

SAMSON'S PHILISTINE BRIDE

A STORY OF THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES IN ISRAEL.
By the "Highway and Byway" Preacher

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Scripture Authority:—Judges chapters 14 and 15.

SERMONETTE.

"Teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born." Samson had the advantage of God-fearing parents, and his training began before he was born. These are two conditions which exert a lifelong influence upon the character and destiny of a life. It is the heritage to which every child has right to lay claim, but oh! how seldom does it come into its right.

The coming of the child into the home is too often the unwelcome accident to be followed by haphazard rearing, with no positive religious training.

God has a claim on every life, and that claim should be recognized by the parents of the unborn child, it should inspire them to the faithful discharge of the parental obligations, and it should guide them in planning the future of the child.

In the case of Samson his career was definitely indicated by Divine revelation before his birth, a privilege not vouchsafed to many, especially in this day; but notwithstanding this, there should be the definite consecration to the Lord and the seeking to follow the Divine will in the training of the child so that eventually he shall come to fill the place best suited to his abilities and the needs of the world in which he lives.

"The child grew and the Lord blessed him."—Does this sound like Divine favoritism? Has God those he picks as particular recipients of his blessing without consideration of the individual merit? Perhaps it would seem so from the superficial and imperfect knowledge of man, but recognition of the perfect love and perfect justice of God compels the conviction that God always blesses where the conditions of life and heart make it possible.

Some children are allowed to grow up like weeds of the meadow, and it is only by a miracle of grace through the saving and cleansing power of Jesus Christ that sometimes such lives are at last brought into harmony with God's will and in the way of divine blessing.

The development of the child should be Godward, so that it may receive God's blessing. The upward walk always finds the descending blessing. What Samson stood for in the war of righteousness and truth in Israel was the result of the early influence of that Godly home in which he was reared.

THE STORY.

FROM his earliest recollection Samson had been imbued with the ambition to become a great general like Jephthah, or Gideon, or Barak. With his mother's milk as a babe he had drunk in an intense spirit of patriotism, and as he had grown into manhood and had listened to the stories of the mighty men of valor whom God had raised up to deliver Israel from her enemies the purpose had grown within him to some day march at the head of a conquering army as these other men had done.

His mother told him over and over again the story of the angel's visit, of his birth, and of the promise that he should be a deliverer unto Israel from the power of the Philistines. She had told of the Nazarete vow and had by her faithful ministry inspired him with the same spirit of loyalty and devotion which had moved her own heart and kept her pure and unspotted from moral and spiritual decline which was manifest among her people on every hand. And in all this early training and discipline, the father, Manoah, had nobly seconded the Godly woman.

In such an atmosphere it was that Samson had been reared, and as he developed into young manhood, and felt the vigor of his strong physique, and the impelling motive of his deep spiritual life, the irresistible impulse moved him to go out among his people and seek to arouse their patriotism and begin the organization of an armed force that should drive the Philistines from among them and break the yoke of their oppression.

But spiritual conditions were at low ebb, and people did not seem to feel the need of or care for anything different. And while they felt the burden of the Philistine rule, there were compensating features, such as protection from other enemies, and certain commercial and social advantages, which appealed to them, and which rendered the efforts of Samson practically without effect.

What if he did perform deeds of prowess before them revealing his powerful physique? What if he did recount the history of the past in which God had given deliverance to

his people? Only a mere handful of men were gathered to him, and he felt that it were worse than folly to attempt the work of deliverance with such a force.

Disconsolate and well-nigh discouraged, he wandered forth one day alone. Questionings filled his heart. Had he after all been set for the deliverance of Israel? How was he to begin when the people were not with him in spirit? No, he did not even have the 300 which Gideon had so effectively used.

Thus occupied in thought he had not noted whether his footsteps were taking him until some voices at his elbow caused him to look up and he noted that he was just within the outskirts of Timnath, a town some three miles distant from his own home. Before him he saw two men struggling to lift a heavy burden from the back of a small ass, that, overlaid and weary from a journey, had fallen and was now crushed to the earth by the weight of the merchandise which he had been carrying. The exhausted animal had fallen in such a manner as to make the fastenings by which the burden was strapped to his back inaccessible, and the men were cursing and swearing and pulling at the helpless beast in an unsuccessful effort to raise him and loosen the thongs.

Samson took in the situation at a glance, and before the men fairly realized what had happened he had lifted the ass, burden and all, with one hand, while with the other he quickly unfastened the thongs, and lightly throwing the burden across his own shoulders, he indicated to the men that he would finish carrying the load if they would lead the way.

Such was the odd procession which passed up the one main street of Timnath that day and more than one person came to the door to see the man walking along with light quick step carrying an ass's load, while the patient beast trotted on by his side and the two men led the way.

The novelty of the situation for the moment quite drove from the mind of Samson the thoughts which had been troubling him, but when he had deposited his burden at the door of the house where the two men lived and had turned to go, having refused the hospitality which the men were urging upon him, the whole unhappy train of thought returned. He resented those Philistines being in the land; he despised their overbearing and supercilious airs; and he turned impatiently from the door and has tened down the street.

"But," he asked himself, fiercely, "how is it to be changed? What can I do? The men of Israel will not stand with me against these Philistines."

He was looking into the doorways he was passing as he spoke, for the people who had thronged thither had not yet withdrawn, and he noted the expressions of wonder and admiration as their eyes followed him. His attention was especially directed to one young woman who had eagerly pushed herself to the front of a group of people standing in one doorway, and as his eyes met hers a blush overspread her face and in confusion she retreated within.

The incident started a new line of thought, and ere he had half retraced his steps toward his home he had made up his mind what he would do.

"If I cannot raise an army to fight against the Philistines, I will force a quarrel with them. I will take me a wife of the Philistines and will yet have occasion against them."

But when he had spoken to his parents concerning the matter, saying: "I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife," they chided him saying: "Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?"

But Samson was deaf to his father's entreaties and his mother's tears, making reply always to their repeated appeals:

"Get her for me; for she seemeth right in my eyes."

And when they saw it was useless any longer to try to restrain him in his resolve, for they did not understand that it was of the Lord and that he sought an occasion against the Philistines, they did as he desired. So it came to pass that in time the young woman of Timnath became the wife of Samson, but ere the week of festivities had ended there had transpired those events of which the Scripture speaketh in detail, and which gave to Samson the occasion which he sought of inflicting upon the Philistines the punishment they so richly deserved, and of turning the hearts of his people back to the service of the true God.

Cormorants Trained to Fish.

Cormorants are familiar enough objects fishing on the outlying rocks below the cliffs whereon they nest, or seated upon the posts which mark the course of the channel in a tidal harbor, their brilliant emerald eyes ever on the watch for fish.

But few people are perhaps aware that these great black uncouth looking birds were at one time trained in England to catch fish for the amusement of royalty. The sport was introduced into the country from the court of France in the time of Louis XIII., the French courtiers had been taught the method of taming and training these birds by a Dutchman, whose countrymen had already learned it during their voyages in the east. For it is to the Chinese and Japanese fishermen that European nations were first indebted for a knowledge of the sport.

NO VALID REASONS

PATRONIZING MAIL ORDER HOUSES IS WITHOUT EXCUSE.

GOODS NOT EVEN CHEAPER

With Freight Charges Added and Quality Considered the Home Merchant Does Best.

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The reasons why people should trade at home are numerous, but so far as we are able to learn but one reason is advanced for purchasing goods of mail order houses. That one reason—a saving of money—is often no reason at all, for in many instances the express charges or freight and cartage will bring the cost of an article that as quoted in the price list seemed a wonderful bargain, almost or quite up to the price charged by the local dealer. But even were one able to save a few cents on the purchase price by buying away from home, it appears to us that the loss is infinitely more than the gain, for he who sends the money which he earns in the home town out to swell the coffers of wealthy dealers in distant cities cannot fall to forfeit in a considerable degree the respect of those around him, nor can he under these conditions preserve his self-respect intact.

The man who patronizes mail order houses must have a sneaking feeling

trade with the home merchant, yet if other people followed your example and patronized mail order houses, there would be no home merchant to trade with. If others bought of him only when they wanted things in a hurry, and sent out of town for the greater part of their supplies, he would have left for more promising fields long ago, or if he had stayed in those circumstances, the sheriff would finally have closed his doors. You wouldn't like to live in a place without stores, and yet it may be that you prefer to reside in a country town rather than in a city. Do your share, then, toward making it possible for the country merchant to carry on business.

You must remember, too, that when you send your money to some big concern in a distant city, you lessen the amount of money in circulation in your own residence town. If you had spent it at the home store, some of it at least would have been paid out by the proprietor in the form of wages to his employees, they in turn would have expended it for the necessities of life, and it would have passed from one to another of the home dealers, proving an important factor in the prosperity of the community. Having sent it to the mail order house the probabilities are that it will never again benefit anyone in your home town.

You should trade with the home merchant because he is the one from whom you ask and receive favors. Perhaps you have had a run of ill luck—you have lost your position, had long-continued illness in the family, or have experienced difficulty in collecting money due you. You are in

NOTES FROM MEADOWBROOK FARM

By William Pitt



Broad tires are partners in good road making.

Oats as a food for man and beast cannot be beat.

Feed yourself, as well as the horse, during these days of specially hard work.

Corn, oats, clover is the most common and, perhaps, the most satisfactory rotation.

Nothing better than the Concord has been found to satisfy the popular demand in the grape line.

The oiled paper which comes in cracker boxes makes nice wrapping paper for lunches. Save it.

In many sections farmers will find that vegetable crops can be made profitable as market crops. Study the possibilities.

The round barn is more economical of space than the rectangular one, but, notwithstanding this, very few of them have ever been built.

The secret of the farmer's success is knowing how to raise crops and turn them into beef, milk, wool, pork, etc., at the highest market prices.

You can tell a good farmer by the live stock in his fields. Thin, clean-looking animals of standard breeds are sure indexes to a farmer's ideals and methods.

Many beekeepers recognizing that beekeeping is primarily a breeding problem—for honey surplus depends so much on the queen—requeen their colonies every year.

Two things the dairyman should remember: First not to let the milk stand in the barn after milking and second to cool it to 50 degrees or below as soon as possible.

Have you begun spraying yet? The first spraying should have been given before the buds began to open up. But don't neglect subsequent sprayings because you did not begin early.

The large eater is not always the large milker. Compare ration and yield and judge whether you have a profitable animal. Use the Babcock tester, too, to show the proportion of butter fat in the milk.

Good seed needs rich soil to grow in and the right cultivation after the plant is up to insure the generous harvest. Something from nothing is never obtained on the farm, nor anywhere else, for that matter.

Dipping of livestock at least once a year is considered imperative by many stockmen and farmers. One can scarcely estimate the loss suffered by the livestock interests each year by lice, mites, ticks and other parasites.

See that the collars fit the horses. As the horse hardens to the heavy spring work it may be found necessary to adjust them occasionally. A poorly-fitted collar makes it harder for the horse and less profitable for you.

Again let us repeat that you cannot be too cleanly in your methods of milking and handling the milk. It is a little extra trouble to use sterilized cheese cloth cover for the milk pail, but it is the only way to keep the dirt out, and dirt in milk, whether seen or unseen, means unwholesomeness and lessens its keeping qualities.

It is more the way a tool is used than the tool itself that counts. The home-made fish-pole will catch more fish than the split bamboo rod when the former is used skillfully and the other is not. Don't say that you cannot farm better until you invest in more modern and up-to-date tools. Be sure that you are getting the very best results with the implements you have. The farmer who thinks that it is all in the tool he uses is mistaken, and would not make a success with the best machine made.

The announcement was made recently by the government that nearly \$1,000,000 was to be spent for the purchase of cattle to supply the needs of the Indians on reservations in North and South Dakota, Montana and Arizona will be made by the Interior department within a short time. The commissioner of Indian Affairs was authorized to invite proposals for furnishing and delivering during the fiscal year 1907 24,751 heifers, 775 bulls, 1,263 mares and 1,268 milch cows to Indian agencies in the states referred to at an estimated cost of \$794,120.

There is still a good demand for mules. Ever raise any?

Milking clean not only gives you more milk but it keeps up the yield.

Too much soft food for the grown-up fowls tends to make them dyspeptic.

Nitrate of soda on corn will prolong growth and delay seed formation and ripening.

Too much livestock, like too much land, is bad for the farmer and tends to poverty.

The successful orchardist is a fighter who turns his batteries relentlessly upon the pests that invade his orchard.

Sow common red clover on that piece of corn land which has become infested with the corn root worm and the corn root louse.

The comfort that has been washed and dried can be made soft and fluffy by rolling tight and then beating with a rug beater.

Oyster shells are good for making egg shells, but they are not a substitute for grits. Provide plenty of sharp grits as well as the oyster shells.

Oats and bran from wheat contain the phosphates needed in building up the bones and tendons of the young colts. Hay of course should be given and there should be plenty of exercise.

A silo holding 80 tons will feed 25 cows a daily ration of 30 pounds each for six months. If you have not a silo, plan to build one to give you succulent food for your cows next winter. It will pay.

Don't let the calves develop horns. When about two weeks old clip the hair away from around the nubbins, wet a little and then apply a stick of caustic potash. No pain or trouble for the calf, and no horn, either. They're nipped in the bud.

The sanitation of the piggery may be lightly considered by many farmers, but it is of vital importance to the health and profit of the swine herd. Damp and ill-ventilated sleeping quarters figure large on the debit side of the account.

If you are inclined to try your hand at alfalfa, and you ought to have that ambition, begin with a small plot. Take a piece of rich ground, well-drained, manure and get in thorough cultivation and then sow only cleaned and tested seed.

Rural libraries for agricultural communities is an idea being developed in sections of the middle west. A township library with some system of distribution which would meet the needs of the rural communities would be a fine thing. Why could not the rural mail carrier manage it as a side line?

A good cow ought to produce butter at an average cost of about seven cents a pound, considering the by-products, or about ten cents a pound figuring on a basis of butter and feed only. Poor cows will bring the cost up to 15 or 18 cents. It doesn't pay very well to make "store butter" that sells from 12 to 15 cents unless you can produce this article at about seven cents.

Don't get into filthy or bad habits of milking. To milk with wet hands is an unclean practice. The clean milker uses clean hands and is sure before he begins that the cow's udder is clean and that no falling dirt can get into the milk. Using lard on the hands to make milking easy will aid in making hard milkers. It will also help to keep the cow's teats very tender. Dampening the teats with milk also has the same effect.

Fertilizer recipe sharpeners are busy among the farmers trying to sell their alleged secret formulas at five dollars apiece. They have been trying to work the southwest which has led the Texas experiment station to issue a warning to farmers. Remember the best information regarding the home mixing of fertilizers can be obtained absolutely free either from your state experiment station or from the department of agriculture at Washington.

Along in February one of our hens wanted to set. Too early, we said and tried to break her up, but she wouldn't break, and so we found a warm place in the cellar for her and set her to work on 14 eggs. Some of our severest weather came after that, and we feared for the eggs, but we kept the good old hen covered and in due time she came off with eight strong, vigorous chicks. They've grown finely and are waiting a chance to get out of doors. The old hen knew best, after all.

In an experiment recently conducted by the New Jersey station in the feeding of milk cows with cow pea hay, it was found that with the cow pea ration milk was made at a cost of 39.8 per 100 pounds, while the cost on a grain ration was 60.5 cents. On the grain ration the cows produced 8.3 per cent. more milk and 15.2 per cent. more butter, but comparison of the price of feeds showed a large balance in favor of the cow pea ration. Why not plan to sow a few acres to cow pea next season?



The mail-order fiend is encroaching upon our town like a devastating prairie fire, and we should turn to with a will, and by the aid of the home-trade plow run a protecting furrow around the community that will save us and our institutions from destruction. Such is the duty of every loyal resident.

that everybody in town knows that he is a hindrance rather than a help to the community. He is not wanted in public positions, and when questions of local interest and importance are discussed, his opinion carries far less weight than the man who contributes his share to the prosperity of the community by spending his money where he earns it.

In addition to losing in a large degree the respect of others and his own self-respect, the man who does nothing to build up the town in which he lives falls to find the contentment which is necessary to happiness. Having done nothing to make the town better, he is unable to see the many advantages it possesses, and is continually talking and thinking of its deficiencies. He does not move out, however, but stays on year after year, a discontented parasite, getting all he can and giving as little as possible in return. There is an unwritten law of nature that makes it impossible for one to really take an interest in a place until he has done something for it, and it is only when we have done our share toward building up the town in which we live that it becomes a real home to us.

Perhaps the local dealers in country towns do not always have in stock just the articles you desire, but they are usually willing to order whatever their customers want, and under ordinary circumstances can supply you as quickly as you can procure the goods from a mail order house. When you buy of the home merchant, the goods are before you and you see what you are getting. In buying by mail there is always a chance that when the goods arrive they will not prove to be just what you expected and desired. In that case you are put to the inconvenience of sending them back for exchange, or if the need is immediate and pressing, you are obliged to accept that which is not entirely satisfactory.

Trade at home in order that your home town may have stores at which to trade. There are many times when you are in a hurry for some article, there is no time to send to New York, Chicago, or elsewhere. Your need is immediate and imperative. You are glad under such circumstances to

strained circumstances. Would a letter to the mail order house, stating all these circumstances, secure for you a supply of the necessities of life on liberal credit terms? Most assuredly not. An appeal to the proprietors for aid in your extremity would be barren of results. It is the home merchant who stands ready to extend the credit necessary to tide you over an emergency, and for this reason, if for no other, he should have your loyal support in your times of prosperity.

Perhaps you are financially independent, and have never known the necessity of asking for credit. Even then you are indebted to the home merchant for many of the advantages you enjoy. The proprietors of a mail order house would laugh you to scorn were you to ask them to subscribe toward the building of your new church, the improvement of your school building, or the expenses of maintaining your fire department. The home merchant contributes liberally to the support of these institutions so essential to the public comfort and well-being, and you cannot afford to withhold from him your patronage.

You know your local dealers. Perhaps they have grown from childhood to manhood in your home town; you were boys together, they have watched you in sickness, and comforted you in sorrow, they take a kindly interest in your welfare. Do you not prefer that your trade should increase their small profits rather than add its quota to the millions of dollars annually sent to the mail order houses? If the home merchants prosper the town will be a better place in which to live. Their prosperity will be manifested by improvements in the appearance of their own property, and by their increased liberality in contributing toward public improvements, and by helping them by your patronage, you will also be helping yourself and the entire community.

FRANCES A. HARRIS.

Provocation Enough. Mand (before the laughing hyena's cage)—How provoking! Here we've been 20 minutes, and the hyena hasn't laughed once.

Ella—Strange, and he's been eyeing your new spring hat, too.