2 Samuel - Commentaries by Christopher Knapp

Staff and Scepter: Six Addresses on Some of the Principle Scenes in the Life of David, Chapter 6: David, Ziba and Mephibosheth

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2 Sam. 16:1-4; 19:24-30

I am going to speak specially to Christians now. Preaching the gospel to sinners is important work. God forbid that I, or any servant of the Lord, should ever slight such work. The responsibility of making the gospel known to a perishing world rests upon all the saints of God. Every Christian is a debtor to those within his reach in this respect. The Apostle Paul says, "I am a debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise" (Rom. 1:14). But the methods of certain popular evangelists going about the country are to be deplored. They remain but a few weeks in a place, and then are off, perhaps a thousand miles away. The converts, when real, are left to starve, and seldom advance much beyond the knowledge of the fundamentals of the gospel, if they are even clear on these.

Now Paul was a model evangelist, and he never left the converts of his preaching like freshly hatched partridges, half out of their shells, or new born babes unable to feed themselves. He stayed by them and taught them, and sought to build them up. We are apt to forget, in reading the inspired account of his labors, that it is the merest outline—a bare synopsis of a life of devotedness, covering a period of thirty years or more. He appears to be flitting about from place to place and always on the go, but he was not. He seems to have spent three years in Arabia (Gal. 1:17-18), one year in Antioch (Acts 11:26), a long time in Iconium (Acts 14:3), a year and six months, at least, at Corinth (Acts 18:11), two years, about, in Ephesus (Acts 19:10), besides a good many years in prison. At some places his stays were short because of persecution. But his travels were not as extensive by any means as most suppose. Many a much lesser preacher today travels more in a year than the Apostle did during the whole course of his eventful life.

And what should we learn from this? Just this, that the greatest evangelist that ever lived always endeavored to establish converts in the faith before he left them.

In view of this, I have decided to speak a little to believers now, though I shall not by any means forget that some of my audience are unconverted. The trend of every address should be like the roads about Rome that used to converge and meet at the golden milestone in the Forum, as the spokes of a wheel all come together at the hub. Christ is the golden center—the focus of all truth. And though saints are specially addressed tonight, may God bless the very mention of the Savior's precious name to sinners' hearts.

There is a verse I often think of in the epistle to the Romans. It is the 4th verse of the 15th chapter. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." There we Christians have what is called our charter for reading the Old Testament in the expectation of receiving something for our souls' instruction. I call it the Magna Charta. It covers so much, you know. Let us look then at the flight of David and his return, recorded in the verses read, as among the "whatsoever things" that have been "written for our learning."

In the preceding chapters, the inspired historian gives us an account of the commencement of Absalom's rebellion. I cannot dwell upon it as our time is limited. He first stole the people's hearts and then has himself set up as king. David is forced to flee, and Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth, pretends to show him kindness. He meets him when he "was a little past the top of the hill" with "a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred loaves of bread, one hundred bunches of raisins, one hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine." He makes a fine display of zeal and sympathy for the rejected king, but it is only show. He wickedly slanders his master Mephibosheth to David and obtains Mephibosheth's estate. "And the king said, And where is thy master's son?" And Ziba said unto the king, "Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, Today shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father." Then said the king to Ziba, "Behold, thine are all that pertained unto Mephibosheth." And Ziba said, "I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king" (2 Sam. 16:3-4).

But by and by the king returns, as we see in the 19th chapter, and everything comes out. Ziba's hypocrisy is exposed and the devotion of Mephibosheth is manifested. He goes to meet the king on his return, and during the whole time of David's absence, he "had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes." David says, "Wherefore wentest thou not with me, Mephibosheth?" And Mephibosheth tells him all. Ziba had deceived him. He wished to follow the king, but could not, as his feet were lame. It seems that Ziba had purposely taken away the ass Mephibosheth had expected to saddle and ride upon among the weeping followers of the outraged king. He recounts David's kindness towards him in the past and owns the nothingness of all his father's house before his lord, the king. "And the king said unto him, "Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said, Thou and Ziba divide the land." And Mephibosheth said unto the king, "Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house" (2 Sam. 19:29-30). What cares he for lands? He is content to see his lord, the king, upon his rightful throne, and in his proper place in peace.

Now all this story is deeply instructive. David, Ziba and Mephibosheth here are representative characters. David, I need scarcely say, is a type of Christ in the present hour of His rejection. Ziba represents a self-righteous child of nature and Mephibosheth a helpless child of grace. You remember on a former occasion we saw how Mephibosheth, a hiding, helpless cripple, was brought into a place of blessing "as one of the king's sons." Ziba never became anything more than a "servant." He is repeatedly called a servant. Mephibosheth is like real Christians who are "sons of God." Ziba represents the mass of whitewashed professors who expect, by serving God, to get to heaven at last. And these always slander genuine Christians who ascribe all their salvation to the grace of God. They make loud professions and display great zeal. It has sometimes been a burning zeal. Many times has Ziba burned Mephibosheth at the stake. And they boast great things of what they are doing for the Lord. They point with swelling pride to their magnificent temples with steeples shooting to the skies. They bid us behold the hospitals, asylums, and homes of shelter they are erecting every year. They remind us of the scores and scores of schools and seminaries they maintain. They tell with intense satisfaction of their hundreds of foreign mission stations, and the thousands of converts they make to

their religion every year. They proudly unfold their list of chief ecclesiastics who are reckoned among the great ones of the earth. They make what the Apostle calls, "a fair show in the flesh" (Gal. 6:12).

And they will not hesitate to slander the unpretentious Mephibosheths. "What do they do for the Lord?" they ask disdainfully. Well, if they do as Mephibosheth did, they shall do well. He acted the part of a loyal subject to the king. He felt the absence of his lord and showed his feelings by his ways and his appearance. He "neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes," until the king returned. He did not act as if everything was right while a rebel sat on Israel's throne. Remember, fellow-Christian, that—

We live in Satan's world. He is its "prince" and "god" (John 12:31; 2 Cor. 4:5). Christ is the rejected King. He was "born King of the Jews" (Matt. 2:2). He is also "King of nations" (Rev. 15:3, marg.). People sing—

But earth has long ago refused Him and continues its refusal. The Jews refused Him. When Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" they cried, "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15). The Gentiles would not have Him. They are high on the list of His rejecters. "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ. For of a truth against Thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together" (Acts 4:26-27).

Now, how ought you and I to act in the midst of a world where our Lord and Master is rejected and disowned? Ought we to mingle in politics? No, God's only candidate has been refused. The name of the Man of our choice has been stricken from their lists. The political world has cast its vote against Him. Our party is out of power down here. What about society? Is Jesus wanted there? No. If you doubt it, go to the very next progressive card party or evening social and ask the cheerful assemblage what they think of Christ. You will very soon discover that they are against Him. They cannot even bear to hear His precious name outside of church. To the real believer, His name "is as ointment poured forth," in "church," or anywhere else. Well, what about the popular religion of this enlightened nineteenth century? Don’t its adherents "crown Him Lord of all?" Few of them seem to have any Christ to crown, the way they deny or question His eternal deity and make Him a liar in reference to eternal punishment, and the Mosaic authorship and inspiration of the Pentateuch (Matt. 25:46; John 5:46-47). If they keep on modernizing Christianity they will, by and by, have none to modernize. If they continue to keep clipping at the Holy Scriptures with the shears of “Higher Criticism,” they will soon have nothing left to criticize. Ah, I fear Christ is not wanted there. He is being basely wounded in the house of His professed friends. The "form of godliness" alone is there, without the "power." "From such turn away" (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

Christ is rejected everywhere down here. May we act as those who feel His absence and rejection. I know a young woman whose intended husband went to the Western States three years before their marriage. When he returned it was to take her back to the West as his bride. Her heart was true to him all those years of his absence. She showed it by remaining modestly and becomingly at home, and went out very little in what is called "society." Her fidelity and devotion to her absent lover was remarked by all. Hers was the love of a loyal heart. Oh, may our hearts beat loyal and true to our absent Lord. Soon He will come, and then His rejection will be ended forever. With a shout He will descend from heaven to catch away His beloved and blood-bought bride, the church. Her waiting and her watching will be over then (See 1 Thess. 4:16-17).

Everything is going to be manifested then. All Zibas will be exposed and shown up, and every true Mephibosheth will be rewarded. The Lord says in Revelation 22:12, "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." In the parables of the pounds and talents, it is when the lord of the servants and stewards returns that they are commended or condemned. There is a verse I often think of in connection with this story of Mephibosheth and Ziba. It is in 1st Corinthians, chapter 4 and the 5th verse. "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God." Now to me, this is very solemn. The Lord is coming to put things right among His servants before He draws His "whet" and "glittering sword" against His enemies. He appears as a judge in the midst of His own before He manifests Himself as a mighty warrior against the world. Peter speaks of this. He says, "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (1 Peter 4:17).

And right here I want to say a little about the judgments. I say judgments, because a "general" judgment is only found among the human traditions of the professing church, not in Scripture. Believers in Christ will never be judged for their sins. The One to whom all judgment has been committed by the Father has declared this blessed fact. He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come unto condemnation [judgment]; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). The word rendered "condemnation" here is judgment. In the original Greek it is exactly the same word as that properly rendered "judgment" in verse 22 of the chapter and that wrongly rendered "damnation" in the 29th verse. It is rendered "judgment" in the German Bibles, and in the Douay Bibles too. The Revised Version also gives it "judgment." Just look it up when you get home—"Look and see." The translators of our Authorized King James' Version rendered the word differently in three different verses when they knew perfectly well it was not a different word in Greek. "Why did they do this?" someone asks. Well, I'll tell you. They aimed more at literary polish and smartness than literal exactness. They wanted to make the Bible a literary gem and thought the frequent repetition of a word would mar its beauty. But the Holy Ghost knows best, and our wisdom is to leave the Word of God as He has given it. Who ever dreamed of varnishing a diamond!

But to return to our subject. You will notice there is a difference between condemnation and judgment. A man may come into judgment in a law court, yet not be condemned. For instance, suppose I am charged with some crime and my case is tried. I come into judgment; I am judged. But the witnesses are all examined; their testimony is taken. At last the evidence is all in and the jury acquits me. I have come into judgment, you see, though not into condemnation. I have not been condemned, though judged. But the Christian will not even come into judgment. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has said so. And I believe His words in preference to all the creeds, catechisms, and confessions of faith that were ever written. I take my stand upon His word, though councils, fathers, popes, cardinals, bishops, priests, and all the doctors of the so-called church teach otherwise.

Now, why won't believers come into judgment? Come, turn aside with me and gaze by faith at Calvary's hill and there, behold, not hear, the answer. Who hangs upon that central cross? Jesus! And who is Jesus? The Son of God eternal. And was He a sinner? Absolutely not! Do not breathe so awful a suggestion! Scripture says, He "knew no sin," "He did no sin," and "in Him is no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5). But why did He hang on that cursed tree, since He is sinless? Why does He utter that cry of anguish, "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Ah, He is being "made sin" by God. He is bearing the sins of others—your sins and my sins, beloved fellow-believer, and His holy soul is overwhelmed in the surging waters of divine judgment against sin. Hear Him cry, "All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over

Me!" It is not the nails and spikes that pierce His hands and feet that hold Him to the cross. It is love! Yes, love, "stronger than death" binds and holds Him to that tree as with a chain of everlasting strength! His intense devotion to His God and His matchless love to you and me has made Him willing to be "made a curse for us." Many waters cannot quench such love, and He exhausts the judgment that was due to us. Then He cries in triumph, "IT IS FINISHED!" and bows His blessed head and dies. Now the atoning work is finished, and by faith we see Him on the throne of God, the subsisting righteousness of "all that believe." And God can say of them, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 8:12). And we can say—

So there is now no judgment for the sinner who believes. Christ has borne the judgment.

But while all this is blessedly and divinely true, we must not forget the fact that there is a judgment at which all believers must appear. "For we must all appear [be manifested] before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10). This is when He comes. It is "the time" referred to by the Apostle in a verse already quoted. It is a manifestation. "We must all be manifested." The examining judge "both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." It is for Christians only. No sinner will be there. And persons are not judged, but works. Christ will sit in His judgment-seat, but not as a judge in a criminal court. It will be more like a judge at a fair, or in a contest, or over a school examination where prizes and rewards are given. The eternal destiny of those whose works are being examined is not determined by or at this judgment, but their worthiness or unworthiness to receive crowns of "righteousness," "glory," or "life," is decided.

Let me give an illustration I have often used. Suppose a widowed mother living in the country goes to town to do some shopping. She leaves her four loved children behind and tells them that if they behave themselves during her absence, she will bring each one a present, or reward, when she returns. She distinctly tells them what to do and what they must not do. In the evening she returns with the presents and gathers her children around her for the examination. Mary, the eldest, is first questioned, and, as usual, she has been obedient. She gets a very nice present. Next comes Charley. He has been naughty nearly all day long, as he himself confesses and the others testify. He loses his reward and only gets an orange. The others have behaved only moderately well and get rewards accordingly. And this is like "the judgment-seat of Christ." He has gone away to heaven and left us here to shine for Him in this dark scene of His sorrow and rejection. "Occupy till I come," were His parting words of admonition. When He comes again, He will gather His own redeemed ones around His judgment seat and reward them for their faithfulness. Nothing will be forgotten and nothing covered over. He will say, "Well done," of any little act of service done from love to Him and for His glory. Nothing will lose its reward, not even "a cup of cold water" given in His name. Hidden things will be uncovered. Naughty Christians sometimes cover over things, but the judgment-seat of Christ is going to "bring to light the hidden things of darkness." How this should solemnize and make us careful in our walk as Christians.

But this has its bright side too, or perhaps to put it better, its encouraging as well as its warning side. How many little acts of service Christians sometimes do for Christ of which their fellow-Christians and the world know nothing. They are like little secrets kept between their Savior and themselves until the time of manifestation at His coming. Nothing, however small, will go unrewarded or is going to be overlooked. The closet prayers for straying saints, and unconverted relatives, and friends; the trifle given in secret to the poor or in practical fellowship to some needy servant of the Lord; the tracts quietly distributed—all is coming out for public commendation.

May this encourage us. How many seeming trifles are referred to in the Epistles. Epaphras' prayers for the saints at Colosse, Laodicea and Hierapolis, for instance; or Onesiphorus' diligence in seeking out the Apostle Paul in his Roman prison (Col. 4:12-13; 2 Tim. 1:16-17). God would have us learn from this that He "is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love" (Heb. 6:10)—not that crowns of reward are to be our object. Christ should be our only object. But the Lord would encourage our hearts to true devotion to Himself, as a wise teacher or fond parent might endeavor to encourage diligence in a child by a prize or present as a reward for industry or good behavior. Moses "had respect unto the recompense of the reward," and the Spirit of God commends him for it (Heb. 11:26).

And there is something else. Motives are going to count. The Lord is going to "make manifest the counsels of the hearts." Many have real desire but little opportunity for service to the Lord. He knows our hearts and is going to manifest their "counsels." He knows each longing of devoted hearts, however little their possessors may accomplish. And we fail and sometimes stumble too. But if the "counsels" of our hearts are for His glory, He will not condemn us as unworthy or unfit to serve Him. David was deceived by Ziba and he even misunderstood Mephibosheth, but our Lord knows all. There is no deceiving Him, and He perfectly understands us. The Psalmist says, "Thou knowest my thoughts afar off." Paul said, "He that judgeth me is the Lord." I have read of a colony of honey-bees working in full view under a hive of glass. That is like the workings of our hearts. Our Lord knows all, sees all, understands all, remembers all, and is going to manifest all. And I am glad it is so. What saint would have it otherwise?

Now turn for a little to 1 Corinthians 3. Read from verse 11: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." Here we have a reference to "the time" the Apostle speaks of in the following chapter (vs. 5). Christ is the firm foundation on which every believers' feet are planted. They can sing with joyful confidence,

But the building is our works from the time of our conversion. Faithfulness to Christ is like the gold, silver and precious stones. Trifling with the world and carelessness of walk is building wood, hay, and stubble. The fire is going to try what we have builded. The light manifests, as we have been seeing; here the fire tests. It is all according to the faithful judgment of the Lord.

The works of some abide, and they receive a reward direct from the hand of the Lord once pierced for their sins at Calvary. Others are going to have their works burned up. They "suffer loss," which means they lose the promised crown. They themselves are saved so as by fire. They just get into heaven and that is all. They have no abundant entrance (2 Peter 1:11). It was the rock beneath their feet that saved them. Thank God for that place of eternal security! Once on that rock, none shall ever fall away and perish.

Sinner, where are your feet tonight? If they are not resting on the rock Christ Jesus, there is nothing between your soul and hell but empty space! You may think yourself secure upon the devil's sand foundation of morality and religiousness, but sooner or later it will give way and land you where no hope can ever come. Be warned! The sure foundation has been laid at Calvary. Step upon it. Just rest your soul on Christ once crucified, and you are saved forever. God help you to do it now.

Christians everywhere confound what are two entirely different things in Scripture—salvation and reward. Now, salvation is God's gift. "The gift of God is eternal life" (Rom. 6:23). The reward held out to Christians must be won and earned by faithful service. "So run, that ye may obtain" (1 Cor. 9:24). But you cannot earn a gift. Here I have my watch. I did not pay a penny for that watch. It was a gift to me. I had no watch and needed one. A Christian friend said to me one day, "Here, brother Knapp, is a watch. Please accept it as a gift." And like a sensible man, I took the watch from his hand and thanked him for it. It cost me nothing. It cost him something, but he gave it to me freely. Now that is like God's free salvation. Nine years ago I felt my need. I knew that I was lost and "ready to perish." God in His gospel offered me eternal life. By faith I embraced His offer and received His gift. It cost Him something. "He spared not His own Son." That was the mighty cost. But it cost me nothing. I did not say a prayer to get it. I did not make, one promise or turn over one new leaf to get it. I just received it as God's gift and thanked Him for it. But if I ever get a crown, I must endure and work for it. For salvation, everything has been forever done.

I will illustrate, if I can, the difference between salvation as God's gift possessed by faith in Christ, and the crowns of "righteousness, life and glory" promised to those who, by works of faith, are reckoned worthy of them. Suppose a father has a son named Jamie. It is Jamie's birthday and his father gives him a ten dollar bill as a birthday present. Jamie thanks him, pockets the money and is going away. “Stop a moment," says his father. "There is something more," and he holds up a silver dollar. Jamie comes back to get this too, but his father says, "No, you must earn this. I gave you the ten dollar bill as a birthday gift; you did not work for it; you were not even worthy of it, for your mother says you have been rather naughty of late. But I love you and wish to see you happy, so I have given you the ten dollar bill. But you must work for and deserve this silver dollar if you ever get it. I am going to lay it by until next Thanksgiving Day. If between now and then you are obedient to your parents, get your lessons done well at school and keep out of evil company, I will give you this silver dollar. I do this to encourage you. The bill is yours already. Be careful now and get the dollar by your labor and faithfulness. Run off to school now." Now the ten dollar bill is like eternal life. It is a gift. "I give unto them eternal life" (John 10:28). It is a birthday gift. There are two things for which I shall forever bless God. One is that I was ever born; the other is that I was ever born again. And I received eternal life on the day of my second birth. If you have been "born again," you have eternal life. Every believer has eternal life. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36). It is not promised but possessed. When the Apostle John says, "This is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life," he refers to what was promised previous to this present Christian dispensation. It was a promise then; now it is a real possession. "God hath given to us eternal life" (1 John 2:25; 5:11). But reward for service is entirely different. We must earn that, just as Jamie earns the dollar. And the decision of his father, on the appointed day, is like the day when the Lord shall come, and "then shall every man have praise of God." God give us to always walk and work in view of that coming day.

Two other judgments follow the judgment of believers' works. One is the judgment of the "quick," or living; the other is the judgment of the "dead." The judgment of the living is pre-millennial; the judgment of the dead is post-millennial. The first occurs on earth, in time. The second takes place in eternity, after the earth and the heaven have fled away. At the one in time, the Lord is seated as King on the "throne of His glory;" at the one in eternity, He sits as Judge upon the "great white throne" (See Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 20:11-15). Lack of time forbids my adding more. May what has been said help saints and stir the consciences of sinners hurrying on towards judgment.

There are three classes I want a parting word with: Christians, pretenders like Ziba, and non-professors.

Our Lord is coming back, beloved fellow-believer. As "King of kings, and Lord of lords," He shall descend from heaven to take His rightful throne and place down here. We shall see Him reign with many crowns upon His blessed brow. "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness." That king is Jesus. "His enemies shall lick the dust." Every knee shall bow to Him and every tongue confess that He is Lord to God the Father's glory. That will mean more to us than all the white-robed angels, the street of gold and the pearly gates. It was enough for Mephibosheth that David was enthroned in power once more. "Let him take all," he says of Ziba and the lands. He saw David on his throne, and that was enough for him. And we will see David's Lord enthroned in power when He comes to earth again, and that will make our hearts rejoice.

Is there a Ziba here tonight? If so, I want to tell him that all such as he are going to be exposed. The Lord is coming soon to manifest all sham professors. Christendom is something like the masquerade balls I used to attend before God saved my soul. Men and women were masquerading in all sorts of costumes. Some were dressed as kings and princes. Others were strutting about as plumed knights or noble ladies. But by and by the disrobing time came, and all appeared just as they really were. Remember, religious masquerader, the disrobing time is coming. Your "cloak of hypocrisy" will be taken away some day, and the mask will be torn from your face. Ziba was exposed when the king returned, as you are going to be at Christ's return. God make you real before that day! Scripture says, "The hypocrites' hope shall perish.”

Now I turn to you, my non-professing hearer. It is high time you stirred yourself to action. "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (James 5:8). When once He comes there will be no longer hope for such as you. "The bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut" (Matt. 25:10). Every living Christian will be changed like a flash and caught away. You and every other unconverted sinner who has heard the gospel will be left behind. The door of mercy will be forever closed against you. You will be left absolutely without hope. The largest wagon works in the world are at South Bend, Indiana. A very large force of men are employed, and the manufacturers are compelled to be strict about getting the workmen promptly in their places at the appointed hour. A warning whistle is blown before the outer gates are closed. The moment the whistle ceases to blow the gates are closed. All outside then are forced to return home until a later hour, and thus lose time and pay. I remember passing these works one morning at their hour of commencing work. The warning whistle was being blown and many were passing in. I noticed a few some distance away from the gate who were leisurely walking along as if they had plenty of time. One man was a little behind the rest, enjoying his pipe, as if he wanted to get a few more whiffs before he would have to lay it aside at the entrance of the works. Suddenly, the whistle ceased to blow, the straggler made a leap for the gate, but he was too late. The gates were closed in his very face and he was shut out!

That straggler, sinner, is yourself—you have no time to lose! I sound God's warning in your ear tonight: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Haste thee! Mercy's door stands open wide. Thousands are passing in. Why not you? Perhaps you have some wonderful sin that makes you linger, like the man with his pipe. Don't miss an entrance into heaven for a straw. "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?”

Soon, very soon, the door will close, and then farewell all hope for you!

May God hasten your footsteps, is my prayer for you.

C. Knapp

Blurb:

These six lectures present the gospel and basic Christian truth in a warm, well-illustrated style similar to W. T. P. Wolston’s. Even believers who have long known Christ as their Savior will add many Scripture gems to their collection when reading this. There’s an excellent illustration of the difference between faith and feeling in the life of Isaac and a fresh look at the truth of eternal security with the shepherd in John 10. Even if you’ve long enjoyed the story of Mephibosheth’s trip from Lo-debar to the king’s table, you’ll find new nuggets in this refreshing presentation of that lovely story.

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