

heard that Samuel had come to choose a king from among their father's sons, Eliab went and "sorted" himself, and came in to look his best. These others came in to grumble that they were taken from the plough tail, and they would say to the servant who came to call them in, "We don't want to be kings; we have no ambition for this vacant situation; it will introduce us, supposing it is real and true, to considerable troubles; it will take us away from home, away on untrodden ground; it is calling us into great deep waters, where we shall lose sight of land; and we could rather stay at home. If Samuel had been yourself or myself, Abinadab and Shammah and the rest would have said, "No, thank you; it is not for us; give it to Eliab;" and of course already his chance was gone. Now, my friend, you see the point. I would to God that every congregation gathered to hear preachers in London to-day could just see it! Do not pull the wool, nor let the world and the devil pull the wool over your eyes. On the one hand, do not be in the inflammation of devouring ambition; and on the other do not be a noodle, a mere nose of wax; but for your own sake, understand that the kingdom of heaven has come nigh unto you when the Gospel is preached. Wake up! This is worth listening to; it is worth coming into a Gospel meeting. There is a chance here that is nowhere else except in meetings like it—a chance for you, and you may have it.

I think, too, that it is depressing to read how these seven came in and went out, when I read their names, because in the Old Testament names meant something. Names nowadays mean nothing; they mean less than nothing, and vanish. The poorest snark of a creature in your office, may be William Wallace, or Robert Bruce, or Cromwell, or Milton, or something like that. Names mean nothing. What miserable creatures one meets who have great names stuck upon them! I met, not so long ago, a poor abject creature with the glorious name of Hampden stuck upon him as a kind of sarcastic label of what he was *not*! So you have it here. One of these is Abinadab, and another Shammah; great names that have something noble in them, as many Hebrew names had. Yet, notwithstanding their names, these may be no more in the owners of them than a day's work, a day's whistling at the plough tail, an evening's pleasure, a night's sleep, and their wages. Now, is not that about the compass of what occupies your thoughts? Only get you a good "crib," a good "screw," as you call it; comfortable salary, hours nine to five, and one on Saturdays, a prospect of advance as per sale, and that is all; you are quite contented and quite satisfied. God

forbid I should be hard on anybody; but, man, I wish you would stretch yourself! Life means more than a day's work, more than a night's pleasure, more than a night's sleep; life means a chance to be saved, a chance to be redeemed, a chance to be born again, a chance to become sons and daughters of God Almighty, and to reign with Christ for ever and ever!—that is in this dull, humdrum, plodding, work-a-day life of ours, through God's grace in the Gospel. Do not let it go past; do not let these splendid days given to you here on earth go past, while you "steal inglorious to the silent grave." Wake up! and when God comes to be ready for him. "Grasp the skirts of happy chance, breast the blows of circumstance, and grapple with your evil star."

For it may be done, and gloriously done, by the furthest back and the most unlikely, if only, unlike those solid stolid sons of Jesse, we understand the situation, and yield to the call of Christ in the Gospel invitation.

Oh, they lost it, they sadly lost it; and it came so near to them, and it hung after all so far above their heads! For when we are going to be nobodies, God will treat us like that, and will not come and thrust upon you this salvation of yours, that cost Christ His precious blood and all the wonderful thirty years of His incarnate history here among men. Do you think that after Christ went through all that to found His kingdom, to found and build and set up His kingdom; do you think that after that He is going to fill it with nameless nobodies like you and me? Heaven help us! what would we be to Him? No, no, let us understand, the king wants *men*; that is why He has not some of us set—because *anybody* won't do. He will make us men if we will only come to Him, and allow Him to do His work. He will stimulate us, rouse us, recover us from all the down-dragging tendency of this weary world, and open our eyes to see that Christ is here, and it is in our opportunity to make ourselves His, with all that that means for ever and ever.

They missed it because they deserved to miss it; because it would have been wasted on them. Now, how did David get it? For, don't you see, after these seven came in and went out, David's turn came? I can imagine Samuel getting a little peppery; he turns round to Jesse and says, "Are all your children here?" It looks as if he had come on a fool's errand. He had come to give a crown, a kingdom; and the Lord had sent him, at least he thought so, to choose a king from amongst this man's sons; they had come and gone, and still he was at a loss; and it does look as if a blush of shame would steal