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GRANDFATHER ABRAHAM

OUR BIBLE STORY by the "Highway and Byway" Preacher

(A Vision Between the Lines of God's Inspired Word.)

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Scripture Authority:—"And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred three score and fifteen years. . . . And Isaac was threescore years old when she (Rebekah) bare them (Esau and Jacob).—Gen. 25:7, 26.

"By faith he (Abraham) sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the some promise.—Heb. 11:9.

TELL us that story again, grandpa," pleaded the childish voice, eagerly.

"What story?" questioned the gray-haired patriarch, his eyes twinkling mischievously, and hesitating in a tantalizing way, knowing full well what story the little Jacob wanted.

"You know, grandpa! The one about Noah, and how he built the ark and rode on the flood, and the rainbow, and—"

"Oh, no, tell us about Nimrod, who was such a mighty hunter," eagerly spoke up the other lad. "I like to hear how he killed the great beasts and was not afraid of anything. I'm going to be a hunter some day, just like Nimrod!" and, seizing a stick lying on the ground, he swung it vigorously above his head and brought it down with a sounding whack on the trunk of the great tree under which they were resting.

"That's the way I'll knock the wild beasts I meet," he cried, boastfully, puffing with the energy he had put into his blow.

"Let's see," questioned Grandfather Abraham, watching with evident satisfaction the animation of one lad, and the earnest face of the other. "Let's see—how many times have I told you the story of Noah?"

"Oh, 'bout a thousand times, I guess—most," admitted Jacob.

"And how many times have I told you the story of Nimrod?" Abraham continued, turning to Esau.

"As many times as the ark story, I suppose," Esau reluctantly confessed, a disappointed look stealing over his face as he began to realize that grandpa was not going to tell his favorite story again that afternoon.

On this particular day each seemed determined on having the story he liked best. But for some reason Abraham did not seem disposed to yield to either, perhaps from a desire on his part to deal impartially, and inasmuch as he could not tell both stories, he would tell neither, or perhaps it was because he had a story with a special point which he wanted for some particular reason to tell. And while the boys tugged at either arm and pleaded he gazed out thoughtfully across the wide stretch of field where the herds browsed peacefully, and at last asked:

"Did I ever tell you the story of Cain and Abel? No, not the sad, sad one of the fatal quarrel and the flight from home of Cain. That was the sequel, the culmination of earlier wrongdoing, for failure and crime are not hatched in a minute, but are the cumulative effects of earlier habits and misdeeds."

"Did you know Cain and Abel, grandpa?" questioned Jacob, who viewed the gray hairs of the old man as evidence that he had lived long enough to have known almost everybody about whom he talked.

Abraham laughed as he replied:

"Your grandmather has lived a good many years, and is getting pretty old—a hundred three score and ten—but his acquaintance does not go back as far as that. Noah told me the story as he heard it from the lips of his grandfather, Methuselah, and Methuselah, you will remember, lived to be a very, very old man; in fact, he lived the longest of any man of whom we have any record, and he heard the story from Adam's own lips."

"Is there anything about animals and hunting in the story, grandpa," broke in Esau, who was impatient over the interruption, and cared little whether his grandfather had known Cain and Abel or not. In fact all he cared for in a story was the stir and action. Details were wearisome to him. He could wait all day to find out the nesting place of some coveted bird, or he could study with greatest care and patience the habits of fox or hare so that he might be able to set his trap to capture them, but to listen to dry facts or the details of a story he would not if he could help it.

"You'll have to take the story as it comes, and see for yourself. Grandfather is not going to pick out the plums for you and leave the dry but wholesome bread untouched," responded the aged patriarch, as he drew the boy closer to his side and looked down earnestly into his face. He had long since come to realize that there was a depth to Jacob which was lacking in Esau, and he was anxious to awaken in the latter an interest and desire for something beyond the mere physical and material. That morning a little episode had occurred which brought this characteristic of the lad fresh to his attention.

The two boys had been sent by their father Isaac with a message to one of the herdsmen down the valley, directing him to select two of the finest lambs in the flock and send them back by Esau and Jacob, as he desired to make an offering unto the Lord, and instructing the boys to be careful and see that no harm or injury came to the lambs in bringing them home, "for," said Isaac, with emphasis, "our offering to the Lord must be without blemish."

Thus admonished, the brothers started off. In good time they arrived at the point where the herd was feeding, and, having delivered their message and having been provided with two of the very finest lambs in the splendid flock by the careful herdsman, they started back towards home, leading the gentle creatures by the long leathern thongs.

Now it chanced that their pathway led over the route usually taken by traders in their journeying to and fro between Egypt and the eastern country, and it happened that day that they met a company of these merchants who had halted under the shade of the little grove of trees and were preparing to cook their meal, having traveled during the cool of the early morning.

As the boys came up leading their lambs, the fine appearance of the latter attracted the attention of the merchants and they offered to buy them.

"We may not sell them, for they are to provide an offering to the Lord which our father is to make," promptly spoke up Jacob, and started on, calling to Esau to follow.

But the latter lingered, his eyes having fallen on some of the merchandise which lay about. Jacob walked on some distance, and then noting that Esau was not behind him, he turned and looked back to see what had become of him. Just as he was about to return and find out why he tarried, he saw him leave the camp leading his lamb, and waited where he stood for him to come up. As he drew near he saw that the lamb he was leading was not the fine sleek one which he had brought from the herd, and said:

"Why, Esau, what have you done with your lamb, and why have you this one instead?"

"Well, it's a lamb, ain't it? and a good one, too," he ejaculated, testily. "I traded my lamb for this, and the merchants gave me this hunting knife to boot."

"But you know how particular father is about the lambs for the offering, and you can see for yourself that it is poor and imperfect beside the other one."

"Well, I don't know why it is not as good to kill and burn up as the other one would have been," he stubbornly contended. "And I have the knife, too," he added, fondling it with a satisfied air.

And thus it was that on their return home Isaac had sharply reprimanded Esau, but the lad apparently did not realize why one lamb was not as good as another to offer to the Lord. It troubled Grandfather Abraham, and that afternoon as he saw the two boys coming towards him this other story of Cain and Abel came to his mind, and he resolved to tell it, and now that he had quieted them down and had their attention, he began:

"Cain and Abel were twin brothers, just as you boys are, and they were about your ages, or perhaps a little older, at the time of our story. Little did they realize then that they were to become the centers of the tragedy of that first home. They were bright, active, happy boys, and their parents loved them dearly and sought in every way to have them grow up into ways of usefulness and honor.

[Note.—Cain and Abel were probably twins, and it is thought that, at this early period, children were born in pairs (Calvin).]

"You boys know how particular your father is in regard to the Sabbath day, not willing that any work shall be performed therein, for the Lord after His six days of creative work rested on the seventh day, blessing and sanctifying it. Well, Adam and Eve were as particular, and sought to impress their boys with the sacredness of the day. The customary toil and activities of the other days of the week ceased and the day was given over to rest, and when the occasional sacrifice was offered, it was offered on the seventh day.

"Now Cain early manifested a liking for the fruitful fields, while Abel's desires turned in the direction of the flocks and herds. And in the course of time, as the boys grew into sturdy stripplings, the father gave to each the desire of his heart. To Cain he gave a small plot of ground and instructed him in the cultivation thereof. Abel he took from his flocks some of the finest of his sheep and showed him how to tend them. Thus the days passed and Cain and Abel seemed contented and happy. The family enjoyed life together and, as we have said, their Sabbath days were carefully observed.

"But one Sabbath day soon after Cain had been given his plot of ground he started for his field, anxious to finish an arbor which he was building as a shelter. In spite of the entreaties of his parents he persisted in going, impatiently declaring it was no worse for him to do that than for Abel to watch his sheep and keep them from straying. You see he was letting the mere desire of the present warp and twist his ideas of right, and made him deaf to the advice and entreaties of his mother and father. He was willful and wanted his own way, right or wrong.

"Well, he finished his arbor, and a very pretty place it was, but he did not find the pleasure and comfort in it that he had expected, for his conscience troubled him. If he had only taken warning then and instead of stifling the better nature within him had yielded to his better promptings and repented of his willfulness and wrong doing, perhaps it would never have been said of him that he slew his brother. But he wanted his own way too much, and that pleasant arbor became the snare which led his feet farther and farther away from the right way, for instead of staying at home on the Sabbath days and listening to his father as he talked about God, and sharing in the worship and sacrifice, he would slip off to his arbor and spend the day there. Somehow, you see, he did not enjoy the worship of the Sabbath days because his heart was not right. He did not want to hear about God. He just wanted to know Cain and to please Cain.

"And that is the other story of Cain and Abel," concluded the grandfather, "But there blows the horn and supper must be ready. Let us be going."

"I should like to have seen Cain's arbor," spoke up Esau as they started homeward, being apparently unimpressed by the moral teachings of the story.

"But, grandpa, I should have thought he would have cared more about God and what God thought of him," thoughtfully rejoined Jacob, apparently deeply impressed.

And grandfather patted his head appreciatively and said with fervor:

"God bless thee, my son, and make thee a blessing." And then, as though unwilling to leave Esau out, he finished with: "And God will bless thee, too, my lad, if you will but receive it."

Home Health Club

By DAVID H. REEDER, Ph. D., M. D.
La Porte, Ind.

LUMBAGO.

Numerous letters have been received from members stating that the subject of lumbago has not been given attention. This, however, is a mistake, as I gave a lecture upon the subject, but it was five years ago. Therefore I think another will be timely. It is true that the disease has not since then been discussed under its own name, although there has been much given in previous lectures which is applicable to that ailment. In lumbago the large muscles by which the whole of the body is raised from a recumbent position become so stiffened that they are unable longer to perform their function. It should be borne in mind that these muscles are at rest when the body is in a reclining position, the time when they are taxed to their utmost being during the act of passing from this position to the erect.

The condition of a muscle affected with lumbago differs materially from either that of paralysis or cramp. The very substance of the muscle itself seems to be mostly at fault in this distressing ailment. In all probability there is a nerve defect in many of these cases, but this could hardly be termed the chief feature of the difficulty, however. It is purely one of the substance of the large muscles themselves.

The direct cause is that these muscles have either suffered from a severe strain or chill, which has temporarily deprived them of the elasticity. In this condition they cannot be utilized, or, if they are, it is only at the expense of very severe pain, the result of pressure exerted upon certain nerves, by the rigidity of the muscles involved.

To cite an example: A man applies his strength to the lifting of a very heavy load, in such a manner as to bring a strain on the muscles of the back, exceeding their capacity to withstand without depriving them of their elasticity. It is possible and even probable that they will not lose their function immediately, but stiffness gradually manifests itself. The explanation of this is not in the least complicated. Because of the overstrain to which they have been subjected, they have been affected to such an extent that they are more easily deprived of their vital heat, and being chilled while in this state, they begin to stiffen. The stiffness thus resulting is one of the most simple forms of the disease now under discussion.

To employ another illustration: A man has walked so far as to expend the amount of vital energy which his nerves are capable of furnishing to the large lumbar muscles. The exertion has been so severe as to entirely exhaust the supply of force which maintains into them their elasticity. To complete the injury which he is doing, when thoroughly tired he sits down upon a cold stone by the roadside, to rest, or accepts a proferred ride on the cold wooden seat of an open wagon. The muscles, already taxed beyond their real capacity, and requiring recuperative measures, by this further violence are now effectually stiffened, and lumbago is the result. Of course it is not meant to intimate that this particular regime is necessary, but only a slight exposure, to the weary and exhausted back, has probably occurred, perhaps without the patient having been conscious of it, but inflexibility of the large muscles results just as sure.

In cases where this vital nerve force has been entirely exhausted, and the muscles have become rigid while in this condition, it is not at all reasonable to expect a cure without a great deal of attention to the application of restorative measures. Of course it would be very nice indeed if by some magic spell the condition could be instantly overcome, but I am of the opinion that we mortals will experience much better and more highly satisfactory results from a careful application of decidedly materialistic agencies. A great many are so desirous of overcoming the condition without any particular exertion upon their part that they are very easily convinced that surgery is the correct thing, or that blistering, burning or poisoning with strychnine or other poisons are the proper thing, and the inevitable result is that the lumbago is indeed forced to succumb, but to an enemy much more formidable than the disease itself.

I have before me what is said to be one of the best medical encyclopedias published. In it I find a careful description of a method of treatment for lumbago which seems hardly creditable in this day and age of the world, and yet the assurance is given that it is largely used. It is called "Acupuncture," and the method of application is described as follows:

"In lumbago acupuncture is made over the erector spinae muscles, and in sciatica along the course of the nerve; it is performed thus. The patient is placed prone on his face, the tender spots are found, and from one to six needles are pushed vertically into the flesh and allowed to remain from one-half to two hours. The needle should actually penetrate the nerve in sciatica."

How would you like that treatment? Well, as for me, I think I would prefer the lumbago.

Returning to the Home Health club methods—it has been seen that the principal thing, or, in fact, the only thing, which is present in lumbago is the loss of elasticity in the structure of the muscle. This elasticity was not always present, but was lost by overexertion and loss of heat. The thing to be done then is to replace this lacking function. It is very easily accomplished. Heat should be applied to the afflicted muscles by means of a heavy flannel cloth, wrung out of water slightly above blood heat, being placed immediately over the afflicted portion. As soon as this gentle heat is thoroughly felt, remove the hot clothes and rub well with hot oil—olive oil is best. This rubbing should not be severe, but thorough. The heat which has been infused into the muscles should not be severe, but thorough. The heat which has been infused into the muscles should be retained by means of the hot oil and a good piece of new flannel. If a person is liable to have this trouble he should wear a broad belt of new flannel during the early fall and winter months, and use care not to overtax his strength in any way. This double precaution will usually prevent a recurrence of the trouble.

CLUB NOTES.

Wisconsin.—Dr. David H. Reeder, Laporte, Indiana.—Dear Doctor: Will you be so kind as to answer me pertaining to the following: I have a little girl, 12 years old, who is very much troubled with tonsilitis—sore throat. The doctor says that the only cure is to cut the tonsils out. The child has been troubled this way since last fall. Will you please tell me if there is any other method of treatment for her?—Mrs. H. W.

I object to the surgical treatment of enlarged tonsils about as vigorously as the average mother does. I have seen a great deal of that kind of work and have also seen such cases treated without surgery, and the result was more satisfactory. The method which I advocate is the use of the tissue elements, of which I have often spoken and found them the natural and safe home remedies for all such troubles. You should also have the club lecture on catarrh, as the exercises given in the lecture would greatly aid in a cure.

Illinois.—Dr. David H. Reeder, Laporte, Indiana.—Dear Doctor: You ask those that have been helped by the Home Health club suggestions to "pass it on," and I want to tell what apples did for me. I was a great sufferer from constipation and piles. I ate from one to three apples every night, generally one, which was enough, and I was not troubled with constipation or piles all winter. So I know by experience that they are very beneficial. I used to laugh at my father when he wanted me to eat them at night. I now tell all of my friends to eat them, but be sure to chew them well, and not swallow them in chunks. I trust that others will try this, as it certainly is not at all a disagreeable method. Respectfully,

Miss C.

I would suggest that all who have the opportunity to use the above method do so, as it is a very wholesome one, and certainly can cause no harmful results. I would be pleased to receive other contributions along the same line, from members of the club. "Pass it on."

Barnesville.—Dr. David H. Reeder, Laporte, Indiana. — Dear Doctor: Would you please tell me if lemon juice will injure the hair. I have used it for dandruff and find it very good. One of my neighbors told me there was too much acid, and it would leave the hair too dry. Having obtained much benefit from your lectures in this paper, I thought I would write you for advice. Respectfully, S. M.

I do not think lemon juice will injure your hair, but if the skin of your entire body is kept in good health the use of any kind of remedy for dandruff would be unnecessary. You will find full instructions for treatment of the scalp in the club lectures.

Missouri.—Dr. David H. Reeder, Laporte, Indiana.—Dear Doctor: I notice in our paper that you will answer questions regarding health. Although I have eaten only what I thought would agree with me for more than a year past, I find that my stomach becomes quite large, and seems to be filled with gas. I have not eaten bacon, ham, pickles, pepper, vinegar, spices, etc., for a year, nor have I drunk coffee for two years. I work hard out of doors, and never drink anything but water and milk. Sometimes an odor seems to come from my body just after eating, and it is so disagreeable that one hates to go to entertainments, etc. I take three or four baths a week, but it seems to do very little good. Such a condition makes one very nervous at times. Perhaps I eat too much or too hurriedly. Sometimes I never eat any supper, and often miss breakfast. For breakfast to-day I ate some crackers and stewed prunes, for dinner, roast beef, potatoes, four slices of bread and a glass of milk; for supper, a handful of uncooked prunes and some crackers.

What shall one do—what occupation is the best for one so affected? If you will kindly give me some advice I will be very grateful, and will closely follow your method of treatement.—Respectfully, J. M. C.

It is not so much what you eat, in this case, as your selection of food is good, but I am inclined to think that the major portion of your trouble is caused by the way you eat. For one week begin each meal with a piece of very hard dry toast or zweiback and chew it, each particle of it, until it becomes like liquid in the mouth. Take absolutely no liquids while eating, but masticate every particle of your food as long as there is anything left to chew. Drink an abundance of water between meals, and you can soon eat three meals daily and feel well.

All readers of this paper are at liberty to inquire for information pertaining to the subject of health at any time. All communications should be addressed to Dr. David H. Reeder, Laporte, Indiana, and should contain name and address in full, and at least four cents in postage.

ONLY ONE WORD NECESSARY.

Miss Elder—I should hate a man to propose to me unexpectedly. I really should not know what to say.

Fair Visitor (who has been relating how successfully she emerged from a similar experience, sweetly)—O, I'm sure you would, dear!

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