

The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness—*a. 35-8*

VOL. XXXVII.

MONCTON, N. B., JUNE 30, 1938

NO. 49

THE SIN OF MEDDLING

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"Forbear thee from meddling with God who is with me that he destroy thee not" (II. Chron. 35:21).

These were the words of a heathen king, Necho of Egypt, to Josiah, king of Judah. It seems that Necho was about to continue the Egyptian conquests in Asia, especially along the river Euphrates. In so doing his nearest route was along the seacoast of Palestine to a point about fifty miles north of Jerusalem where his army disembarked and started to march across the country via the plain of Esdraelon. King Josiah objected to this, though Necho was ready to pay for the privilege of taking the land route, which was nearer. But Josiah stoutly refused and went out to intercept him and there lost his life. Yes, "He that passeth by and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears"—he is likely to be bitten.

Now Josiah was a remarkable youth—few like him today. At the age of eight he began to reign and at sixteen made a covenant, put down all idolatry and revived the true worship of Jehovah. At the age of eighteen he kept the passover of which it is said, "There was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet." Josiah, himself, gave "thirty thousand lambs and kids, and three thousand bullocks." In this he surpassed all other kings.

But was it not sad that after all the good he did he should suddenly come to an untimely end, while in the prime of life, simply because he stepped aside and "meddled"? Let us notice then the cause and cure of this baneful habit—meddling.

1. Idleness. This is a curse to any people. It has caused the downfall of kings and the overthrow of empires. David was invincible until he "tarried still at Jerusalem," and ceased to fight the battles of the Lord. Then when ease, luxury and popularity came, he went down with a crash.

We are told that this was the iniquity of Sodom—the pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness were in her and in her daughters. These three things will ruin any family, city, or nation. It would put an end to a lot of divorce scandals if a host of idle men and women could be kept busy caring for homes with children. They have too much time to gad about and meddle with the affairs and affections of others. As long as Josiah was kept busy cleaning up around home he had no time to meddle with the quarrels of other kings.

2. Curiosity. One old writer said, "Idleness and curiosity married together beget envy." This is certainly true! Let any one be idle and curious and he will be likely to pry into the affairs of others where he has no business. The result will be that he will stir up a lot of trouble between close friends. "It is an honor for a man to cease from strife; but every fool will be meddling."

Had Josiah remained at home and been content to enjoy the smile of his own God and his own people, he would have lived to a good old

age and died in peace. But his curiosity was aroused when he found that Necho was making haste to forestall his Babylonish rival. This curiosity drew Josiah away from his place of security and he was slain. I may be preaching now to some one who, back yonder, brought upon himself suffering and sorrow because he was curious and did not remain at home. Jacob and his household were disgraced and an awful slaughter followed because his daughter, Dinah, "went out to see the daughters of the land." She was not the only child to bring upon herself and her people ignominy as a result of going to parties and pleasure resorts.

3. Self-Sufficiency. No one has time or disposition to meddle with others until he first becomes unduly elated over his own real, or fancied success. Amaziah, king of Judah, sent a challenge to Jehoash, being of Israel saying, "Come let us look one another in the face." But Jehoash, replied, "Thou hast indeed smitten Edom and thine heart hath lifted thee up; glory of this and tarry at home; for why shouldst thou meddle to thy hurt. But Amaziah would not hear. Therefore Jehoash went up. And Judah was put to the worse and fled every man to their tents."

It was after Josiah had put down all idolatry in his kingdom, recaptured and rebuilt the waste cities and had rest on every side, that he vainly over-estimated his ability to go against perhaps the most powerful kingdom in the world. The heathen king tried to dissuade him saying, "What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah. I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war. For God commanded me to make haste; forbear thee from meddling with God who is with me, that he destroy thee not." I gather from this incident that the sin of meddling is so great, so inexcusable in the sight of God that He will permit a wicked nation to punish and afflict a more righteous one—yea, assist that wicked nation in doing it. How terrible then, yea, how unpardonable must be a spirit of self-sufficiency! No marvel that we read "Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall."

Many a man started out poor and unnoticed, but by diligence and frugality became influential. How sad then to see him become overbearing and fling to the winds those qualities which built him up! Many an illiterate, but natural born preacher or leader began his career in a very humble way. But through much prayer and fasting, coupled with hard study, he came to the front and was accorded a place with the mighty ones. How sad then if he become independent and self-important! Josiah's sad and beclouded end should teach all of us the danger of disregarding reproof, though it come from a heathen. And what is a sure preventive for meddling?

1. Mind your own business.
2. Listen to others, even sinners.
3. Seek and obtain the fiery baptism with the Holy Spirit.—The Sky Pilot.

A good face is a letter of recommendation, as a good heart is a letter of credit.—Bulwer.

CLEAR AS A SUNBEAM

Simplicity of thought and utterance is the preacher's secret of success. We find it difficult in this age to keep from having too much philosophy in our preaching. Those who educate and train us usually come out in Saul's armor. The best lessons which we learn from books too often are imbedded in great profusions of learned rhetoric.

When the preacher tries to enter upon his ministry he finds that his habit of thinking is clothed in unusual words and hampered by cumbrous analogies. We lack directness, and in this we lack power. We may even have spiritual power and intellectual light, but these become muffled in our fine speech and finer philosophy.

"Study to be simple" should be the watchword of everyone who would preach a gospel that wins. John Wesley did not reach perfection in this ideal, but he had the idea. It is said that he would write many of his sermons in full before preaching them and read them to an uneducated servant. Wherever they seemed to be obscure from the servant's standpoint, wherever he found in them words that the servant could not understand, he would clear up the obscurity and find a simpler word or phrase with which to convey his thought.

A preacher should not aim to have this simplicity shine merely in the middle of his sermon or at its close. It should be in the opening words. At the outset it should catch the audience with its charm and he should never permit himself to lapse into the fogs of learned speech and the abstruse ways of philosophy.—Christian Witness.

LIVINGSTONE ON SACRIFICE

"People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa. Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to our God, which we can never repay. Is that a sacrifice which brings its own best reward in healthful activity, the consciousness of doing good, peace of mind, and a bright hope of a glorious destiny hereafter?"

"Away with the word in such a view, and with such a thought! It is emphatically no sacrifice. Say, rather, it is a privilege. Anxiety, sickness, suffering, or danger now and then, with a foregoing of the common conveniences and charities of this life, may make us pause, and cause the spirit to waver and the soul to sink; but let this only be a moment.

"All these are nothing when compared with the glory which shall hereafter be revealed in and for us. I never made a sacrifice. Of this we ought not to talk when we remember the great sacrifice which He made who left His Father's throne on high to give Himself for us. (Hebrews 1:3).—The Sky Pilot.

Strength of mind is exercise, not rest.