



## The *Pulpit Exchange*

It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. (1 Corinthians 1:21)

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. (Nehemiah 8:8) Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend. (Proverbs 27:17)

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### **Danger of Producing Mocking Children** — **2 Kings 2:23**

“If a man be trained early in life to right habits — habits of religion, habits of virtue, truth, righteousness, and piety — it is expected that these habits being truly formed will grow with his growth and strengthen with his strength. We have seen this principle repeatedly illustrated. For example you have perhaps inserted characters into the tender bark of the young tree. And if you

return to the tree in the next season, you then find that these characters have become wider and deeper than they were when you placed them there.

So it is with the character of truth imprinted in the young and tender mind. It has been remarked that a vessel generally retains the savour of the liquid with which it was first seasoned, so long as any part of the vessel

### **IN THIS ISSUE**

#### *Child Training*

#### **Danger of Producing Mocking Children**

— **2 Kings 2:23**

**73**

#### *Book Reprint*

#### **One Hundred Lessons In Bible Study**

**90**

remains. How true does this observation apply to the mental constitution of youth. And how important then that it should have the seasoning of the right kind — the seasoning of true piety, love to God and love to man.”

That writing does have its limitations; through repentance the seasoning can be changed. However, the fact remains that the wrong seasoning is not very often changed. Not very many people with the wrong seasoning

cry out to God for mercy so that it could be changed. Also, how inappropriate it would be for any of us to put the wrong seasoning in any of our children and then ask God to cancel its effects. All that forms a background for our subject, “The Danger of Producing Mocking Children.” Mocking is the wrong kind of seasoning. Anytime anyone makes fun of another that is mocking, or anytime anyone holds another in contempt or

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scorn that is part of mocking. Of course, anytime anyone would imitate another's actions with the intent of making fun of him, or to ridicule him, that also is mocking.

I hope this sermon can be obviously for parents, but also for grandparents. Grandparents are also inserting characters into the tender bark of the tender lives of their grandchildren. This sermon really ought to be for all who would influence children. As well then, it is for the youth and the children themselves because it will be for their eternal good to allow themselves to be influenced by the proper seasoning, or teaching and example, of others. Only let the proper people insert characters into your character. The tree cannot keep the vilest person from carving letters into its tender bark but we can.

2 Kings 2:23–25 says, “And he [Elisha] went up from thence unto Bethel: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of

them. And he went from thence to mount Carmel, and from thence he returned to Samaria.” *I would like to clarify a few matters before I get into the heart of the subject. Firstly, one would be that the prophet did not get angry and so call forth these she bears.* He had no power really of himself to call them forth. Prophets were not supermen. They were merely men who told what God wanted said, or also told what God was about to do. The latter case would have been here in the case for Elisha. Verse 24 particularly, says he, “cursed them in the name of the LORD.” That is by the authority of the Lord. Therefore, it was not in revenge or in a fit of anger that he did this.

*Another thing would be that these children were accountable for their conduct.* It is not as likely that we should think of six, seven or eight year olds here, but as those who were younger in age. It seems maybe that is the only thing that is meant. These children were younger instead of older, and of course they were younger than Elisha himself. Solomon used this same expression to tell how he felt when he took the kingdom. He said, “I am but a little child.” (1 Kings 3:7) He did not mean that he was a six or seven-year-old, but that he did feel young and small.

Having said all of that does not subtract from this topic because someone had put the wrong seasoning in these children. If these children were not accountable at this point, if they were younger, still someone was accountable for having permitted what we see happening here. Let us first look at the failures that are in this account. If we first look at that then next we can look at the how we can avoid these failures. Let us look at the failures that produce these mocking children.

1) *Someone failed to supervise these children.* We do not know whether several children were together here when one came up with the idea that they would go mock the prophet, as they saw Elisha walking the road. Or, maybe even one simply dared the other to go mock the prophet, and then they both together started out and collected several people along the way. Or, whether these children (youth) were in a school and one got this idea and then they went and did what they did here. We do know this that in either case, someone was not supervising them as they ought to have been supervised. Even after a church meeting, I have seen already where some children get away from their parent and congregate together with other children. I have heard them talk dis-

respectfully of their elders and of other children. They were being seasoned in the wrong way simply because someone was not supervising them, and making sure that those things did not happen.

What could have saved those children? These children could have been saved from the bitter reaping by simply supervising that was not being done. Teachers at school must not neglect their duty to supervise the children. If anyone asks whether we cannot trust our children we can answer, "That is not the crux of the problem." We cannot trust the Devil that is why we must supervise our children. Let us not repeat the failure here or we may unwittingly produce mocking children.

2) *Someone failed to teach respect for those who are older and wiser.* These were, no doubt, Jewish youth, and the very sight of Elisha (someone who is much older than they) should have evoked their highest respect. This is because God taught Israel to do that. I would like for all of us, but especially for every youth and every child to see in their own Bibles where God commanded that in Leviticus 19:32, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God:

I am the LORD.” Note how our respect for the aged is bound up in our respect for God. Do this fearing, this respecting, and fear thy God. It is all part of the same thing that we should be involved in.

Nowhere in the New Testament is that cancelled. In fact, it is reinforced in 1 Timothy 5:1 when it says, “Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father.” Now, I know the word elder could have the meaning of a term of rank or office, but it also does mean “older in years.” As such, it maintains God’s command here in Leviticus 19:32.

We do not need to wait before someone is sixty or seventy years old before we respect them as an older person. Anyone who is older in years than we is older in experience and wisdom and has more experience and wisdom than we do. There are, of course, exceptions to that rule or principle, but even in those expressions such as a “foolish old man,” (to use a Biblical expression) that person is still someone who needs to be respected as a person. God created him, and for that simple reason he needs to be respected that far. We cannot mock or disrespect him without also speaking against his Creator. It is an affront that God will not accept and will stand against us

in judgment unless we repent.

A number of years ago on my way to school each morning, I would often see some youth of a very small village waiting for the public school bus to pick them up. They were a careless sort of youth (children), and I often pitied their teacher. However, one morning I had a special occasion to pity that teacher as well as the youth and their parents. An older resident of the village, as he was driving home and started out from the intersection where these youth were standing, they saw who it was and they hollered at him, chased after his slow moving car, and as I even recall, banged on it.

One of Job’s complaints was that young children despised him. He said, “I arose, and they spake against me.” (Job 19:18) In another place he said, “They that are younger than I have me in derision.” (Job 30:1) They laughed at him and held him in contempt for one thing or another, or in one way or another. Someone was failing to teach respect for those who are older and wiser. It is a sure way to produce mocking children.

3) *A third failure is that someone failed to teach respect for God’s prophet.* Elisha, we said, deserved respect for being an older man, but then he also

deserved respect because he was God's prophet. Elisha was not a self-appointed prophet. We remember his call. Elijah had found him plowing in the field, and that was the way he would have continued working. However, God appointed him to his work. Therefore, to speak against him is to speak against God Himself because he was God appointed. In fact, we may remember that he was a little reluctant to follow after Elijah. We know that he surely would have had other things to do such as continuing on with his farming work. Perhaps he also knew that his work would not always be pleasant. God could have said to Elisha such as He said to Isaiah when He said, "You go speak to the people but many will not listen." Shame on us if the same thing can be said of us. Or, shame on our children if the same thing could be said of our children.

We must not fail to teach respect for God's messengers because the results are disastrous. There is a place in the Scripture that perhaps paints this disaster in the most vivid terms. In 2 Chronicles 36:14-16 we read, "Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and

polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy." No remedy means, "no healing," and that should shake us to the roots of our souls. However, that is the final outcome of failing to respect God's messengers. A little later we want to show how we can build respect.

4) *A fourth failure I see is that someone failed to teach respect for another's differences or handicaps.* Remember, the young men, particularly mocked the physical characteristic of Elisha's bald head. They emphasized that, "Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head." We know that God decisively addressed that, because they were really mocking the prophet's baldness. Notice too how their mocking of this physical characteristic was so closely associated with mocking God's miracle. Why did they say, "Go up?" It is likely referring to the

account in the same chapter in 2 Kings. Elijah had been taken up in heaven. Of course that was an unusual thing and the word soon spread throughout the village and surrounding area. These children, no doubt, knew that Elisha was his successor, and now they were saying, "Why do you not go up too? . . . Go up thou bald head." Therefore, they were mocking not only the physical characteristic, but also notice how that is so closely associated with mocking God's miracle. They were making sport of the matter. The prophet and God's miracle were becoming were objects of their amusement and laughter, but their laughter was quenched in blood. We are not told exactly whether all of them, or some of them, were actually killed, but no doubt some of them lost their lives. At least, they were punished, and there would have been blood flowing.

God gives us examples like these to show us what His attitude is toward mocking. Therefore, He does not need to have she bears coming out after children or youth today who would mock another, especially a characteristic of another. He has already showed what His attitude is toward that and that there is destruction in store for such conduct. The parents of the children

who mocked Elisha apparently did not teach and train their children, what was their punishment for this failure? They were robbed of their children, and that is a little more involved than in what we may at first think. Parents, especially in Bible times, depended on their children to care and provide for them in their old age. There were various parents, no doubt, who had one or more of their children of whom they would not be able to depend on to support them in their old age. It was part of their punishment for failing to teach and train their children to respect the aged, and to respect those who may have some physical characteristics which the person who is mocking does not have and suchlike. In so far as their children being a blessing to themselves and others, they became a curse to others. All these failures produced mocking children. These parents, perhaps unwittingly, were putting the wrong seasoning in these children and stained their vessels forever.

*Let us consider how these failures can be avoided.* We could sum it up in two words. We must *teach* and we must *train*. Both are needed. One without the other will not do. We must teach the principle and then we must

bring our children's conduct into line with that principle. This will take a repetition of teaching and also some discipline. Without doing this, we produce mocking children.

Let us see how we can teach and train away from each of these failures that we have studied and let us start with the last one first. *We must train our children not to mock or make fun of another's physical characteristics or handicaps.* How do we do that? We must teach the principle that is in Leviticus 19:14, "Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the LORD." Remember, we must teach and then we must train. Therefore, we must go to the principle first. This is very much like the other verse we looked at in Leviticus in that it is all the same as mocking the Lord or putting a stumbling block, as it were, before the Lord. It is doing something against the Lord. Therefore, God says, "fear thy God: I am the LORD."

No matter the physical handicap, or physical characteristic, a person must be respected because he is a person. Children can be told that it was none of their good management that they do not have that physical handicap, that they are mocking in

another. If you have ever been at a university hospital, you soon see what can go wrong and what has gone wrong with human beings as far as physical characteristics and handicaps. We marvel anew that so many of us do not have them. Children can be taught that, and it is none of their good management that they do not have one of those characteristics of children that are in university hospitals.

Then too, it is not without a purpose that we have a place for handicapped children in our schools for many of them. It is there then, that our children can interact with those who have some disabilities, as people and as children. We teach them that they are a person, and that helps to train them away from mocking people like that.

As we think of physical characteristics, mocking surely has large consequences. We can see this in the literature story entitled, "The Horse." I will briefly tell a few things of that because it shows and maybe can help impress our children not to ever enter into mocking another's physical characteristics. The main character is a motherless girl, who grew up on a farm. She enrolled in a new school two months after it had begun because she was helping her

father to finish some farming in the fall. Her father was not at all sure that she needed more schooling but she wanted to go to school to get her diploma so that she could teach school and help support her widowed father. Then also maybe her brother could then go to school after she was finished as well.

Her physical characteristics were common, and her clothing was plain. Remember, she did not have a mother and her gait was awkward, but according to the story she had a good brain, quick perception, and a wonderful power of concentration. One of the first students who saw her said to another, "What is that?" already a downgrade, and a scorn. He did not say, "Who is that?" but, "What is that?" and the other made a sly comment and then the first one replied that she looked like a horse, and the name stuck. Those students and classmates in that school, did not try to hide their sneers, laughs, scorn, or their uplifted brows.

The new girl hardly noticed it because she had immersed herself in her studies and so much so that she soon stood at the head of the class even though she had started two months late. She looked to the day when she could get her diploma and support her widower father, so that her broth-

er could then go to school.

In her joy, she wrote a four stanza poem. It was only for herself, but one of the other girls found it and began to show it around to the other children, and they all made fun of it, of course, and laughed and scorned. Finally, one of them thought of the perfect idea: have her read this poem in front of the student literary club. "Can't you see her there standing reading it? That would be a barrel of fun," they said. So they asked her, and she was surprised that they asked her, but she consented. Of course, she was wholly unaware of their cruel intentions.

Remember, her mother had died and so she did not have the privilege of being taught to sew. She needed a dress though for this special occasion. Therefore, she and her father found one in the bottom of the trunk that was in the attic, but of course, it needed to be remade a bit to fit the girl. She therefore undertook to do this and it was cobbled together instead of sewn together, and she would not look well in it.

The fateful day finally came. She read the poem, and the students applauded and she bashfully fled the stage. Then she heard from the assembly room a burst of laughter that deepened into a roar such that the room rocked.

There was no mistaking the derision, and something within her broke. It was something that she never got back. Her classmates thought that she would not know that they set up this whole situation to do exactly what happened to deride her. However, she was not a fool. She understood now. She therefore took her books back to her teachers and told them that she had to quit. They could not understand because she had been doing so well. Were they not there supervising the children in that literature club?

I can never read that story with dry eyes; to think that a life that was bright with promise so soon came to such an end as this. Think of the other consequences. Ben would not be able to go to school. It does say that maybe Ben can come to school “because he is smarter than I,” but it is not likely that he would get there. She would not be able to support her father like she was thinking, and such a girl as she was, who applied herself to things at hand certainly would have made a good teacher. There would have been many students who could have benefited from that. All of that was destroyed because of cruel mocking, and simply it started by mocking her characteristic that “she looked like a horse.”

That story teaches the disastrous consequences that should not be once named among us, but is our record that clean? That is the question we need to think about. We must teach and train our children into respect for another’s differences or another’s handicaps. School teachers must be aware of sideways glances and the uplifted brows that silently communicate something at another child’s expense. *Our children can be instruments of destruction, if we do not train them away from mocking.* We must teach and train them not to mock. No parent can hide behind what is called peer pressure. No parent can say, “Well, I did train my child so that he would not mock, but he got there with all the other children at school and this is how the peer pressure made him do it.”

We must rather do as the proverb father said, as he instructed his son, “My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.” (Proverbs 1:10) “My son even if when I am not by your side, if sinners entice thee consent thou not.” He was doing more. He continues and does more than merely saying “Just say no.” He says “Don’t you consent. Don’t you breathe after, don’t you wish to do it.” That is the idea built up in that word con-

sent. Do not be inclined to do it. In other words, “Do not say no only because I told you that. I am not telling you to say no, merely to show my authority. I want it to be very rooted and in your character that you will say, ‘No,’ on the basis of principle.” There is a sense of duty that you must have such that you would not consent to doing evil. That wise father continues to instruct as to what may develop, and we can do that too, with children.

Sometimes they may think that we can mock a little bit and that is all that will come of it. This will not work because that will encourage a child when he is unpunished once to do it some more, like those who were there in the account in Proverbs 1 — the company of sinners. Eventually, they will try to probably do it to the government leaders, and they may have contempt of court or something like that and need to spend their days in jail. “My son if your friends entice you to do such things, to be disrespectful, consent thou not.” With such a background of teaching, the net that is spread for that son’s feet, he will be able to avoid it. The birds will not be wiser than he as Proverbs 1:10 and following would hint.

The father remembered more than telling his son, “Just say

no.” He gave the principle behind it. He gave the foundation of it so that the son would have something to build on, and stand on. The book of Proverbs also shows us that that father would know what to do if that son did not listen. The book of Proverbs shows the father knows that teaching and discipline are two guard rails on either side of the path of life — teaching and discipline. If the teaching does not work, the discipline must bring him back into line.

*If we want to train our children to respect others, we must do likewise.* As our children especially grow older, we must take time to lay in foundation for their not doing this or that so that they can never say, “Well, father said ‘don’t do it.’ Father said that I should not really mock, but I never really understood so much why.” We must be diligent in putting the right seasoning in. Therefore, we must teach our children not to scorn or mock another’s physical characteristics or handicap.

*We must train our children not to mock God’s messengers.* One of my uncles told me recently of a family that he would have grown up with and used to be members with us. He remembered how that father usually had something to say against the min-

istry — what the ministry said, what the ministry decided. Perhaps he thought he had a little more insight than the ministry did and perhaps he did. Perhaps he thought he could be a little more noble in the eyes of his children if he would say such things that they too would think that he was a right wise father, but not so.

I do not need to tell you where his family is. They were not dull. They knew that father was really mocking God's messengers. Therefore, if father does not have respect for God's messengers why should they? What did the church have to offer for them if you could always second guess the ministry? "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Galatians 6:7) We must teach respect for God's messengers or the ministry.

In another instance, a deacon needed to visit a father and his son about a matter. While the deacon was there taking care of his work, the father did not say much. However, after the deacon left, he did not seem to spare his words, and that so emboldened in front of his son as well. That so emboldened his son that his son told it to his peers. What shall be the reaping of such? Behind contemptuous speaking is a mind

that despises another person. There is no other way to say it. The one who despises considers the other person to be worthless or beneath him in rank and such like. How does it begin? It often begins with small talk about another. It almost seems like it would be innocent talk. Then it develops more into more permanent complaining about another, and then, it finally ripens into disobedience, not outright at first. Eventually it comes out in the open, but not in all life, only here and there until finally the whole life is engulfed with it. All the while the person is usually justifying himself to others.

Will such a child grow up to be a blessing to himself and to others? Will he grow up being respectful and respect God's messengers? If we allow our child's character to be carved with disrespectful language it will increase with his growth, and strengthen with his strength (to refer back to our opening illustration) and we actually prepare our child for judgment.

Not conforming to the standards of the church is another way to mock God's messengers. Parents are really telling their children in that instance, "That is what he thinks. That is what he says, but we do not believe it, and we do not have to do it." Again,

that is putting into contempt what should have been respected and obeyed. In fact, I wonder if this may be one of the most frequent sins that is regretted in eternity. Can you hear the moans of such parents, "Oh, if only," because at that point, what had appeared to be mountains will be so small, and insignificant that it is nothing. Why did I think they were mountains? Even more so, parents who have such an existence in the next life cannot come back and fix up the damage that they did to their families. Luke 16 would help us to remember that.

The time of opportunity is now. It is now that we must show and teach and train our children away from disrespect and teach them to respect God's messengers. Let us not repeat the mistake that these children and the parents did in 2 Kings in not teaching their children.

*We must also teach our children not to mock older people.* Often it is some weakness or some sickness of the elderly that is usually picked and made a point of scorn. Let us think about some of the foundation that we can build. The older among us are already deprived of so many things. They are deprived of some of their comrades, even sometimes a life companion. They are deprived of many of the

enjoyable things that we still enjoy and are still able to do. Then, when they are deprived of their health, why would anyone want to make that a source of mockery? How low can a human being get when he is not trained in respect? Perhaps children can think that they can speak disrespectfully of the older ones and they will not hear. Let us see what we read in Leviticus 19:14, "Thou shalt not curse the deaf." That is an example of some physical characteristic. Even deaf, aged people are wise enough. I have heard that apparently some young, rude children thought that they could say some things in an older person's presence (they could say it behind their hand, or whisper or do this or that, or simply smile, raise the eyebrows and so forth). I have heard the older ones talk about it. They understood what it all meant, and it hurt.

Remember what Job said about the children who despised him. It hurt. We can remind our children that the aged were once young too, and that they themselves likely could become old and aged and become old and feeble. That is part of our foundation that we can build to help them to see that it is not right to mock the older people.

Mocking may begin by a child

acting or behaving “himself proudly against the ancient,” (Isaiah 3:5) to use a Scriptural term. Let us ponder that: a child behaving “himself proudly against the ancient.” A young child does not have much experience or wisdom, and has much yet to learn is some way about making fun of those who have much more experience than what he does. It may start so innocently. We may smile at a child who is looking at an adult when they are trying to do something and are not able to get it accomplished, and a small child will sometimes run and say, “Let me do it. Let me do it.” We may let the child do it and, of course, he finds out he cannot do it either. We may smile a little, but oh, we must also at that point beware very much. If the child has not learned through that one experience not to do that thing again, or insist that he can do something adults cannot do, he will grow up to be an overbearing and disrespectful child. An overbearing child, being haughty and arrogant would certainly mock older people and think that he knows more than what they do.

Our duty is plain if we are to teach and train away from this mocking. A child who interrupts an older person when he is speaking, is another way of

showing contempt, or behaving himself proudly against the ancient. It is a form of mockery because he is telling that older person what you have to say, your experience, your wisdom is of no account. Children need the counsel of the experience in years. If they do not get it from those who are older, where will they get it? If they do not get it from those who are older, then they must repeat the mistakes of the past.

Another form of mocking the aged is walking by without acknowledging their presence either by a handshake or some words of greeting, simply walking by as if they were not there. We must teach our children that their agendas are not that important that they do not have time to stop and say a few words of greeting to an older person. It should be part of the foundation of our teaching to show them that, and also to show them how much they mean to an older person. As a child warms a young mother’s heart, so the young warm the aged brother’s and sister’s hearts as well. Remember, Joseph took his two oldest sons to see his father, and their grandfather Jacob and it warmed the old Patriarch’s heart. He told Joseph, “I had not thought to see thy face: and, lo, God hath

shewed me also thy seed.” (Genesis 48:11) “Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them.” (Genesis 48:9)

I would like for every youth and child who has a Bible to look at Proverbs 17:6, “Children’s children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers” — especially the first part — the “Children’s children — grandchildren — are the crown of old men.” They can mean so much to them if the youth has been taught to respect, and to respect in these ways which we have been saying, not to interrupt a person, when he is talking and also, when he is walking, by to acknowledge their presence. Youth and children, consider how much you can be a blessing to your grandparents as well as to other children’s grandparents and older people in general. That is so much better than to be mocking.

It would be interesting to know if there would be any older ones who remember the time when people would be sitting in a room, and an older person would walk into the room, and all who were younger than he, especially the children would rise up off their seats. (I do not personally remember it). In that way they showed the older man, “Here you may take any of our seats and we

will take what is left.” How far have we deteriorated from that? How much are we ready to regain some of that too? The rockers and the soft chairs ought to be for those who are older unless those chairs would be uncomfortable for them because of some physical problem they may have. Will a child who is taught something like that be likely to mock the older person? Not likely. Again, it is part of the foundation we can lay so that we train them away from the disrespect of mockery.

*The first failure we mentioned was the failure to supervise children. How can we avoid that?* It is kind of obvious. We simply must do it. We must supervise and be with them where they are, or if we cannot be with them by their sides at all times, we can inquire into their behaviour. We can even ask or inquire sometimes of those who have been with them as to how they have done as well. Another part of supervising them would be to guard our children’s associates. We know what 1 Corinthians 15:33 says, “evil communications corrupt good manners.” That is simply the way it is. Therefore, we must guard our children so that they do not eventually sit, “in the seat of the scornful.” (Psalm 1:1) We do not need to be rude about it, but if

there are children whose parents do not train them away from mocking, then they must not be close associates of our children, if we hope to protect them.

*Thirdly, what are the dangers of producing mocking children?* Obviously some of that has already been worked in. However, we would like to consider a little more exactly a few items. What are the dangers of producing mocking children? One is that they will mock you as their parents. Yes, they will. At that point, you have lost all your control and all of your authority over them. They will crush your heart without pity and bring down your gray hairs down to the grave. I can imagine that some of those parents who found out what their children did here to Elisha, perhaps at that point realized that they did not do their duty. Perhaps their gray hairs were brought down to the grave. As the old proverb says, “birds come home to roost.” Thus, a danger of producing mocking children (sort of starting at the lowest level, if for no other reason) remember they will mock you. They will mock me sometime if we have not trained our children away from mockery.

Another danger is that they will mock sin. Proverbs 14:9 says, “Fools make a mock at sin.”

I think that deserves some meditation on our part to really see and understand the dark deed that this is and all that is bound up in it. They will scoff at the most sacred things and try to find something in it to make fun of, take a bad meaning out of it, or something like that. How can such be helped who have mocked the sacred precepts of religion? Lot’s sons-in-law would be an example of this. They perished in the brimstone and fire that was sent by God who will not be mocked by those who make a mock at sin.

A third danger is that they will mock God. Of course, mocking parents and even making a mocking at sin, is also mocking God, but they will come out with it more forthrightly. As I was in my study looking down in the Strong’s Concordance under mocking, mockery and so forth, it was astounding to me that almost every reference in the New Testament that relates to mockery, had to do with people mocking Jesus Christ, and it was religious people who did that. This shows us that we ourselves also have the potential to do the same thing. This ought to be a sobering fact. We and our children have the potential of mocking God. That should be a strong motive to teach and train them

away from it. In fact, Jesus tells us that some children grown up to be adults will mock God's final verdict of their lives. They will say, "Lord, Lord," but God will have the final word and need to say, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matthew 7:23) "Ye that mock." That is the ultimate danger and the ultimate consequence of rearing mocking children. When a

wrong seasoning is put in children in their youth, it will often stay with them right up to the very last — right into the door of eternity. How important it is then that our children should have this seasoning of the right kind as the man wrote. The seasoning of true piety, love to God, and love to man. God help us to be able to do that with our children.

### Scripture References

<b>Genesis</b>	36:14–16	78	<b>Matthew</b>	
48:9	87	<b>Job</b>	7:23	89
48:11	87	19:18		<b>Luke</b>
<b>Leviticus</b>	30:1	77	16	85
19:14	80, 85	<b>Psalms</b>	<b>1 Corinthians</b>	
19:32	76, 77	1:1	15:33	87
<b>1 Kings</b>		<b>Proverbs</b>	<b>Galatians</b>	
3:7	75	1:10	6:7	84
<b>2 Kings</b>		14:9		<b>1 Timothy</b>
2:23–25	75	17:6	5:1	77
<b>2 Chronicles</b>		<b>Isaiah</b>		
	3:5	86		

### From the Previous Issue:

#### Right Thinking About the Something-for-Nothing Mentality

From a sermon by David G. Weaver

Thursday, April 13, 1995

Blue Rock Mennonite Church

*Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour. (Proverbs 14:9)*

*But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. (Jude 17, 18)*

**Book Reprint (Continued)**  
**One Hundred Lessons In Bible Study**

**LESSON 23.**  
**The Kingdom of Israel.**

1.

*King:* Jeroboam

*Dynasty:* Jeroboam

*Length of Reign (years):* 22

*Kind of Reign:* Wicked

*Leading Events:* Cities fortified. — Idol worship introduced. — Wars with Judah.

*References:* 1 Kings 12–14

*How He Came to His Death:* “Slept with his fathers.”

*Remarks:* God raised Jeroboam to the throne. Jeroboam used the power thus secured in attempting to dethrone God.

2.

*King:* Nadab

*Dynasty:* Jeroboam

*Length of Reign (years):* 2

*Kind of Reign:* Wicked.

*Leading Events:* Siege of Gibbethon. — Baasha’s revolt.

*References:* 1 Kings 15:25–31

*How He Came to His Death:* Slain by Baasha.

*Remarks:* The reign of Jeroboam’s house was at an end; but the wickedness lived on.

3.

*King:* Baasha

*Dynasty:* Baasha

*Length of Reign (years):* 24

*Kind of Reign:* Wicked.

*Leading Events:* Jehu’s prophecy.

*References:* 1 Kings 15:27–34; 16:1–7

*How He Came to His Death:* “Slept with his fathers.”

*Remarks:* The works of the wicked cannot stand.

4.

*King:* Elah

*Dynasty:* Baasha

*Length of Reign (years):* 2

*Kind of Reign:*

*Leading Events:*

*References:* 1 Kings 16:8–14

*How He Came to His Death:* Slain by Zimri

*Remarks:* The son reaped what the father had sown.

5.

*King:* Zimri

*Dynasty:* Zimri

*Length of Reign:* 7 days

*Kind of Reign:*

*Leading Events:* Houses of Baasha destroyed.

*References:* 1 Kings 16:9–20

*How He Came to His Death:* Burned himself to death.

*Remarks:* “The way of the transgressor is hard.”

6.

*King:* Omri

*Dynasty:* Omri

*Length of Reign (years):* 12

*Kind of Reign:* Wicked.

*Leading Events:* Conflict with Tibui. — Samaria built.

*References:* 1 Kings 16:16–28

*How He Came to His Death:* “Slept with his fathers.”

*Remarks:* Some improvement in civil affairs; but the kingdom keeps sinking deeper into idolatry.

7.

*King:* Ahab

*Dynasty:* Omri

*Length of Reign (years):* 22

*Kind of Reign:* Wicked.

*Leading Events:* Elijah prophecies a drought. — Its fulfillment. — Baal’s prophets confounded and slain. — Siege of Samaria. — Naboth’s vineyard taken. — Wars with the Syrians.

*References:* 1 Kings 16–22; 2 Chronicles 18

*How He Came to His Death:* Slain in battle.

*Remarks:* Woman’s wonderful power over man is forcibly taught by the events of this lesson. It is to be regretted that this is not always exerted for good. The conflict between Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel is a vivid picture of the conflict between righteousness and sin.

8.

King: Ahaziah

Dynasty: Omri

Length of Reign (years): 2

Kind of Reign: Wicked.

Leading Events: Moab revolts. — Unsuccessful attempts to capture Elijah.

References: 1 Kings 22:40–43; 2 Kings 1

How He Came to His Death: Died of a fall.

Remarks: Elijah was never beaten in conflict.

9.

King: Jehoram

Dynasty: Omri

Length of Reign (years): 12

Kind of Reign: Wicked.

Leading Events: Rebellion of Mesha, king of Moab. — League with Jehoshaphat. — Moabites defeated. — Elijah disappears in a chariot of fire. — Shunamite's son raised to life. — Naaman healed. — War with the Syrians. — Jehu made king.

References: 2 Kings 1:17, 18; 2–9

How He Came to His Death: Slain by Jehu

Remarks: Jehoshaphat was in poor company. Blind people see no miracles.

10.

King: Jehu

Dynasty: Jehu

Length of Reign (years): 28

Kind of Reign: Reforms carried on vigorously, but not free from idolatry.

Leading Events: Seventy of Ahab's sons slain. — Baal worshippers destroyed. — Hazael's invasion.

References: 2 Kings 9:11–37; 10; 2 Chronicles 22

How He Came to His Death: "Slept with his fathers."

Remarks: A vigorous reformer who failed to grasp the idea that the only lasting reform is heart conversion.

11.

King: Jehoahaz

Dynasty: Jehu

Length of Reign (years): 17

Kind of Reign: Wicked.

Leading Events: Israel delivered into the hands of Hazael. — Delivered in answer to prayer.

References: 2 Kings 13:1–9

How He Came to His Death: "Slept with his fathers."

*Remarks:* What a spectacle! A king of Israel prays.

12.

*King:* Joash

*Dynasty:* Jehu

*Length of Reign (years):* 16

*Kind of Reign:* Wicked.

*Leading Events:* War between Judah and Israel. — Defeat of the Syrians.

*References:* 2 Kings 13: 14:1–16; 2 Chronicles 25:17–24

*How He Came to His Death:* “Slept with his fathers.”

*Remarks:* The man of God exerts a wholesome influence even in the hour of death. True Christians are in the service to the last moment.

13.

*King:* Jeroboam II

*Dynasty:* Jehu

*Length of Reign (years):* 41

*Kind of Reign:* Wicked.

*Leading Events:* Coast of Israel strengthened.

*References:* 2 Kings 14:23–29

*How He Came to His Death:* “Slept with his fathers.”

*Remarks:* Said to be among the ablest of Israel’s rulers. Lack of principle, however, stood in the way of success.

14.

*King:* Zachariah

*Dynasty:* Jehu

*Length of Reign:* 6 months

*Kind of Reign:* Wicked.

*Leading Events:* Conspiracy of Shallum.

*References:* 2 Kings 15:8–11

*How He Came to His Death:* Slain by Shallum

*Remarks:* The doom of Israel is approaching.

15.

*King:* Shallum

*Dynasty:* Shallum

*Length of Reign:* 1 month

*Kind of Reign:*

*Leading Events:* Conspiracy of Menahem

*References:* 2 Kings 15:10–15

*How He Came to His Death:* Slain by Menahem.

*Remarks:* Sin’s victories are short-lived.

16.

*King:* Menahem

*Dynasty:* Menahem

*Length of Reign (years):* 10

*Kind of Reign:* Wicked.

*Leading Events:* Syrians invade Israel. — The Syrian king receives a bribe and returns to his own country.

*References:* 2 Kings 15:14–22

*How He Came to His Death:* “Slept with his fathers.”

*Remarks:* Bribery is an evidence of hopeless corruption.

17.

*King:* Pekahiah

*Dynasty:* Menahem

*Length of Reign (years):* 2

*Kind of Reign:* Wicked.

*Leading Events:* Conspiracy of Pekah.

*References:* 2 Kings 15:22–26

*How He Came to His Death:* Slain by Pekah.

*Remarks:* The stability of the kingdom is gone.

18.

*King:* Pekah

*Dynasty:* Pekah

*Length of Reign (years):* 20

*Kind of Reign:* Wicked.

*Leading Events:* Tiglath-pileser invades Samaria and carries thousands of captives to Syria.

*References:* 2 Kings 15:25–31

*How He Came to His Death:* Slain by Hoshea

*Remarks:* The first actual captivity.

19.

*King:* Hoshea

*Dynasty:* Hoshea

*Length of Reign (years):* 9

*Kind of Reign:* Wicked.

*Leading Events:* Shalmaneser completes the work of destroying Israel. — The Samaritans carried captive to Syria.

*References:* 2 Kings 17

*How He Came to His Death:*

*Remarks:* The wonder is not that Israel was ruined, but that it escaped ruin so

long.

NOTE. 1. The kingdom of Israel began with the accession of Jeroboam to the throne in 975 B.C., and ended with the captivity of Hoshea in 721 B.C.

2. The length of the average reign was nearly  $12\frac{3}{4}$  years.

3. The "salt" of the kingdom was not in the royal court, but among the common people who espoused the cause championed by Elijah, Elisha, and others.

4. On the whole, Israel was more disobedient than Judah, and as a consequence, the average reign was much shorter, and the end came much sooner.

1. Describe the inhabitants of Samaria after the conquest of Shalmaneser.

2. Describe the death of Ahab and Jezebel.

3. What were Jehoram's last recorded words?

4. What effect had the test on Mt. Carmel on Israel?

5. Compare Israel and Judah with regard to (a) religion; (b) government.

# *The Temperate Life*

By

DAVID E. PLANK

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introductory.

Chapter I. Temperate Food and Drink

Chapter II. Temperate Food and Drink (Continued)

Chapter III. Temperate Dress

Chapter IV. Temperate Homes

Chapter V. Temperate Labor

Chapter VI. Alcohol

Chapter VII. Tobacco

Chapter VIII. Temperance and the Great Commission



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