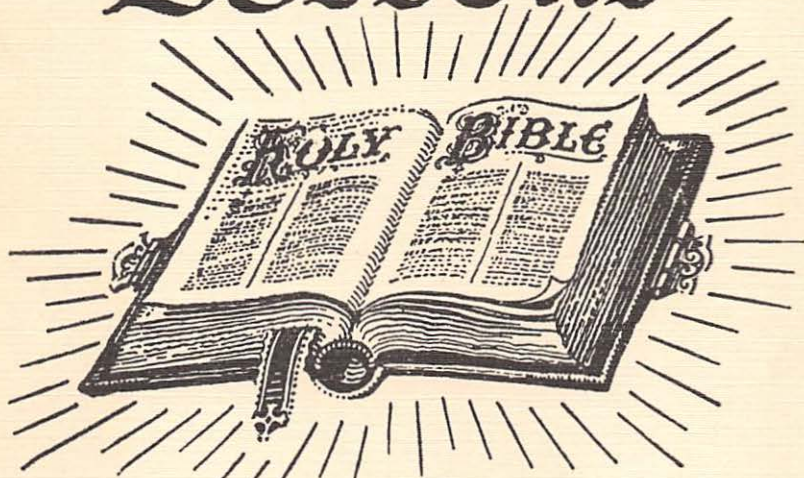


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Bible Lessons



**"Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,
we are CHANGED" II Cor. 3:18**

ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE

**Vol. 12, No. 3
July, Aug., Sept.
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Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

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Volume 12

July, Aug., Sept., 1980

No. 3

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Jesus Christ and His Church**

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Theme for Third Quarter, 1980

We will continue with our lessons in First and Second Samuel for this quarter. We trust that the Lord will help each one to receive spiritual truths from each lesson. God deals differently with people in this day, yet He is the same God and requires obedience. He has let each one choose his course in life, but man cannot choose the consequences. God has laws, and if they are not obeyed they bring punishment. We find this true in the lives of the Old Testament people as well as today.

We have used some accounts from 1 Chron. since it was a little clearer than 2 Samuel. Our lessons in this quarter will bring an end to the reign of Saul as king and deal with the time when David becomes king. —Sis. A. Marie Miles

July 6, 1980

SAUL'S HUMBLE ATTITUDE

1 Sam. 12:1 And Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you.

2 And now, behold, the king walketh before you: and I am old and gray-headed; and behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day.

3 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.

4 And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither has thou taken ought of any man's hand.

5 And he said unto them, The Lord is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, He is witness.

16 Now therefore stand and see this great thing, which the Lord will do before your eyes.

17 Is it not wheat harvest to day? I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a king.

18 So Samuel called unto the Lord; and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel.

19 And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king.

20 And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart;

21 And turn ye not aside: for then should ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver; for they are vain.

22 For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people.

23 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:

24 Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you.

25 But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

Memory Verse: And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day. Acts 23:1.

Central Thought: A true leader does not oppress or defraud his followers. He does not condemn or cast them away in the time of error, but rather reproves them in love, prays for them, and points them to the better way.

Word Definition: *Defraud:* to oppress, violate, or deceive. *To oppress:* to break into pieces, crush or bruise. Hebrew Dict.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The Lord God of Israel has just made Saul King of Israel in response to the people's clamour for a king. By the help of God, Saul has just returned in triumph from a victory over the Ammonites, and Samuel called Saul and the people to Gilgal to renew the kingdom there. Here Saul was made officially the King, and sacrifices and peace offerings were made to the Lord. It was here that Samuel addressed the people with an earnest entreaty of love. He was able to witness to them that their longing for a king was not for any fault or failure of his. It was their own wickedness, yet he was not throwing the blame at them. He gives them hope of the mercy and goodness of the Lord and another chance to make it with Him. He makes it plain that they have sinned in wanting a king, but declares the

good will of the Lord to bless them if they will but follow God from then on. He assures them that he will not drop them from his association but will pray for them and teach them the good and the right way. Surely his attitude is commendable and a good pattern to follow.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What request had God granted Israel? Who inspired this prophecy?
2. What kind of testimony was Samuel able to give of himself?
3. Was Samuel pleased with Israel's desire for a king?
4. What was the essence of Samuel's attitude toward the people?
5. What hope did Samuel give the people?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

He that leadeth and ruleth men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. He must be merciful, patient, firm, gentle, forgiving, forbearing, and must have the welfare of the people at heart. He must have a humble, benevolent attitude, willing to bear the iniquity of the people before the Lord to obtain mercy for them. Samuel manifested these qualities. He was a leader for the sake of God's great name. It had pleased the Lord to make Israel His people. They bore His name. Samuel had respect to that. The Apostle Paul was called to suffer great things for His name's sake. Acts 9:16. The Psalmist said that the great Shepherd led him in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Psalm 23:3. It means much to be living and doing for the honor of Christ's name. We are to bear in our hearts the prayer: "Hallowed be thy name." Matt. 6:9. Teach the good and the right way while one prays for the people. Love them earnestly and warn them faithfully. Keep a humble attitude. This is the kind of leader that God desires to have at the front. Many times the work of God has suffered and souls have been crushed and discouraged by leaders who failed to maintain this kind of attitude. Jesus was this kind of leader. He pleased not himself, but let the reproaches of them that reproached God fall on himself. Rom. 15:3. He bore our sins and sorrows and came not to be ministered to, but to serve. He becomes the good, tender Shepherd to the souls of men. All of those who are called to be under-shepherds must have the same spirit. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ." Phil. 2:5.

—L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Samuel was not ashamed to call attention to the life that he had lived before the people. He did not have anything to cover up. He was not afraid to ask the people if he had stolen from anyone? He gave opportunity for a person to bring out if he had not been honest or if he had pulled any shady deals. God required honesty from him and he had lived accordingly. All business dealings that he had with anyone were open and above board. The price he charged was according to the current price and not an over-charge. The wages he paid his help were according to the current wages and what the worker was worth. If he had been a landlord in our day and rented a house he would have kept the house in good condition and if something went wrong he would fix it. If he rented from someone else he was as careful to take care of that house as if it were his own. He did not borrow something and keep it longer than the agreement was without permission. If he borrowed flour, etc., from anyone, he was careful to pay it back. He never helped himself to his neighbors' fruits or vegetables without permission. He respected his neighbors' property. He observed the laws of the land. If he lived today, he would not drive at an excessive speed, keeping watch for the police. He paid his taxes and was careful to show sympathy to those around him.

Most of all Samuel obeyed God's laws and kept His commandments. He judged people with a righteous judgment. He didn't let anyone give him a bribe so he would be swayed to give judgment in their favor. He was willing to stand before the people and let them examine his life and give their verdict.

Could each of us do that today? The Apostle Paul said, "... I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men." Acts 24:16 —M. Miles



July 13, 1980

IT'S FOOLISH TO DISOBEY

1 Sam. 13:1 Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel,

5a And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel.

8 And he [Saul] tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel had appointed: but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him.

9 And Saul said. Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. And he offered the burnt offering.

10 And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him.

11 And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash;

12 Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering.

13 And Samuel said to Saul, 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 for ever.

14 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.

14:27 But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath: wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that was in his hand, and dipped it in an honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes were enlightened.

28 Then answered one of the people, and said, Thy father straitly charged the people with an oath, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food this day. And the people were faint.

29 Then said Jonathan, My father hath troubled the land: see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey.

30 How much more, if haply the people had eaten freely to day of the spoil of their enemies which they found? for had there not been now a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?

45 And the people said unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not.

Memory Verse: And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God. 1 Sam. 13:13a.

Central Thought: God is a Ruler who deserves and demands unconditional obedience.

Word Definition: Foolish means "unwise, absurd."

LESSON BACKGROUND

Saul gathered to himself two thousand men, and one thousand were with his son Jonathan. Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines that were in Geba and the Philistines heard about it. Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land and gathered the men of Israel to fight against the Philistines. The Philistines gathered together 30,000 chariots, 6,000 horsemen, and "people as the sand is on the seashore in multitude." The Israelites were scared and many of them hid in caves and other places. Saul was in Gilgal and the people followed him, trembling.

Our lesson begins with Saul waiting for Samuel to come and offer a sacrifice unto the Lord. When Samuel did not get there at the appointed time, the people were more afraid and scattered from Saul. Saul became afraid that all would go so he offered the offering, which was wrong. He disobeyed the Lord because only the priest was to offer the sacrifice.

The part about Jonathan, the son of David in our lesson, occurred when they again went to battle against the Philistines. When the Philistines were in panic, Saul called the men of Israel to battle against them. He rashly told the men not to eat food until evening. Jonathan had not heard about this charge. When he came to the woods there was a tree that had honey on it. He dipped the end of his rod in the honeycomb and put it to his mouth. This gave him strength. ("His eyes were enlightened.") He thought that his father had caused much trouble in Israel. The men could have fought much better with food and had victory. Later, Saul was going to punish Jonathan, but the people rescued him and he did not die. —M. Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. Does God let us be tested as Saul was by Samuel's delay in coming to Gilgal to offer sacrifices?
2. What excuse did Saul make for his distrust and disobedience? Who else in the Bible made excuses, and will excuses stand?
3. What did Samuel tell Saul would be his punishment, and was it too severe in the light of his sin?
4. God had given Jonathan, Saul's son, a great victory and

the Philistines were in panic. What rash command did Saul give? Read 1 Samuel 14:52, which was the result of Saul's rash command when God was working.

5. What did the people think of Jonathan?
6. Discuss God's physical laws and moral laws. Can a person disobey either without disaster?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Making rash statements and doing rash deeds causes much confusion and trouble. We read in our lesson about Saul, who disobeyed the Lord. God has laws and we cannot disobey them without paying a penalty. The root of Saul's disobedience was distrust. He did not believe that Samuel would come. He admitted it by his own confession. "Thou camest not within the days appointed." In essence he was saying that he doubted whether God and God's prophet would be as good as their word. The dishonor offered to Samuel was in reality a dishonor to God. Distrust is almost certain to lead to disobedience. This is where the devil will trick a person to get him to disobey God. Even Eve doubted God and this led to her disobedience. Saul could not plead that he did not understand what was required of him. He knew, but he set the laws of God aside to please himself. At first sight it may appear that his punishment was very severe, but it's a grave thing to disobey God. When we consider all the circumstances which surround this act we can see that the sentence was not heavier than the sin. Saul's excuse for the act was the urgency of the situation. He pleads that he had disobeyed God in order to obtain from Him a fulfillment of His promises. It seems that he hoped, by breaking God's laws, to bring the success to his arms which had been promised only on condition of obedience. But Samuel summed it all up and said, "Thou hast done foolishly."

God has certain laws even in nature that when they are broken brings disaster. No man who thinks rationally would throw himself over the precipice, for instance, and escape bodily injury and pain. Disobedience to the laws that govern matter can never bring the same results as obedience, and men never expect that it will do so. God's moral laws, like his physical ones, are as straight forward as the mighty wheels in Ezekiel's vision. (Ezek. 1:17). "Whatsoever a man soweth," in moral acts, "that shall he also reap." Men are foolish who think otherwise.

Saul acted foolishly in connection with his son, Jonathan, who had faith for victory against the Philistines. He had given a rash commandment and showed not much natural affections for his son, rather than confess his actions as being foolish.

—Marie Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

God allows certain dire conditions to develop and exist to put us to a test as to whether we really mean to serve and obey Him. God wills that we wait on Him, and this is one of the most difficult things for the human to master. We will be given many opportunities in life to take matters into our own hands. God's wisdom has designed that it be this way. He wants us to make full proof of ourselves. No device or means that are for the public good is made available without being tested and proven for its value, efficiency, and profit. Thus it can be guaranteed and assured to the public of what it is supposed to be. God designs to put to the test those who would be His servants. A wary, watchful soul who is constantly on guard against the inroads and workings of Satan, must keep this thought in remembrance. The greatest damage that one can receive is not by way of pressures from without. It is rather a danger of failure from within. Get the inward man in order as he should be, and all outer foes can and will be subdued and conquered. The cause of Israel's downfall through the years of her history was always because of inner troubles. As long as their faith and righteousness was with the Lord, no force of the enemy, regardless of how large, could prevail over them. And the inward troubles of a nation or Church stem from the inner spiritual trouble with the individuals that have a bearing upon such a society. Saul's downfall bears a likeness of the downfall of so many, and lessons we should take from this for our own welfare.

—Leslie C. Busbee

July 20, 1980

SAUL'S DOWNFALL AND REJECTION

1 Samuel 15:1 Samuel also said unto Saul, The Lord sent me to anoint you to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the Lord.

2 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.

3 Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.

7 And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt.

8 And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.

9 But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.

13 And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord.

14 And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

17 And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel?

19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord?

20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal.

22 And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

Memory Verse: Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. Proverbs 16:18.

Central Thought: The pride of a man's heart will not permit him to obey the commands of God. Instead of following

the Lord's directions, pride will cause a man to chart his own course to his own destruction.

WORD DEFINITIONS: *Rebellion:* To go against, to bitterly oppose. *Witchcraft:* Satanic power to divine or discover secrets in superhuman affairs. Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. This shows how cunningly deceptive it is.

LESSON BACKGROUND

As we have discovered in previous lessons, Saul has already manifested a wrong spirit and attitude on two different occasions. First, he did not wait on Samuel to offer the offering as he should have, but went ahead and presumptuously offered it himself. That his kingdom would not continue was pronounced upon him then and there. After that, Saul made a rash commandment forbidding his army from eating food when they were fainting for strength. Now the stage is set for Saul's ultimate trial of faithfulness. Saul seemed to have a good start and a humble beginning. He did not want to show himself, but rather hid himself among the stuff. When he was anointed king, he did not immediately take hold of the crown, but waited until the time when his leadership was needed. But a change took place. The exalted position, and the victory over the Philistines (which was accomplished really by the faith of his son, Jonathan) had gone to his head. He forgot that his leadership was to be a help to influence the people for right. Instead he let the people influence him. This was rendering him ineffectual and of no profit to the Lord. Thus pride accomplished its deadly work. This same pride will do thus in every soul that fails to guard against it. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What had Amalek done in the past to merit God's judgment?
2. What was Saul commanded to do in judgment against this nation?
3. Did he obey the Lord in this? Why?
4. What cause did Samuel label as Saul's downfall?
5. What did Samuel say that rebellion and stubbornness were like? Why?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

How one needs to guard against pride! Pride was one of the elements of Satan's temptation to our foreparents in the

fall from Eden's holiness. The desire to be wise, to be elevated in one's mind to heights of honor and power that the all-wise Creator forbids—such was the downfall of Eve and Adam. It has produced a weakness and an inclination to pride in all their posterity, the human family. The pride of life is not of the Father, but of the world. The world with all of its pride and lust will pass away, but he that humbleth himself to know and do the will of God abideth forever. Pride lies at the root of all rebellion and disobedience. It blinds the mind and causes man not to see God regardless of how obvious He makes Himself. Pride causes men's thoughts and desires to be turned inward to themselves. Whether it be the thrill of being lifted up in men's admiration or the remorse of being humiliated, it is all the same pride that is working to destroy all happiness and render man miserable and worthless. While humility turns thoughts and desires away from self fulfillment and pleasure (thus helping to bring God into view) pride captivates the soul with a sense of foolish pleasure of self gratification. Thus the soul, mired in a pit of dark vanity, is lulled into complacency with this false security. It was pride that spurred the plans for the building of the tower of Babel. It was pride that allured Lot to pitch his tent toward Sodom. It was pride that plagued the nation of Israel during the years in the wilderness that saw them rebel against Moses many times. Pride was the downfall of their first king. It was pride that caused them to want a king in the first place, and now here this evil spirit of pride takes its toll of their happiness and prosperity. Many troublesome years are ahead for Israel. The kings that followed were often beset by pride. There is but one antidote for pride: Humble yourself. This must be done voluntarily and willingly. God does not want to have to humble us, but He can. It is much better, though, to humble one's self and be spared the bitterness of God's punishment against pride.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Saul came boldly up to Samuel and said, "I have performed the commandment of the Lord." How sad for a person to be so bold before God and before His servants. It reminds us of Ananias and Sapphira who tried to deceive Peter. Their end was sad. Peter reminded them that they had lied not only to men, but to God. While the property was their own they could have chosen to give just a part, but they wanted others to think they had given all the money from the possession that they had sold. (Acts 5:1-11) That is the way that Saul

came up to Samuel, trying to make a great impression that he had performed all the word of the Lord. We must remember that "Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7) At times we might be able to fool man, but we *never* can fool God. Those covered up sins will be exposed and many times before man.

The boldness of Saul wilted when Samuel said, "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" As is common to mankind, Saul had an excuse. The people wanted to keep the best to offer to the Lord as a sacrifice. Saul was afraid not to do as they wanted him to do. I wonder how he thought the Lord would feel when he offered unto him a sacrifice of animals that He had already commanded to be killed and destroyed. Sometimes it seems that people think God is very stupid and can be twisted around to suit their ideas and fancies. But God will not be brought down to man's ideas. God's laws are forever settled in heaven. We either obey them or take the consequences.

Many today are not living up to God's Word. They have not died to their own ways. They allow unforgiveness, grudges, ill-feelings, pride, and many other things to stay in their hearts, yet they will say, "I have performed all the commandments of the Lord!" God is looking and listening. Is he hearing the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the cows? We can't do wrong and get by. —Sis. Marie Miles

JAMES EVANS-MISSIONARY OF THE NORTH

One of the converts whom Mr. Evans carried with him by canoe from Lac La Pluie on Lake Superior was Peter Jacobs. He was for many years a faithful and efficient worker among the Indians in Canada. The following is about his conversion. "In the year 1824, I first heard the gospel preached by Mr. Case, a missionary. Before that time I was a heathen and so were all the tribes of Canada West. When I was a lad, I never heard an Indian pray as Christians pray to God, the Great Being. Our people believed in the existence of a Great Being, and Maker of all things; but we thought that God was so very far away that no human voice could reach Him: and indeed we all believed that God did not meddle with the affairs of the children of men.

"I, as well as the people of my tribe, were very cruel and wicked, because there was no fear of God in my heart, and no fear of punishment, but every man settled his own affairs by

the force of his tomahawk; that is to say, by burying his tomahawk in the people's heads and that ends all disputes. The Indians made their women do all their work and the men did little or nothing in the heathen life. The women made the wigwam, and removed it when necessary, carrying it on their backs; they also chopped the wood and carried it home on their backs. They brought the venison home when the deer was killed by their husbands; they dressed the skins for their husbands' clothing and made the coats, shirts, pants and moccasins, which completes the Indian dress;—all was done by the women. Notwithstanding that the poor women did all this, they got very little gratitude from their heathen husbands.

"The main prayer in the heathen life was: 'O God the Sun, I beseech you to hear my prayer, and to direct my steps through the woods in the direction where the deer is feeding, that I may get near him, shoot him and kill him, and have something to eat thereby.' And this was all the prayer I ever made. There is nothing about soul salvation in that prayer. Some pray for fish, ducks, rabbits, or whatever they wish to get.

"At length the missionary came and began to preach about Christ and how He died for me; but I first said, 'No; that is the white man's God and white man's religion; and that God would have nothing to do with the Indians.' But he assured me God would save me if I would believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and as a proof he read portions of Scripture to me again and again. At last I began to think that he must be right and I must be wrong because he read the 'Book of God' (as we call the Bible) to me. Then I began to pray for the first time in English. Then I knew only a few words. I said, 'O God be merciful to me, poor Indian boy, great sinner.' The Word of God had now got hold of my heart, but it made me feel very sick in my heart. I went to bed and I could not sleep for my thoughts troubled me very much. The Holy Spirit was convicting me of my sins. Then I would pray the words over and over again, and got more and more sick in my heart. I was very sorry that God could not understand my Ojibway language. I thought God could only understand English. When I was praying tears came spontaneously from my eyes, and I could not understand this, because I had been taught from infancy never to cry. In this misery I passed three or four weeks. I then met with Peter Jones, who was converted a few months before me; and to my surprise I heard him return thanks at a meal in Ojibway, my native language.

This was quite enough for me. I now saw that God could understand me in my Ojibway, and therefore went far into the woods, and prayed in the Ojibway tongue to God and said; 'O God I was so ignorant and blind, that I did not know that thou couldst understand my Ojibway tongue! Now O God, I beseech Thee, to be gracious to me, a sinner! Take away this sickness and conviction that I now feel in my heart; for all my sins lay very heavy in my heart. Send now Thy Holy Spirit to come work in my heart! Let the blood of Christ be now applied to my heart, that all my sins may depart!'

"Though I could now pray in this way in my native tongue, yet God did not seem to think it best to hear my prayers at this time, but left me to pass many miserable nights. And I cried out again: 'O God, I will not let Thee alone! I shall trouble Thee with my prayers till Thou bless me!' And at last God heard my prayers, and He took away this heavy sickness of heart; but not till many tears had been shed. And when this sickness was taken away from my heart, then I experienced another feeling which was 'joy in the Holy Ghost,' which was indeed 'full of glory.' My tongue could not express the joy I then felt. I could say nothing but 'Happy, happy!' When I found this religion of Christ so sweet in the heart of man, I wanted all my people then to know of the great and true God; but they all said: 'No; that I was wrong; that I had been to the white man's God and not the Saviour of the Indians.' But I said that God was the Saviour of all the nations of the earth; the Bible says, For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Romans 10:13. I know in my own heart what God has done for me in forgiving my sins and what He has done for me He can, and will do for you. And they began to pray for mercy, and for the forgiveness of their sins; as they prayed in strong faith, many of them were converted."

July 27, 1980

THE CALL OF DAVID

1 Samuel 16:1 And the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.

4a And Samuel did that which the Lord spake, and came to Bethlehem.

5b And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.

6 And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him.

7 But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.

10 Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The Lord hath not chosen these.

11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.

12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.

13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

14 But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.

17 And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me.

18 Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the Lord is with him.

22 And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me; for he hath found favour in my sight.

23 And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

Memory Verse: For the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. 1 Sam. 16:7b.

Central Thought: God does not look upon a man's stature and outward bearing as a basis for his qualifications. But rather, he weighs a man's spirit, views his attitudes, and beholds what is the very essence of his being and desires.

Word Definitions: *Heart:* The very center of man's being; the seat of the affections, desires, attitudes, dispositions, etc. "*An evil spirit from the Lord*": Because of Saul's evil inclinations, the guard and protection from Satan was taken away, and God permitted the devil to send his tormenting spirits to trouble Saul. Through the righteous influence of David, the evil spirit was rebuked from time to time.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We have already heard of David, although his name was not called. In 1 Sam. 13:14, on the occasion when Saul offered the sacrifice before Samuel arrived, Saul was told that his kingdom would not continue and that "the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart" to be the commander of His people. The apostle Paul preaching to the people at Antioch in Pisidia seemingly quoted this when he related how God gave testimony to David, saying, "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will." Acts 13: 22. David had been seeking God as a youth. As a youth he had heard of the sojourn of the ark at Ephratah (Bethlehem). Psalm 132:6. A great zeal for the work of God had sprung up in his soul. He was proving the Lord to be a present help in need by the way God helped him in caring for his sheep, as he later related to Saul. He was being prepared to fill the place that Saul was no longer qualified or fit to fill. "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him?" was God's query of Samuel. It seems that God had literally given Saul up. Instead of trying to reform Saul, the prophet Samuel was simply instructed to go and anoint another for the king.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did God not want Samuel to mourn for Saul?
2. Why did God reject Eliab?
3. What was He looking for in men?
4. Name some of the things that helped make and prepare David for God's blessing.
5. How did David minister to Saul?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

God looks on the heart. He passes by the outward appearance. He does not size up a man and reckon him according to his good looks or portliness. Man is very prone to do just the opposite. But "as a jewel of gold is in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman [or man] without discretion." Prov. 11:22. Good looks without the proper qualities of heart and soul is just like a rotten egg. Outwardly the egg looks good, but look out if that shell gets cracked and broken! The spirit of the world tends to fix up, adorn, and decorate the outward man. Much effort is spent and time consumed in trying to make the outer man presentable and attractive. There is nothing wrong with making the outward man neat, presentable, and modestly gracious if it is not done to an excess, but the inner qualities of faith and holiness of heart are much more needful and important. God desires to see that meek and quiet spirit, for in His sight it is of great price. He loves to see the grace of humility and self-denial being manifest in one's life. It is so easy to neglect the heart. We are warned to "keep the heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life." Prov. 4:23. The issues—the outflowings, the conversation, the conduct, and the attitudes of a man—come from the heart. Jesus rebuked the people in His day for neglecting this so vital a need. They garnished the outside and were very solicitous to wash hands and do outward cleansings in ceremonies. But Jesus declared that it was not that which cometh from without that defileth the man. It was that which came from within, that is, the heart of man that defiled him. Evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, etc. were the things that really defiled the man because they were coming forth from his heart. Matt. 15:19. Many times these things are harbored in the heart long before they break forth into evil deeds. God saw things in the others' hearts that He knew would be a trouble later. But David had a heart that was after God's great heart. David was earnest and sincere in his devotion to God. He was honest and humble, and harbored no

ill-will toward anyone. Such was the heart that God chose, and such is the heart that God chooses today for His habitation.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

People who are not saved are more or less under the control of Satan, but there is a vast difference between this state and being possessed with evil spirits. Those who are bound by the devil must be loosed before they can find salvation. Jesus speaks of the man who, when a devil is cast out, is "left empty, swept, and garnished." Matt. 12:44. If the vacuum is not filled by the salvation of Christ, the unclean spirit "walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out: . . . Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits . . . and the last state of that man is worse than the first." (verse 45) When a person is delivered from evil spirits, he needs to be filled with Christ who is mightier than the devil and can overcome him.

Saul was a chosen vessel of the Lord in the beginning and he was humble. He got lifted up with pride and felt that the God-given graces and position were from his own workings. God could not use him any longer, so He had to let him go his own way. By rejecting the Lord, Saul's heart became wicked and he yielded to the devil more and more until the Lord withdrew from him and permitted an evil spirit to take possession. We notice that Saul fell into a deep depression and was troubled in his spirit. He even wanted David to play on the harp to help him to be calm.

Oh, how we need to get a real experience with the Lord and hold on to it! We should never let the spirit of doubt cause us to lose what God has done for us in our souls. Doubts will often dress up in white robes and come as "an angel of light," when it's only the devil trying to cast one down. Faith in our hearts will dispel doubts, fears, and bad feelings.

The devil in witches can commune with evil spirits, and from the beginning of God's dealings with the Israelites in bringing them out of Egypt, it appeared. Heathenism is filled with witchcraft and it's in our modern day. Flee from it and cling to the Lord.

—Sis. Marie Miles

August 3, 1980

DAVID'S TRIUMPH OF FAITH (Part I)

1 Samuel 17:4 And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.

10 And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.

11 When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

20 And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the trench, as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle.

23 And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them.

24 And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid.

26 And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?

32 And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

33 And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

34 And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock:

36 Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

37 David said moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of the Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the Lord be with thee.

Memory Verse: I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about. Psalms 3:6.

Central Thought: Present battle won and victories gained will prepare us for greater battles in the future.

Word Definitions: *“Six cubits and a span”*: A cubit is the length of a man’s arm from elbow to the finger tips, while a span is the spread of the fingers. Figuring a cubit at about 18 inches and a span about eight inches, we have calculated that Goliath was about 9 ft. 8 in. tall, or almost ten feet tall.

LESSON BACKGROUND

After David had ministered to Saul for a time, he returned home to Bethlehem to tend his father’s sheep. 1 Sam. 17:15. The Philistines from the west had invaded the countries of Israel, and a battle was being pitched. Before the battle began, the Philistines decided to challenge Israel with one of their champion soldiers, a giant named Goliath. He was 9 ft. 8 inches tall. His armour weighed 27 lbs. and 13 ounces. In a duel between one of the Israelite soldiers and himself, Goliath declared that the outcome of the battle could be settled. It seems that Saul has forgotten just who David is. He seems to make no recognition of David when he offers to fight the giant, and later he had to ask him who he was. (verse 58) The Philistines were a hardy race of people of Canaan that the early-day Israelites had not driven out as they had originally been instructed of God to do. God had eventually decided to leave the Philistines and other people in Canaan to be a trial to the nation of Israel to see whether they would serve Him. Judges 2:20-23, 3:1-5. Thus, they were present to deal Israel misery and cause them great concern. It was God’s original purpose to drive out all of these inhabitants of Canaan, but because of the people’s disposition and unbelief, He saw fit to leave them there. David is one who proves the faithfulness and love of God at home. There, amid the beauties of nature and in the school of faithful but lowly service, he proves the Lord precious and dear to him. Now in our lesson, he is prepared to be a great blessing to Israel through the strength achieved in past blessings and to meet and overcome one of their greatest enemies.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Goliath do to the armies of Israel?
2. What was their reaction, and why?
3. Did David hesitate to accept the giant’s challenge?
4. What did David point back to as the basis for his courage against Goliath?

5. What did Saul tell David to do?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

"It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." Lam. 3:27. David learned to bear responsibility by taking care of his father's flocks. His courage enabled him to go right out in the name of the Lord and face a lion in the defense of the sheep. A bear also was killed by his hands. He had to face these wild animals with faith and courage. "I went out after him." This took courage. This was the step of faith. If he had waited until the Lord did something first, he would have lost the faith and the fight. It is the same with us in the Christian fight. We must never run from a battle, but face the foe. God will give us victory if we will face the foe with a testimony of faith. David might have been trembling inside, but he overcame all fear and stood up for the good of his flock. He saw that his flock was endangered and their lives were at stake. He was willing to step out and do something about it. He saw that the work of God was being challenged and reproached. This was the cause of his faith. He believed that God wanted him to step out and face that giant in His holy name. While the giant rested assured that his mighty weapons would pin David to the ground, David rested on the strong arm of the Lord and went against him in the name of the Lord of hosts. He knew that God would be glorified in this victory. All these things were written for our learning. The courage that David had here has since inspired thousands of people who have read this story. Saul had no courage to go out and face the battle. All Israel was also afraid. But David was prepared in faith and holy zeal. If God helped and enabled him to overcome this great giant, how much more will He help us today in the Christian life! The greatest giant that any of us will ever face is the great big giant of SELF. This lies at the root of every man's difficulty in the Christian venture, for without the assertion of self and selfish desires there is no problem. Self must not only be subdued, but it must be crucified. It was David's courage and faith that enabled him to step forth in courage to face and conquer the giant, just as it will be our faith and courage that will see us through the hardest battles of life we ever face.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The tendency of all men is to put confidence in that which they can understand or comprehend with their senses. Physi-

cal strength or material greatness of any kind, or belief in the seen and temporal, are the objects of most natural men's trust. Even in history we read that Napoleon said, "Providence is always on the side of the great battalions." In men's estimation the things of the unseen God go for nothing, because He is unseen.

In our lesson we see these two beliefs strongly brought to light. The Philistines had their faith in their arm of flesh and in their own giant, who was of extraordinary size and had great bodily strength. They did not seem to even have faith in their own false gods of their nation. In this we see, that this has been the case of the majority of men in all ages and all nations. Even some who profess to believe in the unseen God will act as if He doesn't have power to take care of things in this life.

We note that Saul was dismayed when he heard the words of the Philistine. (verse 11) He even sought to restrain David from going out to meet the man of war. Saul was so afraid that he had forgotten the many miracles and the great way God had worked in the past with his own nation, the Israelites. He had even forgotten of how Moses had led the Israelites across the Red Sea and away from the hands of their persecutors. Saul seemed to forget all the heroes of faith (who are mentioned in Heb. 11) who "through faith subdued kingdoms and obtained promises." If he had been in contact with God, he would have rejoiced to go forth in the name of the Lord and add his name to the list of heroes for God. Because Saul's army saw the unbelief in Saul, we do not wonder at their manifested fear.

David was strengthened by his past experiences with the lion and the bear. His faith rested upon a solid foundation. Only a man who was accustomed to discern an unseen hand in all the events of his life would have seen God in the deliverance from the lion and the bear. Only such a one would have drawn hope and confidence from it for the present greater peril. David's life had been a life of faith in the unseen, and only such a one therefore was ready for an emergency. "Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice." Psalm 63:7.

—Sis. Marie Miles

A LONELY CABIN

Joseph Conley, an intelligent young man, being a writer of talent, became editor for a daily paper; but with the passing

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of years, he became addicted to drink and finally, did not have the capacity for work. Also, this learned man who had been the minister for a time of a church, became an immoral drunkard.

In his growing dislike of God, Joseph Conley became president of a group of atheists, and for twelve years he was in a saloon, giving discourses concerning atheism and drinking until he was ill.

Having raised his challenging hand to God to cause him to die, and seeing that nothing happened, he told his listeners: "Look, there is no God."

One day in the street he asked a man for money to buy liquor. With surprise, the man recognized him as the former minister. The good man was a Christian. He took Joseph to his home, bathed him, put a new suit on him, and took him to a nearby hotel. Joseph pawned the suit to obtain money to buy liquor.

Finally, after various attempts in vain to help him, the man decided it would be better if he put him in a different environment. It was at the time of the gold rush in Alaska, and he persuaded Joseph to go there. They packed his suitcase, bought him another suit and went to see him off on the ship. His wife and little girl were there to tell him goodbye, and his little girl hugged and kissed him. "Daddy," she said, "I put my own little Bible in your suitcase. I would not give it to anyone else in the world but you. Please read it, Daddy. In the Bible I have written: 'To my dear Daddy, with love from Florence.' Don't forget that we love you."

When Joseph arrived at the River Yukon, the first place he found was a saloon, where he found the job of sweeping floors and cleaning cuspidors. His pay was all the liquor he could drink and sufficient food to sustain ife.

One day a man said to him: "Joseph, I have bought an old cabin, forty miles from here, which I have paid for in gold. I want you to go live there and take care of the place."

At first, Joseph refused, but when the man promised him that he would send provisions every two weeks by dog sled, and that he would see that he had all the liquor he could drink, he agreed to go. This is the way Joseph encountered this lonely cabin, with nothing to do but drink—and he had a large quantity for the winter.

After a time, two other men, James and Walter, who were slaves to drink, came. They begged him to let them stay there with him. Thus, there were three of them in the cabin. By the

end of November, three trips had been made with the dogs to obtain more liquor and groceries. The three drank and drank night after night. One day, James got very close to the shore of death. In great agony, he exclaimed: "Bring a doctor. You can't leave me here to die." They were forty miles from the city, it was 40 degrees below zero, and the snow was very deep. "Bring a doctor," exclaimed the delirious man.

Joseph remembered that down below in the suitcase, was a box of medicines. He brought it out and opened it. On the opening of it, the little black book fell to the floor. He opened it and read: "From Florence to Papa." "Florence! Florence!" screamed Joseph. Walter asked: "What did you find?" "It is a Bible, curse it!" Joseph said as he went to the stove, and opened the door to throw the Bible in. Walter cried: "Man, don't do that! Don't you know we don't have anything here to read?" He snatched the little Bible from Joseph's hand. "If you want to read it, you can, but I don't," said Joseph; "What was that written on the first page?" " 'To my dear papa, with love from Florence.' " By this time Joseph was a little more sober. "My little girl! I'm glad I didn't burn the little book she gave me," he said.

The medicine which James took, worked. He began to get better and began to read the Bible. He began to read it aloud, but Joseph told him to be quiet. Walter was interested and said: "What was that you read, James?" So, James read it again. "I had no idea there were things like that in the Bible," said Walter. What do you think about our reading it just to pass the time—not to believe it?" Thus, they took turns reading it, not knowing the effect it was having on them in that lonely cabin. The barrel of liquor began emptying more slowly. Some days they read five to seven chapters.

Arriving at the New Testament, profane language was used much less and they left the barrel of liquor for peace. No bad language was heard for several days. Was it not the Bible that was causing this?

The first of January, they began to read the gospel of John. Later, that memorable day of February 14 arrived. It was Walter's turn to read. Joseph was standing behind the stove. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:1-3) Joseph rubbed his eyes. "What's the matter, Joseph?"

"Nothing." "Were you crying, Joseph?" "Yes, go on and read. I'm thinking of my little girl. I'm not crying about the Bible." Then Walter said: "I want to know if what this book says is true. For the last five days I have been wanting to pray, but I was afraid you boys would laugh at me, but I'm not afraid anymore." Continuing, he said: "I'm going to ask God, if there is a God, that He will speak to me." Then Joseph said: "All right, now that you fellows have given up, I'll tell you that my heart has been breaking for the last week. What do you say, James?" James said: "If you both want to pray, I'll pray with you."

In that lonely cabin, three of the worst drunkards fell on their knees to plead salvation from their sins. Shortly, Walter got up with the assurance in his heart that God had heard prayer and with praise on his lips for salvation through Jesus Christ. Soon James, and later Joseph, the third man in that lonely cabin, entered into a new life by simple faith in Christ as their Saviour. It was 2:00 a.m. when they arose from prayer. The Man of Galilee, the Son of God, the Saviour of sinners had come to that lonely cabin. There, close to the old stove, he put His hand on the heads of those three redeemed men, and said as He did of old to the fishermen on the coast of Galilee: "Come and follow me and I will make you fishers of men." Trusting in His Word, they left all to follow Him.

Joseph took hold of the barrel of liquor and rolled it near the door. Walter hit it with the axe and the terrible liquor ran through the snow in the midst of the exclamations of three redeemed souls. Certainly the angels were witnesses of this scene and sang the notes of glory for the finding of three lost sheep of the Yukon. James, Joseph, and Walter were born again by the Spirit of God.

Some months later, Joseph returned to the United States, now a new man in Christ Jesus. He was no longer the negligent drunkard and spitter of the lonely cabin of the Yukon, but a man redeemed of God. He became a Bible teacher and one of the most useful and humble workers in the state.

He continued in this blessed service for the Lord until he was called to the celestial home to be with the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for him.

Dear Reader, Jesus not only saves from a life of sin and degradation, but He goes with each believer all the way to glory. There, He will share of the happiness of heaven with those whom He has redeemed through His precious blood, poured out on the cross of Calvary. Is this your prospect? I trust it is, for the cause of His Name!

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isaiah 1:18.

—Sel. from Spanish tracts.

August 10, 1980

DAVID'S TRIUMPH OF FAITH (PART II)

1 Samuel 17:38 And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail.

39 And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him.

40 And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.

41 And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him.

42 And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance.

43 And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

44 And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.

45 Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.

46 This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

47 And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands.

48 And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine.

49 And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.

50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David.

51 Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.

Memory Verse: It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect. Psalm 18:32.

Central Thought: The battle is the Lord's and the real victory comes when we rely upon the strength that He gives us, and not upon our own.

Word Definitions: *Coat of mail:* A coat made of jointed plates of metal. *Disdain:* Scorn, disesteem, belittle, contemn or hold in contempt. *Assayed to go:* Undertook and yielded through mental doubt or weakness.

LESSON BACKGROUND

After Saul had given consent for David to go out to fight the Philistine giant Goliath, David was talked into donning Saul's armour. He wanted to be co-operative as much as he could, but it was with much distress and uneasiness of mind that he put on the armour, because he had never fought with such weapons. He was used to the staff and slingshot and the help of the Lord. He was not adaptable to the heavy coat of armour. It is very difficult for humankind to be forced to utilize things strange and uncertain and to hurriedly adjust to methods that they have not proven heretofore. To change from sin to righteousness is a work of miracles, but it takes time for the saved soul to become adaptable to God and His ways. God wants us to acquaint ourselves with Him and His ways. Job. 22:21.

There was a valley between the two camps. Doubtless, there was a brook there from which David gathered the five smooth stones. Adam Clarke notes that the Septuagint (Greek

translation of the Old Testament) states that the stone passed through the giant's helmet and sank into his skull. To some this may seem perfectly improbable, but we are assured by the ancients that scarcely anything could resist the force of the sling. We are also confident that God guided that stone and reinforced its speed and force to accomplish the need. Another ancient class of people used slings and could therewith break into pieces shields, helmets, and every other species of armour. They were such exact marksmen that they scarcely ever missed that at which they aimed. Therefore the force and the trueness of the aim were very important to David here.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why could David not go with Saul's armour?
2. Why was Goliath seemingly embarrassed to see David coming to meet him?
3. What was David's chief weapon?
4. Who was the largest, David or Goliath?
5. What are some of the giants that we meet up with today?
6. How can the youth, as well as adults, prepare to meet the giants in life?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

There are many giants that we meet today in the Christian life. An enlarged problem or situation that is beyond our own ability or power to handle can be a real giant. It will strike fear to the heart as we think how big it is and how utterly unable we are to handle it. David's example of courage as he faced this powerful champion of the enemy has inspired many to brace up and go out against gigantic foes that rise up to withstand them in the way. John Bunyan in the book *Pilgrim's Progress* names different giants that confronted the Christians. There was Giant Despair in Doubting Castle. Oh, what a giant despair can be to a soul. Dark pictures and horrible sentences of fate can be drawn up against the struggling person who has not learned to pluck out of his bosom the key of promise and walk out into the sunlight of God's love (which sunlight Bunyan said caused Giant Despair to fall into a fit and lose the use of his limbs). Then there was giant Maul, giant Slay-Good, and giant Grim. All of these giants were ultimately overcome by one called Mr. Great Heart. Oh, that is what we need in the Christian life. We need a courageous heart filled with a determination to press our way forward regardless of what Satan may seek to stop us

with. Then there are other giants. The giant of Unbelief, the giant of Worry, Fear, and Doubt, and the giant of Discouragement have ravaged God's children so many times. Let us not forget that one giant (of which I suppose could be what Goliath was a type) of SELF. Self love and interest is the paramount hinderance to most people in their spiritual lives. This selfish and wretched giant must be disposed of. We must live self-forgetful and self-sacrificial lives. Self-sufficiency, self-confidence, self-esteem, self-promotion are things often infesting lives and sapping spiritual perception and reality. We must lose ourselves and find it in the Lord. This alone can bring true happiness, success, and victory. Let us be brave to face and slay these giants just as David did the giant in his day.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

It would have been madness and presumption for David, the youthful shepherd, to go out to fight a hand to hand combat with the giant, Goliath. But David was prepared in another way. No doubt, while he spent many hours out watching the sheep he practiced with the sling. We note in those days that the Bible said there were men in their army who used the slingshot, and they could sling stones and not miss at an hair's breadth. (Judges 20:16) It was a mighty weapon to use by those who had practiced. David did not waste his time out there on the hills. In many ways he was preparing himself for his future life. Many times the youth of today dream but do not put forth much effort to prepare for life. Dreaming and having a vision are good, but there needs to be more to them than just that. Prepare yourself for things ahead in life; not only in a material way but in a spiritual way. Have certain goals and base those goals upon a firm foundation, which is God's Word, and then pursue them. David did not attribute his victories with the lion and the bear to his own strength, yet he gave his strength to God to work through. When he accomplished those things he gave the glory to God. He did not brag that he had done some mighty thing. He said that the "Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." (verse 37)

When through your studies, or use of practice, you accomplish something give glory to God and not to yourself. You are basing your faith upon a solid foundation. When you meet giants in this life you can know the same God will help you

overcome them. You will have proved God's word and found that when it is obeyed, it will bring peace and victory to your soul. If you have proved and trusted God, you will have faith in Him to help you fight the giants that you meet in life. Do not give up, but know in your heart that you will overcome, by your faith in a living God. Through faith you can say, "The battle is the Lord's."

When my mother-in-law, Mother Miles, came down to her dying bed, she had faith to trust God fully to the end. She had been trusting God, and it was not new to her. She had prepared for that hour and at almost 82 years of age she went to be with Jesus. Prepare to be prepared.—Sis. Marie Miles

August 17, 1980

THE CRUELTY OF JEALOUSY

1 Samuel 18:2 And Saul took him [David] that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house.

5 And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

7 And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.

8 And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom?

9 And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.

10 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house: and David played with his hand, as at other times: and there was a javelin in Saul's hand.

11 And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it. And David avoided out of his presence twice.

12 And Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, and was departed from Saul.

13 Therefore Saul removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people.

14 And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the Lord was with him.

15 Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.

16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

Memory Verse: Jealousy is cruel as the grave. Song of Sol. 8:6.

Central Thought: One who cannot allow others to excel without bitter resentment falls prey to the cruelest and most unmanly passion there is. Jealousy robs one of happiness and keeps him from attaining victory over his own faults.

Word Definitions: "The women *answered* one another": To respond, sing, shout, testify, and announce. "David *behaved* himself wisely": circumspect, intelligent. David was very careful of his conduct and speech. He endeavored to live above reproach. Saul eyes David: watches with jealousy.

LESSON BACKGROUND

David's victory of faith over the Philistine giant had great effects. The son of Saul, Jonathan, became very fond of David and loved him as his own soul. If anyone would have cause to be jealous, it should have been the eldest son of the king who would ordinarily be next in line to the throne. But it was not so. Instead of jealousy, there was love. All Israel was carried away with the magnitude of the great victory David was blessed of God to gain. They gave vent to their joy with songs of praise to David. And the evil spirit broke out from Saul in a passion of hatred and intent to murder this young man who had been a saviour to Israel. As Saul's efforts to destroy David were foiled one by one, he was conscious of the fact that what David had he had also enjoyed once. That was the presence of the Lord to bless and sustain. David finds himself in a hard place. He does his very best to behave and conduct himself wisely to obtain the favor of the king. But nothing can satisfy a jealous spirit. How miserable and wretched is this man who was once little in his own eyes! No doubt David was surprised to learn what kind of man Saul truly was. Let us remember that these things were written for our learning and admonition. Let us be on our guard against this terrible spirit of jealousy, and at the same time gird ourselves for the fight in the times when we are taken advantage of and persecuted.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. How did David conduct himself?
2. What incident touched off Saul's jealousy?
3. What did jealousy give place to?
4. Is there any danger of one becoming jealous in the trifles of life?
5. What would be a good safeguard to keep from falling prey to jealousy?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

There are many ways that people can be jealous. Webster defines jealousy as *unpleasant apprehension of rivalry*. There is a lawful and justified jealousy. A man has a perfect cause and right to be jealous of his wife. In other words, pain and sorrow arise unbidden when he has cause to suspect his companion of being unfaithful. This is natural. But this very element of jealousy can be stretched out of proportion. One can imbibe such an attitude of jealousy toward his companion that he becomes suspicious of everything she does. This can work havoc to happiness. Some forbid their companions to hold conversation or any kind of association with members of the opposite sex. This is going too far, and works great sorrow and frustration. There is a balanced line. God is jealous over his people. Ex. 20:5. He wants no other gods before Him. The true ministers of God have a jealous feeling over souls. They want them to serve the Lord, and are troubled when they see other things working. Even then this spirit of jealousy can work in harmful and destructive ways. Ministers can become jealous of others. Satan will try to get one minister to feel badly when people don't respond to his messages like they do to someone else's. We must head off these things or they will bombard the mind and force their way in. School children become jealous of each other when they feel that others are being overly favored by the teacher. Perhaps one of a family is able to make friends quicker and easier than another member of the family. Sometimes one son is more capable and prosperous than his brother. Jealousy arises. The brothers of Joseph were jealous of him and sold him into Egypt to get rid of him. The Jews had Jesus crucified through jealousy. Paul and the early brethren aroused jealousy in the Jews when the people responded to their preaching. And so it goes on and on. Two women both want to have the same man. Many people are in the grave today through the work of jealousy. Oh, it is a

spirit that we need to guard against and overcome. God can help us if we really mean business for Him.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What has happened to Saul who once was chosen of God? This man had in times past taken a noble indifference when he was wrongfully treated. (Read 1 Sam. 10:27.) He was able to hold his peace. But we see him take one step at a time on the downward road. Although our lesson leaves Saul in the external position as king, it gives in detail some of the steps by which he descended from one moral platform of character to another, still lower. As David grew more fitted for the position of king, Saul became more and more unfitted. Saul first reveals himself as a jealous man. As David's popularity increased, and as Saul allowed his mind to dwell upon it, the greater his dislike for David became. It's not easy to see one's self being uprooted from the position that he has held and having someone else take his place. It requires something deep from God to say, "He must increase, but I must decrease." (This is what John the Baptist said of Jesus.) Surely Saul realized that his lack of faith in and obedience to God had caused the people of Israel to lose respect and confidence in him. He did not let this humble him, but it mortified him by his consciousness of the fact. In such a state of mind he could not see David's rise without the painful sense of his own loss, which constitutes jealousy. The next step is envy. Then impatience of rivalry develops into hatred of the rival, which is more deadly than the demon of envy. Soon, no crime is too great for a person to commit. Some have admitted jealousy but found that it cost him his happiness and perhaps ruined his character entirely. So it was with Saul. Soon he was a murderer in intention, which was the one aim in his life.

Let us take a lesson from this and fight any ill-feeling toward anyone, which is the beginning of hatred and finally will be the ruin of our souls. Let us rejoice when we see others prosper or see the Lord blessing them. Let it be as easy for us to rejoice with those who rejoice as well as to weep with those who weep.

—Sis. Marie Miles

August 24, 1980

RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL

Romans 12:19-21 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

1 Samuel 24:2 Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.

3 And he came to the sheeppcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.

4 And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily.

5 And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

6 And he said unto his men, The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord.

7 So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way.

8 David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself.

9 And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?

12 The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

13 As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

15 The Lord therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.

17 And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.

Memory Verse: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matt. 6:15.

Central Thought: Nothing is accomplished or gained by returning evil for evil. It is the way of Christ to return good for evil, causing those on the contrary part to be ashamed.

Word Definitions: *Vengeance*: retribution. *Sheepcote*: an enclosure where sheep were sheltered; a sheepfold.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The jealousy of Saul had developed into a murderous passion. Learning that David had been to the high priest at Nob and was given aid, Saul had all the priests and their families killed. One of the sons of the high priest escaped and came to David with the sad news. Then word reached David that Saul was on his way to get him with an army. David was hiding from Saul in the wilderness, and Saul was looking for him every day. But David's trust was in God, and Saul was not permitted to find him. Jonathan met David in the forest and encouraged him, and the two made a covenant before the Lord. David's location was again reported to Saul, and on this pursuit he came close to finding him, as they were at one time on opposite sides of a mountain from each other. But Saul's hunt for David was interrupted by a report that the Philistines were invading the land. After Saul's return from fighting the Philistines, David's location in the wilderness of Engedi was reported to him, and once again the hardened heart of Saul spurred him to hot pursuit. It was wild and rough country for the army, but Saul was determined to apprehend this man David. Into the very cave where David and his men were hiding came weary Saul to take a nap! Observe this scene in our lesson and feel the weight of David's integrity! Here is David with a good opportunity to destroy the man who seeks his life, but David refuses on purely religious grounds. "He is the Lord's anointed." Although Saul was backslidden in heart, to David he was still the Lord's anointed. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the result of avenging one's self?
2. Why does it not accomplish anything?

3. What would Saul's being the Lord's anointed have to do with what David did to him? Why did David count him the Lord's anointed?
4. Whose place is it to take vengeance?
5. What effect does returning good for evil have upon men?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

David revealed the true character of Christ when he refused to take action or have hard feelings against Saul, the man who sought to kill him. Here was true humility and innocence. Gladly would David have served in Saul's army, and gladly would he have been close to the heart of the king. The evil was in Saul. Here was manifested the true and noble spirit of David, the man after God's own heart. David had great respect for Saul. Even though Saul was a long way from what he had been when he was first anointed king, in David's humble and earnest sight it was still the Lord's anointed that lay at his feet in the cave that day. He respected him as the King of Israel. He had great regard for the office. He was well aware that God was displeased with anyone's touching His anointed. It is the same today. It is a very serious thing to criticize reproachfully anyone who has been, or is, anointed to preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The gifts and callings of God are weighty and full of responsibility. The servants of the Lord need to be respected and venerated. They are not to be praised or worshipped, but they are to be highly esteemed for their works' sake. If they have done wrong, they will receive for the wrong, but it is not our place to recompense. God will do the judging. The ancient saying had great weight with David—"Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked." Just where this saying originated is not known, but it was no doubt in the ancient writings handed down from the early fathers. David had respect to this that was written. When we feel that a person is wrong, we ought to be careful of what attitudes we hold, and what we do about these things. Nothing is accomplished by condemning and criticizing. Kind and earnest counsel and entreaty better become the Christian in his dealings with others. Wickedness proceeding from a man proves that he is wicked. If we would not be wicked, then we must let no wickedness proceed from us. This is a valuable lesson. Many fall a prey to wicked actions in their effort to go against wickedness. Thus they bring themselves under the condemnation that they are trying to put on the other man. Let David's example here be a great pattern for our lives.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We should never forget the Bible verse and its deep truths which is in our lesson that says, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." All of us will meet up with things that are evil and face many injustices. When a person is mistreated or taken advantage of, the enemy comes in like a flood, trying to get that person to take revenge. That revenge might be in a big form or a small form. Of course, if the devil can't get a person to do something gross or outstanding, he will work on trying to get him to just hold a little grudge but not say much about it. Regardless as to the form, it will affect one's salvation. Thank God for that "sufficient grace" to have a sweeping victory and truly "overcome evil with good." But dear ones, it takes a dying out to self and a complete surrender to God and God's ways.

A saint of God was working in a place and the foreman began to reveal to this person and others his evil doings. He would talk openly of his filthy habits. The saint of God did not say much but didn't in any way let him know that he approved. Finally, the foreman made an issue of his ways to the saint of God, and the man told the foreman that was doing wrong and that he just could not approve of such a way of living. The foreman wasn't enjoying his evil doings nor did he feel as free around the other men when the saint of God was there. Finally, the foreman decided to get rid of this child of God. He couldn't find any fault of his work to report to the higher authorities to get him fired, so he began to sabotage his work. He would make errors in it, in such a way that it got to the higher bosses. In so doing, he got the man fired. This was a severe trial to this saint of God. He knew the foreman had done the evil, but he had only his word against the foreman. He had to leave the place of employment under false accusations. You might guess the battle he had to fight, but thank the Lord he came out victorious! In a few weeks he had a better job than the one he had lost.

In this world we do not expect to get justice. Neither did David get justice, but we can come through like David and commit our lives into God's hand. —Sis. M. Miles

NOTICE TO TEACHER: If you have not placed your order, please do so immediately. We must have your order for the next quarter by September 1.

August 31, 1980

ENCOURAGING YOURSELF IN THE LORD

1 Samuel 30:1 And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire;

2 And had taken the women captives, that were therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way.

3 So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.

4 Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.

5 And David's two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.

6 And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

8 And David enquired at the Lord, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all.

18 And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two wives.

II Timothy 4:16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Memory Verse: Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. Psalms 55:22.

Central Thought: There will be times when everyone else will forsake, criticize, or misunderstand you. They are unable to help you in that condition of mind, but you can still en-

courage yourself in the Lord, and He will not forsake you if you are sincerely following Him.

Word Definitions: *Encourage*: the Hebrew word means to fasten upon or seize. It denotes acquiring help and strength by laying ahold on God.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our last lesson we saw how David spared Saul's life in the cave. Not long after this, David and one of his men stole into Saul's camp while he and his men were asleep and took Saul's spear and a cruse of water. He sought to make clear to Saul that he had no intentions of harming him. After this show of friendship, Saul went home ashamed and sought no more to try to capture David. But David did not feel safe from Saul, and decided to go and seek for refuge among Saul's enemies, the Philistines. Somehow he struck up a close friendship with the Philistines and their king, Achish. In answer to his request for a place to shelter his family and the families of his soldiers, Achish gave David the city of Ziklag. In the meantime Achish was planning a campaign of war with Israel. It looked as if he were going to expect David to accompany him in this battle. But the Philistines objected to David's presence in their midst, so Achish was forced to dismiss David and send him back to Ziklag. As the Philistine armies gathered against Israel, Saul was afraid. He sought the Lord to no avail. At last he resorted to a witch in an effort to bring up Samuel with whom he desired to seek counsel. But what he saw and heard filled him with fear, for he was sentenced to die in that battle, along with many of the Israelites including his own sons. Upon David's return to Ziklag, he found only smoking ruins. His family and the families of his soldiers had been taken captive. Oh, the sorrow was great, and his men turned against him and threatened to stone him for letting this happen. But David turned to the Lord. He encouraged himself. Just as Paul did on the raging seas enroute to Rome when all men forsook him, so did David take hold of faith and courage at this needy time. This is such a valuable lesson to us today.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What did the people want to do with David, and why?
2. How did David meet this crisis?
3. How deep and dark were Paul's troubles on the sea?
4. What did he do?

5. What did he do when all men forsook him?
6. What are we to do in times of distress?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

There are times in every Christian's life when he will have to employ the lesson we have before us that David proved so effectual to his success. All of his men had turned against him, and blamed him for the loss of their goods and their families. This was their reaction. They should not have done it, but they did anyway. This was a heavy load on David for sure. Those who had before been willing to risk their lives for him, and even on one occasion had broken through a wall of the Philistines to bring him a drink from the well of Bethlehem, were now ready to take up stones against him. This is a close place. But David encouraged himself in the Lord God. Somehow he quieted the men's alarm, and sought counsel from the Lord. The Lord told him what to do. The Lord will not always prevent evil things from happening to us. There will be times for our reproof that He will allow disheartening and woeful things to come our way. It is a great lesson to encourage one's self in the Lord God. Paul felt this pressure on the occasion when all men forsook him when he took a certain stand on an issue. We do not know what the issue was, but we do know that there are many things coming up these days, that we are going to have to take a stand concerning. Sometimes others have not been counseled of the Lord about this. They probably have not counseled with the Lord to be sufficiently prepared for such issues. It is then that we may be called upon to stand alone. Others cannot encourage us in those times. We have to *take* courage. It will not ordinarily come. We must reach out and be encouraged simply from our intent devotion and love for Christ. Sometimes the tempest is raging and the billows are rolling high. Let us hold steady. Do you think that boat could have sunk to destruction with Jesus on board? How about the ship Paul was on? He was being sent of God to Rome to bear witness of God. Nothing could sink that ship with the soldiers and crewmen when one of the prisoners was a holy child of God. So when the burdens grow heavy, let us encourage ourselves in the Lord, and know that He will care for us always.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil: my cup runneth

over." Psa. 23:5. How true this is in our lesson! Surely David knew what he was talking about when he wrote the 23rd Psalm. Maybe he thought of the time when he went out with the Philistines to fight against Israel before asking guidance, and on returning he found the city burned and their families taken captive. The men who went with him, turned against him. He was alone in his great sorrow. It has been said that "the only way to flee from God is to flee to Him." We find that David turned to God and sat down. As he looked to God he saw the table spread of all that he needed. On that table there was forgiveness for his haste in not seeking God first. There was forgiveness and comfort from that table, even while the soldiers around upbraided him. There was comfort from the sorrow of losing his family. There was peace, faith, and comfort, and David took full helpings of all. Even joy was on that table. Oh, how precious it is to look to God in times of need and sorrow! "David encouraged himself in the Lord." David had turned to God, who is the fountain of life. There he found comfort when his heartache was almost beyond enduring.

A different David started out again to recover his family and possessions. He had sought the Lord, and God said for him to "pursue." When a person is in the order of the Lord he can move with confidence, and this is what David did. He took some great spoils and was glad to divide it with others. The men that went with him in the rescue of their families didn't want to divide the spoil with those who did not go. They called it "the spoil that we have recovered," but David gave glory to God. He called the spoil "that which the Lord hath given us." (verse 23) No wonder David received help from God! He accounted everything as coming from God and not as being gained from his own strength. What a wonderful virtue!

—Sis. Marie Miles

AWAY FROM THE CONVENT AND OUT OF CATHOLICISM

I was born in Capistrano, a small village of Abruzzi in central Italy, about two hours by motor northeast of Rome. Born a Roman Catholic, I was instructed by the local nuns, attended their day camps and other religious programs.

In 1938, when I was eight years of age, my brother and I came to live with our father in the United States. (Our mother had died in Italy four years previous.)

With the outbreak of World War II, my brother went into the service, and I, being much alone, read books on the lives of

saints, listened to religious programs over the air, said Catholic prayers, and meditated. My prayers were empty, for they did not express what was on my heart, having been written by others and used only for repetition. My efforts did not seem to bring me closer to God, and so I eventually resolved to drop most religious interest outside of attending church, and decided to join the world and have fun.

As the years went by, however, I thought of the future. I considered the religious life and wrote for information concerning religious orders. One tract that came into my possession had a picture of a young girl on the cover and behind her the pierced hands of Christ beckoning, with the words printed, "Follow Me." The words spoke to my heart, and I knew somehow that they were genuinely the words of Christ. However, the content of the tract—following Him to a convent—did not seem to be of Him. I became reluctant. At a later time when I asked the Lord if He would have me enter a convent, the very idea of being enclosed in a cell seemed to increase and strengthen fetters that had my soul bound even then. The convent grounds appeared to me as leading nowhere—a dead end. Christ had drawn me with the words "Follow Me"; we would be on the move. The answer in my spirit was "no."

In the spring of 1954, a disappointment broke my heart. It was at this time that God spoke to my heart, making it clear that He wanted to come into my life. I was prepared. The first thing to do now was to put aside the "saints" and seek Christ only. His biography was written in the Bible, I believed, and so I must get one. But where should I read? I would ask a Christian acquaintance.

My friend asked me whether or not I knew I would go to heaven if I died that night. I told her that I believed I was a child of God and would, but I could not know for sure—that we cannot know until the time of death, I thought. She opened to the Gospel of John, third chapter, verse 16. It read, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but *have everlasting life*." I learned that the promise is eternal life *starting now*. I believed and received assurance of my salvation! First John 5:13 says, "These things have I written unto you that believe . . . that ye may *know* that ye have eternal life." The Scriptures began to open to me. Salvation is by ~~faith~~ and not by works, "For by grace are ye saved through ~~faith~~; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: *Not of works*, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8,9).

One day, while reading in II Corinthians, I came to chapter six, verses 17 and 18, which read, "... come out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." The Lord was referring to Roman Catholicism, for along with this word from Him there came a sense of alienation from Romanism, as if a chemical applied had destroyed that which adhered me to it. There was a sense of release and freedom. I was greatly surprised, for I had had no intention of leaving my religion—and the Lord called it "unclean"! This revelation amazed me. In the Bible, evil spirits are referred to as unclean. I was to be amazed again upon reading I Timothy 4:1-3, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." Here the uncleanness of Roman Catholicism was made clear to me, for Timothy states that it has deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. Also, the passage indicates that the doctrine of celibacy and meat control are not of God. In the book of Revelation, God calls Roman Catholicism a harlot—one who has committed spiritual adultery by forsaking God and worshipping idols. To His own in this system, Christ says, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Rev. 18:4. They that are His do hear His voice and follow Him, according to the Gospel of John and the words of Christ Himself. This I did.

The Lord chose to lead me out in the month of May, 1954, the month dedicated to Mary by Roman Catholics in this country, because of the observance of one of its Sundays as Mother's day. This particular May was special in that it was the Marian year—the year so-called because of the newly proclaimed dogma of Mary's assumption into heaven. The worship of Mary is idolatry. In Luke 11:27, a woman cries out to Jesus saying, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee and the paps which thou hast sucked!" But He said, "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it!" In Isaiah 42:8, God proclaims: "My glory will I not give to another." While Roman Catholicism wallowed about in her uncleanness glorifying Mary in processions and other ways, Christ called me out into His marvelous light, made me clean from my sins, and clothed me in His righteousness. For the first

time I began to know what love is, and it extended to Roman Catholics. God gave me compassion for those held in the darkness of Rome.

Two years later, the Lord spoke the familiar "Follow Me," and I yielded to His service. (John 21:19)

That's enough about my experience. Christ who is no respecter of persons is as interested in you as He is in me, for "He is not willing that any should perish." If you do not have assurance of salvation, He is waiting for you to come to Him believing, for He said, ". . . no one cometh unto the Father, but by me." Repent of your sins, for "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Do you fear your sin is mortal? "The blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from *all* sin." Are you in bondage to the idea that a priest must be your go-between? "There is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." Would you like to know more? Read the Gospel of John and the rest of the New Testament.

—Flo Santini

September 7, 1980

POSSESSING ZION

II Sam. 5:3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord: and they anointed David king over Israel.

4 David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.

6 And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither.

7 Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David.

8 And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, that are hated of David's soul, he shall be chief and captain. Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.

9 So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward.

Luke 16:16 The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Matt. 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Heb. 12:21 (And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)

22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.

Memory Verse: For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. Psalm 132:13.

Central Thought: *Strong hold of Zion.* Zion was a fortress or castle; a citadel as one part of the city of Jerusalem that was strongly inhabited by the Jebusites. *Zion:* The Hebrew word *Tsion* means a conspicuous monument or pillar, also having to do with that which glitters afar; sunny, bright, and outstanding. *Gutter:* Hebrew word denotes something hollow, which refers to a culvert, watercourse, tunnel.

LESSON BACKGROUND

After the death of Saul, David was crowned king in Hebron. While in Hebron David desired a better location for the capital of Israel. It is very evident that God had before chosen the city of Jerusalem to be the site of David's throne. Deut. 12:11 spoke of a place that the Lord would choose to cause His name to dwell there. It is to be noted that the city of Jerusalem was the same city of Salem over which was King Melchisedec, the priest of the most High God who blessed Abraham, of whose priesthood Christ was the fulfillment. God had chosen this city of Jerusalem (city of peace, def.) as the place where His name would dwell. When David and his champions went to take the city, they found it fortified very strongly by the Jebusites. It is very certain (although the rendering of the text is somewhat obscure) that the Jebusites felt that their city was so well fortified that they mocked David and his men by putting the blind and lame upon the

walls to keep guard. This angered David, of course, and he was determined to break through. One part of the city was called Zion. It was a fortress, a citadel that seemed impregnable. "Whosoever getteth up to the gutter." It is generally opinionated that the entrance into the city was gained through the wall by way of an underground water-course that ran under the wall. This would evidently mean that whoever went into the city by that route would have to swim underwater for some distance, passing the wall and coming up inside. Joab became David's captain, as he accomplished this feat. (1 Chron. 11:5,6) Once inside he probably opened the gates and let David and his men enter. Thus the city was subdued and captured. Thereafter the name Zion is associated along with Jerusalem as meaning the city of God. In prophecy it pointed to the New Testament Church of God, and several Scriptures in the New Testament agree to this. The press and the entrance into Zion through the perils of deep water serve as a type of the entrance into God's Church in this time. It is a like figure such as baptism and what it signifies. Noah and his family were saved (carried safely through) by water. 1 Peter 3:20. It is a standard of the faith that we must evidently show in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is the only means of our salvation. Unless we come by way of the cross, there is no way we can enter the true Church of God. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. How old was David when he became king, and how long did he reign in Hebron?
2. What was the name of the strong hold that David desired to have as his home? What does this name signify to us?
3. Could you give a reason why God would so arrange the Church of God to be labeled as Zion? Would David's favor with God have anything to do with this?
4. How do we get into Zion today?
5. What is the New Jerusalem and the Zion of God?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

David found favor with God. He has come a long way from the sheepfolds of his father Jesse to the scene of today's lesson. He was a man after God's own heart. He was a great warrior, but a just and noble king. With his champions no foe could withstand him. The capture of Jerusalem and Zion was a thrilling venture that he and his men accomplished. It took

bravery and devotion to David for Joab to dive into the water stream and swim under the wall, not knowing what he would run into. It is like the stepping out on faith that we have to do when we give our hearts and lives to the Lord and vow to serve Him to the end. But really, so what? Our whole mortal life is hinged on a miracle of God. The earth hangs in space on nothing but His naked Word. "He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. Psalm 24:2. Going through the water was nothing new. The Israelites were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. I Cor. 10:2. It all is a type of what baptism means to us today. A testimony of a good conscience toward God is the light that shines as we go down into the watery grave, doing so with clear faith in the resurrection of Christ. This kind of faith is saving faith, and it puts us into the holy family of God. It is a narrow way that leads to life. It is difficult, but it leads to spacious pastures of green that feed the hungry soul and makes it fat and flourishing. Oh, the beautiful city of Zion! The spiritual vision of Zion's glory is the portion of all the newly born in Christ. Gone is literal Zion from the scope of God's designs. He is interested in the New Jerusalem. He wants people to be born again, filled with Spirit-life and power, and living a consistent Christian life right here in the present world. Every time we see the name Zion, let us remember the young king of Israel standing before the walls of the city and looking to God for the key to know how to enter therein. Praise the Lord for the Zion which is now the home of the soul and the dwelling place of the most high God!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Not all at once did David pass from the shepherd life of Bethlehem to the throne of Jerusalem. There was a long, weary, and trying road to be travelled, after his anointing by Samuel. He was not cradled in luxury and pampered. His character was hardened by trial, and his judgment was matured by frequently recurring emergencies. Best of all, his confidence in God had been his strengthening power through his manifold trials, in and through which he had been sustained by the divine grace, and out of which he had been delivered by the divine hand. But it's the same today with us. Success is not usually a sudden thing, or, if it be so, it is not a wholesome thing. Generally speaking it is a matter of time, trial, and diligence, and study. Resistance is necessary to the development of power. The greatest misfortune that can befall a youth is to have no

difficulties whatever with which to contend. It is by overcoming obstacles that a man's character is mainly made. Hence, let no one be discouraged who is called in early life to struggle with adversity. He is thereby only making himself for his future life-work. Not in a day, nor in a year, nor in many years, do we reach the throne of our individual power, the sphere of our personal and peculiar labor. We graduate up to it through trials, and each new difficulty surmounted is not only a new step in the ladder upward, but is also a new qualification for the work that is before us. Nor does this principle hold merely of the early part of our earthly life as related to the latter. We will have spiritual battles. God is preparing us for that home over there after this life is over.

We do not enter Zion without much perseverance. Jesus said, "The violent take it by force." David took Zion by force. It was a great feat for the one who was willing to swim in that deep flowing fountain under the wall and take the chance of getting caught before opening the gates of Zion. It took bravery and courage to enter those gates and fight against the enemy. Today, if we will have salvation we must beat ourselves under and bring our wills under the supreme will of God. We can enter spiritual Zion by the power of God. —Sis. Marie Miles

ROBERT KUHNS GETS LIFE

"I was born in Peoria, Illinois. My father died when I was six or seven years old. I have had two stepfathers since my real father passed away. My first stepfather was no good. He beat me with boards, belt buckles, his fists, or anything that was handy. My second stepfather was somewhat different. He was not very active and didn't want to play baseball or do anything with me. He would always argue with me when I asked him to do something.

"The first time I ever got into trouble was in 1963, only two months after I came to California. I am ashamed to say it, but my police record shows 18 separate crimes from 1963 to 1968, taking me to a boy's camp, Chino, Tracy, and Y.T.S. in Ontario, California. I started using drugs in 1965. I started with Codeine. I have tried Methedrine, Marijuana, Heroin, L.S.D. and S.T.P. and many different pills. I got hooked on Methedrine (speed) and was only able to stop after four horrible and painful months. I used narcotics to escape from the world around me. It was also a sort of rebellion against society. I have spent hundreds of dollars on dope. I am very

sorry that I ever touched it. It makes me sick to think of all the terrible things I have done because of it.

"In February, 1968, I killed a man during a robbery, and am now awaiting trial on a murder charge and two counts of robbery. But God in His great mercy sent Bro. Charles Panoyan to me in the Santa Barbara County Jail. He showed me through God's Word my sinful condition. I turned to Christ with all my heart and asked for forgiveness for my sins. I know I have peace in my heart because God forgave me. Whatever the sentence is, life or death, I have complete victory through Christ our Lord. I have placed myself in His hands and nothing can separate me from Him.

"I am only twenty years old, but I have lived so many of those years in sin. If only young people could realize that 'The wages of sin is death.' I would like to warn young people to stay away from liquor and to take Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. Again, I thank God for sending Bro. Charles to me when He did, or the next twenty years might have been lived in sin. He showed me the right way. He is the only person who has ever been able to get through to me. I pray God will let me live and help all the young people who are on the wrong road. But I am not afraid to die, for Jesus has given me eternal life. He has gone to prepare a home for me in Heaven. It all sounds so wonderful that I wish I were there now."

—Robert Kuhns



September 14, 1980

ZEAL NOT ACCORDING TO KNOWLEDGE

1 Chron. 13:1 And David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader.

2 And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the Lord our God, let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, that are left in all the land of Israel, and with them also to the priests and Levites which are in their cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us:

3 And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul.

4 And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

5 So David gathered all Israel together, from Shihor of Egypt even unto the entering of Hemath, to bring the ark of God from Kirjathjearim.

6 And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, that is, to Kirjathjearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the Lord, that dwelleth between the cherubims, whose name is called on it.

7 And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart.

8 And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.

9 And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled.

10 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.

11 And David was displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called Perez-uzza to this day.

12 And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me?

13 So David brought not the ark home to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of Obedom the Gittite.

14 And the ark of God remained with the family of Obedom in his house three months. And the Lord blessed the house of Obedom, and all that he had.

Memory Verse: For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. Rom. 10:2.

Central Thought: There is a danger of being engaged in religious worship without God's blessing and approval because of ignorance on our part of what His Word really teaches.

Word Definitions: *Psalteries:* A harp-like stringed instrument; a lyre. *A breach:* meant a break in the favor of God which brought a breaking out of His anger and wrath.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Since the early days of Samuel, the ark of God had been kept at Kirjathjearim. The men of Kirjathjearim had gone down to Bethshemesh to fetch the ark from them when the kine had brought it on the cart from the Philistines. Twenty years had passed, then the forty years of Saul had come and gone. Now David had been king for over seven and one half years. During David's childhood he had heard of the sojourn

of the ark, and there was conceived in his heart a desire to do something about this shameful condition. Now that he was king and his kingdom was being established in good order, it was his next desire to organize his people in a great effort to bring the ark to Jerusalem. Thus our lesson begins. But a costly lesson was to be learned. How easily light and knowledge can slip away from an individual, a group, or even a nation! Here they supposed that as the Philistines transported the sacred vessel on a cart, that they could do likewise. But what God let the heathen get by with He was not going to overlook in His people. His people were supposed to know better. Abinadab and his two sons Uzza and Ahio were caring for the ark in Kirjathjearim, so they were given charge of seeing after the ark on its journey back to Jerusalem. It is important to know and to bear in memory what the commands of God are. Saints in light are not going to be excused for error or wrong. Saints in light should be informed as to the ways of the Lord. This is a warning. Paul said that the Jews had a zeal of God but not according to knowledge. Such a condition can prevail if we are not careful.

The ark of the Covenant was an oblong chest of shittim wood, 2 1/2 cubits long , 1 1/2 broad and deep. Within and without gold was overlaid on the wood. Over the mercy seat two Cherubims sat with wings touching each other. The ark was fitted with rings, one at each of the four corners, through which staves were passed. The priests carried the ark on their shoulders by the staves. Within the ark were the two tables of stone on which was written the Ten Commandments, a rod of Aaron's, and a pot of manna. (Bible Dictionary)

QUESTIONS:

1. Was David's desire to return the ark a good desire? Why?
2. Where did they get the idea of transporting the ark on a new cart?
3. What happened when Uzza tried to hold the ark?
4. What was David's reaction to Uzza's being struck down?
5. Is there any danger of our putting our hands to steady the ark today?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

God is longsuffering with mankind. He is longsuffering to their infirmities and aptness to err. But there are times when He uses drastic measures to awaken man from his slumber of error to righteousness that he sin not. The error of Uzza's

putting forth his hand to steady the ark (like many other errors) was caused by another more serious error. David and the people had failed to know and understand God's specific instructions as to how the ark should be carried. Had it been carried on the shoulders of Levites as God had commanded, there would have been no need for anyone to steady the ark. We should be aware that God has planned to work through His holy servants. It is a tendency for men to miss this thought. Get a person to have respect for the ministers, and there is proneness to make a Lord out of the minister. Get a person to know the Lord for himself and trust fully in God, then there is an inclination to drop the man of God. How we need to be balanced. God wants to use human vessels to bless us, but reserves the right to have a place in our lives that no man can fill. Let us remember that this is God's work, not ours. He will take care of His work without our puny human efforts. Yet He wills that we have a part with Him in His great work. Thus we must be vessels or instruments that He would use. It takes humility for men and women to receive the help of the Lord through one another. Yet God would not have us actually depending on each other. He would have us keep our eyes on Him. David's desire to bring the ark back to Jerusalem was a good desire. But the error they were committing was too serious to overlook. And all these things are recorded as admonition and warnings to us. We should diligently consider our ways, and be sure that what we do is in His sacred order.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

David's emotions about the ark of God was like a river that had been long pent up and by the removal of a dam, it made an extraordinary rush of waters. Even though we may allow some of the pent-up river some extension of its ordinary bounds, yet it must not exceed all limits or it becomes a means of destruction rather than a blessing. It seemed that David was so wholly bent on bringing the ark of God to its rightful place that he tended to forget the Divine plan and requirements of God concerning it.

Uzza and his brother, Ahio, drove the new cart from the house of their father. The ark had been in their home many years. At the king's request, he went along as a guide, or to help take care of it. He saw the oxen staggering, the cart shaking, the ark rolling, and he was close to it. Who would not have put forth his hand in such a case? If the ark had

actually fallen through his neglect, would not the whole multitude have cried shame upon him and maybe done worse to him? Maybe the Philistines would have blasphemed the God of the ark of Israel that at last had fallen, as well as their god, Dagon which had formerly fallen before the Ark of God. But such reasoning weighs nothing in God's sight. Obedience is required as only a Levite was to handle the Ark of God. Emotions or human reasoning cannot take the place of obedience.

We do not hear David say that surely Uzza is guilty of some secret sin that the world knows nothing of and there is no danger to the others. He does not proceed with his plans. David's fear stops him. He dares not venture where he sees such a deadly check. It's time now to wait upon the Lord.

Let us take warning here that all acts are not pleasing unto the Lord when it comes to the zeal in the Church. Let no one say that it will be all right if it's just for the advancement of the cause of God. We must check the reason for the great zeal in God's work. Is it according to the Word of God? Is it prompted by the Holy Spirit and in agreement with wisdom from above? The disciples were on the boat and the storm was tossing the ship. But the disciples dared not approach Jesus with any familiar irreverence in order to awaken Him, who slept as man but who saw all things as God. Here is the trial of their faith. Let them tarry the Lord's leisure, and He will arise and help them, and bless them for their trust and waiting before Him. (Mark 4:37-41) If we see things among the people of God that we think we need to take care of, we had better wait and be sure that God is leading. Emotions must not guide us nor our human reasonings. We might find that we will be like Uzza—not physically dead, but through getting out of God's order we might lose our own soul and become spiritually dead. Many have acted without Holy Spirit's leadings and gotten into such a tangle that they turned away from serving the Lord. They were not willing to humble themselves as David, and ask, "How shall I go from here, since I have made such a mistake?" Humility is the key to making amends and recognizing one's mistake and seeking for forgiveness.

—Sis. Marie Miles

THE CONVERSION OF A BARTENDER

During part of the years 1945 and 1946, the writer of this tract was working the city of Los Angeles as a bartender. The district in which the cocktail bar (the present-day name for saloon) was located was called "Skid Row," which is a term

applied to the worst section of any city where the populace has reached the lowest level in life. This proved to be an advantageous position for me later, as I was enabled to observe the horrible results, the havoc caused by dispensing intoxicating drink. Words seem to be inadequate to describe the horrible effects that liquor has upon men and women. One only has to visit the local jails and go to what is called the "drunk tank" to see this. There you will find the "winos" sleeping on the concrete floor or upon an iron-surfaced bunk using their personal clothing for a pillow. When they are released after a few days, they go back to sleeping in the alleys, trying to keep warm with old newspapers and rags, begging or stealing to get a little more wine. Their diseased, dead bodies are found and taken away each morning by the police in Los Angeles. Mental institutions of any State house a large percentage of human wreckage who are alcoholics. Alcohol is a killer and wrecker of human beings. Medical men say the alcoholic is a diseased person, yet the disease-producing products—beer, wine and whiskey—are permitted to flow freely. What these poor human derelicts need is not to switch to a popular brand of whiskey, but to switch to Jesus Christ, who alone can save them.

While observing these conditions during the time I was a bartender, God spoke to my heart and convicted me of my own sins and need of a Saviour. I acknowledged myself a sinner before God, and asked Him for mercy. The Lord pardoned and saved me that day and I became a new creature in Christ Jesus. II Cor. 5:17—"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." This is exactly what happens to a person who asks God for mercy and deliverance from sin; old things are passed away. My bad habits were severed by the power of God. Smoking and drinking desires were quenched by the power of God, with no effort on my part to quit. I no longer wanted to pass drinks across the bar, and work for the devil.

If the reader should be so unfortunate as to be a servant of sin, and the devil is your master, and your life is being ruined by soul- and body-destroying habits such as smoking and drinking, God will lift the heavy burden of sin from your heart and give you eternal life. Heb. 7:25—"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Isa. 1:18—"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white

as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Dear reader, if you need deliverance from sickness, habits, and sinful practices, you will find complete victory and eternal life in Christ Jesus. You must decide where you will be in eternity, after your soul leaves your body and goes to meet God. Let Jesus save you, and wash your sins away in His own blood. He died and shed His blood to save all who will let Him save them.

If you want a true friend you will find one in Christ Jesus. Prov. 18:24b—"There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

If your friends and family have forsaken you, there is One who will take you in. Psalm 27:10—"When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up."

God loves you and wants to help you in all your trials and problems, and will solve them all if you but give Him a chance. He will not force His way into your life, but patiently awaits outside your heart's door for an invitation to come in. Rev. 3:20—"Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

It has been four years since the writer of this tract surrendered his life to Christ, and there are no regrets in having traded eternal death and separation in a devil's hell for eternal life in God's prepared mansions. John 14:2—"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." I have no regrets in having traded my union bartender's book—a passport to hell, according to Habakkuk 2:15a—"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also." Prov. 20:1—"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." I traded it for a New Testament which shows the Way to Heaven through Christ Jesus. John 14:6—"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." I have no regrets for trading the devil and everything bad for Christ Jesus and everything good. Prov. 10:22—"The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."

—R. Smith

September 21, 1980

THE RESTING PLACE OF THE ARK

1 Chron. 15:1 And David made him houses in the city of David, and prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent.

2 Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the Lord chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever.

3 And David gathered all Israel together to Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the Lord unto his place, which he had prepared for it.

11a And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites.

12 And said unto them, Ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites: sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it.

13 For because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order.

14 So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel.

15 And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded according to the word of the Lord.

25 So David, and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the house of Obed-edom with joy.

28 Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.

16:1 So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God.

2 And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord.

Memory Verse: Arise, O Lord, into thy rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength. Psalm 132:8.

Central Thought: God desires that His strength and Holy laws be implanted and flourishing in the hearts of men. We

must consecrate our lives to His perfect will, make room in our hearts, and give Him welcome and abundant entrance into our lives.

LESSON BACKGROUND

After the costly error of trying to carry the ark with oxen and a cart, David at last is lined out with proper proceedings as to how to handle the ark. Now borne upon shoulders of six of the chief Levites, the ark is being carried from the house of Obed-edom to Jerusalem. The people are rejoicing, and David the king is leaping and dancing with all of his might. What a grand procession accompanies the ark those last few miles to its resting place in a tent that David had pitched for it! And this time God is pleased. Michal, David's wife looks at David from a window and despises him in her heart. She criticizes his actions when he returns, and she is punished by being childless the rest of her life. This accomplishment of the ark's return meant much to David. He wrote a Psalm for the occasion, recorded in 1 Chron. 16 and also in Psalm 105 and Psalm 96. From the early days of his youth, David had carried a concern for the welfare of the ark that had been stolen from Israel in the time of Eli. Psalm 132 expresses the joy of the return of the ark, and the aspirations that David had for its well being. This zeal and fervent devotion to the cause of God are marked attributes that God is surely pleased with. It must be accompanied by true light and knowledge, but many have light and knowledge that are void of this fervent endearment to God. David was zealously affected in this good thing, and applied all the power and authority he had to carry it out. He counted it a shame that the ark of the Lord was not held in reverence and worship as it was intended to be. For nearly 70 years the ark had been away. And now through the zeal and help of the Lord it is returned to Zion, the chosen place of the Lord. Let us give the Lord first place in our lives and experience the joy of His rest.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was God's ordained method of transporting the ark?
2. Name some of the circumstances that made the return of the ark such a joyful occasion.
3. What does the ark typify in us today?
4. Was God pleased with David's effort?
5. Would the ark ever have been returned if someone had not had the zeal to go and fetch it?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Consider the works of God Almighty through the ages. Behold the wonders He brought forth to Israel in the days of old. See how He rescued them from the awful plight of Egyptian bondage and carried them and nursed them in the wilderness travels. He was their God and the Shepherd of their souls. Throughout the Israelite history, we find His fatherly affection yearning toward them even in their most despitiful times. But in the fullness of time He sent a Saviour, not only for the Jews, but for all mankind. It was His well beloved Son, Jesus Christ the Anointed One. It was through His great endearing love that the Saviour was given as an atonement for the sins of the world that all men might be reconciled to Him. Let us be glad and rejoice in Him today. Let us be thankful that Christ did not remain in the tomb, but came forth to show His resurrected life and to ascend back to the Father and sit on His right hand! And lo! He has poured out His Spirit upon those who believe in Him, that the very fullness of the Father and Son might be enshrined within the soul of man as a sacred temple forevermore! Here is the ark of His strength perpetuated and fulfilled. Here is the place of His rest. The literal tabernacle, the tent David pitched, and the massive temple constructed by Solomon were not sufficient to house the eternal God whose presence fills the earth and the heavens. "Where is the house that ye build unto me, and where is the place of my rest?" Isa. 66:1. He has forsaken all the works of men, but has chosen the poor in spirit, the lowly and the meek, as His dwelling. The secret of His presence and the overshadowing of His great wings is found through the born-again and Spirit-filled experiences of the New Testament plan of salvation. Oh, the joy and happiness that is found when God returns to the human breast from whence He was driven by sin! Thank God for the wonders of His grace and for the hope that it all affords. Let us lift our eyes above the trifles of earth and let the King of glory, strong and mighty in battle, come in and take up His blessed abode in our hearts.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

David said in verse thirteen of our lesson, "We sought him [God] not after the due order." David realized that they had not taken time to find out how God had said that the ark should be moved. How sad it is for people to suffer because they have not *sought* the Lord before they did something.

Many mistakes are made because of a person's getting in a hurry. Many heartaches are caused because a person spoke too hastily. Waiting upon the Lord pays. Waiting before a person speaks and understanding all the circumstances will save others from being hurt. There is a Scripture that says, "Wait upon the Lord, and again I say wait." How important it is to wait. That takes patience and it takes thought. Seeking to know God's will in all the details of our lives takes time.

David realized that God had to use desperate means to stop him since he had not waited upon the Lord in finding out just how the ark should be moved. Sometimes men who are leaders make mistakes. If they will confess their mistakes it will cause others to trust them more. Many times the devil will try to make a person think that if he confesses a mistake others will lose trust in him. This is not true. The devil is a liar. David confessed his mistake. He said, "None ought to carry the ark but the Levites." Think of the words, "None ought." This is a gentle reproof. Can each of us take reproof? Can we take it without offence? Are we ready to amend if we are reproved? Someone has said that "to reprove is the most necessary and the hardest part of friendship." Who is the person that at one time or another merits a check? And yet how few there are who will endure it! One time David said, "Let the righteous smite me: it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me: it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head." Psalms 141:5. Oil the nail before you drive it home.

Personal holiness is necessary to carry out the sacred service of the Lord. The priests sanctified themselves, or set themselves apart for service. They were called of God for a personal service and a special work. We all are called unto holiness. To work for God we must be filled with the Holy Spirit and set ourselves apart for His use at any time.

—Sis. Marie Miles

September 28, 1980

THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH

II Sam. 12:1 And the Lord sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:

3 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:

6 And he shall restore the lamb four-fold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

7 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.

9 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.

14 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.

Memory Verse: Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. James 4:17.

Central Thought: Every sin and disobedience shall receive a just recompense. Either sin must be put on Christ through faith and repentance for atonement, or the judgment of God will fall in punishment. David's sin brought sorrow, death, and sore hardship for the rest of his life.

LESSON BACKGROUND

After David's victories in battle, his accomplishment in returning the ark to Zion, and the laying of his plans for a great temple unto the Lord, he fell prey to the worst tragedy ever to strike man: that of yielding to temptation and sin. He had coveted another man's wife, and had this man killed in his effort to secure her for himself. He had it neatly covered up. No one would have suspected anything. A little child was born and all seemed a happy occasion. It looked like David was going to get away with what he had done. "But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord." The Lord had been watching the whole thing. It seems strange to think that a man who had been so greatly blessed and used of the Lord could be so deceived. But this is the way of sin. It is so deceitful! And the influence of it is far reaching. It affected David for the rest of his life. God sent Nathan to pronounce punishment and judgment. The Bible tells the whole story, both sides. It is a warning to us. No matter how greatly blessed we may be of the Lord, we are not devil proof. We must always be on our guard. Before one yields to temptation, he should stop and think: What is this going to cost me? What far reaching effects will it have? Who will it hurt? Oh, let us remember that the wages of sin is death. It is spiritual death, and if this is not corrected through Christ, it will bring eternal death. Sin is also unjust and unfair. Nathan's parable proves this. David's taking Bathsheba from Uriah, one of his faithful, gallant soldiers, was an awful deed. Let us remember that these things were written for our admonition. Let us be on our guard and take God's way always. It is best all the way around.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Nathan use to convict David of his sin?
2. In what way did this parable illustrate David?
3. What was David's reaction to the parable, and what did Nathan say about it?
4. What was going to be the result of his sin?
5. What did David do?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The sin of David is plainly revealed in its grossness and error as a fair example of all transgression and wrong. Think of the illustration that the parable the prophet Nathan gave him brought out. The poor man with his one ewe lamb that was so close and dear to him in contrast with the rich man with his many flocks and herds served as a comparison of David with Uriah. Uriah was one of David's thirty-seven champion soldiers. II Sam. 23:39. Here was a purely innocent man. No doubt he was happily married to his wife, Bathsheba. He was a dutiful soldier and one of David's faithful warriors. He was away engaged in a battle for David and Israel. It appears that he was totally unaware of what was going on. It was his faithfulness to duty that frustrated David's efforts to cover up his sin at the first. If Uriah would have gone home as David told him to do, then David's wrong could have been completely locked up inside of David and Bathsheba. But it still would have been open to God. Such was not the turn of events, however. Uriah could not feel right in going home and taking it easy while the army was encamped in the open fields. He was willing to deny himself for the sake of God and his nation. He bore the message that sentenced his doom back to the battle. He did not seek to know what the letter contained. He went to his death not knowing what was going on. It was a tragic error, and a costly sin for David. It was unjust, unreasonable, and unfair. It stirred the wrath of God Almighty. God's design for the human race is a life of purity, obedience, faith, and happiness. If we will seek for the Kingdom of God with all His righteousness, all these natural blessings will be added. We need not transgress the law of God for the sake of material benefit or physical enjoyment. The consequences are too great. But Satan keeps that hidden from souls. They become deceived in supposing that happiness and success come from seeking their own pleasure and satisfaction. Then the sins of their pride begin to give their recompense. Sorrow and trouble erupt. The wages of sin is death and woe.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Why was David so ignorant of his terrible deed when Nathan told him the story of the little ewe lamb taken from the poor family by a rich man? Notice how David firmly stated that the man who had done such a thing would be put to death. Cannot man see himself and know himself more than

anyone else? Man has all the facilities for studying himself, yet we find that many times he will close his mind to his own misdeeds. He has let his conscience become seared. If man only knew that his conscience is a sin-resisting force within him, he might not let it become seared. One person said that "sin can be truly measured only when it is resisted." A person can study that statement and come up with some truths. What is within us will not come out until it is resisted or opposed. Let us think of a pan on a stove with water boiling in that pan. The steam rises from that open kettle unrestrained. But if you put a lid on that pan, the steam will cause that lid to dance and pop. A force is gathering within that pan because you are resisting the steam. When a person is under pressure what is in him will come out.

When Jesus told Peter of his denial of Him, the apostle exclaimed, "Though all men deny thee, yet will not I deny thee," but within a few hours Peter repeatedly, and with oaths, denied his Master. Peter did not know what was in him because he had not allowed himself to check closely with himself. He did not have the inherited sin nature cleansed out of him by the power of the Holy Ghost. Later, after the day of Pentecost, Peter was under pressure again. He had been cleansed by the Holy Spirit. Now Peter stood up to those who came against Jesus and boldly told them that they had crucified that "Holy One."

Today we cannot face pressures without being filled with the Holy Spirit. We cannot face them sufficiently unless we are keeping up our prayer-life. We must continually draw from the Source above to be able to live a victorious life.

Sinners must come to the recognition that they are sinners. They must be like Paul and exclaim that "what things were gain to me, I counted loss." The murderers of Christ, on the day of Pentecost, cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" David said, "I have sinned." He then repented of his sin. —Sis. Marie Miles

LOYALTY TO GOD

Azolee wanted her children to be in Sunday school, and she took them regularly. One Sunday, when she arrived home, her husband met her at the car, shouting, "I'll teach you to go to church!" Dragging her by the hair of the head, he took her behind the house and beat her. She never went to church again.

In contrast is another true story, taken from *Underground Evangelism* magazine, March 1970.

An informer told a Communist party boss in Bulgaria that his wife had been seen going to church. Nikolov Michi left his office immediately to go question his wife, who was a Christian and had been serving the Lord secretly. Just as she was leaving for a women's prayer meeting, her husband arrived. When he demanded to know where she was going, she said with dignity, "I'm going to church."

Nikolov cocked his rifle and warned, "If you go to church, Maria, I'll shoot you!"

"If you shoot me," she replied, "I'll go to heaven! If you don't shoot me, I'll go to church!"

Maria went to church. God still has many loyal servants. Are you one of them. —Sel.

