

## PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

### NABAL AND HIS WIFE.

A FREE TRANSLATION OF 1 SAM. XXV.; RENDERED  
IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN TIMES.

And behold Moan was a sinful place, and there lived a man in it whose possessions were very great. He had three hundred acres of land, and ten thousand dollars worth of Government bonds, besides railroad shares, mortgages, and notes without number. His cattle browsed on the rich pastures, and he drew a large income from the produce of his farm. Now the name of that man was Nabal, which being interpreted means a fool; and the name of his wife was Abigail, who in the days of her childhood was her father's joy. She was a woman of good understanding and of a beautiful countenance, but the man was a churl, exceedingly stingy in his dealings with others; howbeit he was wasteful and self-indulgent in the use of tobacco and strong drink.

And behold there was a little church in that sinful place, but it was weak and had great difficulty in sustaining the Gospel from year to year; so that sometimes the pastor and his family suffered for want of the common comforts of life. And the trustees of his church said among themselves: "Behold, Nabal is rich, and even now is gathering a bountiful harvest. Let us go to him and ask for assistance." And the pastor consented and said: "Go in peace;" and they went to Nabal, and said: "Peace be to thee and to thy house, and to all that thou hast. Thy property has increased in value a hundred-fold since our church was organized, and it must be evident to thee that the religious people of the place are the most sober, honest, and industrious. Moreover, our minister is a friend to the rich and the poor, ready and willing to serve one and all at any hour when they call upon him. Give, I pray thee, whatever cometh to thy hand unto thy servants for our struggling church and worthy pastor."

And Nabal answered and said: "What is the church, and who is the pastor? There be many ministers now-a-days who are too lazy to work like me, but seek an idle life, and the Church is always wanting subscriptions. I am paying large wages to my men, my taxes are heavy, I have my own children to feed, I had to build this my new house and furnish it without the aid of the church. Shall I then take my money that I have earned with my own industry, and give it to lazy men whom I know not whence they be?"

And the trustees returned, all discouraged, and told the pastor; and the pastor said to the elders of the church: "Gird on every man his sword, which is of the Spirit, and go forth with all prayer for that man's punishment; for we will all heap coals of fire upon his head," and the pastor also girded on his sword; and there were with him all the devout men of the place. But one of Nabal's hired servants had heard what his master said to the trustees of the church, and being a wise and good young man, he told Nabal's wife in the evening all that had passed; moreover, he assured her that her husband's property had increased in value a hundred-fold since the church was built, that law and order had prevailed so that there had not been a lamb stolen from their master since the day the church was opened, though he had lost much by reason of many thefts previously. And then, with solemn emphasis, he added: "Thou oughtest to know and consider what thou wilt do; for some evil will come on our master from God; for he is so stingy and such a son of Belial withal that a person cannot speak to him." And Abigail made haste and sent a large subscription out of her own portion allowed her for herself and the children, but she told not her husband. And she wrote a letter and sent it to the pastor, and behold when the letter came the people were all praying in the church, for the conversion of the wicked Nabal, and the letter read as follows: "Dear pastor, upon me let this churlishness be. Lay not this meanness to Nabal, for as his name is so is he, for folly is with him. But I am sure that thou wilt return good for evil, and pray for them that curse thee; therefore accept my gift as if it came from Nabal; and remember not our niggardliness to the church in times past, for the Lord will certainly make His house a praise in this wicked place; for thou and thine arduous work are for the good of the people."

Then, in reply to the letter of Abigail, wrote the pastor in the following words: "Dear madam: Blessed be the Lord God of Israel who put it into thy heart this day to send us help in our great need. And blessed be thy comforting words. And blessed be thou for this Christian liberality, which helps our little church and removes from our minds all unpleasantness toward thee on account of thy stingy husband, making us more fervent in prayer for his conversion. May the Lord God visit Nabal in the day of his salvation, and save him from his wicked ways, and turn his heart to seek the Lord God of Jacob."

And Nabal held a feast in his house like the feast of a king during the time that the church was praying for him. And Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken. And it came to pass in the morning when the wine was gone out of him, that his wife showed him the pastor's letter, and for a moment he was very wroth, and vowed to kill the pastor; but when he considered the matter and saw his folly, his heart sank within him, and he was under deep conviction of sin for ten days, and on the tenth day he sent for the pastor and confessed his meanness, and there was a great struggle within him till his old nature died, and he became a new man; and anon he made a profession of faith, and became a most devoted and liberal member of the church. And his wealth increased and his heart was opened, and he gave a large proportion to the cause of God so that the church became strong, and many of the wicked people of Moan were converted to God, and all the servants of Nabal became devout and served him well, and all rum-shops of Moan were closed, and the youth learned to fear God and keep his Sabbaths, attending upon the ordinances of the church and giving to the cause of religion of their gold and silver, which they formerly wasted on tobacco and strong drink. And Nabal himself became the devoted friend of the pastor, labouring with him in every good cause. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."—*R. H. Craig, in Observer.*

#### "THIS IS LIFE."

"I have planned much work for my life," she said;  
A glib creature, with golden hair,  
And bright and winsome as she was fair.

"The days are full, till he comes to wed;  
The clothes to buy, and the home to make  
A very Eden, for his dear sake."

But cares soon come to the wedded wife;  
She shares his duties and hopes and fears,  
Which lessen not with the waning years;

For a very struggle, at best, is life;  
If we knew the burdens along the line,  
We would shrink to receive this gift divine.

Sometimes, in the hush of the evening hour,  
She thinks of the leisure she meant to gain,  
And the work she would do with hand and brain.

"I am tired to night; I am lacking power  
To think," she says; "I must wait until  
My brain is rested, and pulse is still."

O woman and man, there is never rest!  
Dream not of a leisure that will not come  
Till age shall make you both blind and dumb.

You must live each day at your very best:  
The work of the world is done by few;  
God asks that a part be done by you.

Say oft, of the years, as they pass from sight,  
"This, this is life, with its golden store:  
I shall have it once, but it comes no more."

Have a purpose, and do with your utmost might:  
You will finish your work on the other side,  
When you wake in His likeness, satisfied.

—*Sarah A. Bolton, in Sunday School Times.*

#### REVIVALS.

Revivals will always have opposers, but they are a part of God's plan in saving the world. The Church was begun in a revival, and in spiritual outpouring it shall end, nations being born in a day, the glory of God filling the earth. Earth's hope is in these visits of God to His people.

Revivals awaken respect and awe for Christianity. Skeptics who have ridiculed the Bible feel the might of God, and the testimony of bad men converted shuts the mouth of boasters, shaking down the castle of self-righteousness. Revivals make the Bible a new book. They deepen piety, incite to prayer, lift up the family altar, and quicken all the drooping graces of

the Church. Laymen are set to work, new streams of influence are opened, and men are raised up to special service. Difficulties are healed, alienations set aside, brotherly love made to abound, and knowledge and experience of Christian truth extended. In revivals God and eternity seem great, Christ's love near and precious, and Christian duty pressing.

Revivals bring the Church back to the simplicities of doctrine and worship and Christian living. They awaken regard for the Sabbath and the house of God, the prayer-meeting, and all the divine ordinances. They fill up the evening service, and make that hour the best in the Sabbath for reaching and saving the masses. By revivals ministers are more united, pastors and people are drawn into more endearing fellowship, and better established, benevolence is enlarged, lost joy restored, and both home and public standards of piety are elevated. Revivals make preaching more scriptural and pointed. The Word of God, pure and simple, comes to the front. A personal Christ is set forth, and the evil of sin and the eternal loss of the soul without salvation.

The doctrines of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, forgiveness of sin through the sacrifice of Christ, and the rewards and retributions at the judgment day, are made vivid and weighty, and half truths and heresies starve. Revivals take churches out of the ruts of formalism and the fashions and pomps of this world, putting new life into everything. They lighten the burdens of the ministry. It is never so easy to preach and pray as in the Spirit's presence. They pay church debts, lift up the fallen, and give the Church a wider field and a fresh lease of life and usefulness. Many, "almost persuaded," will never start till this time comes. Missionaries and ministers and teachers are born in revivals, and great Christian societies which bless the world follow them.—*Dr. Goodell.*

#### SUPPOSE.

Suppose that all members of the congregation should do what some will probably do next Sabbath, *i.e.*, stay at home for some trifling reason. Result, empty pews. Suppose that you should neglect store bills and other business debts as you frequently neglect your church dues and offerings and missionary obligations. Result, loss of credit; law suits.

On the other hand, suppose that all members of the congregation should do next Sabbath what Mr. and Mrs. — always do, *i.e.*, get to church, rain or shine, hot or cold, headache (?) or no headache. Result, pews filled full; galleries occupied; hearty service, music and responses "as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder, and as the voice of harpers harping with their harps."

Happy parson. Happy people.

Suppose that every one should treat religious duty like any kind of secular duty; that he should be careful and painstaking in all religious obligations—Sabbath school work, work in various church organizations, attention to the holy communion, watchfulness over God's children, etc., etc. Result, a live church; a godly people; shining lights; living epistles; many "good confessions witnessed before men."

Suppose that you *really* do give for religious and charitable purposes in proportion to your income. The Bible plainly teaches that we should give *one-tenth*, but say one-twentieth of what you have to spend for living purposes; and further suppose that you give with some little sacrifice, *i.e.*, fewer cigars; fewer buttons on your kid gloves; lower heels on your boots; less crushed strawberry on the hats; fewer dainties on the table, if needful—sacrifice somewhere in order to give to God's work. Result, overflowing treasury; mission promoted, charities helped, and good work set forward.

Please take these matters into consideration, and suppose you try to be *faithful, honest and earnest*, not only in your dealings with men but with God.—*Earnest Worker.*

MR. SPURGEON, in a recent sermon, is reported to have said, "It is the glory of the Moravians that all their members are missionaries; and such ought to be the glory of every Church. Every man, woman, and child in the Church should take part in the battle for Jesus."

DR. W. A. HAMMOND says in the "North American Review" that woman is "incapable of ruling," because "man's brain has more intricate convolutions, more secondary fissures, and the grey matter is thicker." This will be news—perhaps welcome news—to many husbands.