

And David took him more wives out of Jerusalem.**F.B. Meyer:****And David took him more wives out of Jerusalem. 2 Sam. v. 13.**

THIS is terribly disappointing! According to the ideas of the surrounding nations, the greatness of a monarch was gauged by the extent of his harem. But the law of Moses put severe restraint on the multiplication of wives, "that his heart turn not away " (Deut. xvii. 17). It seems as though the soul of David sank into sensual indulgence and luxuriance. It lost much of its early hardihood and strength in consequence; and at this period of his life those seeds were sown, which in after years brought forth such a plentiful and terrible harvest of anguish, murder, and impurity, in his family.

Few of us realize how much our character owes to the stern discipline to which God subjects us. The only way to keep us healthy and vigorous is to send us many a nipping frost, many a keen northern blast. The bleak hillside breeds stronger natures than the warm sheltered valley. The difference between Anglo-Saxon and Negro is largely wrought by temperature and soil. The campaign, with its strain on every power of endurance, trains better soldiers than the barracks. As David was a stronger, better man, when hunted like a coney in the rocks of Engedi, so are we braced to a nobler life, when all things seem against us.

Few of us can be trusted with unbroken happiness. God is compelled to withhold what the flesh craves. But where prosperity has shone on your path, be very careful not to abuse it. Consider it as indicating God's loving trust in you. He would rather convey his lesson in sunshine than in storm. But walk carefully and humbly, looking to Him constantly for daily grace, and never relaxing the girdle about the loin.