hour.

You missionaries can doubtless look back and see the multitudes who were converted at the same time you were. They had the same zeal and blessing as you had. But where are they?

Some of them married the wrong person; some of them cooled off and lost the vision; some joined the wrong church; some have gone into business. And where are they today? Stranded upon the rocks, or like a floating derelict, out of commission.

Pardon a personal reference. I have been preaching over forty years. I can look back and see the multitudes who attended the same revival I did. Many of them were beautifully converted, many of them as clearly converted as this unworthy preacher. Later, I attended college, and a number of young preachers were in the same theological class with me. Many of these boys were bright and gifted. One of them was the valedictorian and gave a great oration on the day of the commencement. At that time the doctrine of holiness as a second blessing became an issue, and all of these boys (except one) including our professor in theology took their stand against it. I feel very sad as I look back at these collegiates, to know that I am the only one preaching Bible holiness. They all had a chance to know the truth, and did know it for the time being; but, like Ahab, they failed to stand by it.

3. When men have a chance to know the truth and do not accept it, God gives them over to believe a lie that they may be damned! Behold the scene! Here were four hundred prophets of Ahab who said, "Go up to Ramoth-gilead and prosper. It belongs to you." And here was only one man who dared to withstand the four hundred and say, "It is a mistake; you will fail if you go up to battle." Four hundred to one was very convincing to a man who in his heart hated truth and wanted to go in his own way of choosing. Keep this in mind, will you that, as a rule, God is always on the side with the minority. The popular crowds make a nice gesture, but God is not there. Do you want to know where God is working? Do not go to the big cathedrals, the costly churches. Go down to the tent, the little church, the mission, and the place where despised people are!

One truth can stand alone like a big oak tree in face of storms, frosts and winter blasts; but error cannot do this! Remember when you imbibe one error it will not be long until you imbibe others, for they must cling together to hold one another up.

"Truth crushed to earth will rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers;
But error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies amid her worshipers."

Take, for instance, Seventh Day Adventism. The first false position they embraced, away back there, was keeping Saturday as the Sabbath, rather than the first day of the week. It was not long until they embraced another false tenet -- "conditional immortality." This led to that popular and pleasing delusion -- no eternal punishment. Next, annihilation, which only proves the total depravity of men; for men would rather become a nonentity than renounce all sin.

The Scripture says, "Buy the truth, and sell it not." Let us buy it even if we have to pay a fancy price for it, no matter if the price seems high. Not only buy the truth but hunt up people who hold the truth, and cling to them as your personal friends, even if they reprove you and go after your pet sins.

We read, "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." So if a preacher, a husband, or a wife has occasion to reprove you, for Jesus' sake and as you value your own soul, do not resent it, but rather say, "I thank you for this reproof and I will profit by it."

Get the picture again! Here is Ahab who had met the true prophets of the Lord and had many a chance to know the truth, but trifled with it and then rejected it. Finally the time came when, we read: "I saw the Lord sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said who shall entice Ahab king of Israel that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one spake saying after this manner and another saying after that manner. Then there came out a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will entice him. And the Lord said unto him, wherewith? And he said, I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the Lord said Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail: go out and do even so."

Think of it! Ahab had now come to where his cup of iniquity was full. It is a serious thing when God looks down from heaven and sees that one's cup of iniquity is full. I do not believe God plans the damnation of any soul, but He does step aside and give us a chance to choose, and when we deliberately choose time after time in the wrong direction, then He says, "Let him die and cease to be a curse in the earth. He, like Judas, has prepared himself for 'his own place'. Let him quickly go there!"

Sometimes teachers, after repeated efforts with an unruly student, get to a place where they are compelled to say, "I can't do anything with you! You are incorrigible! I must let you run your course and learn the lesson for yourself!" In like manner, it is a fearful thing for us to get to the place where God must say, "You are so proud, stubborn, licentious, and gluttonous I will give you over to your own deadly doings."

We read, "No man shall pluck you out of my hand." You are in God's hand as long as you implicitly obey. Wicked men and devils cannot take you out of his hand, but you can do so and then go hurriedly to hell. Yes, in a sense I believe in "eternal security", when in harmony with 1 John 5:18, "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." As long as you keep your eyes at home, as long as you keep your ears closed to that which is not to the glory of God, Satan is a chained hound and a defeated foe. He cannot touch you! But when you get careless and play fast and loose, trifle with your former God-given convictions, look out, for you are taking yourself out of the hands of God; and the devil, like a ravenous wolf, is ready to seize upon you!

Poor Ahab! He has been in hell now perhaps 4,000 years. Why? Because he was not teachable, because he despised the knowledge God gave him; because he persecuted the true prophets of the Lord who were sent unto him. And you need to be careful, lest you despise those preachers, or certain books that dig you up; that get at you for your impurity and your departure from righteousness! You prefer to go and hear some one, instead, who will pat you on the back and rub you the right way of the grain. Remember when you do so you will do it at the peril of your own soul! You should hunt up people who will be faithful to you.

"Shall I, for fear of feeble man,
The Spirit's course in me restrain,
Or undismayed in deed and word,
Be a true witness of my Lord!

"Awed by a mortal's frown, shall I
Conceal the Word of God most high!
How then before Thee shall I dare
To stand, or how Thine anger bear!

"Shall I, to soothe the unholy throng,
Soften Thy troth, or smooth my tongue:
To gain earth's gilded toys, or flee
The cross endured, my Lord, by Thee?

"What then is he whose scorn I dread,
Whose wrath or hate makes me afraid?
A man! an heir of death! a slave
To sin! a bubble on the wave!

"Yea, let men rage, since Thou wilt spread
Thy shadowing wings around my head;
Since in all pain Thy tender love
Will still my sure refreshment prove."

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14 -- THE MAN WHO WAS PROMOTED

Preached at Shanghai Bible School

Text: "Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly." -- 1 Kings 18:3.

Here we have a short sketch of a remarkable though obscure man. His entire biography can be found in sixteen verses. When God writes, He can couch a great deal of a man's life into a few verses. Let us study his life closely. This man not only feared the Lord greatly, but "feared him from his youth." This of course laid a sure foundation for success in life.

Friends, would it not be wonderful if all of God's people could join together and. pray unitedly that a tidal wave of holy fear might sweep over the World once more? We have come to a time when men, women and children do not fear God, His law, nor the laws of the land. In fact they scoff at sacred things and all amendments for the good of the people. A few have legal fear, such as fear of the judgment, and fear of hell. This is better than no fear at all, for legal fear often retards men from going into open crime. But filial fear, that which fears not God's wrath, but fears to grieve Him -- this is more wholesome and evangelical.

And what will the fear of God insure? What did it bring to Obadiah?

1. Protection

2. Promotion

3. Prosperity

4. Perpetuity

1. It brought to him and will bring to you Protection. Why not, since it is natural for all property owners to protect and care for their own? If we are wholly the Lord's and fear Him greatly, will He not look after us? We read, "Ye are God's husbandry (farm), ye are God's building," Very well, let Him till us; let Him lease us for His own and our profit.

It is a nice thing to feel securely protected against all loss and all danger. In the Southern state a woman does not feel safe after dusk to pass through a cotton patch, a strip of woodland, or in fact go anywhere, without some one accompanying her. She has heard and read so much about black men assaulting white women and shattering their nerves for life that this has become the one common dread to womanhood. But let me quiet and relieve your fears. Here is a sure guarantee against misuse or abuse -- fear God and honor Him in your thoughts and life and He will protect you.

But, let a girl paint her face, frizz her hair, stand around soda fountains, giggle and laugh aloud, take rides and walks with a young fellow who, wears a red necktie and blows cigarette smoke through his nose, and it will be a miracle if she is not ruined before she is eighteen. She thinks she is loved and admired above others, but she is mistaken, for all that these young libertines care for her is that they may ruin her.

Young lady, do you want a guarantee for a happy married life? If so, live so close to God that He can choose for you. If you trust to your own or perhaps even your mother's choosing, you may make the mistake of your life. Do not deceive yourself in a young man simply because he is polite, has money, and treats you freely. His goodness may be only skin deep! If you want to know his real worth, find out how he treats mother or little sister at home. If he can be ugly to them, he will be the same to you later on. If he can be unkind to his little sister and hurt her feelings, remember your time is coming.

What do I see? I see multitudes of heartbroken women! What are they doing? They are walking the floors of their little bedrooms tonight, with bowed heads and hot, scalding tears streaming down their faces. Listen to what they are saying: "My God! Why was I ever born? I thought John was a good man and because he had money, I fondly hoped for a nice home with servants and furniture ever so fine. But where is he? Off gambling or with some other woman and here I am without necessary comforts, with these little children crying for bread! What shall I do? Were it not for fear of plunging into hell I would now end the whole thing!" Yes, there are, right now, many haggard, lonely women who were once just as pretty and had just as many friends and as fair prospects as any of you, who are saying or at least feeling these very things. How did it all

come about? By flirting, by sitting halfway back in the congregation, by being ashamed of the humble people of God. And now they are reaping what they sowed.

But it is a poor rule that will not work both ways. Many a man has been deceived in thinking that a good companion consists of a beautiful face and form and the ability to thump a piano. But this is no way to Judge. Find out if she has pouting spells at home; find out if she is too lazy to wash the dishes or iron her own clothes; find out if she lies abed in the morning while mother gets the breakfast. Does she love novels and story papers? Is she so nervous that she screams at the sight of a worm or a mouse? Is she so effeminate that she cannot look at you when speaking? Or, on the other hand, is she so bold and talkative as to weary you with her company? If these things exist, better go slowly or you will get "more than you bargain for."

There is many a man who works like a slave, and is tempted to dishonesty in order to get money for a wife who must have fine clothes; and if the money is not forthcoming, he is hen-pecked until life is a burden. It is all because lust played a greater part in the engagement and marriage than did the glory of God. The fear of God will protect you against getting the wrong companion.

Some years ago we were conducting a rescue home in Cleveland, Ohio. There were certain streets and alleys down in the red-light district where a policeman did not dare go alone lest he should be knocked down. But in this same locality one of our rescue workers, or a Salvation Army "lassie" could go any hour in the night and the thugs would swear at each other and say, "Stand back and let that good lady through!" What was the secret of her power? Purity! Her purity was a greater protection than a revolver. Whoever you may be, let me say, if you want to avoid pitfalls, disappointment and disgrace, begin now to live a godly life.

I have heard my sainted Minnie relate how God delivered her from a "white slaver" in Chicago. When but seventeen years of age, she came across Lake Michigan by boat, landing there very early in the morning. She was to go to 104 Franklin Street (then the Free Methodist Publishing House) where she would join a band of Christian workers.

Never having been in a large city before, she felt a little confused. A woman with a child in her arms stepped up and asked her where she wanted to go. She told her readily and felt very grateful when the woman said that she was going right by Franklin Street, and would show her the way.

First, the accommodating stranger stepped up to a convenient stand and ordered lemonade. An inward voice said, "Don't drink it," and it was left untouched. A second attempt, but the Spirit checked her.

After walking a long distance, Minnie felt some uneasiness. She had been told that it was only a short walk, and she asked if they had not lost the way. "Oh, no," said the woman, "we are almost there now." A little further, and this young girl heard the inward voice again, "Don't take another step." She saw a merchant in the door of his store, looking at her pityingly, she thought. "I am going to ask that man the way to Franklin Street," she said. "No, no," said the woman. "Come on, it is just around the corner." But she resolutely turned away to ask the man, and as she did so her companion signaled a passing street car, and was soon out of sight.

"You poor child," said the man, "You are a mile and a half from where you want to go. That woman was leading you wrong." Following his kind direction, she found the place at last, and soon realized what a narrow escape she had. She did not dream of danger in accompanying the innocent-looking woman with the baby in her arms. There was no human friend to warn her. But the Lord checked her as she was about to drink the lemonade, which without doubt was drugged. And again, He led her to ask the man the way, just before the house was reached, which closes its door annually upon so many as innocent and unsuspecting as she.

2. The Fear of the Lord will insure Promotion. Here was Obadiah, who had become the "governor of Ahab's house." We do not know how he came to this important position, but we are safe in saying that there was no electioneering or "wire pulling". God alone could elect him to this office, considering Ahab's wickedness, his hatred of Elijah and the real people of God. Ahab was concerned with the affairs of state, while Obadiah was entrusted with the domestic cares of the royal palace.

It is a false notion that one must tone down and lay aside God-given convictions in order to climb and amount to something. Some of you will soon be forgotten and there will be nothing left behind to bless the world, simply because you were afraid to obey your convictions. It seems to me that this is one of the saddest things of this age -- lack of moral stamina. If I had to write in one sentence the greatest need of the day, I would write, "Oh, for men and women who have the courage to express and follow their convictions!" Some of you have backbones like cotton strings -- can be wound around another's finger either way, just to suit convenience. God wants to give you a backbone more like an iron crowbar that will enable you to defy poverty, persecution and death in order to be free and untrammelled.

I conducted a meeting in Philadelphia and was entertained across the street from the great Girard College, built and richly endowed by Stephen Girard, an infidel tea and coffee broker. One Saturday night, years ago, he announced to his clerks that a cargo of sugar had just arrived from Cuba and that he wanted all hands to appear for duty the next day. One of his chief clerks ventured to request that he be excused from Sunday work, saying he would work overtime on Monday. But Mr. Girard cut him short and wanted to know his reasons.

The young man replied that he had conscientious scruples against Sunday work. This enraged the skeptic who said, "Away with your religious cant! You appear for duty. If I let one off, I will have to let others off." The next morning the young man did not appear, but was there bright and early Monday. He was told to go to the cashier's office and get his time. As a consequence he walked the streets for weeks without work. But God had his eye upon him. One day Mr. Girard was accosted by a banker who asked if he could put him on the track of a good young man for a cashier in a suburban bank.

"Yes," replied Mr. Girard, "I know a fine young man who worked for me, but I discharged him because he was too religious to work on Sunday; and any young man who has a widowed mother to support and will lose a good position rather than violate his conscience, I consider safe to trust anywhere."

The young man was found and given the position. Did it pay him to be true? Had he caved in like many of you have done he would now be holding down a little position when a better one was waiting for him. Do you know that there are banking institutions and large corporations looking for men of principle and piety? Some of you are selling out too cheap, you are working against your best interest.

Several years ago a railroad man of Mansfield, Pennsylvania, was wonderfully converted. With his conversion came the conviction that he should not work on the Lord's Day. He requested the superintendent of his division to give him another job which did not necessitate Sunday work, though it might mean smaller wages. But what do railroad officials care about a man's conscience? Being a brakeman on the local freight which ran into Pittsburgh, he did not need to make the Sunday trip except on "special" runs, which were once or twice a month. Finally when the test came the man was true to God and as a result lost his position. He walked the streets looking for any kind of work, but a panic was on which meant that there were ten men for every job. His money began to ebb and it was not long until the last dollar was gone. Next, his grocer informed him that though he had been a good customer, all would have to be treated alike -- which meant that there was to be no credit business. This, along with the fact that winter was coming on and the children needed shoes and clothing, made the dear man desperate. His wife did not fail to chide him for his "fanatical notion of giving up a good job." What should he do? What did he do? Instead of asking for his old position, he took his Bible, locked himself in the bedroom and, kneeling before God, read and argued his case as follows: "I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added." He told God that he had taken this stand for Christ's sake and now He must help him out. After a long struggle he prayed through and shouted the victory. When he opened the door and came out smiling and singing, his wife wrung her hands and cried out, "Oh, my God! It is not enough to be without something to eat and wear, but my poor husband has lost his mind." No, he had simply fought the good fight of faith and received the assurance that God would undertake. The next day he received a telegram to come to the office of the superintendent. On his way down, old Beelzebub stepped up, walked beside him and started a conversation.

"What will you do if your old job is offered to you again?"

"I will thank them, but politely refuse."

When he arrived he was informed that there was an opening on the local passenger accommodation which ran into Pittsburgh only six days in the week. He accepted, and now has a cleaner, safer position, with twenty dollars a month higher wages.

Did it pay him to "swear to his own hurt and change not"? Did it pay him to be true to his convictions and stand the test, though it meant temporary suffering? God is looking for those who have "martyr material in them. He takes delight in promoting such. Sometimes it is a promotion upward and sometimes downward. Sometimes He enlarges the purse, and sometimes permits it to be diminished but shrinks up the necessity so that there is not need for so much. Well, what of it? Either way reveals His overruling.

3 The fear of God will insure Prosperity. If it does not do this immediately, it will in the end. It will at least insure liberality. It did for Obadiah. He was able to support one hundred "prophets" all alone, for at least three years. He must have received a large salary to have done so. We do not hear that he complained of "hard times", wishing for a change of pastors. This was true generosity! But of course his preachers were easily supported. If we had more of such today we could soon evangelize the world. They had two bills of fare, "bread and water", and water and bread. The question is how did he bake all this bread and carry all this water to these one hundred men, for three or more years, without bloodthirsty Ahab's knowledge? A mystery and a miracle! But when God is "greatly feared", miracles will be wrought.

While God has no special respect for the rich, He nowhere puts a premium upon poverty; and while it is a great blessing that the "poor have the gospel preached unto them," yet many of us are poor, not because we have honored God so much, but because we have dishonored Him. Some people are always behind and cannot do what they ought toward the work of God at home or abroad, because of one of three things -- laziness, extravagance or poor management. Many are too lazy and easy-going to succeed; others work hard but are always pressed because of extravagance or poor management. This is seen in the kitchen, in the buying of clothes, in giving to the doctors or drug stores what could be saved were proper diet and exercise given to the body.

It is doubtful if there is more than one person in a thousand who receives all the benefit from water, internally and externally, that God intended. The same could be said concerning air, exercise, and food -- what, when and how to eat. Because of these things there is an immense waste of time, energy and money. No wonder the apostle prayed, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

God says, "If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity and thy darkness be as the noonday." Instead of always taking in like a sponge, God would have us so well fed and filled that we can give out, having more than we need for ourselves. Amen.

I am not pleading for covetousness or a hoarding spirit, but for such diligence and frugality as to enable one to always be in a position to help rather than be helped. A genuine case of godliness will sooner or later make this a possibility. God forbid that you should then swing to the other extreme, as many have done, and give proportionately less than when you were struggling with adversity.

4. The fear of God will insure Perpetuity. Sin paralyzes, while godliness perpetuates. Madam Guyon said, "God does not love inconstant souls. He loves that which resembles His own immutability." Perhaps this is one reason why some people never accomplish anything permanent. They are always busy but so changeable and easily influenced that nothing remains after they are gone. God says, "The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." He also says, "Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days." If ungodly men live long, it is the exception rather than the rule. God is merciful and sometimes lets wicked men live to an old age, not because they are wicked, but in spite of their wickedness. They might have lived longer had they honored God in their lives.

Some of us would have been dead and forgotten years ago had we not sought religion. Have you ever noticed that most of the sad and sudden deaths come to those who drink, disregard the Sabbath or are disloyal to their marriage vows? "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

Prof. Elmer Gates, a scientist in Washington, D. C., has proved the power of good and evil thoughts upon the body. He places in a glass tube the exudations from the pores of the skin and by treating them chemically can prove by the chemical reaction what kind of thought waves were sent over the body. "Positive" currents of thought are thoughts of peace, contentment, love (not lust), and things that pertain to happiness and health. "Negative" currents are those of anger, hate, jealousy, sensuality, grief, anxiety and things that pertain to remorse and disease. The negative currents have a tendency to destroy the tissues and throw out through the pores and other excretory channels the valuable elements of the nervous system. One can stand such abuse for a while, and appear well and happy, but sooner or later there comes a breakdown. Or, to say the least, he who harbors ignoble and sinful thoughts will suffer more in mind and body than the momentary satisfaction of sin was worth.

According to this, every one ought to seek salvation in self-defense. You will live longer and happier for having lived pure and holy. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

I conducted a meeting in South Carolina, and the closing night there was much conviction on the people. We prolonged the call for penitents and finally I felt led to say that some one was trifling and resisting for the last time. I felt so strange that I declined to pronounce the benediction. Little did I know how soon one of those present would plunge into hell. Just as the people were passing out a young man" seeing his rival with a former lady friend, was immediately enraged, and, drawing a knife, proceeded to stab him. After receiving several wounds, the second young man drew a revolver and threatened to kill him if he did not desist. But he kept on, whereupon the revolver was fired without taking effect. The young man with the revolver, being backed off, stumbled over a stick of wood and fell. At this the would-be murderer said, "I've got you now and will kill you." But before he carried out his threat a third shot pierced his heart and with knife in hand he fell dead across his victim's body. Some one came rushing in and said, "Come out quickly -- a man is killed." We went out, and there he lay with his mouth full of sand and his eyes already glassy. We picked up his limp body and carried it into the church and up the aisle. Passing the very altar at which he ought to have knelt, we laid him upon the platform. I could not help remarking, "Poor young man, had you only knelt at this altar of prayer we would not need to have carried your lifeless body up here now." From this sad incident let me remind you that no one is safe while unsaved. You know not when that jealousy, temper or lust of yours will get the best of you, and the result may be an untimely end.

True, you may not have a sudden or calamitous death, yet your influence for good may be dead long before you die. Some people who have shut God out of their lives, and are busily engaged at this and that, are now as truly damned as they ever will be.

And now you who are particularly concerned know for yourselves if these characteristics of the fear of God exist in your lives. If so, very well; if not, look well lest you simply have the "form of godliness" without the life and power thereof.

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15 -- THE MAN WHO DIED TOO SOON

Preached at Los Angeles, Calif.

Text: "It is the man of God who was disobedient unto the word of the Lord." -- 1 Kings 13:26.

The history surrounding this case is about as follows: On this occasion King Jeroboam "ordained a feast . . . like unto the feast in Judah." So, in order to hold the ten tribes, he built an altar at Bethel where he initiated a cheap imitation of the true worship at Jerusalem. While the king was in the act of burning incense, a man of God from Judah suddenly appeared and cried against the altar of false worship. The altar was rent in twain and the ashes were poured out. The enraged king put forth his hand, saying, "Lay hold on him." But his hand was "dried up" so that he could not pull it in again. Immediately he perceived that a true prophet stood before him, and he begged him to entreat the Lord to restore his arm. The prophet did so and the withered arm was healed. Apparently repentant the apostate king insisted that the man of God go home with him, refresh himself and receive a reward. But the prophet replied.

"If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place; for so it was charged me by the word of the Lord." Strange that though this man of God did not yield then and there, yet afterward he listened to an old backslidden prophet and as a result lost his life. In our study today, I wish to consider three things concerning this prophet and his untimely end:

1. He trifled with convictions.
2. He mingled too freely with compromisers.
3. He yielded to self-indulgence.

1. He trifled with God-given convictions. God is always ready for every emergency. He is preparing, or has His man already prepared, to "cry aloud" against every departure from righteousness. He had Nathan ready to reprove David. He had Micaiah ready to rebuke Ahab. He had Paul ready to convince Agrippa. Oh, how much it means to so live in advance that God will not need to wait upon and get us ready to deliver His truth.

Here was a man of God -- we do not know his name, nor from whence he came, except from Judah, a distance of nearly fifty miles. His was a very strict and unmistakable command. It may have seemed a little severe to walk this distance and return another way, without any nourishment. But God's commandments are "not grievous" when fully complied with.

It is a wonderful favor for the great God to take us into His confidence and trust us with His plans and purposes. He seldom does this. Why? Because we either do not live close enough to Him to hear His gentle voice, or when we do hear we lack the courage to go against the tide and implicitly obey. Perhaps I am speaking right now to those who, in the past, have had strong convictions on various lines, but because they trifled with them are now befogged and hardly know what to believe or practice.

There are at least four classes of people: (1) Those who never had clear, well-defined convictions. These are harmless, easy-going souls who are naturally drawn into the current and follow the crowd. They must have a leader who thinks and takes the initiative for them and then they will follow whether he lead them right or wrong. Such souls are to be pitied rather than censured. (2) Another class are those who at one time had strong convictions on certain lines, as for instance, on tithing, voting, plainness of dress, Sabbath observance, entertainments, eating and drinking to the glory of God. But, by mingling too freely with worldings, they have gone back on those former convictions entirely, or have so toned down to please others that it is hard to know on which side now to place them.

They have become "good mixers" and, like Ephraim, have lost their identity. What a pity! (3) A third class have held on tenaciously to their original views, but unfortunately have become harsh and driving, so that they now have more grit than grace. They repel rather than draw; they sour rather than sweeten. How sad that they have given up so much and gotten so little in return. (4) But, thank God, there is another class, and I hope you are among this number. These have had strong light and as a result have taken a pronounced stand on every vital question. By so doing they have become unpopular and are branded by many as "extremists" and "unsafe". But instead of letting the opposition sour them, it, like frost on persimmons, has ripened and mellowed them. They stand out as beacon lights, strong and forceful, yet tender and unassuming. They do not swerve one inch to escape censure or gain recognition. Oh, that we had more of this type!

Brother, settle it here and now that you will not trifle, tone down, nor become critical, but hold firmly, yet without an intolerant spirit, to the "pattern shown thee in the mount." If God had to frequently ring this in the ears of Moses, how much more do we need to heed it today. You must look straight ahead and not at this one or that one. For instance, God may hold you, like a few saints in the past, to a line of renunciation that not many will take. If He does, do not pity yourself, but rather count it a great compliment. Those who travel on upper deck will always see mountain peaks and land before those who are beneath. Your own companion, your co-worker, yea, your pastor may not appreciate or understand your leadings.

2. He mingled too freely with compromisers. Here was a mighty man of God who had the courage to withstand an apostate king, but could not survive the flattery and influence of a fellow prophet. When the king invited him to dine, he positively replied, "I will not." But when invited by one of his own profession he modified it by saying, "I may not."

Strange, but it is a fact that most men who fall away do so through the subtle influence of relatives, or those of a similar occupation, rather than through total strangers or those with whom there is no community of interest. For instance: Students lose out through the association of

students rather than through foreigners. Musicians become jealous of musicians, not physicians. Preachers change their views and practices through the influence of one another rather than the influence of the outside world. It is easier to resist the coarse, debasing things of the world than the refined compromise inside the church. A railroad engine cannot well turn a right angle, but it is easy to finally make a complete circle, through a switch as thin as a knife blade. More than one man and movement have lost the fire and cooled off by indulging in little departures and mingling too freely with those who were not bitter enemies, but conservative advisers.

Say, beloved, if you would "keep yourself free to follow the Lord in all things," do not mix too freely. Never put yourself under obligation by accepting certain favors. This will hold good in business relations as well as in religious circles. Of course there are two extremes to avoid, but especially that of mixing too freely.

Here are two preachers. The first takes the attitude of seclusion. He keeps to his line of work and has little to do with other movements. He or his people are seldom seen or heard in popular gatherings. Perhaps he is a little too churchy and narrow; so much so that he fails to enter on open door of usefulness. But, though he may not accomplish so much, yet as a rule he will hold what he does gain better than the other fellow.

The second man takes the other attitude -- that of aggressiveness. He pushes to the front and is in nearly everything, civic and evangelical. Such a man must have great depth of soul and be very outspoken against shams, or he will soon be swallowed up and lose his identity. If he is true to his convictions he is likely to be ousted, and this generally means a new order of things, with him at the head. Few are strong and wise enough to take this route without spiritual loss. Personally, I feel like sticking to the motto which God gave me thirty-five years ago: "A clean work, rather than a big work." It has meant more or less ostracism and misunderstanding, but it has also meant a peculiar anointing and victory well worth the sacrifice.

3. He yielded to the clamors of the flesh. This good man was like other men in that he had natural appetites and desires. But he disobeyed when he returned to eat and drink. While at the table, it seems the spirit of prophecy suddenly came upon the old backslidden prophet and he "cried unto the man of God that came from Judah," saying, "Thy carcass shall not come unto the sepulcher of thy fathers."

This is one of the mysteries: That though a man may not be right himself, he may, like the lying prophet, be used in declaring God's message. Inspiration may come upon a man when in fact the Holy Ghost does not possess him. God spoke through Balaam, but did not endorse him. God permitted some things among the patriarchs that He did not sanction. He does the same with us today. It is too bad that we are exemplary on some lines and fearfully lopsided on others.

This man of God yielded on but one point, while we have frequently yielded on many. He lost his life, while we continue to live and disobey. He let a present enjoyment, yea, a seeming necessity; blind him to a greater good. One step of self-indulgence led to another. See him! After hearing his death sentence it appears he deliberately finished his meal and allowed his host to saddle for him the donkey on which to ride. Oh, that he had fallen to his knees, or sprung to his feet

and started on a dead run! God might have given him repentance and a lease on life. But having disregarded the checks of the Spirit once, it was easy to go farther.

Beloved, do not be too severe in your criticism of this prophet, or any other man of God who has gone astray. If you are absolutely sincere, doubtless you will confess that many a time have you set aside your covenant or convictions for a present gratification. It was the mere mercy of God that you did not go farther and apostatize. It was when you were not prayed up and prayed through that the devil saw the open gap and slipped up on you. You were off your guard, became blinded to future joys, and down you went. "Self-denial is the law of life; self-indulgence is the law of death," said one of the early fathers.

William Law, in his "Serious Call to a Holy Life," says: "If religion requires us sometimes to fast and deny our natural appetites, it is to lessen that struggle and war that is in our nature; it is to render our bodies fitter instruments of purity and more obedient to the good motions of Divine grace; it is to dry up the springs of our passions that war against the soul, to cool the flame of our blood and render the mind more capable of Divine meditations. So that although these abstinences give some pain to the body, yet they so lessen the power of bodily appetites and passions, and so increase our tastes for spiritual joys, that even these severities of religion, when practiced with discretion, add much to the comfort to our lives."

Many a man has lost his soul who started out well and was a flame of fire for years; then because of overwork, or physical infirmities, he began to ease up and finally settled down to such an extent that he never regained the old-time glory and unction of former days. It is so easy to step aside for the time being, in order to get out of debt, or educate the children, and one step leads to another until soul-saving becomes a secondary thing.

In fact, this is the way the experience of holiness is lost -- through legitimate channels. Since there is no carnality within to appeal to, Satan appeals to the natural, innocent desires of the flesh. And when these are gratified for the mere satisfaction they bring, rather than for the glory of God, it is at this juncture, Mr. Finney says, that yielding becomes sin. "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat." Satan tried the same steps of temptation on Jesus, but failed ingloriously, thank God.

Reader, if you ever fall into sin it will be through one of these three channels -- through the eyes, through natural, fleshly desires, or through unsanctified ambitions to be wise. We shall never be exempt from temptation or solicitation. Jesus was tempted; Joseph was solicited. The danger point is at that juncture where we find it necessary to resist and yet, in spirit do not. So long as God knows that in the integrity of your soul you are absolutely sincere and mean to be pure and upright, you are as innocent as heaven. But the moment you inwardly consent to that thing which weakens your standing with God, "sin lieth at the door."

I knew a valuable minister who suffered at times with a severe headache. On one of these occasions a good sister, a member of his church, suggested that she could relieve him by massaging his forehead. This delicate touch was so pleasant that it called for a repetition and finally brought about a familiarity that resulted in their downfall. O brother! Be careful of the little

beginnings. Watch against the first departures! Insist that you leave every home as pure as you found it. Remember, Satan does not at first tempt to open sin. If he did, the conscientious soul would quickly perceive the suggestion to be from beneath and then and there resent it. With the wholly sanctified, Satan uses natural things to appeal to natural desires and, through their misuse, or abuse, carnality enters the soul.

He who is able to keep the victory over the flesh -- his natural desires and appetites -- will easily keep the victory over the world and the devil. Eating, sleeping, and ease-taking may seem to be trivial things, but he who readily yields to these proves that he does not have the entire body thoroughly in hand and would, if enticed, yield to grosser gratifications.

"Oh, wouldst Thou, Lord, Thy servant guard
'Gainst every known, or secret foe,
A mind for all assaults prepare;
A sober vigilance bestow;
Ever apprised of danger nigh,
And when to fight and when to fly.

"Oh, never suffer me to sleep
Secure within the verge of hell;
But still my watchful spirit keep
In lowly awe and loving zeal;
And bless me with a godly fear
And plant that guardian angel here.

"What though a thousand hosts engage
A thousand worlds my soul to shake;
I have a shield shall quell their rage,
And drive the alien armies back:
Portrayed, it bears a bleeding Lamb;
I dare believe in Jesus' name."

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16 -- THE MAN WHO LIVED TOO LONG

Preached at a Camp Meeting in Canada

Text: "God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart." -- 2 Chron. 32:81.

Hezekiah was a remarkable king, the son of wicked Ahaz. Though good heredity is an advantage, this case proves that a child can turn out well even though the parents may be ungodly. As a rule, the second generation of rich, or royal parentage is either brainless or corrupt. Hezekiah was a glorious exception in this respect, but his luxurious living brought on disorders which broke out in carbuncles. God told him he must die. He turned his face to the wall and prayed a prayer

such as was never before uttered by mortal man -- a prayer wherein he reminded God of his own righteousness and it was accepted for face value. You may be assured he was an exemplary man; else his prayer would have brought a curse rather than a blessing. God heard and healed him through natural means -- "a lump of figs." There is nothing better for a poultice than figs.

We must walk softly and with reverence when we study Bible characters. And yet they are on record for our profit. If they were good men, they become an inspiration; if they were bad men, a warning. Now, as we approach this good king, I find three outstanding thoughts concerning him:

1. He was on trial and not aware
2. His was a trial of motive rather than social or intellectual strength. ,
3. He outlived his day of usefulness and became a disappointment to God.

1. Hezekiah was on trial and did not know it. Here was a good king of whom we read, he "walked before God in truth and with a perfect heart." His outward life was exemplary in every respect. But it seems that human nature cannot survive ease and popularity. After his remarkable healing, congratulations and gifts began to pour in, and we read, "His heart was lifted up; therefore there was wrath upon him and upon Judah and Jerusalem."

Strange that God's wrath should come upon an entire city and nation because of one man's pride of heart! The same was true when David insisted on numbering the people; as a result seventy thousand men died with the plague. It appears that God recognized a representative man for the whole. Reverse it, and let one man like John Knox pray the prayer of faith for an entire nation and God stands ready to answer. Oh, what fearful responsibilities and glorious opportunities are ours!

"God left him to try him." There is a vast difference between a trial and a temptation. God tries us, to the intent He may strengthen us. Satan tempts us that he may weaken us. God tempts no one, but He does permit the devil to do so for one of two reasons:

- (1) To prove to us and others what grace has already accomplished; or
- (2) To discover in us weaknesses and tendencies that we did not know existed.

If we only knew when one of these tests was coming we would be on our guard. But as a rule they are on, and over before we awake to the fact.

Oh, what a thought! God lifts His hand of protection for a moment and turns a soul over to the devil on the outside .and carnality on the inside! Who knows when this crucial test may come? And who will be able to stand? None but the pure in heart. Perhaps God and Satan held a debate over your soul this day. Satan challenges God to withdraw the "hedge," as in Job's case, and what a pity if, when God accepts the challenge, you fail Him.

Brother, you ought to be so well saved that God can let come what will and in every instance the adversary be put to shame. You should come out of every trial in better shape than you went in. Only those who are sanctified through and through can do this. You ought to seek heart purity in self-defense, if nothing more. You are not safe a moment while carrying around with you an explosive that may blow you up any minute.

Listen! Did God ever leave you to try you, so that He might know all that was in your heart? Yes, more than once! In the kitchen, in the hen-house, when you hit the wrong nail, when the cow or the mule stepped on your foot, when you were ill-treated. In short, when things did not go to suit you, God seemed to hide for the time being. But, no! He had only stepped into the other room as it were and was listening, or looking on to see how you behaved while under pressure. When the storm passed over and you had time to think, did you feel perfectly satisfied that you showed the right spirit? Were there, misgivings and dejection of soul?

During these unpleasant tests are not the only times when God shows us up. Have you had a measure of success? Are you, or your children, sought after more than others? Do you take an inward satisfaction in relating what you or your relatives have accomplished? Do you feel inwardly exalted when you are promoted and noticed above others? Do you find special delight in talking about your bright ancestors or grandchildren? On the other hand, are you clever to avoid those photos or names which reflect unfavorably on family pride? Yes, doubtless you also have some relatives who are not bright, some who are too lazy or wasteful to support themselves and must be helped by charity; and others who are either in the penitentiary or ought to be there.

Brother, do you swell out, or shrink up when these things are mentioned? If so, it looks bad on your part. Do you ever catch yourself swelling out with pride in letting relatives and others know in what city you live? Do you take more delight in driving up the boulevards and calling attention to the fine buildings than in helping to pray some one through? Had you been dead to earthly joys you might have led a lot of visitors to Jesus. Oh, when you meet some of these damned souls at the judgment how will you be able to bear their frowns and curses! They might have been saved, but for your fear of offending them, but for your miserable pride of perishing things. Methinks I see Jesus cover His face and weep many times while you are entertaining company and showing off.

2. Hezekiah's test was that of purity of intention. After his remarkable healing, the king of Babylon sent princes and a "present, to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land." It was at this point that, unexpectedly, "God left Hezekiah to try him." Here was his opportunity to honor Jehovah and preach to these heathen ambassadors the power of prayer. But, instead, it seems he forgot God and took delight in showing off. We read:

He "hearkened unto them, and showed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armor, and all that was found in his treasures; there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not." Perhaps he thought to himself: "These Chaldees think we Israelites are a back number and a poor, helpless people. I believe I will give them an eye opener; after they have seen my riches, honor and military strength, they will return to their country feeling different. We must

get on the map and make ourselves felt. They will fear to attack us when they know that I could hire all the armies of Egypt and defeat them in battle."

Does not this sound plausible and modern? I can see him now as he walks about from one large building to another, feeling 'lifted up' over these earthly things. How sad! How blind is carnality. We have seen it strut around on a platform, or over a camp ground, while angels and eagle-eyed saints were feeling mortified.

The old prophet Isaiah could scent the carnal mind afar off. No sooner had Hezekiah's "pride of heart" manifested itself than the prophet decided to go over and see the king. He greets him, bows to the earth and inquires of the departed messengers, and then stands erect, the fire of God flashing from his eye, and says: "Hear the word of the Lord. Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon; nothing shall be left, saith the Lord." After he pronounces these and other judgments -- enough to put the easy-going, self-indulgent king on his face -- to our chagrin we hear Hezekiah reply: "Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken. Is it not good if peace and truth be in my days?" Let the coming generation suffer, just so I have a good time. This sounds like old carnal self.

The motive back of an action is bigger than the action itself. A man may perform a good deed and be condemned before God, because he did it from a selfish motive. Or he may refrain from a wicked act and receive no credit whatever, because of a wrong motive. He did not refrain because he feared he would grieve God, but rather because of "pride of reputation. He would have considered the act favorably, but for the thought, "It might disgrace me or my family. Yet if I had the opportunity and positively knew that it would never come out on me, I do not know but that I might try it." God puts him down as guilty "before the fact," because in principle and purpose he was not above committing the act.

Of course it is better to live the white life outwardly even though the inward desire may not be pure. Why? Because of the example and influence you exert over others. If the inner intention is wrong and the outward man yields to the same, this is a double tragedy. But the fact is, every act is a false act, every word a false word except as the ultimate aim is the glory of God and the good of my fellow creatures without any thought of reward. The one and only incentive should be pure, disinterested love to God and man. Now, brother, do you measure up to this? I submit to you, Hezekiah did not, and this is what brought the wrath of God upon him and his people. O brother, for your own protection, promotion and prosperity, I beseech of you, seek heart purity and begin today!

3. He outlived his day of usefulness. Most men die too soon because of exposure, dissipation, overwork or hereditary tendencies. But here was a king, a good king who, we fear, lived too long. To say the least, after his miraculous healing he "rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him." We do not read of a single good act after this. But, on the other hand, he became the father of Manasseh; one of the most wicked kings who ever lived. We have personally known people who were remarkably healed who, like Hezekiah, disappointed everybody afterward. But this does not reflect upon God in mercifully intervening for man's recovery. It only

shows the fickleness and depravity of human nature. Paul and many others were restored to life and health and afterward rendered valiant service for God and humanity.

It would have been a great blessing if some men could have died fifteen years before they did. They lived just long enough to pull down what they had labored hard to build up. What a pity! Here is a man -- perhaps a minister -- who has been a great blessing and inspiration to others. He is a worthy example of self-sacrifice and Christ likeness. Finally he begins to fail in health, or for other reasons retires from active service. How sad that in many instances we see him become peevish, sour, covetous and slovenly, so that onlookers stumble over his inconsistencies. Even his intimate friends are pained and find it necessary to use a cloak of charity in order to have confidence in him. We hear them whisper among themselves in sadness, "Well, he is becoming childish and set in his ways, but at one time he was a great and good man."

Say, friends, do you believe it possible to grow old gracefully? How many old people do you know who are agreeable, not touchy, or talkative, but mellow-hearted and interesting? I hope a great many. I have prayed this prayer frequently: "Good Lord, let me live as long as possible; as long as I can be a blessing and bring glory to Thy name; as long as I can build up more than in my awkwardness I knock down. But when, through infirmities or old age, I am no longer an asset to Thee; when I do more harm than good; when I grieve rather than gladden; when I scold rather than soften; in short, when I am in the way, rather than in demand, please, Lord, kiss my life away quickly and take me to Thyself, I ask in Jesus' name. Amen." There are some chief characteristics of an old man. Too bad when they appear in a young man. Here are a few:

1. A slouchy appearance, a dirty collar, hair untrimmed, shoes that have not been properly shined.

2. A swinging gait, bowed shoulders, a loose, untidy attitude on the street.

3. A tendency to live in the past and relate stories, often repeated.

4. Indifference concerning great events and a lack of interest in spiritual things.

5. A set way of thinking and doing things, which borders on boredom and rutism.

6. Lack of sympathy for and adaptability to young people and their peculiar trials.

Brother, would it not be a good thing for you to go home, and after thinking over these things, write your own epitaph for your tombstone and tack it up on the wall where you and your family could read it occasionally? It might have a salutary effect on your life. Write something like this:

"Here lies an old man who in his declining age had learned how to grow old pleasantly. Children loved him, young people sought his counsel and company, and old people eagerly desired his friendship and no one ever called him a bore after he went out. He knew how to be silent at the right time, and when he spoke everyone stopped to listen and do him reverence. He was never disturbed because he was not noticed, and maintained his serenity when his opinion was set at

naught, He loved God and thought of Him more than of himself. He lived to bless others and died happy, at a ripe old age, loving God and all men."

Say, if you do not quite measure up to this, begin now to amend and, if need be, do some apologizing so that those around you will have respect for your sincerity. You cannot afford to start out well, build up a good name and then in your latter days be looked upon as a contrary, covetous, unsympathetic, self-centered old man. God forbid!

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17 -- THE MAN WHO ECLIPSED HIS BRETHREN

Preached at Nampa, Ida. Nazarene College

Text: "And Jabez was more honorable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Became I bare him with sorrow.

"And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested." 1 Chron. 4:9-10.

Some years ago I conducted a camp meeting in Central City, Colorado, over 8,000 feet above sea level. While there I went out to a gold mine. This mine was between two cragged peaks in the Rockies. How they ever got the machinery up there I do not know. The ground was not level enough to set a boiler, but they were digging gold by the millions, and I received this lesson: Sometimes we get rich deposits in the most unlikely places.

In like manner, my text is taken from a chapter, yea, a book, containing hard, unmeaning names. But in the midst of these we find here a rich deposit of truth. Many times God is pleased to go to the country rather than the city to find a boy who is to become a mighty reformer or revivalist.

In this instance we find a boy by the name of Jabez, which means "Sorrowful". Who would want to give his child a name like this? Think of a mother calling her children to dinner and saying, "Come, Mary, Johnnie, James and Sorrowful." The very sound of his name was enough to cast a gloom over his spirit and take all the joy out of his play. From his birth everything seemed to be against him; but instead of becoming despondent or vicious as a result of his deformity or infirmity, he resorted to prayer and hence turned a curse into a blessing. In studying this character we learn at least three things. .

1. He Made the Right Choice.
2. He Arose Above His Environment
3. He Became More Honorable than His Brethren.

1. He Made the Right Choice. Much depends upon a choice. Thousands of homes are unhappy because of a wrong and hasty love affair; again, others are happy and healthful because God was consulted. Methinks I see Satan now almost holding his breath, so to speak, lest some of you make the right decision. Oh, the weal and the woe that swing upon this little pivot!

In crossing the Rocky Mountains we come to the Continental Divide. Here on the mountain peak stands a barn. Upon this barn fall two raindrops which have traveled together for a great distance, coming from the heavy clouds above. But now they must part, never to meet again. One goes on one side of the cone or apex of the roof, and the other on the other side. They are only an inch apart but the apex separates them and the result is, one travels down the side of the mountain and finds its way to the Pacific Ocean, while the other finds its way to the Gulf of Mexico and the great Atlantic.

In like manner two persons may be parting ways here now. There you sit: two boys or two girls, two neighbors, or husband and wife. One makes the right choice, that he will call upon God and be wholly His. The other fails to do so, saying there is time enough yet. Immediately a great gulf separates these two persons, even though they may live together for years. One starts toward heaven and the other toward hell. Oh, how much depends upon that inward choice!

Notice the results of a selfish choice. In Genesis, chapter 13, we read of a strife between the herdsmen of Lot and the herdsmen of Abraham. Abraham was so magnanimous that he proposed a peaceful separation, suggesting that his nephew choose the hillside or the plain, and whatever was left he would take. Instead of positively declining such a proposal, Lot "lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere," and of course gave way to old greed, and "pitched his tent toward Sodom." In the next chapter he "dwelt in Sodom." Later we are told, "Lot sat in the gate of Sodom." Now he was a prominent figure, perhaps mayor or one of the officials. But listen to the sad climax: the angels took hold of him "while he lingered," and said, "Escape for thy life." God rained fire and brimstone upon the wicked city, and Lot lost everything and came near losing his own soul. Why? All because of making a wrong choice and pitching his tent in the wrong direction.

Two men stood side by side at a ticket window in New York City and both purchased tickets; both went out at the same gate and to two different trains standing side by side, facing the same direction. But in five days one man was in Seattle, Washington, and the other in Miami, Florida. Oh, how the angels must look upon some of you now, side by side, hearing this message. It is enough to make heaven rejoice on the one side, and hell groan on the other. In just a little while one of you will be shouting in glory and the other wailing in perdition. Great God, help my precious hearers to make the right choice! Better be turned out of house and home; better lose your position and become a bankrupt, and in the end be safely housed in heaven, than to lose your soul.

2. He Arose Above His Environment. I do not know what it was that came into Jabez' life or his mother's life that caused her to give him this peculiar name. But we might suppose this or that. It may have been a famine, a war, or a pestilence; or it may have been that the father was untrue and left the mother just when she needed him most; or the boy may have been deformed. Be that as it may, something brought great sorrow to her heart, and hence his strange name. More than likely some member of the family espoused the religion of Baal. In contradistinction, this child

was perhaps the only one of the children that "called on the God of Israel". This indicated that the others were godless.

Whatever it was, something drove the boy to prayer, and anything that will do this is a blessing in disguise. He rose above his surroundings. He may have been ostracized by his brothers and persecuted by his neighbors. He realized that everything was against him -- perhaps physically, socially, mentally and financially -- hence he became desperate and resorted to prayer. Hear him! "Oh, that thou wouldest bless me" -- and then to make it stronger and more emphatic he added "indeed". He wanted an "indeed" blessing. He wanted a second engine attached to his train, for he realized that there were many tunnels and heavy grades ahead. I am wondering if this "indeed" blessing was what John Wesley was pleased to call "the second blessing".

Read on, "And enlarge my coast!" This was advancement. He did not want to be circumscribed. He caught a vision and determined to stake out great territory. Oh, that some of you might do likewise! It is too bad that many good people have stopped growing, have ceased their aggressiveness. Their prayers and testimonies and sermons are perfectly orthodox. They are loyal to their church, but with it all they have no freshness, no enlargement. They are in a rut and sinners are not made hungry for a real experience in grace. Brother! Sister! You should constantly be a rebuke to worldlings and compromisers, and at the same time be a constant invitation to come to Jesus. This should be the case when you get that "enlargement of coast".

Read on, "And that thine hand might be with me." Here is strength! The consciousness that God's hand is with or upon one gives confidence and holy boldness. No feebleness here! We read, "There shall not be one weak one among you." Lord, save us from our feebleness! Jabez evidently felt that it was worth more to have the strong hand of God with him than to have great wealth or a large circle of influential friends. I would rather feel the pressure of God's hand than be on intimate terms with any human hand that could write a check for a million.

Read on, "And that thou wouldest keep me from the evil, that it may not grieve me." Here was a young man so tender-hearted and conscientious that he wanted not only to avoid open wickedness of every kind, but to be kept from even grieving his God, and of course feeling grief himself. It is wonderful to live so close to God that we are quick to heed the slightest checks of the Spirit, so that the very thought or sight of evil will burn the heart. I will guarantee that any boy who lives thus will sooner or later come to the top and turn out well.

Read on, "And God granted him that which he requested." God is pleased to grant such a request, and, as in Solomon's case, He generally gives something additional. Remember this, young man: If you will pray the prayer of Jabez, you likewise will make your stumbling-stones your stepping-stones to high visions. Others may outstride you in beauty and natural accomplishments, but in the end your name and influence will live after those who were more brilliant have been thrown on the scrap-heap of broken-down aristocracy.

3. He Became More Honorable than His Brethren. We read, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." Remember this: Nothing will live as long as genuine piety. Take for instance two notable men, John Wesley and George Whitefield. They were contemporaries. George Whitefield was perhaps the greatest orator that Methodism ever produced. He preached on

one occasion to 60,000 people, on the "Commons" in London, and could be heard by all. He was so eloquent that, when men came with the full purpose of stoning him, they were disarmed and fell before him like grain before the sickle. It was said that he could pronounce the word Mesopotamia three times, and the third time cause his audience to weep. You may know there must have been great music and pathos in his voice. But with all honor to Mr. Whitefield, let me say that John Wesley's deep piety has outlived Whitefield's great oratory.

O friends, let us take the God route as Jabez did. Pardon a personal reference. I had two cousins about my own age. They were dressed well and rode their little ponies up the highway, with their little horns and drums, while I, a ragged boy, mowed weeds, hoed corn, and dug potatoes in an old out-of-the-way farm. I could look across and see them going to band practice. In fact, they called my attention to their drums and brass buttons, while I was laboring with gravel in my shoes. I confess the tears ran down my face as I said to my father, "It doesn't look fair for me to work so hard while the other boys have such a nice time." I remember his reply, "Never mind, my son, we will wait and see how things turn out." Well, I have lived to see how it turned out. I prayed to the "God of Israel" and received a radical conversion. These boys did not do so, but lived such lives that they broke their father up. One died at an early age because of dissipation; the other was so ungrateful that after his marriage he compelled his aged father to live in an outhouse, where he died broken-hearted. Neither of them ever did a thing to bless the world.

Yes, friends, it may be a long and lonely road but as surely as God is on yonder Throne, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be abased."

"Then to learn to scorn the praise of men,
And learn to lose with God;
For Jesus won the world through shame,
And beckons thee His road. " -- Faber.

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18 -- THE MAN WHO PAID FULL FARE

Preached at Chicago Camp Meeting

Text: "But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord." -- John 1:3.

You will notice the text is taken from the Book of Jonah. For the benefit of the small-minded skeptic, or the broad-minded higher critic, let me diverge enough so say that I believe the story of Jonah and the whale. Why? First, because Jesus Christ believed it and referred to it in Matt. 12:40. The story is authentic or Jesus Christ Himself was the greatest deceiver the world ever saw. Second, I believe the story because it is true to human nature. Every one of us has had an experience similar to Jonah's, only on a smaller scale. We have been whaled! Third, I believe the account because from a physiological standpoint it was a possibility. There has been a great deal of quibbling over the whale. They say his throat is too small to admit a man. Well, what

of it? The Book says, "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah." Jesus called it a "whale". When God Almighty prepares to do a thing, all He needs to do is speak the word and the thing is made to order.

When in London we visited the Museum of Natural Science. Here we saw whales measuring up to sixty-nine feet in length, with each jaw bone twenty feet long. Twenty-six tons of oil and twenty-six hundred pounds of whalebone were taken from one. It was so large that six or eight persons could enter at once. I stepped inside and, with arms outstretched, could not touch his ribs, and my head did not reach his backbone.

Without doubt, a whale of such dimensions could have held Jonah. The whale's diet consists of both small fish and enormous sea monsters. One of, these was on exhibition here, called the "Giant squid." It was a hideous-looking creature with feelers extending from every side. Its round body was nearly eleven feet long and its two tentacular arms were something like thirty-three feet. If the whale could swallow such a monster, surely he could take care of the disobedient prophet!

Notice that the account is explicit, for it says that this Jonah was the "son of Amittai." Perhaps this was necessary in order to distinguish him from the numerous other Jonahs everywhere who are disobeying the call of God.

By referring to 2 Kings 14:25, we find that Jonah prophesied in the days of King Jeroboam and warned the king of approaching danger. Now, a little later, God calls the same prophet to hold a street meeting up and down Main Street in Nineveh, a city of about 600,000 inhabitants. This was quite a comedown -- for the prophet to walk and cry against that "great city" after having been special adviser to King Jeroboam. He evidently must have been like some preachers today, who would rather preach to a lot of empty seats than hold a street service and get down among the common people. The result was that he became self-centered and important, but after he had the application of a seaweed poultice (chap. 2:5), his head became normal in size and he was ready to obey.

As soon as he struck dry land he heard the voice of God, "the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." I gather from this statement the thought that God is unchangeable and what is once light is always light. Friends, if you had light and convictions ten years ago on tithing, fasting, plainness of dress, Sabbath observance, etc., that light is binding upon you the same today. It is not enough to say you have changed your views and "look at things differently now." Perhaps you do, and this may account for the fact that you have less fire, holy unction and burden for souls than formerly. It was a sad day when you laid aside your conscientious scruples. We could get other lessons from the life of Jonah, but we pass on to the subject in hand.

Notice the wording of the latter part of the text, "So he paid the fare thereof," then "went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord." Yes, when one starts away from God he starts downward, and generally goes with "them" -- a crowd.

We frequently hear sinners say that it costs too much to be saved, that there is too much to give up, too much restitution to make, and similar excuses. But I want to prove, if God will help me, that it will cost more to be damned than to be saved. It will cost more tears, more sleepless nights, more losses and disappointments in life to have your own way than to let God lead and direct your path.

Jonah "paid the fare," but never reached Tarshish. You can pay the fare, dear friends, yet never reach the Tarshish of your earthly ambitions. And what will be the price you may need to pay? It may be:

1. Defeat in business.
2. Disrespect of others.
3. Decay of health.
4. Divine protection forfeited.

1. Defeat in business. Perhaps I am now speaking to those who have suffered loss financially because of sin. In fact most of us have to some extent. I tell you it costs in dollars and cents to live for the devil. Had you not been so proud and self-willed you would not have gotten into that law suit back there which cost you dearly. Had you been kinder and more congenial in your ways you would have won instead of lost patronage. Had it not been for that unholy alliance with, that man or woman, your domestic relations would have been more pleasant, and you would not have been at so much expense. Had that young clerk remained at home at night, improved his mind and studied how to make old people happy, he not only would have retained his virtue, but might have been promoted and by this time owned the business.

Many men have their noses on the grindstone of poverty, working like slaves and merely existing, who ought to be connected with some firm or running business for themselves. Why is it? There is only one reason, and that reason is SIN. It may have taken one form or another -- intemperance, dishonesty, sensuality, selfishness, extravagance, idleness, sports, or other form; but remember it was that slimy, poisonous thing we call sin that defeated these capable men and brought them low. Young man, let me urge you to go into partnership with Jesus Christ. It is to your interest in every way. Multitudes, who once had better prospects than you, have made wretched failures simply because they trusted to their own wisdom and sagacity. "The drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags."

2. Disrespect of Others. Sin is disrespectful. It disrespects the claims of God and the rights of humanity, and in return brings upon its victim the disrespect of others. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." I dare say that many of you can look back and see where your ill manners lowered you in the estimation of another. It may have been your own companion, whose affections you worked hard to win. Then, afterwards, when irritated over some little affair, with one word you drove a dagger to the heart of the one you loved. You would have given your right arm if you could have recalled the hasty word or the unkind look, but the deed was done.

It does not pay to treat another disrespectfully, for who knows but that you will need to ask some favor of him later on. He may be a little ragged street urchin. Treat him right, for you may be glad to have him recognize you some day. Are you not sorry for a mean, snarling old man or woman wandering about with no friends or money? Would it not be sad if you finally became such? Very well, just go on tossing your head and acting independently; just go on finding fault with mother about your clothes or meals; just go on being blunt and unaccommodating; just keep on lying and acting deceitful. In short, live for self, pamper your feelings, be disagreeable and discourteous to others and you will not be missed much when you die. "A man that hath friends must hew himself friendly."

3. Decay of Health. Sin affects not only the mind and manners but the body as well. Multitudes die before their time! Sin kills them!! I had a cousin; we played together. He had better prospects for living than I had, but lust killed him at twenty-two years of age. It was said he died of typhoid fever, but this was false. He drank and gave way to licentiousness until he undermined his health; then when fever seized him he did not have enough resistance left to fight his way through.

Pride has killed many a girl because fashion decreed she should go bareheaded, bare-armed and next to bare as far down and as far up as the law will permit; then in this semi-nude condition she would go to a ball or theater, or parade the streets, and the result was a cold, consumption and a corpse. This is what it may cost you to turn your back on light and flee from the presence of the Lord.

Sometimes we venture to speak to young men about their souls and we get such answers as these: "I am sowing my wild oats," "I believe in a short life and a merry one." In answer to these excuses let me say that a reaping time always follows the sowing, and in addition, one reaps more than he sows. Remember this, young man! You may say you believe in "a short life and a merry one." Ah! You betrayed yourself. Your excuse implies that the life you are living means a short one. Better say "a long life and a happy one." God says, "With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation." Most young men cut their lives short by dissipation and exposure. One night's lying out drinking booze or playing cards may mean five or ten years cut off the end of your life. You may think you are having a "big time" at the races or bawdy house, but wait a few months or years and then see how you feel. Better be sure than sorry!

Sin is deceitful. You may not go into open wickedness, but simply give way in your mind and imaginations to vileness. Look out, or rather look in! Every time you feast your eyes or mind upon that which is ignoble, a black-winged sculptor steps up and chisels a line of coarseness and meanness upon your countenance. No wonder we read, "The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not."

Here are some things to think about:

"Professor Peelman, of the University of Bonn, has recently been conducting a series of investigations. Beginning with a single profligate woman, he traced the personal records of her children and their descendants for six succeeding generations. There were 834 descendants, and of that number complete records of 709 were obtained. It was discovered that one hundred were of

illegitimate birth, one hundred and sixty-two were professional beggars, sixty-four of them died in alms-houses, one hundred and eighty-one lived lives of open shame, seventy-six were convicted and imprisoned for crime, and seven were executed for murder. Professor Peelman estimates that the descendants of this one woman within one hundred years have cost the state, in support of paupers and punishment of criminals, an average of \$12,000 a year, or a total of \$1,200,000."

Again: "Jonathan Edwards was born in 1703. One thousand three hundred and ninety-four of his descendants have been identified, of whom thirteen were presidents of great universities, sixty-five professors in colleges and universities, sixty doctors of medicine, one hundred clergymen and missionaries, seventy-five officers in the army and navy, sixty prominent authors, thirty judges, one vice-president, three United States senators, several governors, members of Congress, framers of state constitutions, mayors of cities, and ministers of foreign courts. Fifteen railroads, many banks, insurance companies, and great industrial enterprises have been indebted to the Edwards family for careful management. Thirty-three American states and several foreign countries and ninety-two American cities and many foreign ones have been beautified by the influence of this family."

Here is what might have been written of him or his, had he not been enlisted on the side of right: "Max Jukes was born in 1720 -- seventeen years after the birth of Mr. Edwards. His descendants have been identified as follows: Three hundred and ten found homes in almshouses, three hundred died of want in childhood, four hundred and forty were viciously diseased, fifty notorious for immorality, seven murderers, many habitual thieves, one hundred and thirty convicted more or less often for crime. Not one of this man's descendants ever contributed anything in either wealth or character to the public weal; but, on the contrary, each one is declared to have cost the public over \$1,000 or all of them a grand total of \$1,250,000."

Once more: "A woman of criminal tendencies, who died in 1827, had given birth to several children, all of whom inherited her criminal traits. By following the records of her offspring from generation to generation, it has been found that, up to May, 1902, no less than seven hundred of them had been convicted of criminal offenses, and that thirty-seven had been executed for committing murder. The offspring of this one woman had, up to that date, cost the government about three million dollars for court trials and executions. And all this crime with costs resulted from one woman's thoughts, multiplied in her offspring."

Scientists tell us that the blood undergoes a chemical change every time one gives way to anger or jealousy. It is a known fact that mothers have thrown their children into convulsions and actually killed them by nursing them immediately after being greatly excited or angered. It is also a fact that a man whose body is permeated with nicotine or liquor often becomes the parent of an inebriate. Great God, if this be true, no one is fit to live, much less become responsible for another life, until he is made partaker of the Divine nature!

Yes, disobedience costs in dollars and Cents, it costs friendships, and it costs good health and long life. In fact, sin spells disease, disappointment and despair. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

4. Divine Protection Forfeited Here and Hereafter. It is worth, a great deal to have the protection of God through life, but it is worth more to be able to say with the Psalmist, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Yes, religion is a good thing to die by, and if so it ought to be a good thing during the changing scenes of life. It is an awful thing to be exposed to the wrath of God.

Perhaps I am preaching right now to those who are constantly in fear and dread. Even while sitting here you may be restless and agitated. Why? Because you are fighting against God. Because you know you are not walking in past light and doing your whole duty. It may be a call to preach, as in the case of Jonah. Or it may be that while you were in great danger, or when a loved one was near death, you promised God and your own conscience that you would obey. But you have lied to the Holy Ghost and taken something back that was laid upon the altar of God. No wonder you feel guilty. No wonder you cannot look up and claim His protection for your property, your child and yourself. And, unless you repent, this is only the "beginning of sorrows." If you feel like this now, what will you do when the lightnings of God's wrath are let loose? Even now the bloodhounds of justice may be tugging to get loose and take vengeance upon your guilty soul.

Some years ago my wife and other ladies were holding a meeting in Corning, Iowa. One day the city was terrified when on the far western horizon there appeared a strange funnel-shaped cloud swinging back and forth like the pendulum of a clock. As it came across the prairie it twisted large trees off as though they were rye-straws. Houses were demolished; box cars tumbled about like toys, while boards, shingles and fence posts blackened the air. What was it? A western cyclone in all its fury. Business men and weak-kneed skeptics ran into the streets and began to pray and plead for protection; How about these Christian workers? Two of them were walking home from the post office, feeling secure in God, when a large man (who was a Catholic) slipped up and, walking close behind them, said, "I never opposed you good people as others have." What was he trying to do? Find a little comfort and protection in time of danger by getting close to these holy women.

O friend, when the storms of eternity begin to blow and the terrors of impending doom seize men's souls; you will want a place of refuge. Then you would be willing to give worlds to exchange places with those whom you have mocked and ridiculed. When the sky rolls back like a scroll, and Jesus, with ten thousand angels, comes riding upon the clouds with power and great glory, every eye will be riveted upon the King of kings and Lord of lords. The saints and redeemed of all ages will look placid and restful as they rise to meet their victorious Lord.

But how about you, Christ rejecter? Methinks I see unsaved children and loved ones who put off the day of their salvation! What are they doing? With blanched and petrified looks they are first seeking a place of refuge, then again, trying to get the attention of some lovely saint, if perchance he may have some influence with the Judge severe. But there is no bribing now. Every one has forgotten all others and is busily taken up with the all-important thought, where shall I hide? How can I escape the wrath of God? O sinner, what will you do in that day? It may soon be upon us! The signs of the times indicate it! Will you not break away now from every influence that hinders you? It may be you will have to break away from the very ones sitting by your side, but you must go the heavenly way singly and alone with Jesus. You dare not wait for others; you cannot go

with a crowd! Do not parley. The door will soon be shut! The blackness of eternity's night may be settling down yonder! Flee for your life; tarry not in all the plain. You may find refuge tonight in the Rock of Ages, in the wounds of your crucified Lord! Will you do so? He waits now to receive you!

"Vain man, thy fond pursuits forbear;
Repent, thine end is nigh:
Death, at the farthest can't be far:
Oh, think before thou die'.

"Reflect, thou hast a soul to save;
Thy sins how high they mount!
What are thy hopes beyond the grave?
How stands that dark account?

"Death enters, and there's no defense;
His time, there's none can tell;
He'll in a moment call thee hence,
To heaven, or down to hell.

"Thy flesh (perhaps thy greatest care)
Shall into dust consume;
But, ah, destruction stops not there;
Sin kills beyond the tomb."

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19 -- THE MAN WHO LIVED AHEAD OF HIS TIME

Preached at Brooklyn Holiness Convention

Text: "And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves." -- Daniel 10:7.

There is a great difference between seeing visions and being visionary. Many people are visionary. They can give advice and tell how things ought to be done. They criticize others, but they themselves do not make a blessed success in life. They try one method, then another! they go into one kind of business, then another; they harp upon one line of Scripture, then another. They are always trying something new, or are about to do some wonderful thing; but, like a meteor, they blaze very brilliantly for a while, then become dim and finally go into oblivion. These are the visionary people. The world is full of them, but there are only a few who, like Daniel, catch visions.

I wish to draw some lessons from the life of this remarkable man.

1. He had the courage to express and follow his convictions.

2. He lived in advance of his generation.

3. He was greatly beloved.

1. He had courage to express and follow his convictions. In this day of insipidness and slackness, it is blessed to find a man of the Daniel type, who can stand up and face a frowning world without a quiver. Daniel dared say "No," and stand alone, though it meant the displeasure of a king. He stood the test, and later stood before the king. Nearly every one would be glad to be recognized and stand before some great personage. But there are very few who are willing and able to stand the tests necessary to prepare them for such occasions.

It is the little things that make character, and it is the crucial tests that reveal it. Long before a man is recognized as a rascal, he has become so at heart. And long before a man becomes a molder of men, he himself must go through the testings and grindings. It is much easier to behave nicely before a gazing multitude than behind the scene in private, everyday life.

The secret of Daniel's success was that, at the very outset, when a young man, though a captive and prisoner, he entered into a covenant relationship with God. We read that he "purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat nor with the wine which he drank." Where is there a young man today who would decline to dine with a king, eating the same kind of meat and drinking the same kind of wine with the king's household? Where are the young men today, who, in order to lay themselves out for God and catch heavenly visions, will voluntarily consent to live on a cheap and coarse diet? Most of us might consent to live on pulse, or split peas, for a few meals, but to consecrate that this shall be our bill of fare for life is quite another thing.

The fact is, nature is contrary to grace. We feed and pamper the flesh in order to enjoy life, but we must mortify the deeds of the body; yea, as Paul said, "bring it under" (which, literally means, beat it and bring it into subjection), in order to mount up on wings to the "third heaven," and hear "unspeakable words."

At this time Daniel was about ninety years of age and had been fasting and "mourning for three full weeks," when the vision came. Perhaps more of us would catch heavenly visions if we, in like manner, had the ability to hold ourselves to long seasons of prayer and self-denial.

The sad thing with many people is that they never had any well defined convictions. They are so easy-going that they are naturally drawn into the current and follow the crowd. Such people are to be pitied rather than censured.

But some of you belong to another class, for in the past you had light and convictions along various lines -- as to eating and drinking, tithing and giving, amusements, politics and plainness of dress. Yet you have either gone back on these convictions entirely, or have so toned them down to please others that it is hard to know on which side to place you. Some of you have backbones like cotton threads that can be wrapped around the finger of public opinion, first one way, and then another, just to suit convenience; whereas, you should have a backbone like a crowbar that will

neither bend forward nor lean backward. God pity the man, the movement, or the school whose convictions are so tame and insipid that they do not draw the ire and opposition from the old world. We are living in what is called a refined and intelligent age, yet the spirit of the times is as antagonistic to the Sermon on the Mount as when it was spoken.

Only a few years ago we were endeavoring to follow the example and command of our Lord in preaching the Gospel to every creature. We were singing and preaching on the streets of L____, Florida, when we were taken and locked in a lousy old jail three times. Then, so we would be kept from preaching from the jail window, we were further taken and locked in an inner cell, four by seven feet. Here three of us began to sing:

"Dare to be a Daniel,
Dare to stand alone;
Dare to have a purpose firm,
Dare to make it known."

Some of those on the outside who dared to sing with us were likewise arrested and locked up. The preachers of the town walked by, but were afraid to cry out against the outrage. Yes, they can stand up on Sunday morning and eulogize Daniel, but they are too cowardly to protest against the spirit of opposition toward those embrace Daniel's principles.

2. He lived in advance of his generation. Every one who does this is misunderstood and not appreciated until the next generation, which is about forty years. Jesus said, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish, the sepulchers of the righteous, and say, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets" (Matt. 23: 29, 30). They lauded Moses and the prophets, but now were ready to crucify the Son of God.

It has been so ever since. Men have depreciated and in spirit stoned those who in their day have lived in advance of them. Later on their children caught up with this advanced life, gathered up the stones and built a monument to their memory. Brother, if you are willing and consecrated to live such a life, a life so in advance of your contemporaries that they will not be able to fully appreciate you or your standard until you are dead -- if you are willing to do this, come along, for we are going that same route.

On a great battlefield, years ago, an armor bearer and his men were storming a fort on top of a high hill. The shot and shell were mowing them down, but the armor bearer was so intent on capturing the position that he became oblivious to the fact that his company were falling right and left. Suddenly he turned to see what had become of his regiment, and to his surprise saw them retreating, and heard them call, "Bring that flag back!" Did he do it? Nay, verily, but instead he said, "Bring your men up to the flag!" The result was that they took new courage, rallied around him and captured the fort. In like manner, instead of taking a backward step, we should insist on rallying to the standard and living in advance of those around us.

The devil knows just where to find some of you, for after gaining a victory you have crystallized around it and been satisfied with present attainments. But not so with others, for after

crossing over into Canaan and capturing one walled city, then another, they have kept up an aggressive warfare until now they are spiritual giants in the "hill country," eating grapes and pomegranates, and are victors over all they survey. It is amusing to see the devil waste ammunition on these hardy soldiers. After firing a volley and thinking he accomplished great things, he is chagrined to hear from a mountain peak a shout, "Hallelujah!"

"What! Is that you? I thought I blew you to atoms."

"Oh, no; you simply fired into an old camp where I rested one night last week. You are a week behind the times."

O brother, keep climbing; keep the devil guessing where you will be and what you will do next. You can so learn his tactics that he will be sorry he ever had anything to do with you.

Daniel lived on a higher plane than those of his time. The same rapturous vision that delighted him frightened the others. Was not that strange? But such, is the case today. Let a saint get burdened and scream, or fall prostrate under the power of God, and most preachers will become frightened and call for a doctor to have the person removed. This shows how little they know about, the mighty operations of the Holy Ghost. They can preach about Jesus and admire His teachings, but will get frightened or angry at the operations of the Holy Ghost. The fact is they are living one dispensation behind the times. They did the same when Christ was here. They glorified Abraham and stoned Stephen.

Yes, Daniel alone saw the vision. Another passage says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." This is true. The death groans of a soul seeking holiness, or the paroxysms of a soul, who is burdened for the lost, will frighten most professors, but this is music to one who knows the joyful sound. It is good to see a seeker get near the verge of despair, for then there is hope of his getting a lasting experience. Benjamin Pomeroy, an old-time Methodist preacher, said, "Victory comes on the heels of despair."

In order to catch visions we must live on a high plane. When traveling on shipboard for days, those who are on the upper deck will always see land before those who are on the lower deck. This proves two things, viz., that the world is round, and that there is an advantage in living on a high plane.

Visions are only for those who live in the heavenlies. If you are content with anything less than this, God will give you over to your deadly doings. If you want to live a commonplace: life and be satisfied with earthly and sensual joys, then I have no message for you. But if you want to outstrip yourself and your sluggish brethren, then come along and we will climb the delectable mountains where God is pleased to reveal to us things unutterable and too glorious to be appreciated by the majority of men.

3. He was greatly beloved. Did it pay Daniel to lay himself out and give himself up to a life of self-denial? We generally get the idea that to take a pronounced stand for God means naught but ignominy, contempt and reproach. While this may be the case on the part of those who scoff, yet with thinking people it is different. True, sometimes we lose a certain class of friends, but in

return we get a better and more substantial class. This was the case with Daniel. After he stood the various tests, then he stood before the king and the king could not get along without Daniel's superior knowledge and wisdom. Instead of his being depreciated and set at naught, we are told at least three times that he was a man "greatly beloved." Yes, shallow and sentimental minds may ridicule and persecute, but if we have the martyr material in us and will behave wisely, sooner or later they will be convinced, confounded, and sometimes converted.

Another reward that came to Daniel for his faithfulness was his promotion. He was elevated from a captive and the dungeon life to the royal palace where he daily ministered to the king. All this was preceded by a courage that dared to follow his convictions. When the decree went forth that no one should pray to any other god save the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up, Daniel did not do either of two absurd things: first, lift his window a little higher and pray a little more loudly than before; nor, on the other hand, suppress and limit his daily devotions. But he opened his window toward Jerusalem, "as aforetime" and continued to kneel before his God. Oh, that men had the same courage and wisdom today! Courage that could neither be coaxed nor frightened bought nor sold!

Another beautiful thing about Daniel was that when he did become popular he did not compromise. This was due to his deep piety and devotion. One reason that men nowadays get important and top heavy, when they are noticed a little, is that they forget the covenant they entered into at the beginning. Or perhaps it would be better to say they never fully purposed in their hearts, as did Daniel, to be true to their original principles and convictions.

Again I say, if I were to write what I consider the greatest need of this age, and if I were limited, not to a book, or a page, or a paragraph, but to only one sentence, this is what I would write: "Oh, for men and women who have the courage to follow their God-given convictions!"

And now, who among you are ready to lay yourselves out for God that He may in return lay Himself out for you?

We get what we live for. Give up a little and you get a little. Give up everything and you get everything. "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Luke 9:24).

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20 -- THE MAN WHO BOASTED

Preached at Brooklyn Holiness Convention

Texts: "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," -- Matt. 16:16.

"But he began to curse and swear, saying I know not this man of whom ye speak." -- Mark 14:71

Here are two widely different statements from the same lips. A fearful change evidently transpired between the first and the second utterances. When a man starts to backslide, he generally loses all grace before; he fully wakes up and repents. The Bible is a faithful history. It records the good deeds of men that we pattern after them. It also records their failures and sins that we may take warning. When Peter made the first statement he was in a good condition and on one of the top rounds of the ladder. He was living so near heaven that he could get clear revelations as to the divinity of Christ. While some blasphemed and others doubted, saying He was John the Baptist, Elias, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets, Peter declared, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." The reply was, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Peter was living on a higher plane than the Sanhedrin and perhaps beyond the other disciples. The devil likes a shining mark, and no doubt planned more for the overthrow of Peter than for any or all of the other disciples combined. It seems that men of great genius, those who can do extraordinary things and stir a whole city, can likewise turn around and become so inconsistent that they are a disappointment to their fondest admirers. Peter was such a man. Let us study the steps to his downfall, and then, thank God, his reclamation.

In the 14th chapter of Mark we get a pen picture, not only of the backsliding of an apostle, but the successive steps of all others who have wandered away from their Lord.

1. Self-sufficiency, (verse 29).
2. Sensibilities benumbed (verse 37).
3. Self-defense, (verse 47).
4. Cowardice, (verse 54)
5. Beneath, (verse 66)
6. Lying, (verse 68)
7. Blasphemy, (verse 71)

Self-sufficiency. Jesus had just said, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night." "But Peter said unto him, although all shall be offended, yet will not I." This is the first symptom of heart-backsliding -- to begin to feel self-sufficient, to begin to notice his achievements and take an inward satisfaction in comparing himself with others. This is what Peter did. Then when Christ, in the next verse, said to him, "This day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice," Peter became still more self-confident and, flatly contradicting his Lord, "spake the, more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise." Oh, if he then and there had humbled himself and fallen at the feet of Jesus, no doubt special grace would have been given him. A spirit of boasting and self vindication has paved the way to many a man's ruin. When one is charged with anything, though he may feel confident that he is clear in the matter, it is not best to quickly resent it and defend himself. Ponder it well. There may be a semblance of truth in it and if so you cannot afford to despise the warning.

2. Sensibilities benumbed. And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst not thou watch one hour?" All the disciples were asleep, but the gentle reproof was to Peter, doubtless because he had been foremost in declaring his integrity. Now his sensibilities are blunted and he becomes oblivious to everything in view of a present enjoyment -- sleep. It is the same with every one today who breaks step with God. One of the first signs is the yielding to the clamor of the flesh, so that it is easy to reason away former convictions and sleep over things that at one time would have brought despair. It is a bad sign when a husband or a wife can say cutting things, or act sullen, then go to bed and sleep soundly without a word of apology or confession. It is a sign that the conscience is no longer tender, the heart no longer sympathetic and responsive to the sad feelings of another. In short, it is a sign of a backslidden state.

3. Self-defense. "And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear." Now the poor man becomes vindictive, and tries to recover from the cheap impression he had given because of his sleep. Accordingly he whips out a sword and cuts off an ear -- a real ear. No doubt it was painful, but not nearly so painful as the ears some of us have taken off. For instance, an opposer or a delinquent member drops into a service. At this a zealous brother feels especially commissioned to do his "duty" -- do some amputating. he prays, testifies, or preaches right at the "compromiser" and so mutilates his hearing that should he ever return he is unable to hear, or get any good from the one who whacked and banged away at him out of the Spirit.

Self-defense is a poor weapon, and he who uses it is injured more than the other person. Brother, if you insist on defending yourself, God will step aside and give you the job and you will have a hard task before you. But if you refuse to stand up for your "rights", then your Advocate will plead your cause and do so much better than you. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." -- Psa. 37:5.

4. Cowardice. "And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest; and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire." Here we see the fruit of retaliation. It always reacts upon the one who thinks he must defend himself and the cause he represents.

It does not pay to follow "afar off". Even the world despises half-hearted-ness. If it is worth anything, it is worth everything to be out-and-out for God. Since we have the best thing outside of heaven we should not be ashamed to let our convictions be known. If your relatives come to visit you, or you go to see them, do not follow your Lord "afar off", but let it be known at the outset that you believe in private and family prayer. If you meet your old associates and they begin their foolishness, or entice you to sin, do not be passive or evasive, but by word and act give them to understand that you are done with everything that is questionable. Though they may persecute, yet down in their hearts they will admire your courage. Never think for a moment that you will win them more quickly by letting down and being less outspoken. Like John, keep near to your Lord and you will make it easier for yourself and others.

"He warmed himself at the fire." Think of it! Here is a disciple getting comfort from a fire kindled by those who were clamoring for the life of his Lord. But let us not be too severe on him

until we first see if we have done better. It means much to be so dead to the world with its pleasures and riches that we can spurn its offers and walk off, saying, "There is not a thing in this old world I want." Brother, when you can truthfully say this, you will not get mixed with the crowd and feel so at home with worldlings (as did Peter) that you will lose your identity. You will not put on nor take off just enough to escape the reproach of plainness in dress.

5. Beneath. "And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest. And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said. And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth." Now he has completely lost his hold and is at the foot of the ladder. Alas! but he is not the only one who let down little by little until he was "beneath" and the spirit of the world was on top. When this is the case, a man becomes weak before his enemies. The devil works long and hard for this crucial point; yea, no doubt Satan actually withholds certain temptations until his victim has prepared the way and comes to the opportune moment of yielding.

6. Lying. "But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest." Oh, had he only had the courage to acknowledge it -- an honorable thing to do. Many a man would recover himself from total shipwreck if he would only confess and acknowledge some things. But pride of opinion and self-will are too strong. He vainly imagines that it is beneath his dignity to make a concession, and the result is that down the road a little farther we find a big failure. When a man gives way to one act of deception he generally has to go farther in order to cover it up. The better plan is to frankly own up and let it appear just as it is. This will not weaken, but strengthen character. It requires no brains and only little grace to hold out for an opinion, but God is pleased to overrule the blunders of one who can humble himself. It was said even of wicked Ahab, "Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days; but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house." -- 1 Kings 21:29.

7. Blasphemy. "But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak." Now he is beyond all restraint. He gives way not only to lying, but to cursing as well. He can go no farther except to commit murder or suicide. A sad picture! One, who walked upon the water, cast out devils and saw his Lord transfigured -- now shorn of his strength and cowering in the dark before a few "maids" and "servants". "How are the mighty fallen!" It remained for a chicken to preach him under conviction. God can use roosters better than some preachers to start a revival.

His Restoration. But, thank God, there is another side of the picture. Some men go down and never rise again, but Peter was too big to stay down. Some men so sin against conscience and nature that when they finally collapse there is nothing left from which to build a strong, symmetrical character. They may repent and be saved, but their influence and force-fulness will never be as though they had not deliberately sinned against great light. Peter's sin was unpremeditated, and not the smoldering of pent-up animosity. The moment he came to himself, instead of excusing his act, he bitterly repented. You may know that his restoration was complete, or he would not have been chosen as the mouthpiece on the day of Pentecost, when, under his fiery message, about three thousand souls were saved. His repentance embraced at least three things:

1. "He thought thereon." His reclamation was not a spasmodic handshake, but the result of deliberation and anguish of mind.

2. "He went out." He broke company with all Christ-rejecters. He chose to be alone and in the cold, rather than enjoy earthly comforts and be under condemnation.

3. "He wept bitterly." No dry eyes and card signing for him. Men do not like to show emotion, but Peter so felt the heinousness of his sin that the only way he could find relief was to weep bitterly.

O brother, are you almost on the verge of despair as you view the dark past? If so, remember Peter. The very fact that you can weep implies that there is hope. If you will but re trace your steps as thoroughly; as did Peter, you may be as fully restored as was he.

Just a word relative to the unpardonable sin. Many super-conscientious souls are harassed over this subject. Such could get help from Peter's sad experience. Great as was his offense, he did not blaspheme against the Holy Ghost. They who commit this awful sin are seldom if ever alarmed over the fact. The same is true of those who have crossed the dead line and grieved the Spirit for the last time -- they become hard and feelingless, though they are aware that they are doomed. Unconverted men can sin away their day of grace when the Spirit leaves them forever; but none can commit the unpardonable sin except those who, having "tasted of the heavenly gift," fall away and go so far as to declare there is nothing in it; moreover, to attribute the workings of the Spirit to Satan. This is terrible indeed, but some do it to their everlasting undoing. If you have broken step with your Lord, do as did Peter -- fly back to Him immediately, lest you get farther and farther from Him.

After Christ's resurrection the angel appeared to the women and said, "Go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee." Does this "and Peter" take you in? Believe that it does! Rise up and declare that you will yet be a man, and profit by the checkered past. You can if you will. "Whosoever will let him take the water of life freely."

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THE END