

"TRAGEDY OF A QUEEN"

A Brilliant Sunday Sermon By Rev. F. F. Shannon.

Draws a Timely Lesson From the Story of Vashti—Few Finer Exhibitions of Sacrifice.

BROOKLYN, N. Y.—For his Sunday morning sermon, in Grace M. E. Church, the pastor, the Rev. Frederick F. Shannon, had for his theme "The Tragedy of a Queen." The text was from Esther 1:11-12: "Bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to show the people and the princes her beauty: for she was fair to look on. But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains." Mr. Shannon said:

The Ahasuerus of the book of Esther is the Xerxes of profane history. By common consent of historians he was one of the most powerful monarchs who ever lived. The pages of Herodotus are filled with his exploits, and Grote and Rollin, who dwell upon his power and achievements in an interesting manner, but his story is a tragedy as far as his power is concerned; and it is a tragedy that is a warning to all of us who are tempted to greatness. The power of his empire was his own power, and he was a man of a different nature from those who are content to be ruled. He was a man of a different nature from those who are content to be ruled. He was a man of a different nature from those who are content to be ruled.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMMENTS FOR JANUARY 8.

Subject: The Witness of John the Baptist to Jesus, John 1, 19-34—Golden Text: John 1, 30—Memory Verses, 32, 37—Commentary on the Day's Lesson.

I. The Testimony of John the Baptist (vs. 19-23). In "This is the witness" (R. V.), the sentence means that the testimony that John bore to Jesus. This term in John's gospel commonly means the opponents of Christ, "the Jews"; but the persecutors are murderers, but the name of a race has become the name of a sect. He uses the term about seventy times, almost always with the shade of meaning, "Priests and Levites." This combination "priests and Levites" occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. To state that the hierarchy had a delegation from the Sanhedrin—"Who art thou? What do you profess to be? Do you assume to be the Messiah, or are you a prophet?" One of the plainest things in this verse is the great indignation caused by John the Baptist's ministry. The other is the state of expectation in which the people were at that time.

20. "Not the Christ." The form of speech in this verse implies a very positive and unmistakable assertion. Any reference to the following verse is an instructive example of true humility. John the Baptist was an eminent saint of God. Few names in the Bible are higher than his. "Elias," Greek form of Elijah, is an am. That is, not in the sense you have in mind. They were speaking literally, and John was speaking figuratively. He was speaking figuratively (comp. Luke 1:17). The prophet (R. V.). The well-known prophet of Deut. 18:15, who some thought would be a second Moses, others a second Elijah, others the Messiah. "No," John knew that Jesus was not the one he referred to. He was speaking figuratively. He was speaking figuratively. He was speaking figuratively.

21. "Elias." Greek form of Elijah, is an am. That is, not in the sense you have in mind. They were speaking literally, and John was speaking figuratively. He was speaking figuratively. He was speaking figuratively.

22. "After exhausting all other names, he presses John to a full description of himself, that they may be able to give a proper answer to the Sanhedrin.

23. "The voice." He was not the "word," but merely a "voice." He was called a voice because, as he was uttering God's thoughts, 2. The importance of his ministry is in the message, not in the messenger. 3. Although weak in himself, yet he produced a great influence. Heralding, proclaiming. "In the wilderness." The world was, indeed, a moral wilderness when the time drew near for the coming of the Son of Man, etc. See Isa. 40:3-5. The idea is taken from the practice of Eastern monarchs, who, whenever they took a journey, sent heralds before them to prepare the way. 24. "Pharisees." The Pharisees held most strenuously that no prophet after Moses had a right to introduce any new sacred laws, or ceremonies, or changes in the Mosaic institutions, except the Messiah himself. The question then in the following verse, "Why baptizest thou then?" was a very pertinent one. John's baptism was not a new institution, but a re-enactment of the baptism of Jesus. John's answer is very pertinent. Why baptizest thou then? was a very pertinent one. John's baptism was not a new institution, but a re-enactment of the baptism of Jesus.

25. "After me." John was the forerunner to announce His coming. "Not without." A proverbial expression, signifying that the Pharisees and Sadducees belonged to the humbler servant, and in comparison to Christ, John says he was too inferior to do even that. The desire to exalt Christ, and to place the ever uppermost in John's mind, 28. "Bethabara." The R. V. has Bethany. This was not the Bethany on the Mount of Olives, but a small town on the same name. Bethany sometimes signifies "house," and Bethabara "ford house," or "ferry house."

29. "The next day." After the testimony of John to the deputation from Jerusalem, "Seeth Jesus." The fact that John knew Jesus was that of a man who was a Christian (Matt. 3:13 to 4:1) preceded the events of this lesson. "Lamb of God." There is no reasonable doubt that John was a true sacrifice for sin, the true antitype of the passover lamb, and the lamb prophesied of by Isaiah (Isa. 53:7). "Talked away." Both names now merely in the margin. On the great day of statement the priest confessed the sins of the people and laid them upon the scapegoat, and the goat was sent to the wilderness. Christ's taking away the sins of the world is borrowed from this act. We have here one of the many expressions which declare the greatness of His sacrifice. "The sin." All the sins of all the children of Adam. The atonement was complete, but it was left to man to choose whether he will accept the provisions made. 30. "After me," etc. Jesus came after John in point of time, but He was preceding him in glory and honor. "Was before me." This refers to Christ's eternal pre-existence with the Father. 31. "Knew Him not." I was not previously acquainted with Him, and there has been no private collusion or agreement between us. But others think that as John was a cousin of our Lord, he must have been acquainted with Him, and that the expression here does not mean that he did not know Him as to His nature, office and mission until the time of his baptism. "Therefore am I come." John here declares that the great end of his ministry was not to form a sect in his own name, but to make Christ known to the Jews.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR NOTES

SOME STARTLING FACTS ABOUT THE VICE OF INTEMPERANCE.

Point: No Place For Boys—Drinking Among Women Has Come to Be One of the Social Problems of Brooklyn—Look Out For the Girls.

What can a boy do and where can a boy stay? If he always tells to get out of the way? He cannot stay here any longer, he must not stand there. The cushions that cover that fine rocking chair. Were you there, of course, to be seen and admired. A boy has no business to ever be tired. The beautiful room, an answer to the bloom on the floor of the dais and the delicate ornament. Are not made to walk on—at least, not by feet. The house is no place, anyway, for their noise.

But one life can live in the kingdom of God, and that is God's life. Take a bird from the air and put it in water, and death by drowning ensues. Take a fish from the water into the air and it dies by suffocation. These are not more opposite than the natural and the spiritual. The natural man cannot live in a heavenly atmosphere, and John was speaking figuratively. He was speaking figuratively.

The Spirit's methods we cannot know, but the facts of the new life are as plain and certain as that the strong wind bends the forest trees. We may not know the day nor the hour when we are born again, but we may know the fact by the fruits. The impartation of life to man, to animal, and to plant is, even in the brightest light of science, still as great a mystery as ever. But the fact of life is a certainty. Come, weary and oppressed; To come to Jesus is thy part; His part, to give thee rest. No man can come to Christ except the Father draw him. If he comes asking, that proves he comes drawn. The new birth is from God. But though man is incapable of producing his own regeneration and conversion, yet he has the power of hindering and preventing it. A sick man can do nothing in restoring his own health, but he can do much in hindering his restoration by refusing the physician, by disobeying his prescriptions, and by refusing his medicine, and on the contrary doing that which promotes and strengthens the disease.

EPWORTH LEAGUE LESSONS

JANUARY EIGHTH.

The Making of a Christian: His Birth.—John 3: 1, 8.

This lesson is founded on the passage which records the conversation of Jesus and Nicodemus. A ruler of the Jews, he comes to Jesus by night. Whatever other conversation may have occurred we know not, but it all revolves around this declaration of the necessity of a new birth. The first thing in the making of a Christian is that he will be "well born." There must be and will be great differences in the details of a religious experience, but certain clear and well defined epochs will be found in the conscious experience of every Christian. There will be first the sense of sin; then the conscious and sincere turning away from sin, then the looking to Christ for salvation; and then sooner or later the consciousness of peace and pardon. To this conscious experience every real Christian comes. And this is the foundation of the whole religious life. To us, as to Nicodemus, it may be strange and inexplicable, but it may be recognized by its results. Notice how Jesus pours out his richest truths to an audience of only one person. A change which will fit us for companionship with Christ is a necessity of our nature. Socially, politically, and intellectually we are constantly changing. There is no greater mystery in a spiritual new birth than in a material one. The more often we have had the conscious guilt of a human soul demands that it be changed before it can come into the presence of God. It is not only repentance, reformation, and church membership. It is the result of a new birth that it is a "learning to do well." It is a new life. It affects the whole man, his intellect, sensibilities, and his will. It changes his opinions, his affections, his choice in life. It is a new life which produces a new creature. It is a radical and permanent change in the whole man. It is the beginning of the life of the Christian.

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A LONG TOLD TALE

The Troublesome Experience of a Faded Husband in Story Telling.

There was a friend dining with Mr. and Mrs. Guernsey a few evenings ago. He was a few minutes late to lunch, for the train on which he had come out from the city had been delayed by a "hot box."

"That reminds me of an experience I had a year ago," said Mr. Guernsey, when his friend had explained his tardiness.

"Why, no, Frank, if you mean the time that the limited was late, it was eighteen months ago," said Mrs. Guernsey.

"Well, maybe it was, my dear. At any rate, it was a very chilly evening and "chilly" interrupted Mrs. Guernsey. "Why, Frank, it was frigid. I remember distinctly that it was eighteen below zero that night. I looked at the thermometer while I was waiting for you." "Yes, it was very cold. Well, as I was about to say, Bronson, one of our neighbors, and I were coming out from town and—" "Oh, no, it wasn't Mr. Bronson that came out with you; it was Wilfred Clark. You met Mr. Bronson in the smoking car after the accident occurred. You told me so that night."

"I dare say, but that doesn't affect the story. Let me see, oh, yes, just as our train was pulling in at Maywood, the—" "No, no, Frank, your train was just leaving Alderson. Don't you remember it stopped right there by the big water tank? I always think what a time you had every time I pass that water tank on the cars, and last summer, when I was driving by once with the Reids, I told them all about it."

"The train came to a standstill with a fearful lurch," continued Mr. Guernsey, "and I said to Bronson—" "No, you said to Wilfred. I reminded you a few minutes ago that you didn't meet Mr. Bronson until afterwards."

"So you did. Well, I said that I thought we were in a collision, for the jolt was something fearful. The car was thrown violently to the floor."

"Why, some fell on seats, Frank. I know that, because Wilfred told me afterwards that one woman had her ribs broken on the arm of a seat."

"Yes, a few did fall in that way. But it was Wilfred—that I was sure it was a collision, and then we were run to the rear end of the car."

"It was the forward end of the car. You know that the rear end had fallen across the platform."

"Oh, here comes the dessert," remarked Mr. Guernsey, irrelevantly. "Will you have whipped cream on your pudding?"

The guest said "Yes," and as he had an engagement in the suburb, he left shortly afterwards.

"Well, I declare," he said to himself as he walked away from the Guernseys, "poor, old Frank gives up trying to tell his story; I'll meet him at lunch some day in town and get him to finish it. I wonder that he attempts to talk—under the circumstances."—The Little Chronicle.

St. John, the beloved disciple, on Patmos, lonely for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ, gazing over the waters of the Aegean Sea, saw the form of his glorified Saviour and heard His voice like the sound of many waters. This wonderful vision of Jesus, who was unfolded unto him from the opened heavens in vision of God. In the book of revelation, chap. 1, is sketched a full length picture of Jesus Christ, and the glorified Son of Man by the hand of an inspired artist, whose soul was enraptured in spirit on the face of the Saviour. John saw a great vision, as of a trumpet, like the sound of many waters. The voice is one in authority and power, the voice of the Lord is full of grace and truth. The Lord's voice is heard as the sound of a trumpet, it divides the flames of fire and shaketh the wilderness. It awaketh Lazarus from the sleep of death, and will yet call all believers of every nation. John saw a vision, as of a trumpet, like the sound of many waters. The voice is one in authority and power, the voice of the Lord is full of grace and truth. The Lord's voice is heard as the sound of a trumpet, it divides the flames of fire and shaketh the wilderness. It awaketh Lazarus from the sleep of death, and will yet call all believers of every nation.

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How John knew Jesus (vs. 32-34). "Baptized." Both names now merely in the margin. On the great day of statement the priest confessed the sins of the people and laid them upon the scapegoat, and the goat was sent to the wilderness. Christ's taking away the sins of the world is borrowed from this act. We have here one of the many expressions which declare the greatness of His sacrifice. "The sin." All the sins of all the children of Adam. The atonement was complete, but it was left to man to choose whether he will accept the provisions made. 30. "After me," etc. Jesus came after John in point of time, but He was preceding him in glory and honor. "Was before me." This refers to Christ's eternal pre-existence with the Father. 31. "Knew Him not." I was not previously acquainted with Him, and there has been no private collusion or agreement between us. But others think that as John was a cousin of our Lord, he must have been acquainted with Him, and that the expression here does not mean that he did not know Him as to His nature, office and mission until the time of his baptism. "Therefore am I come." John here declares that the great end of his ministry was not to form a sect in his own name, but to make Christ known to the Jews.

20. "The next day." After the testimony of John to the deputation from Jerusalem, "Seeth Jesus." The fact that John knew Jesus was that of a man who was a Christian (Matt. 3:13 to 4:1) preceded the events of this lesson. "Lamb of God." There is no reasonable doubt that John was a true sacrifice for sin, the true antitype of the passover lamb, and the lamb prophesied of by Isaiah (Isa. 53:7). "Talked away." Both names now merely in the margin. On the great day of statement the priest confessed the sins of the people and laid them upon the scapegoat, and the goat was sent to the wilderness. Christ's taking away the sins of the world is borrowed from this act. We have here one of the many expressions which declare the greatness of His sacrifice. "The sin." All the sins of all the children of Adam. The atonement was complete, but it was left to man to choose whether he will accept the provisions made. 30. "After me," etc. Jesus came after John in point of time, but He was preceding him in glory and honor. "Was before me." This refers to Christ's eternal pre-existence with the Father. 31. "Knew Him not." I was not previously acquainted with Him, and there has been no private collusion or agreement between us. But others think that as John was a cousin of our Lord, he must have been acquainted with Him, and that the expression here does not mean that he did not know Him as to His nature, office and mission until the time of his baptism. "Therefore am I come." John here declares that the great end of his ministry was not to form a sect in his own name, but to make Christ known to the Jews.

A LONG TOLD TALE

The Troublesome Experience of a Faded Husband in Story Telling.

There was a friend dining with Mr. and Mrs. Guernsey a few evenings ago. He was a few minutes late to lunch, for the train on which he had come out from the city had been delayed by a "hot box."

"That reminds me of an experience I had a year ago," said Mr. Guernsey, when his friend had explained his tardiness.

"Why, no, Frank, if you mean the time that the limited was late, it was eighteen months ago," said Mrs. Guernsey.

"Well, maybe it was, my dear. At any rate, it was a very chilly evening and "chilly" interrupted Mrs. Guernsey. "Why, Frank, it was frigid. I remember distinctly that it was eighteen below zero that night. I looked at the thermometer while I was waiting for you." "Yes, it was very cold. Well, as I was about to say, Bronson, one of our neighbors, and I were coming out from town and—" "Oh, no, it wasn't Mr. Bronson that came out with you; it was Wilfred Clark. You met Mr. Bronson in the smoking car after the accident occurred. You told me so that night."

"I dare say, but that doesn't affect the story. Let me see, oh, yes, just as our train was pulling in at Maywood, the—" "No, no, Frank, your train was just leaving Alderson. Don't you remember it stopped right there by the big water tank? I always think what a time you had every time I pass that water tank on the cars, and last summer, when I was driving by once with the Reids, I told them all about it."

"The train came to a standstill with a fearful lurch," continued Mr. Guernsey, "and I said to Bronson—" "No, you said to Wilfred. I reminded you a few minutes ago that you didn't meet Mr. Bronson until afterwards."

"So you did. Well, I said that I thought we were in a collision, for the jolt was something fearful. The car was thrown violently to the floor."

"Why, some fell on seats, Frank. I know that, because Wilfred told me afterwards that one woman had her ribs broken on the arm of a seat."

"Yes, a few did fall in that way. But it was Wilfred—that I was sure it was a collision, and then we were run to the rear end of the car."

"It was the forward end of the car. You know that the rear end had fallen across the platform."

"Oh, here comes the dessert," remarked Mr. Guernsey, irrelevantly. "Will you have whipped cream on your pudding?"

The guest said "Yes," and as he had an engagement in the suburb, he left shortly afterwards.

"Well, I declare," he said to himself as he walked away from the Guernseys, "poor, old Frank gives up trying to tell his story; I'll meet him at lunch some day in town and get him to finish it. I wonder that he attempts to talk—under the circumstances."—The Little Chronicle.

St. John, the beloved disciple, on Patmos, lonely for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ, gazing over the waters of the Aegean Sea, saw the form of his glorified Saviour and heard His voice like the sound of many waters. This wonderful vision of Jesus, who was unfolded unto him from the opened heavens in vision of God. In the book of revelation, chap. 1, is sketched a full length picture of Jesus Christ, and the glorified Son of Man by the hand of an inspired artist, whose soul was enraptured in spirit on the face of the Saviour. John saw a great vision, as of a trumpet, like the sound of many waters. The voice is one in authority and power, the voice of the Lord is full of grace and truth. The Lord's voice is heard as the sound of a trumpet, it divides the flames of fire and shaketh the wilderness. It awaketh Lazarus from the sleep of death, and will yet call all believers of every nation. John saw a vision, as of a trumpet, like the sound of many waters. The voice is one in authority and power, the voice of the Lord is full of grace and truth. The Lord's voice is heard as the sound of a trumpet, it divides the flames of fire and shaketh the wilderness. It awaketh Lazarus from the sleep of death, and will yet call all believers of every nation.

THE GREAT DESTROYER

SOME STARTLING FACTS ABOUT THE VICE OF INTEMPERANCE.

Point: No Place For Boys—Drinking Among Women Has Come to Be One of the Social Problems of Brooklyn—Look Out For the Girls.

What can a boy do and where can a boy stay? If he always tells to get out of the way? He cannot stay here any longer, he must not stand there. The cushions that cover that fine rocking chair. Were you there, of course, to be seen and admired. A boy has no business to ever be tired. The beautiful room, an answer to the bloom on the floor of the dais and the delicate ornament. Are not made to walk on—at least, not by feet. The house is no place, anyway, for their noise.

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