

Lecture 7 — A Young Man of Egypt; or, A change of masters.

1 Samuel 30.

Young Men of Scripture.

Nine addresses to young men.

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It is a great thing, my friends, to have a good master, — a just, a fair, a righteous master, — whether it be for time or eternity. Again, it is a bad thing to have a poor master, whether for time or for eternity; and the lesson I learn from this interesting scene in David's life is the importance of being on the right side. Now, no man that is unconverted in this hall tonight is on the right side of the line. No man here this evening, who is unsaved, has a good master. You may tell me you are your own master. That is very easily said, but it is not true. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (John 8: 34).

David comes out, in this passage, as a remarkable type of the Lord Jesus Christ in the position in which he is now. There is no doubt that the Lord Jesus Christ is "Kings of kings and Lord of lords," but the world does not believe it. The Lord Jesus Christ is now exalted at God's right hand. God said to Him, "Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Jesus has been in this world. No one will deny that He has been here. He has been refused here. The world today stands convicted of the solemn truth that the Son of God has been in this scene in sovereign grace. Divine goodness has been personified in the person of the Son of Man, — and the world spat in His face, smote Him with a rod, plucked off the hair from His cheeks, clamoured for His blood, crowned Him with thorns, and hung Him on a tree. When it came to be a question of choice between the Saviour and the robber, the world preferred Barabbas, and said, "Away with this man; crucify him!" Jesus was "numbered with transgressors," led to the cross, gibbeted, mocked, and slain. He was taken down from the cross by loving hands and buried, and the world hoped they would never see Him again. In that they are much mistaken, for "God raised him from the dead." Hatred slew Him, love buried Him, but righteousness raised Him. Before that, however, fear sealed Him in the tomb in which love had placed Him, and fear also put a guard of soldiers round about that tomb. Nor was that all. When He rose from the dead, do you know what took place? His murderers paid the soldiers "large money" — hush-money — to tell lies and say that He was not risen, but that His body had been stolen away by night by His disciples. That was a lie, whereas the truth was this, God had raised Him from the dead, and now He is alive, and has passed up and sat down in glory. But mark! He

is coming back again, and the day is not far distant when the rejected Saviour — the Son of God — will come again into this scene.

This is what I find in figure here. David comes to Ziklag, and finds the city burned, and everything taken away. His foes have worked their will, and have done what they liked. The city is burned, and everybody is taken captive. It is just a figure of what has taken place in the world's treatment of Jesus. When man gets his own way, he always makes away with Jesus. "What shall I do," says Pilate, "with Jesus, which is called Christ?" They all said unto him, "Let him be crucified." See what David does here. He turns to the Lord. He calls on Abiathar the priest to bring the ephod. "And David inquired at the Lord, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? Shall I overtake them?" And the answer of the Lord is very striking: "Pursue," says He; "for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all" (ver. 8). just so will it be with the Lord Jesus Christ Where is Christ? At the right hand of God, and the world is trying to forget Him. Men are now boldly saying, There is no God, no Christ, no heaven, and no hell, and that the story of Jesus is a downright myth.

But what is Christ now doing? Sitting quietly at the right hand of God; but time is rolling on, and the moment is drawing near, when God will make His enemies to be His footstool. That is very solemn for the foes of Jesus. He waits in patience for the day when He will deal with all those that oppose Him. It is no good to say that the world is not opposed to Christ. Let me take the history of any of you here tonight, and ask whether that history has been one of affection to Christ, of subservience to Christ, of devotedness to Christ, or whether it has been one of opposition to Christ. Take a stand for Jesus, and you will find out the world's opposition.

I recollect perfectly well one Saturday evening coming from the country in the train. I was in a long third-class carriage. About the middle of the carriage there were nine or ten people who had evidently been spending the day together, and they had got what you would call jolly. They were very happy, and there was no doubt they had imbibed a good deal of spirituous liquor. They were musical, and sang fairly well, I must say, a lot of Scotch songs. The carriage was full, and everybody listened. At Portobello they all got out, and the compartment was filled by strangers. As the train moved off, I rose and said, "My friends, I have listened with great interest to these songs, but I am not a Scotchman, and I thought I would like to tell you of a song of my native country." They looked at me, curious to know where I had come from. "Well," I said, the song is this — I cannot give you the tune, but can give you the words — 'And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth'" (Rev. 5: 9, 10).

Then I went on and very simply preached the Gospel till the rattle of the train became so loud that my voice could not be heard. At that moment, a distant signal being at "danger," the train was brought to a stop. There was a dead silence in the carriage, broken at length by a voice from the other end, saying, "Is he drunk?" Now the fact was the people who had gone out were, I will not say drunk, but on the high road to it. A second voice said, "He is not drunk." A third added, "I think he is a good man." A fourth rejoined, "But he is not a wise man." "Why?" asked a fifth. "Because he does not know the time or the place," replied the other. The time or the place

to speak about Jesus! Will you tell me when the world wants to hear about the Saviour, and I will be your man, and be there? You see this world does not want Jesus.

How often during my life have I stood at the corner of the streets, and witnessed the servants of God preaching the Gospel of the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, when along comes Constable No. 246, and he says to the preacher, "You must move on. You must not cause an obstruction." "All right," says the preacher, and moves on. I go down the street, and three blocks off is a German band, and crowds of people, but I do not find Constable 246 saying to it "Move on." No, the world likes music. It does not love Christ. That is the truth. You know it. You know I am speaking the truth tonight The world does not want Jesus. But Jesus wants you.

"Shall I pursue after this troop? Shall I overtake them?" says the despised king. God's answer is: "Pursue, for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all." Well, David starts. He has six hundred men in his retinue. It is a grand thing to be among Christ's six hundred. You have heard of another six hundred who, in obedience to orders, went to certain death on the plains of Balaclava. "Noble six hundred!" as the dead poet has well said. Suppose that there are only six hundred in this city tonight on the Lord's side, are you among them? Are you one of the six hundred? Can you, with honesty and truthfulness, say tonight, I am among the Lord's six hundred? If not, understand well that we want recruits for Christ. We get a recruit here in this chapter.

The pursuit is a long one, and in course of time, when they come to a certain torrent Besor, we read that two hundred were so faint that they could not pass over, and so stayed there. Well, if there be some Christians who are faint in their Master's service, the Lord will not forget them. David does not forget his men. He is a good master. Now Christ is my Master, and He does not forget any active service. A cup of cold water given in His name is held in everlasting remembrance. David passes on with the four hundred men, and found a stranger in the field. Do I find you a stranger tonight? There are a good many in this hall tonight whom I know by head-mark, to be the Lord's servants. I am thankful for those concerning whom I can say, That man belongs to Jesus, and that man is following Christ.

Now notice what David's men do. "They found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water. And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins; and when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him, for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk any water, for three days and three nights" (vers. 11, 12). His case looked very bad. He was almost dead. My unconverted friend, your case is worse. You are dead. You are "dead in trespasses and sins." This man was not dead. Life was in him, but he was in a starving condition, and exactly what he needed, David and his servants could minister to him. That is exactly what the Gospel does. What you need, the servants of Christ can proclaim to you. They can minister to you "the bread of life" and "the water of life." Are you a needy sinner, a man ruined before God, needing and desiring salvation? Then it is proclaimed to you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Is it salvation you want? You may have it. Christ the Saviour has died for such as you, and there is nothing but grace in the heart of God towards you. This is the day of grace, the day of salvation. The day of judgment is not yet come. God is, as it were, putting the drag on the wheels of His chariot of judgment, but the day of judgment must take the place of the day of grace.

Ere the day of judgment arrives, what has come? Grace! And what is grace? It is God's love putting on a new character — a new colour. After man has sinned, and before the day of judgment the Son of God appears as Saviour. Grace is the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ into this world, and fulfilling the work which He only could do — the work of atonement and redemption, which enables God in righteousness to save the guiltiest man. There is no man too *bad* for Christ. I have met many who were too good for Christ. They did not want saving. They did not need conversion. I remember one such man. He was a hall-keeper.

I was speaking in Bristol to a meeting of between two and three thousand people. Hall-keepers like to see a full house, and to know that the speaker is heard in every part of their hall. At the close of the meeting he came up to me and said, "A grand meeting tonight." "Yes," I replied, "a very good meeting." "Full hall," said he, "and everybody heard you." "Thank God," I replied, "there was better than that, God has been working, and saving souls. Did you hear the voice of the Son of God?" "Oh!" he said, "I was outside. I was looking after some boys who were making a noise." "Did you ever hear the voice of the Saviour?" I asked. "What do you mean?" said he. "Are you converted?" "Converted! I don't think you know me, sir." "No," I replied, "I never had the pleasure of meeting you till tonight." "Converted!" said he, "conversion is all very well for these wicked rascals found in the lower parts of the town, but perhaps you don't know that not a drop of the cursed thing has gone down my throat for six and thirty years." Then he drew himself up, as much as to say, I am the one man in the world that does not need a Saviour. I left him. I have no gospel for a man like that; he is far too good for Jesus. He was wrapped up in a coat of mail of his own self-righteousness. It would require a seventy-two ton gun of the Holy Ghost, so to speak, to break through that coat of mail. That man needed crushing up. He needed breaking down.

This poor Egyptian, however, in our chapter wanted neither crushing up nor breaking down. He wanted picking up, and that is what he got. What he needed David ministered to him. And they gave him not only "bread and water," but what illustrates, in a certain sense, the excess of grace, for "they gave him a piece of cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins; and when he had eaten his spirit came again to him." The Gospel not only meets the need, the downright deep need of the sinner's soul, in pardoning his sins and bringing him to God, but it lavishes that which rejoices and charms the soul. It not only reveals to the soul his pardon as a guilty sinner, but it fills the heart with joy. I don't mind telling you frankly that it is thirty-three years since God saved me one Sunday evening in London. And what has gone on in these thirty-three years? Every year that has passed was better than the one previous. Tonight I am happier than ever. After thirty-three years spent in the service of the Saviour, what do I find? Fuller joy and gladness, deeper happiness, more peace and joy, each just like the snowball rolling and gathering. Tonight I would give anything under the sun for you to know what I know. Would to God that you knew the Saviour that I know. I can commend my Master, my Saviour, to every soul in this hall tonight, and if you have never been brought to have to do with the Lord Jesus Christ, give me your hand and let me bring you to Him just now. It is the business of the evangelist to bring the sinner to Jesus, and that is what I find in this story. "They brought him to David." That was the best thing that ever happened to this young man. The Gospel does similarly. It brings a man to Jesus. The Gospel meets you where you are. Oh that I could bring you to Jesus!

When brought in destitution and misery — a foe and a stranger — to David, before a single question is put the Egyptian's need is met, and I have no doubt, as he opened his eyes, and his strength came to him again, he would say to himself, "I have got into good company." He was quite right. When he heard the men speaking of the one into whose presence he was brought, and learned that it was David, he must have said to himself, "I am in the presence of the one against whom I have helped to do so much mischief, and whose city I have burnt." Without doubt conscience acted. It is always a good day for a man when he listens to the voice of his conscience. "And David said unto him, To whom belongest thou? and whence art thou? And he said, I am a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and my master left me, because three days ago I fell sick. We made an invasion upon the south of the Cherethites, and upon the coast which belongeth to Judah, and upon the south of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag with fire" (vers. 13, 14).

Now, observe that David's two questions are answered in a most honest way by this young man; and I would to God that every young man could hear from heaven the voice of the despised and rejected Saviour, as He says to each one, "To whom belongest thou? and whence art thou?" That is a serious question. To whom do I belong? There are but two masters. Christ said no man can serve two masters. If Christ is not your master, then mammon is the means that the devil takes to keep and hold you by. Mammon! A little money! How many a man has sold his soul for money? Judas did, and he has had many followers.

There was a shipwreck on our coasts some time ago. A ship struck upon a sunken rock, and the lifeboat put out to rescue the crew. The lifeboat drew near that sinking ship, and all got safely in except the captain and the first mate. "Get aboard," said the captain to the latter. "Wait a minute, captain," and he dived down the companion ladder to fetch something from the cabin. The captain saw the folly of the act, and jumped into the lifeboat, which pushed off at once, just as the vessel was submerged. The mate who had gone down to the cabin went to the bottom. All the rest were saved. A few days afterwards divers went out to see what could be done with the vessel, and they found the corpse of the mate in the cabin. In his right hand was something tightly grasped. They brought him on deck, and unclasped the clenched fist. His purse came out. They opened it. It contained — eighteen pence! And that man lost his life for a wretched eighteen pence! Ah, you say, What a fool! Do I hear you say, What a fool to lose his life for eighteen pence? But what are you risking your soul for? It may mean pounds in your case; but, mark, your soul is at stake. "To whom belongest thou?" Whom are you serving? Money may be your god here, but it will be no company for you in hell. Lucre may be your object now, it will give you no consolation in the lake of fire. God grant that you may find the true riches. I implore you, Come to Jesus!

"To whom belongest thou, and whence art thou?" says the king here to this stranger, and gets for answer, "I am a young man of Egypt." I am a worldling. Egypt in Scripture is the figure of the world — where Satan reigns. Egypt is the type of the world as a sphere of sin, lust, and folly, and holds every man until he is converted and brought to God. This man says, "I am a young man of Egypt," but he goes further — "Servant to an Amalekite." Amalek has a large place in Scripture. It is the flesh, used by the devil to keep a man away from God. He does not care how he keeps you, or how he holds you. He is not careful as to the means by which he maintains his grip of you. "Divers lusts and pleasures" are his tackle. With one man it is money,

with another the wine cup, with another the gambling hell, with another the card table, with another the race-course. With others it may merely be the football field, the cricket field; or something yet more refined, as music, painting, sculpture, and the like; but Satan uses the flesh to be your keeper.

It is a very small matter what comes in between your soul and Christ If there be, as it were, but the thickness of the finest piece of gold leaf between your soul and Christ, where are you? You are on your road to eternal judgment It is better far to own that you are the servant of the Amalekite, than to shut your eyes to your real state. This young man fully owns his, saying, "And my master left me, because three days ago I fell sick." I think that is very touching. He was left to die like a dog in the field, because he could not be of use to his old master. The devil eventually treats all his servants badly. Look at the prodigal in Luke 15. As long as he had plenty of money, he was "Hail fellow, well met." As long as his funds held out he was sought for, but afterwards "no man gave unto him." I daresay some of you know the same thing. What a nice fellow you were when you had plenty of money. Everybody was your friend. When your money ran out some of your boon companions — your quondam friends — put up their glasses, and even then did not see you. They simply dropped you when you were of no more use to them. When you want the world, the world does not want you. That is the example you get from this scene.

What a tale! "My master left me, because three days ago I fell sick." I was of no more use to him, and he left me to die like a dog in the field. You know the story of Beau Brummel — the man who said to royalty, "George, ring the bell." He was the leader of Europe's fashion. The cut of his coat and the shape of his collars were copied, and so favoured was he by royalty that he made a bet that he would ask a royal prince to ring the bell, and he did it. The prince, offended by the request, nevertheless complied, and the bell was rung. When the footman came, the command was given, "Order Mr Brummel's carriage," and from that moment he fell. You know how he died. In a dirty, low garret in Paris, felled by the most loathsome disease that can attack a man — smallpox — he lay alone and neglected, with none to soothe him, or close his dying eyes. That is just an illustration of how the devil treats his servants. You had better change your master. It is far better to be on Christ's side.

The young Egyptian, encouraged by David's grace, makes a clean breast of his sins. "We made an invasion on the south . . . and we burned Ziklag with fire." He says in effect — I know who you are, the one against whom I have sinned; but I know that there is enough grace in your heart to forgive all, even though I helped to put the flame to your city. The man who owns his sin always gets blessing from God. The man who owns his true state is the man who invariably receives mercy from God. Oh that you might own your sin, and if you have been until now a man of the world, and amongst those who are serving the flesh and the devil, would now change your master God is giving you a fine chance tonight.

"And David said to him, Canst thou bring me down to this company?" He says, as it were, Will you have a new master? That is the proposal God makes to you tonight. Young man, will you have a new master? Unconverted, unsaved man, will you have a new master? It is a very fine answer that David gets here. "Swear unto me by God that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this company" (ver. 13). He wants

to be sure of his own safety, and of his full and final deliverance from the captivity which had been so galling to his spirit. "Canst thou bring me down to this company?" is Christ's word to you also. Wilt thou be converted, and go back to your old friends, taking God with you? The Lord converted me at ten o'clock one Sunday night, and what did I do? I went straight away home to my lodgings in the north of London, where was a young fellow who lived with me. He had been that night at the meeting with me, but at the close of the preaching he went home, while I stayed, and was converted.

When I got home he was seated in front of the fire, and tears were rolling down his cheeks. He was anxious to be saved. I said, "Well, Tom, how is it with you?" He turned and said, "I see how it is with you. I know it by your face." "Thank God!" I replied, "I am saved. I believe in Jesus, and He has saved me." And then what did I do? I tried to bring my friend to Jesus, and within twenty-four hours I had the joy of seeing him at the Saviour's feet, and seeing him on the Lord's side. There is nothing more glorious and blessed than, first of all, to come to the Saviour, and then to bring men to Him.

"Canst thou bring me down to this company?" the Lord Jesus Christ says to you tonight. Wilt thou be Mine from this night forth? is the query. "Swear to me by God that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and *I will bring thee down to this company,*" said the Egyptian. Assured of salvation, he would willingly serve. So is it with the redeemed soul now. But you need have no doubts as to the Lord's purpose regarding you. He will not kill you! Christ kill you? "The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Luke 9: 56). He came to bless. The Son of God came in grace to bring you life. Kill you? Who would dream of putting a question like that to Christ now? Yet it is in some hearts tonight. To all such doubting believers, what does the Lord say? "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand" (John 10: 27).

Faith confides in Jesus, and then follows Him, or, as in this case, starts to serve Him. If you receive Jesus now, there is a link formed between you and the blessed Saviour that never can be broken by any possibility. A new life, a new history, a new service start with conversion. God saves you where you are, and you start on Christ's side. Perhaps you say, I will believe the Gospel. I have been thinking of it many a time. I have been coming to these meetings for six or seven nights, but tonight — Well! what about tonight? Who says, "I will bring thee down to this company"? Who will be the Lord's from this moment? Will you?

The young Egyptian brought David down to his old company, and what was the result? They were found "eating, and drinking, and dancing." That is just what the men of the world are doing now, "eating, drinking, and dancing." They forget the past, and do not fear the future. They ignore sin, and hope that there will be no judgment, but judgment comes. What follows? "David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day, and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, which rode on camels and fled" (ver. 17). Some of them — four hundred young men — got away, but, in the day when the Lord comes in judgment, there will be no camels for you to flee on. There will be no way of escape then; you may be perfectly sure of that. "For when they shall say peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Thess. 5: 3). You had

better get to Jesus now. If you are wise you will turn to the Saviour now. If you belong to Him tonight, you can enter on His service straight off.

Get under the flag of salvation, and become one of those who gladly own Christ as their Master. I know that your old comrades may call you a turn-coat. Never mind that. When I was converted I was to have sung at a concert, but I wrote to the conductor and said, "The Lord has saved me, and if I come down to your concert I shall have to sing about Christ. I cannot sing about anything else now; I must sing about Christ, and if I do so I am rather afraid I shall spoil your concert." I did not go, and when people asked where I was, the answer was given that it was feared that my head was turned. It was better than that, my heart was turned, and I wish you had the same complaint. I wish you would turn round and start for the Lord. I have such a good Master, and such a good service now, that I can heartily commend Him and it to you. It is a magnificent thing to be a servant of the Lord, and I pity the man who is still on the devil's side. I implore you, Get out of that damnation corps — the company serving under the black flag of eternal damnation. Get to the Lord, and if your course in life be long or short, there will be nothing but sweetness and gladness in it.

Look at what follows here! Look at the spoil they got. And what about the two hundred who were stopped by the flood of the brook Besor? Ah, they got the same reward as those who went to the battle! David was faithful and considerate to those whose weakness had detained them. "As his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: THEY SHALL SHARE ALIKE" (ver. 24). The rewards are yet to be distributed, for faithful service, and as David did not forget the men who abode with the stuff, so Christ our Lord says, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22: 12).

The truth of *reward* for service is very fully developed in the New Testament. It is never a motive for devotedness, but is always a holy incentive. No action done for Christ can ever be forgotten, "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward" (Mark 9: 41). Again, we read: "A certain nobleman (Christ) went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come" (Luke 19: 12, 13). When the Lord returns one man can say, "Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds" (ver. 16). He is set over ten cities. Another says, "Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds" (ver. 18). In this case the ability of the servant would seem to be equal, but their *devotedness* or their zeal differed, and the reward is proportionate — rule over ten cities, and five respectively. On the other hand, we read, "Unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one to every man *according to his several ability*" (Matt 25: 15). Here the ability differs, and the talent committed in trust is in view of that. When the Lord returns the first can say, "Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents; behold I have gained beside them five talents more" (ver. 20). The second says, "Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents; behold I have gained two other talents beside them." To each of these, whose *ability* differed, but whose *devotedness was equal*, — for each had doubled his capital, — the Lord says, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been *faithful* over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (vers. 2 1, 23). The ability differed, but, the devotedness being equal, the reward is identical.

To serve such a Master is joy indeed. Forget not that He says, "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be; if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (John 12: 26).

In conclusion, I implore you to turn to the Lord now, and then if your friends should call you a turncoat, I will tell you what answer you should give them. just say to them, "Imitate me, and you will be on the right side of the line, and will have the right Master." May you give your hearts to Jesus now, and from this night forth be able to say, I am on Christ's side through infinite grace, and am seeking to serve Him, the best of Masters.