

he must have a vessel large enough to wash him in. The king ordered the potter to make such a vessel. When made it was crushed by the elephant's first step in it. Many trials failed; and the potter was ruined by the very scheme he had intended should crush his enemy.

2. HEARTLESS FEASTING, ver. 25. THEY SAT DOWN TO EAT BREAD. Knowing that their innocent young brother was cast into the pit to starve to death. Behold how sin hardens the heart! They hated Joseph because he was good. So sinners love not God. Prov. xxx. 20; Amos, vi. 6; Rom. i. 30; Rev. xi. 10; 1 John iii. 12. LOOKED. Perhaps conscience smites their guilty souls, and they look around fearing discovery. A COMPANY. A caravan. From GILEAD. A mountainous region east of Jordan. The caravan route from Damascus to Egypt touches Dothan. SPICERY. Hebrew, *neoth*, supposed to be the gum *tragacanth*. BALM. Balsam; "balm of Gilead," Jer. viii. 22; xlv. 11. MYRRH. A fragrant Arabic gum. All these substances were in great demand in EGYPT for embalming.

A continued custom, and making a trade of sin, makes the conscience to be hard and brawny, able to feel nothing. As it is in a smith's forge, a dog that comes newly in cannot endure the fiery sparks to fly about his ears, but being once used to it, he sleeps securely; so let wicked men be long used to the devil's work-house, to be slaves and vassals to sin, the sparks of hell-fire may fly about them, and the fire of hell flash upon their souls, yet never trouble them, never disturb them at all; and all this ariseth from a continued custom in the course of evil.—*Spencer*.

Bessus, a Grecian, gave as a reason for pulling down the birds' nests about his house, that the birds never ceased to accuse him of the murder of his father. So these heartless feasters shall yet find the accusing torments of a guilty conscience.

If a man has murderous hate, he murders. If a man broods dishonest thoughts, he is a knave. If a man harbors sharp and bitter jealousies, envies, hatred, though he never express them by his tongue or shape them by his hand, they are there. There are many good-seeming men, who, if all their day's thoughts and feelings were to be

suddenly developed into acts, visible to the eye, would run from themselves as men run from the fiery gapings of the ground and sulphuric cracks that open the way to the uncooled centre of perdition.—*Becker*.

3. THE CONSPIRACY AND SALE, ver. 26-29. JUDAH. Hebrew, *praised*, (Gen. xxxix. 35) the fourth son of Jacob and Leah. SAID. Seeing the caravan, and doubtless conscience-smitten, he hopes to save Joseph's life. WHAT PROFIT. He appeals not to their brotherly love, for of that they have none, but to their cupidity. If he dies in the pit we are murderers, but if we SELL HIM TO THE ISHMAELITES, we shall not only get rid of him, but make money by the operation. "The love of money is the root of all evil." 1 Tim. vi. 10. HIS BRETHREN ARE CONTENT—to make their brother a slave. Murderers still at heart. Joseph's life is saved, not because of his brothers' relenting, but because of their greed of gain. "Be sure your sin will find you out." Num. xxxii. 23. MIDIANITES. Descendants of Midian, a son of Abraham by Keturah, Gen. xxv. 2, 4. A powerful tribe of Arabia. Merchants: an enterprising people. The "Ishmaelites" were also Arabians, of whom the caravan seems to have been largely composed. THEY.....SOLD JOSEPH as if he had been a dog or a camel. Infamous act. The pit was Dothan's "slave pen." But the eye of God was on Joseph. TWENTY PIECES OF SILVER. Probably shekels. Lev. xxvii. 5; Exod. xxi. 32. Probably about fifteen dollars; that is, about one dollar and a half apiece for each of the ten brothers! THEY BROUGHT JOSEPH INTO EGYPT. The destination of the caravan. These guilty and unnatural brothers are now rid of Joseph. But God will make the wrath of man to praise him. Psa. lxxvi. 10. For thirty pieces of silver Christ was also sold by one of his own disciples. Matt. xxvi. 15; xxvii. 9.

The infatuated Caligula slew his brother because he was a beautiful young man. Mutius, a citizen of Rome, was noted to be of such an envious and malevolent disposition that Publius, one day, observing him to be very sad, said, "Either some great evil has happened to Mutius, or some great good to another." "Dionysius, the tyrant," says Plutarch, "out of envy, punished Philoxenus, the musician, because he could sing, and Plato, the philosopher,