

The American

Re-established, September 13, 1928.
Devoted to the best interests of Central Point and vicinity.

Entered as second class matter at the post office, Central Point, Oregon, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:
One Year \$1.00
Six Months \$.75

Payable in advance.
Advertising rates on application.
Office—Second Street, off Main.

ARTHUR EDWARD POWELL
Editor and Proprietor

BACCALAUREATE SERMON DELIVERED TO H. S. GRADUATES

(A sermon preached to the members of the graduating class of the Central Point high school on Sunday evening, May 6th 1934, by Rev. Jos. M. Johnson.)
Text: Genesis 16:7, 7, 13.

After briefly addressing Supt. H. P. Jewett, and other members of the Faculty, Mr. Johnson said to the class:

INTRODUCTION
I am very happy to have the honor of having been asked to serve you in this delightful event. You have come through the years of your high school work under the love and care of all christian people who have known you. There are many who are deeply concerned about your lives, in all that life means; but none can be so fully aware of the real issues of life as you are going to contact the world, as those who have caught the vision of God's will, and who understand the power of the enemy of all life, against the will and the purpose of young people as they try to fit themselves for true service. Life is truly a journey. I am presenting my message tonight with that thought in mind. The desert places to which I call your attention are the attitudes and conditions and entanglements in life which stifle the things of the soul; and which circumscribe and hinder the development of the mind and spirit which were made in the image of God.

WE GO ON
One cannot stay long in one place. Days and weeks and months and years, filled with events become the places of departure, the points of interest, the pauses and the goals on **THE JOURNEY AND THE GUIDE** truly living. There are no humdrums, no commonplaces, no inconsequents; and no dullness to the one who sees that every incident, every purpose, whether fulfilled or missed, every word, every thought registers its impress, and stamps its influence upon the character of the traveler who is on the outlook for all that the journey may mean. Here is a book. From cover to cover, and from title page to the end it is made up of small things which we call letters, and of smaller things which we call markings. Yet how essential that each letter and each mark be in its proper place.

Each letter and each mark is of such vital importance to its self and to the others that the entire meaning of the book might be changed or destroyed by the misuse or the omission of one. Of such interest, then, are the everyday events which go to make up a life. Life is of such vital concern that we need a guide. I am asking you to consider with me for a little while the very great importance of your own lives; and the fact that you, too, may have such a guide, that every detail of your journey may be made to fit into the whole scope in such a fashion that at the end you will see that some of the things which seemed small to you were in truth very great things with others whom you meet with, or who followed after you in the way.

EVERY JOURNEY HAS ITS GOING OUT

It matters but little what the cause may be of one's going out from the usual and ordinary environments of life to new and strange things which one knows not; nor how confident, nor yet how doubtful one may be of the future; the normal life will have its periods and places of new departures; and will need to understand the necessity of some knowledge of directions, at least. There are many experiences and applications which are common to all who venture out into the living issues of life on this journey; some of which I shall note for the sake of the LIGHT and ENCOURAGEMENT which they bring. I have selected a very real, yet, at the same time a very unusual story from the Bible as the basis of what I shall bring to you.

LET ME GIVE YOU MY TEXT

"And the angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness by the fountain in the way to Shur. And he said: Hagar whence comest thou; and whither wilt thou go? And she said: I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai." Genesis 16: 7, 8, 13.

SOME VERY REAL INCIDENTS IN A YOUNG LIFE

Truth is stranger than fiction. Here is a very challenging story of a young woman who was venturing out upon the highway of life; but in paths unknown to her. There are a few outstanding things connected with this story, the principles of which underlie all our lives, as we too, venture out into NEW ISSUES and NEW UNDERTAKINGS. It is

SOME OF THESE PRINCIPLES which I wish to note; then from the unerring records of God's word, bring to you some helpful suggestions and advice which only you and God can make living and real.

This young person, though unconscious of what she was doing was making and fulfilling destiny; and in so doing has laid open some examples of practical and useful fundamental phases of life. Because it matters not whose life it is, nor where that life may be lived, there are certain experiences which are common to all. For instance, if this young lady had continued in the obedience in which she started from this fountain, the story would have been different in its conclusion; but she had the inclinations to disobedience which affect us all. Shall we profit by the experiences of others? Shall we read carefully the notes of her? It could only partially satisfy her. It could not meet all her needs. How far short of God's plan a life falls that is not well-rounded and full! How vain life is without service for others! She had, indeed, started out; but had gone in the wrong direction to find many of the essentials of life. They were not to be found where she was going. She must be stopped, helped to get her bearings again and must make another start. Moreover, it takes more than the material things of the world to make life real and worthwhile. As we study her conditions let us seek the lessons which may give us a better understanding of our own lives.

THE ELEMENT OF CHOICE

First she was acting on her own volition or choice. She was living her own life. She had chosen to go out from her present conditions even though she could not tell where she was going. Others, too, were involved in her life, just as there are always others who are involved in any life; but she had not given right consideration to them. "No man liveth unto himself" was a principle which she did not know, or which she had not considered at this time.

Surely she had hoped to better her condition! though, perhaps HER condition was not, at any time as bad as she had thought. Much depends upon the viewpoint, and the amount of the ego that is made prominent in the picture. I am sure that this would be the findings of any one who would look carefully at the facts as we have them recorded in the Book.

She was willing to take a risk, both for herself and for those who might be involved with her in the venture. That she had not looked at all the facts is plainly shown in the records. She felt the urge to better her condition, try to get some of the things she wanted; and was willing to endure hardships rather than live on without knowing just what she might be living for. This was most praiseworthy; and these things will be found in any normal life.

She had gotten well out toward the desert. The records say that the angel found her in the wilderness by the fountain on the way to Shur. Whether she had purposely started toward the desert or not, we do not know. We shall hope not. The record is clear: "She was by the fountain in the way to Shur." Shur means region of the desert. It was a good place to be found in her adventure. She had gone far enough to be willing to stop and consider. It was not too late to take advice from God. If God had ever spoken to her before this, we have no record of it. Perhaps God had not been able to get her attention before this. God's acts are always timely.

No doubt she was surprised that the messenger who spoke to her was the angel of the Lord. Now this expression, the Angel of the Lord, is well-worth looking into; for we find it used in the same sense in many places in the Holy Scriptures. It means the visible, body-shaped form of a spirit messenger or person. A very clear example of the use of it in the same sense is found in Acts 12: 15 where the writer is giving the account of Peter's escape from prison. The church had met to pray for him and when Rhoda announces that he is at the door, they will not believe it; and the record says: "They supposed that she had seen his angel." Ordinarily the word angel means "messenger". It may mean a human messenger, or one of the created spirit beings. In the scripture which we are using here it is meant to identify the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of the old Testament scriptures. This is revealed in the 13th verse where we read: "And she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me."

God was seeking to direct her life but she did not know it until this incident took place. He knew her by name, just as he knows each one of us by name. He said: "Hagar, whence comest thou; and whither wilt thou go?" Here she found that God was interested in her past, and concerned with her purpose to go somewhere. He was willing that she should go on into the desert. He spoke to her in time. In answer to his question she said in a very literal sense: "I am trying to get away from unpleasant conditions." There is not a word in the records to show that she had any definite objective in view, beyond a desire to be rid of present circumstances and restraints. God was dealing with the facts in her life, and was recording them even though others had overlooked them. These are the things which make character and character is what God is interested in.

We believe that she might have insisted upon having her own way and might have gone on into the desert. We believe that God would have allowed her to go on if she had insisted. The power to reason, to judge, to determine, to choose, to will, to act, is the greatest blessing which God has given his creatures, when used rightly, because they are related to his own powers. In the misuse of this God-given power lies the greatest danger to any life; and to the world. Certainly she might have given some very plausible reasons why she should try to change her conditions; though she might have been at a loss to tell why she had started in the direction which she had come. God did not seek to destroy her power to choose, he only tried to direct it.

She recognized God's wisdom, his authority and his goodness. We find her very willing to take his advice, and yield, for the time at least, to his will. She humbly submitted to his authority. God fulfilled his every promise to this young lady. His promises are sure. If her life was

in any measure, short of what it should have been. God was not to blame. She had the making of her life in her own hands and God was there to help her. He was her friend and sought to be her guide. If you are familiar with the story you will remember that later, when she again started out upon the unknown paths of life, she instinctively took to the desert way. She was, shall we say, "desert-minded." Such is destiny; and we are helping to make destiny. And, like she did, we must make our own choices.

It is very significant that she was by this fountain when the Lord spoke to her. She might have lived there the rest of her natural life, only for a few things. It furnished her drink; but no food, no shelter, no clothing, no means of service, and no opportunities for service. It could only partially satisfy her. It could not meet all her needs. How far short of God's plan a life falls that is not well-rounded and full! How vain life is without service for others! She had, indeed, started out; but had gone in the wrong direction to find many of the essentials of life. They were not to be found where she was going. She must be stopped, helped to get her bearings again and must make another start. Moreover, it takes more than the material things of the world to make life real and worthwhile. As we study her conditions let us seek the lessons which may give us a better understanding of our own lives.

SOME ANALOGIES AND SOME LESSONS

Now we are thinking of your lives as being in many respects represented by these incidents in the life of this striking and historical young character. First then, as you have started on your life's career, there have been some elements of plausible and justified dissatisfactions in your lives which have helped you to determine to improve yourselves and find a larger field of service. Of course we all have some dissatisfactions which may not be justified; and there is no finer nor wiser way to better one's condition than to make the best use of the conditions under which one finds himself. The young lady of our text found this to be true in her own life.

The members of any high school class who come to the fine event in life when their parents, their teachers and their high school board have the high privilege of saying to them: "Thus far we have acted on our very best; but you are more than happy to put into your hands these parchments which are the tokens that you have finished well your course in our public schools. We believe in you, and are with you in every right undertaking. Go out upon life's highways. Journey toward the better places. On your way make good use of all that comes to your hands; AND MAKE USE OF LIFE in such fashion that those who travel after you shall find it more profitable going. I repeat that those who come to such an event, stand, in a most practical way, beside one of the great fountains on life's highway. In just a few days, you, the members of this class will come to that place, and are congratulating ourselves, and you, EACH ONE. You have done well to answer the urge within yourselves to growth and higher attainments; and there are many things for you to consider yet.

There are many fountains on life's highways, just as there are many fountains on the earth. Some traveling the trackless wastes of our deserts have come upon a fountain and have been refreshed and saved, physically; and I believe that some who have gone out into the spiritually barren desert places in life have come upon other fountains, just as truly as Hagar came to this fountain on her way toward the desert. Some fountains stand on the edge of the desert; yet it is terribly true that the affairs of life, one may turn at any time to go into the desert places. There is no POINT ON THE SURFACE; and NO EVENT IN LIFE from which one may not turn his face toward home and from God and go toward the deserts. THERE IS NO PRESENT ACHIEVEMENT which makes the future safe. There is always some of the road before us; and always that practical question of the text: "whither wilt thou go?"

You young people, members of this class, sit here tonight on the eve of your graduation, beside a great fountain on life's highway. In a very true sense, in a short time you are going to leave it for new adventures. Some of you may literally leave home, friends, schoolmates and school. To most of us this means more than leaving any fountain of water. But in leaving these things we need not leave God. To hold onto God always means that the best of all that these things have meant to us remains, and becomes dearer, regardless of how many miles we travel from them. "Thou God seest me," or "Thou are a God that seest me," wants to be our guide. As you leave your school, seek to be guided into THE USEFUL FIELDS, though the larger desert expanses may be calling you.

And another similarity is that you young people have come here very largely thru your own choices. True, there was a time when you were "sent to school"; but whatever else your own parents, and friends, have entered into the matter has only helped you to your decisions; and we are glad to say that in the truest sense you are happy to be here; and we all, your school-mates, your friends your teachers and your parents are happy with you. You will more and more realize the need of weighing matters in your own light, and understanding, and making your own decisions. In doing so may you always have a clear understanding of the wonderful truth that there is only one who knows the end from the beginning; and that he is the only safe Guide.

You are truly on your way from restraints, conditions and restrictions. We do believe that you are on your way to larger preparation, clearer vision and richer achievements.

Remember, however, that there is no place of liberty. God, humanity and your own better self demands control and a faithful service. I say to you in all honesty and truth, that if the WORTHY CAUSES DO NOT CONTROL you then nothing can keep you out of slavery to the baser things. Remember that you are always on the edge of the desert. If you understand this it gives you a very great advantage. Any time you wish, and many times when you do not wish to do so, you may see some of the results of the mistakes of those who have left the fountain for the desert roads of life. There are too many lives which are destitute of the world-while things, and are literally perishing in THE WASTES OF THE DESERT, which have passed thru our high schools with as good promise as any of you who are here tonight. They have had their own way, and have taken their own course; but have not been obedient to the angel of the Lord as he tried to turn them into another way. In a world that is so in need of right living to see a life literally wasted in the barren places.

Let us hope that even these things may find some fountain where the Lord will speak to them, again. If the angel of the Lord should ask you as he asked Hagar long ago: "whither wilt thou go?" what would be your answer? With all the powers and possibilities which the great God has put into you, physically, mentally and spiritually, would you presume to insist upon going your own road? Need I even suggest that God is just as directly and personally interested in your life as he was in the life of the young woman at the other fountain? God would not be God if he showed respect to any certain individuals. His word is plain: whosoever will may have his guidance and help.

SOME CONCLUSIONS MAY BE CLEAR

If that young lady had gone on out into the desert, as she had started there is no ground for believing that she would have survived. The fact that God spoke to her there shows that it was a crisis in her life. Now if one of this day, with all the light and understanding and urge to right living that comes to intelligent people, should turn from life's highway into the desert places, where is the promise that that one will return? Where is the promise that he shall reach another fountain where the angel of the Lord will speak to his heart? You stand at the place of the "fountain" and you have a vision of what life means. There are worse things than restrictions and disciplines. True life is a veritable series of chastening and corrections. A life that might be free from restraints and discipline would be most subjectively enslaved. Life "He continues in sin is the slave of sin," says the word of God.

WE MUST MAKE OUR CHOICES
Just as Hagar had acted on her own responsibility in going out so far as to the fountain; so we, too, must make our own choices; and must continue to make them in the issues of life. That is God's plan, and that only, can fulfill his purpose. As the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Hagar's vision appeals to you to know where you intend to go, he gives you the assurance that his way is the only way in which you can most successfully, the great responsibilities of life. Over the hard road of responsibility all must pass who expect to achieve. "Enter ye in at the hard gate," said the Master of life.

SHE HAD COME SHORT
There was nothing in her answer to the question which the Lord asked her that would even indicate, in the least, that she had any particular objective in view. "I am trying to get away from certain restraints and hardships" was her cry. But in getting away from one place and into another, she was also getting into other restraints and other limitations. So must you. She had already gotten somewhere; she scarcely could tell. She had reached this fountain; but her fountain was on the very edge of the desert; and her face was set that way. It was the love of God that brought the messenger to her at the most opportune time. He cared for her; he was wise; knew the way; and wanted to be her guide.

Just as she had dared to venture out, face the unknown, and tread in difficult paths, so must you, also, venture out into new and difficult places if you are to accomplish God's purposes. "Thou God seest me," had watched her all her life. He knew when she had started, and just when to address her. The same kind God has also watched over you as you have been coming to this event. He has already spoken to you, or will speak to you on the same subject that concerned her. He will not let you leave the fountain and go out into the barren places of life, without showing you the dangers there. Your life means too much to him and to the world to take any chances of failure. At this fountain or at some other fountain he will make you see that you too are on the edge of the desert, and that you need a guide. He will try to get you to tell him where you are going. When once he can get you to sincerely answer that question, then he can reason with you that his way is best. It may mean some changes in your plans, just as it meant some changes for her; but any life yielded to him is in the way of true and lasting service; and there, the real satisfaction of life lie.

WE MUST GO ON FROM ANY POINT
Turning back from any point on his advice is going forward. There should be no shrinking from taking whatever steps he may show. It is never a matter of inaction; (better any kind of hardships than doing nothing) but simply a matter of determining what the right thing to be done is. The young person of our text was surely justified in resenting some of the circumstances which had come into her life; but she had made the common mistake of trying to make the corrections and

settle the matter without God. God is greater than circumstances and restrictions. He can sanctify any conditions under which one of his children must live, for the good of that child and for his own glory. She had taken the issues into her own hands; and had tried to find an easy path. THERE ARE NO SUCH PATHS which lie between us and the final consumptions of a worthy, useful life. She tried to go where she pleased. The Lord found her in the wilderness way to the desert. Any time that we take matters into our own hands and try to live our own lives without God, we too, get into the desert way.

Just how long she had been in that frame of mind, and in doubt as to where she should go; and what would be the outcome we do not know. At any rate, when the angel of the Lord found her she was willing to listen to his advice. There need be no doubt in our minds as to where we should go or what we should do. We find that the lack of this confidence on her part was the undoing of her undertaken purpose in the journey; for when she could not tell where she was going, it convinced her that she did not know where to go. She saw her dilemma. She could only say: "I am trying to get away from unpleasant things." She had NO IDEA of where her road was leading her to. She did not even try to answer the question, and yet the query whither wilt thou go? is a most practical question for any young person, regardless of who asks it; but when that question comes from the lips of the Lord Jehovah, the Redeemer, our very best Friend—the Lord Jesus Christ, one should be ready to give a reasonable answer.

THIS IS AN OLD QUESTION

God has been asking this question from the beginning, in one form and another. If you young people have faced it seriously before; and have attempted to answer him satisfactorily to yourselves and to him, my heart is greatly relieved. If you have not so answered him, then this is the most pressing matter before you. "Whither wilt thou go?" from this point in your journey is going to mean much to you and to the world. In just a few days you will be making an entirely new start from this fountain. We are anxious that you have this divine Guide. Regardless of what you are leaving behind you, or what changes you have determined to make, or may later find it necessary to make, there is this definite thing to settle: "Where are you going?"

If I am able to show you that the same kind, wise friend who met that young lady at the desert fountain so long ago when she needed a guide, is your personal and divine friend; and that he is just as anxious to direct your life as he was to help her, then you may soon step out from your high school work with the confidence that wherever your field of life may lie, and whatever your tasks may be, you have this friend beside you, who sticks closer than any brother; and you will act with that measure of confidence which belongs only to them who can say from the heart; "He knoweth all things that I take; and I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

There seems to be a peculiar fascination in the idea of being able to do as one pleases—of being able to do wherever one may choose. It sounds very well; but the finest philosophy of life proves that the very moment one makes that decision, and faces that way, one is headed toward the desert road. Perhaps that one may find a fountain and a friend waiting somewhere; but more than likely the dim desert paths may be lost in the mazes; and the friend be not there. There are very few people who appreciate you enough to tell you when they see you on the wrong road. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near."

We mentioned, also that this person of our text recognized the goodness and the wisdom of God; and for the time at least was willing to yield to his will and take his advice. We know that whatever was wrong in her future life, was not God's fault. God is always ready to cooperate; but he will not coerce during this time of life's testings. Life, with its problems, burdens and mysteries is too complex a thing to work out alone. Too many have already tried it and failed. The desert places are full of wrecks. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death." Nothing is plainer in the word of God than this: God has a plan for every life. This plan is both practical and perfect, and will work if God can get one's cooperation. Be as willing to listen to him at all times as she was when she was at the fountain and you will not go wrong, nor live in vain. He will definitely lead you away from the deserts, and into the fertile fields.

A VERY GREAT PRIVILEGE

This statement concerning God's plan and purpose for your life is one

of the most precious truths which we as messengers of God can make; and it is one of the most reasonable ones. God has a road-chart for each one's journey thru life. None need waste his time or his talent trying to find out what he should do. None need journey here and there to see if certain paths run in the right direction. God, who has redeemed you with heaven's greatest price, has given you this gracious promise: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye."

I say, this is reasonable. Let us look at it for a moment. The Lord asked Hagar: "Whence comest thou?" She did not try to answer him. You have your body, which is the climax of God's creative wisdom and power. You have your mental powers—your soul faculties fashioned after his own attributes, and entrusted to your care. You have a spirit, or rather a spirit which is another gift akin to himself. You have your life—breath-pneuma which is another gift from him. I quote from his word: "In him we live, and move and have our being." Yes, you have come from the hands of God. Is it reasonable then that he should ask: "Whither wilt thou go?" You are now well on your way to graduation and from there you should make a very determined effort, to know where you should go and what you should do.

It is with these things in mind that we are seeking to have you think the next steps through in the light of God's will so that you may be assured of his presence and blessing as you find your places, and live your lives.

SOME THINGS WE KNOW

It is no surprise to you that God is interested in you and wants your life. He wants your being to be happy, useful and abounding. There are certain things which you should prepare to do. God has a blue-print of these things. God knows, also just where these things are. He wants to direct you to them. He can make you very conscious of his presence, wisdom and power. The fact is, that your coming to this point in life has been no mere happenence. It has been achieved thru well-laid and well-executed plans. Your parents, your school, your friends and God have worked together with YOU to bring you to this hour. Whither wilt thou go? You young people are very dear to us all. You will never know just how we feel until you stand in our places (Continued on Page Three)

MATTRESSES

WE MAKE THEM NEW
and
RENOVATE & RECOVER
OLD ONES

Flowers' Mattress Shop

Phone 145-J 114 N. Front
Medford, Oregon

Unique CLEANERS

South Central Ave.
Medford, Ore.

Phone 96

Dr. I. H. Gove

DENTISTRY
Medford, Oregon

Medford School of Beauty Culture

419 1/2 EAST MAIN
PHONE 84
ENROLL NOW
BEAUTY SERVICES
AT A SAVING

Permanents \$2.50
Shampoo and
Finger Wave 50c
Marcel 25 and 50c
SPECIAL
Scalp Treatments
Or Facials 50c

This Classified Directory Will be found useful When in Medford

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Shangle Studios
Expert Photography
Fine Portraits a Specialty
Medford Bldg.

OPTOMETRIST

Dr. Jud Rickert
Good Glasses, if you need them,
otherwise good advice.
222 E. Main, Medford

FASHION SHOPS

The Fashion Shop
Dressmaking and Remodeling
MRS. MYRTLE ANDREW
Phone 1191 424 Medford Building

PHYSICIANS

Dr. B. C. Wilson
Physician and Surgeon
Stones' Drug 210 Medford
Store Bldg
Central Point Medford

ATTORNEYS

O. C. Boggs
LAWYER
Jackson Co. Bank Building
Medford

TAILORING

F. J. Huber
Ladies' and Gents' Tailoring
SUITS 830 UP
31 N. Fir St. Medford