

— Our Pastors Speak —



HEZEKIAH'S MORAL CHARACTER

by Rev. B. G. Bridgeo*

"For he clave to the Lord, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses. And the Lord was with him; and he prospered whithersoever he went forth"—(II Kings 18: 6-7).

A goodly character is evidence in itself of a definite personal relationship with the author of goodness. Hezekiah was one of the most pious kings of Judah. He lived in the fear of the Lord, and was jealous for God's glory. Before he became King of Judah the people had greatly departed from the true God, and had sunk into deep sin and idolatry. The account which describes this departure from God is recorded in chapters five, nine, and seventeen. With such circumstances existing what would we do, if we were King Hezekiah? Would we as individuals promote the cause of righteousness if we were the only one in the community who revered the Bible, or would we give up because of overwhelming odds?

Hezekiah ignored the tremendous odds and became a man of action. It is possible to have strong ideals, clean thoughts, lusty and honorable purposes, and good intentions and still fall far short if we lack drive and incentive.

Hezekiah immediately set on foot an entire reformation. It is said of him, that "he did that which is right in the sight of the Lord". (Ch. 18).

Verse four of chapter eighteen tells us that he removed the high places, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto these days the children of Israel called it Ne-hush-tan (a piece of brass).

It is amazing what people will allow to exist, knowing full well that their presence means the absence of God. This brazen serpent which once had its purpose in the hands of Moses had now come to be nothing more than a piece of brass. Now, all eyes were upon Hezekiah and many wondered if he would continue his plans for reformation, especially in the face of an attack from Assyria. It is well to note however, that when good is about to accomplish her ends the clouds loom dark and foreboding! This particular turn of events may arouse us to wonder what Hezekiah had that enabled him to carry on in the face of such danger.

We may notice secondly that Hezekiah was a man of great piety. Hezekiah's great strength did not reside in his mighty army or in his great wealth. It was furthermore of no great advantage for him to be a king. It was necessary to possess more than material equipment to face this emergency. He attempted on different occasions to appease the king of Assyria and as a last human resort gave all the silver and gold from the treasury. Even the door knobs which were made of precious metal were used to fulfil a demand made by the king of Assyria. Hezekiah had something within his soul that was more precious than gold that perisheth. In verse five and six of the eighteenth chapter of II Kings we are given his reason for parting with commodities that most people would never think of giving up.

"He trusted in the Lord God of Israel, so that

The King's Highway

PROMISES UNCLAIMED

Years ago an aged and ragged Indian wandered into one of our Western settlements, begging for food to keep him from starving. A bright-colored ribbon, from which was suspended a small dirty pouch, was seen around his neck. On being questioned he said it was a charm given him in his younger days, and opening it, displayed a faded greasy paper, which he handed to the interrogator for inspection.

It proved to be a regular discharge from the Federal Army, entitling him to a pension for life, and signed by General Washington himself. Here was a name which would be honored almost anywhere, and which, if presented in the right place, would have insured him support and plenty for the remainder of his days, and yet, he wandered about hungry, helpless and forlorn, begging of the charitable bread to keep him from starving.

What a picture of men with all the promises of Jesus in their hands, and of Christians, too, with the charter of their inheritance in full possession—yet starving in the wilderness!—Anonymous—Wesleyan Methodist.

FAMILY ALTARS

If every home in every land had altars

Where families worshiped daily and where prayer

Was lifted up and God's dear Word held sacred,

With Christ, a welcomed Guest, beside them there,

The nations would not need to reassemble

In further parley over future peace;

For enmity and strife would be forgotten,

And wars, and their wild rumors, would all cease.

The love of God is born at family altars;

Peace and goodwill to all mankind is part

Of any praying group's sincere devotion.

God, God, may every household take to heart

The old earth's desperate need and rear its altars

Close by its own hearthside—and peace, long sought,

Will love the earth because of mankind's heeding

The vital lessons that the Master taught.

Grace Noll Crowell, Housewife (Texas)

after him was none like him among the kings of Judah. For he clave to the Lord, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses".

Here contained, are the ingredients of his success. First, his adherence to God. "He clave unto the Lord; Second, he kept his commandments and Third, he persevered in the way of holy obedience, "He departed not from following him."

When we place these elements together we are able to arrive at our third consideration concerning the life of Hezekiah. He was a blessed man.

Favored with the Divine presence as he was, victory over the forces of evil was evident. "And the Lord was with him." The presence of the Lord is the good man's safety and guide. At this point, Hezekiah turned to God's prophet, Isaiah, II Kings 19:5 and here received his reward for faithfulness. God's prophet promised that the servants of the King of Assyria would be caused to fall by their own sword. So God in the life of Hezekiah confounded the forces of evil. He was blessed with divine favor and also with continued prosperity. His active piety brought to him the blessing of God. How many today are imitating the good King Hezekiah, cleaving, following, and obeying God? There is great encouragement for all to do so, for in the face of great danger God seems to prove Himself to his people. May we find God's help to enable us to step forward upon His wonderful promises and do mighty exploits for Him.

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