

It is common to regard J. as one of the wildest characters of the Bible. J. was neither a godless nor a selfish man. Not godless for we find in his life more copious recognition of God than in case of most of the other judges; and not selfish, because, forgetting his private wrongs, he devoted his life to the service of his country. We shall be nearer the truth if we regard J. as a good man, sadly misguided; a man roughly trained, poorly educated, and very deficient in enlightened views; wishing to serve God but in great error as to what would prove an acceptable service.

He had the grievous misfortune to have a wicked mother, a woman of abandoned character; father no better; childhood must have been very dreary. No good example, no holy home, no mother's affection, no father's wise and weighty counsel. If he owed little to his parents he owed less to his bros. By them he was kicked out of his father's house; driven forth into the wide world to shift for himself. The motive for this was to keep him from sharing in his father's inheritance; to keep to themselves the largest possible share. A wretched revelation truly of family spirit. The life to which he resorted was wild and rough but was not considered immoral in those days. He became a freebooter carrying on an irregular warfare in the form of raids for plunder. The occupation was very unfavourable to religious life and yet somehow he acquired deep religious impressions. He was strong vs idolatry because he had a deep regard for the God of Israel, and had been led in some way to recognize the obligation to serve Him only, and to be jealous for his glory.

What a strange feeling J. must have had when his bros. and old neighbors came to him, inviting him and imploring him to become their head; trying as best they could to undo their former unkindness, and get him, for their safety, to assume the post for which not one of them was fitted. It is amazing what an ill-treated man may gain by patiently biding his time.

J. was remarkable for two great qualities----

1. He depended on God for everything
2. He dedicated everything to God

"WHY ARE ye come unto me now when ye are in distress?"

They come in poverty, weakness and humiliation. Some people can only be taught when they are whipped.

Church might ask this question

Bible can also "What you back again? What has happened now? Some one dead property lost, not well? What do you want with me today?"

OPENED MOUTH

1. Confessed faith in Saviour
2. Declared ourselves to be His disciples--followers
3. Master
4. Cast in our lot with His people

J. sacrificed his daughter to the true God--- Modern J. are theirs to-- false gods---

1. Idleness--indolence is ruin
2. God of worldliness
3. God of ambition, vanity, fashion

J. sacrificed only the body of his daughter but many souls now

J. paid his vow.

His rash vow---

1. It was characteristic of the age and the man
2. It was inspired by no low motive

MORAL

Beware of bargaining with God

Our vows ought not to be in order to purchase God's favour, but to testify our gratitude.

II His Vow

1. Suddenly made
2. Seriously made 30-31

III His Victory

1. Complete 32-33
2. Costly 34-35
3. Of the Cross 36-40

IV His Virtues

1. He sought not to save himself
Tempted to retract
2. He made an unspeakable sacrifice
3. He kept his vow
Rather die than break it
4. He was enrolled with the saints to the 113