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THE SIN OF THE UNDONE

Judges 5:23

Mē'roz

Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

Theologians divide sin into two classes. Omission and commission. Commission equals the down fall of the prodigal son, who wasted his life. Who made a mess of things by going in the wrong direction. He spent his time sowing wild oats. There are thousands like him.

Omission is just as deadly as the other. James 4:17 therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Having the knowledge of what ought to be done, and failing to do it is sin.

V, 12

Deborah was prophetess in Israel - she was an extra ordinary woman. She might have had great rank today. Even as she did in her day, because she was a splendid example of intellect and of dealing with the extra ordinary things at her hour. She left her mark upon the history of the world forever. She had religion and she pursued the things that were of interest to her God.

During her time they were exposed the violence of the Canannites under the tyrant Hazor, who had a general named Sisera.

V, 14

She summons Barak to advance into the country with 10,000 men in order to attack Sisera. And Barak refused unless the prophetess with herself accompany him, and his soldiers. He lacked the needful strength and the conviction. She warned him that he would forfeit the honor of the victory. Now Sisera

brought up 900 chariots of iron and of course, you know the story that he was defeated in some great way that is almost unaccountable. Even the (stars) in Heaven fought in behalf of Israel on this occasion.

V. 12 V. (2) There were many who willingly offered their services.
V. 13 (Highway empty) How does that compare today? Paths Thronged with By roads - nothing on main rd.

V. 15-16 V. (15 and 16) - Reuben made great resolves but really never accomplished a whole lot. It was really an emotional thing, when he was called to defend the Lord's cause. He was a glow with love and admiration. There are many people who resemble this today. Who, after entering Christ's service, begin to cool down and try to make a compromise. Reciprocal Relations - Not Exchange for Battlefield.

What position does your son play on the football team, Mr. Jones? "I'm not sure"; replied Mr. Jones "But I think he's one of the drawbacks!"

V. 17 V. (17) - Dan remained in ships. He was engrossed in the cares of life and so he stayed on the seashore. Like many people today who pray, let us be excused. We are extremely sorry. We wish you success. The honor of God's name touches them very lightly if at all. But they think about preserving their own worldly interests. Busy Loading + Unloading Ships, Stopping Leaks, Mending the Sails.

Now this is the case of the seed that fell on thorny ground - the cares of this world soon choke out the Word.

There was no room for Jesus in the inn. Neither is there room in a heart which is already filled with the world for the things of God.

Demas ^{sell} forsook the Christian way - having loved this present world.
St Louis State way west - Arch. I ride Top work out - Top away - 12" in wind!
Group up - Owen Cooper's wife - Talented talling archer - Arch Bishop
How many people tonight would sell their prospects of immortal happiness for a mess of pottage. The world steals away their affections.

Gad was indifferent to the call. They had no heart for the call of God. And at the bottom of their heart there lay indifference. It seemed to be no concern of theirs. And this is a criminal way to treat a responsibility.

I. What Does The Bible Say About This Sin.

We have noted the praises of Deborah. And Reuben listened to the sheep and the reed blowing. Dan was secure in his ships. And Asher was unmoved.

First, the Old Testament. Now the town of Meroz in the book of Judges where Deborah was judged - ordered Barak to fight Sisera. Now Sisera was defeated. And the people of Meroz did not come to fight. They were busy with their own affairs. It did not suit them at that time.

Deborah pronounced a curse against them because they did not help.

Judges 5:23 - Only once in the Scripture is this mentioned. Right near the battle field - they were in sight and could hear the strife. And they turned a deaf ear and they had a cold heart.

Visions of a People that had no church in struggle to stay alive - not helping

While their hearts were hardened - the fighting went on. And the very stars in their courses battled against Sisera in that great storm. And the swollen waters of Kishon was laden with the bodies of the dying and the dead.

The dreaded chariots of iron were put into confusion. And it all ended in the

tragic death of Sisera, the general, in the tent of Jael. And the chapter concludes with Sisera's mother expecting her son's return - but here is one

who is missing in action. Israel had hazzarded her life - Meroz saw all of this.

*V 20
V 21
V 22
V 26
V 28*

And knew all of this and had no part - and took no part. Dan and Asher were both too absorbed with their seafaring populations and their trade. Reuben had felt the agony, but had stayed with a shepherd's life. And this truly is a dark patch of human passion. Not to have taken part in the pursuit of Sisera was naturally a crime.

Deborah was interested in her people.

Just as David ^{at the time} reserves his enthusiasm for the friends of God, and for the success and the risk of God's kingdom. He once said "as the captives in Babylon, if I forget thee Oh Jerusalem. Let her right hand forget her cunning - if I do not remember thee. Oh let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth. Yea, if I remember not Jerusalem."

long for date drummed church

The language of Deborah was not the expression of just a person, a social. Or political spite, as was the language of David and Ezra. It was not only her cause, it was not really the cause of her country as such. It was the cause of the Lord God.

The doctrine here of responsibility and knowledge of truth and duty could not be taught any clearer.

Jesus spoke out on the whoes of Chorazin and Bethsaida.

He spoke out against Capernaum. Matthew 11:21, 23.

Why should he have predicted the tears and the sorrows and the desolation of Jerusalem. Matthew 23:37.

weep

What was the meanings of the many sayings in which he proclaimed the necessity of accepting and the danger of rejecting himself. Luke 19:27.

Paul pronounced Anathemas against false faith. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ - let him be Anathema. I Cor. 16:22.

Second, the New Testament. The Bible has a lot to say about this sin.

The fig tree. Jesus walked toward Bethany - saw a fig tree, there was no fruit. And he pronounced a curse against it. Not because the fruit was weak or poison - but it bore no fruit. Omission.

Talents. Jesus praised the men who had invested their talents. But the one who had buried his - he lost it because of what he did not do with it. The sin of omission.

The ten brides maids - five of them missed the wedding. Not from what they did, but because of what they failed to do. Five of them failed to get oil for their lamps. The sin of omission.

The Church at Laodicea. It was rich but it was condemned for doing nothing. The sin of omission.

v. 31 Let their love, Lord be as the Sun - for your Real Love to keep.

II. What Causes This Sin

What precisely was the sin of Meroz. They were found wanting on a great occasion. And yet they knew what their responsibility was.

What caused them - why is it that people are useless. And why are people not enlisted in battle for God.

Why do people take church obligations lightly. They never speak to Christ, they never go to church.

In an Iowa town of 8,000 people, a survey showed only 600 people went to church on a given Sunday. Now when we think of the causes and the reasons - there are three or four, I think that would claim our immediate attention.

First, pre-occupation. Now some people are good folks, they are honest but they are engaged in different things. Over in the Gospel we find people just like that when we read that one man had bought a piece of land. Another man had bought five yoke of oxen. And yet another man had married a wife. All of these were taken up with legitimate things. But they were all guilty of the sin of omission.

Coleridge might have been one of the greatest writers in all of history. He spent most of his time planning masterpieces. After planning, he would lay the work aside. When he died those who went through his effects were surprised. At the splendid things he had intended to do - but had never carried through to completion.

This means people are allowing things to crowd out their religious life. They are leaving undone their duties.

Second, there are those indifferent. Many people say, what good is

going to church or Christian work, or prayer, or reading the Bible.

Now if we consider what we, ourselves, would have done under similar circumstances - just how would we have re-acted from the duty of patriotism - men today are indifferent. Say this land was being invaded - freedom was being taken. And some American towns would be lying in the very valley or in the path where your help or assistance was needed. And you refused to assist. Do you think that the writers of the newspapers would review the campaign without denouncing you. Would you insist and say that I had no concern here.

Henry Crowell / going West to die of T. B. / saw a "for sale" sign from a train window on an old store building window. He got off, bought the building, and tried his hand at making rolled oats. He was still living at the age of 90 years.

Some men said to the Master, we have fished all night and taken nothing. Quite often a person says I have been teaching a class, I have been leading a group. And so I am going to quit - what is the use. They become indifferent. Jesus often became weary in his work, but he never tired of going on and fulfilling his duties.

Charles Kingsley said, "thank God every morning when you get up that you have something to do that day which must be done."

Third, someone treated me wrong. Who knows but perhaps Meroz had felt that maybe in times past politically they had been by-passed. And they had some private opinions and grudges, and hesitations about entering the battle.

Someone has said something untrue, something unjust or unkind. And so we will let the Master's work go because of that.

It is sometimes amusing that people, members of the church, would like for the church to become a nursery. And the preacher to be the chief nursemaid to deliver bottles to all those who have feelings.

✓ Fourth, engrossed in cares of life. People say we do not appreciate your work and I am engrossed in my work - and so I will not do my share.

Very few people appreciated Jesus but he did not stop - he stayed with it. How little would be done if the great souls who served humanity waited for the appreciation of the people.

I'll tell you, people are not always thankful, and do not always express their appreciation.

Robert Burns was given a stone instead of bread by the people who lived around him. And there is a Scripture that says, "let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap." And that is a lot of help in days of discouragement.

✓ Fifth, the cause was bound up in religion. There failure was far greater than just duty. It was the cause of the church. It was the cause of Israel. God was in the midst of that state. And they were not just wanting in duty to the race of Abraham and Jacob. They were not just wanting in tradition to Moses and Joshua. It was being unfaithful to the true King.

The Scripture says plainly, Meroz would not come to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

Now why Meroz failed, I do not know. I have suggested to you some reasons - causes for this sin. But if we probe for the explanation, they may have been selfish in their calculations. And thought that the tide of war would go against God's people and they would be rewarded by the enemy.

To refuse aid to the sacred cause until it was certain of success - might have been in the heart of Meroz.

The real cause might have been that they were stubborn and they just refused to help on the Lord's side. They were very near to the battlefield - only a little to the North. And they could have stopped the enemy, but for some unaccountable reason, they declined to give any assistance. They turned the movement of Sisera's army into retreat.

"To whom much is given, much will be required."

Whatever the cause, these people were virtually taking the side of God's enemies. And they were doing so on a day of decision. They would rather give their sympathies to Sisera - the despiser of God. They would act in treason against him.

People today in days of revival and redemption - when God is trying to empant new life in the church will settle down in their old habits and the result is that they are wedded to evil and insensible to good. They have a hard crust.

✓
III. The Consequences of This Sin

If this sin is continued in, it can destroy even the most precious possessions that we hold dear.

Meroz is (never unrepresented) in history. Now God went ahead and conquered Sisera at the proper time, without the aid of Meroz. As doubtless he came. But the question is, here is one who plainly disobeyed God.

Now Meroz was not merely politically cut off. But religiously excommunicated. Curse ye Meroz / yes, the words still live today. They are still heard in the souls of men.

Men still hear a voice, the angel of the Lord. And conscience prophesing within them. They have deliberately rejected a known duty. And God cannot destroy.

You, in your own experience, will best decide on the justice of this charge. It is not simply to leave undone what you might do - it is to probably fail to be what you might have been. It is to exchange a higher place in the state of moral life for a lower one.

Now nothing is lost by our failure to obey God's call. The great struggle of good and evil, of truth and error - which was raging when Deborah judged Israel. It rages still.

Sisera never really dies. Deborah is always despairing, triumphant, hoping. And the opportunities to generously serve Jesus Christ still come to men. And sometimes these opportunities come and we fail to use them and they

it.

Third, what about your church. During World War II, there were at least 4000 church buildings and surrounding countries blown to bits. But I believe there is another way to destroy churches besides the use of bombs.

You just act like the people at Meroz and you will destroy your church. When it is time for you to attend your church - you go off fishing, play golf, sleep, go on pleasure trips.

Never Take time to pray for your church and her work.

Never give any of your money to missions through your church.

Group women talking - One own congregation down 30-40 Sun. night. another mission " 6-7. One lady whinged "its so bad at our church on sun. night that when minister say "Blessed" Spend a good deal of your time gossipping about it and talking. "Beloved" "it makes me blush"

For example, I used to know a woman that I talked to once, about teaching a Sunday School Class. And her story was that I am engaged - I am a busy person. Now some of the things that she listed off to me - she was sewing for the Red Cross, knocking on doors for various campaigns, she worked in the PTA in the school, she was prominent in the Civic League that had to do with a lot of suppers and a lot of politics.

Now with a few folks like that - you can write Ichabod over the door - which means the glory of the Lord has departed.

Don't you pity anyone who has to get down on their knees to ask you to do something for your own church. Imagine some of the silly excuses you have given

for not standing for Christ.

Something great was expected. The Lord did not especially need the help of Meroz - but they needed his help.

They had an opportunity to show their obedience to God.

If time permitted me, I could tell you other experiences of people who have just ignored and been stubborn about letting the church alone. I remember Dr. Payne who used to be pastor at the 4th street church in Portsmouth - and he talked about a woman who had been living in the city for a good while. He talked to her about uniting with the church and being active. Well, she said, my aunt is buried at the old church down in the country. I have three uncles buried there. Mother's two sisters and she went on to list a rather long list of people who were in the cemetery. Dr. Payne said, well, my friend - you are not a member of the church - you are a member of the cemetery.

And I suspect there are people on the rolls of the church who are members of the cemetery and not members of the living church of God.

Dr. Gordon once wrote, in the Baptist Program, that he met a lady and he asked her about her church membership, and she said she was a member of Dr. Gates' church in San Antonio. He said at the time that she made that statement that the dear sister probably did not know that Dr. Gates had been dead for 20 years. And that Dr. Roy Angell had succeeded him and had already moved to Miami. And he had been succeeded by Perry Webb, who had been the preacher there for 15 years. Yet, she was still a member of that church.

Fourth, what about your soul. What many people neglect to do is the cause

John Stewart - Wounded "Willing to die for God & My Country"
Thinks he have fulfilled my Destiny - Minister Came,
Do you have a request? - Feb-14- Sing "Rock of Ages" - Sang
Justly & Sidel - Buried Hollywood - Richmond, Va
Civil War for the loss of their souls.

Because whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.
a woman said in a courtroom heard a judge give to you to 21 yr son - drinking, gambling
robbery & shooting man. "judge asked young man don't you believe in God?" son sang "God, who's that?"
"God, who's that?" Every eye on the mother - Little girl gave 50. worship - married - children
Husband not go Meroz was reaping what they had sown so God put a curse upon them.
so she stayed - Bowing from sun - Now to you - "God, who's that" - Train up child & duty -

How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation. If we pay no attention to repeated invitations, If you neglect the best farm land in this country - weeds will take over. If you neglect to swim when you fall in the river - how will you escape. If you neglect Christ and salvation - how shall you escape from being lost. 2 Cor. 5:20.

I plead with you not to be guilty of the sin of the undone. Yours may not be professionally done or done as well as you may have liked - but by all means, see that you do something for Christ.

Moody was preaching in a tent during an exposition in Chicago. He used the text, the son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. When the sermon ended, a policeman (lifted) a little boy out of the crowd and he was lost. And Mr. Moody took the little fellow in his arms and asked the people to look at this lost child. This child has a father - and no doubt that father is looking for him at this moment. The father is more anxious to find the boy - than the boy is to be found. It is so with God, our Heavenly Father. He is seeking, he is searching for us.

Just then, a man - whose face was pale and excited - elbowed his way to the platform. As he reached it with outstretched arms - the little fellow ran quickly across and the crowd burst into cheers. Thus Moody cried, will God receive you if you will run to him today.

Funeral for Mass yesterday - I asked the widow
did they attend the little -15- church in their community
(they had said yes to you) she replied "I'm sorry we haven't"!

God wants your service. He wants you. He is inviting you as Deborah
invited Meroz. But Meroz decided they would have nothing to do with the work
of the living God. They would not volunteer.

V. 31 - The end of the ungodly. All the enemies of the Lord shall surely
perish. And the day is not far off which will be marked the difference between
the righteous and the wicked. Between him that serves God and him who serves
him not. The Lord Jesus will be revealed from Heaven with his mighty angels
and flaming fire. Taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey
not the Gospel. Then they that love him will be as the son - when he goeth
forth in his might. The righteous will shine forth as a son in the kingdom.
Hold onto your faith without wavering with the certainty of this great reward.

There are occasions when a man cannot be neutral -
When the Lord calls for help against the mighty - He that withholds that help is cursed -
By refusing to help he aids the wicked -

Ephraim, Benjamin, Issachar, Manasseh, Zebulun, Nephthali were pouring out
their thousands to defend their homes, freedom of God's people, to honor God, for the cause of truth.

Men of Meroz hung back -

Angel of Lord looked out from windows of heaven -

In our own time enemies of the cross & church would overthrow with

lit, intellect, fashion -

Appeal to his redeemed - who is on the Lord's side?

When factory glorified Bar of steel, weighing 500 lbs suspended large chain
Average size cork suspended slender silk thread - set in motion - swing gently against
cord to strike reg 10 min, heavy bar moves slightly - then both
cord & bar swinging together nicely, pendulum of a clock -
many we not making deal upon nations sin - Not so!
God's power through weak believer, spiritual weapon - pull down
strongholds - harmony with Lord, his word, cumulative influence -