

Great 2 of 2

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Study Given by W. D. Frazee—July 18,

"Thine, O LORD is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and Thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all; and in Thine hand is power and might; and in Thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all"
1 Chronicles 29:11-12.

God is great. Can He make anybody else great? Yes, if they will be in His hand. Lucifer was great, but he lost it when he put himself out of God's hand. True greatness depends upon what God is doing in our lives. True greatness depends upon the Great One, the Creator, the Infinite One. There is nothing we can do apart from Him.

When I was a boy I remembered a poem about Alexander the Great, so I looked it up. This is a dialogue conversation between a father and his son.

"How big was Alexander, Pa? The people call him great;
Was he like old Goliath tall, his spear a hundred weight?
Was he so large that he could stand like some tall steeple high?
And while his feet were on the ground his hands could touch the sky?
Oh, no, my child, about as large as I or Uncle James;
T'was not his stature that made him great, but the greatness of his name.
His name so great? I know 'tis long, but easy quite to spell;
And more than half a year ago I knew it very well.
I mean my child his actions were so great he got a name;
That everybody speaks with praise that tells about his fame.
Well, what great action did he do? I want to know it all.
Why, he it was that conquered Tier and leveled down her wall,
And thousands of her people slew and then to Persia went;
And fire and sword on every side through many a region sent,
A hundred conquered cities shone with midnight burnings red,
And strewed o'er many a battle ground a thousand soldiers bled.
Did killing people make him great? Then why was Abdul Young,
Who killed his neighbor training day put into jail and hung?
I never hear them call him great, why no, t'was not in war;
And him that kills a single man his neighbors all abhor.
Well then, if I should kill a man I should kill a hundred more;
I should be great and not be hung like Abdul Young before.
Not so, my child, t'will never do, the Gospel bids be kind;

Then they that kill and they that praise the Gospel do not mind.

Did you know the Bible calls Alexander the Great? In fact, it calls him very great.

"Therefore the he goat waxed very great" Daniel 8:8.

"And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king" Daniel 8:21.

That is Alexander. So in a sense it is all right to call Alexander great. But let's not stop here. When he was strong the great was broken. He died when he was thirty-three years old in a drunken debauch, celebrating his victories. He had conquered in all directions. At Babylon he engaged in a great celebration. He kept drinking and drinking until he finally died a suicide from his indulgence of alcohol. He conquered the world but he couldn't conquer himself.

Was he great? Not in the eyes of God. In the eyes of men, yes. He was great in his influence for a time. But like a meteor flashing across the sky drawing the attention of thousands or millions, his light went out in obscurity. I don't want to be like that. Do you?

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever" Daniel 12:3.

They will not be like meteors that flash and then go out like Alexander. But like the fixed stars that shine on generation after generation, forever and ever.

It is true that David made some terrible mistakes, but thank God, he had a deeper repentance. God appreciated David because he was willing to admit when he was wrong and sought forgiveness.

David was in flight. His son, Absalom rebelled against him, and is on the march with an army. Rather than to see Jerusalem a battlefield, David retired with those who were loyal to him. He went up to the Mount of Olives in mourning, sad that there was rebellion. His sorrow is great because it is his son that is leading the rebellion. And his sorrow is still greater because he knew it was his own fault. He is reaping the results of his former transgressions. He had not been as faithful as he should have been in training his children. His own sins tended to make him more lenient than he should have been. So Absalom had risen up to slay his own father, if necessary, and take the throne.

As David went up there is a man called Shimei that cursed him and called him a bloody man. Some who were with David said, Why should this man curse the king? Let us go over and take off his head.

"And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants,
Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh
my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? let

him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him. It may be that the LORD will look on mine affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day" 2 Samuel 16:11.

David was enduring the results of his sins. Notice the comment on this:

"The Lord did not forsake David. This chapter in his experience, when, under cruelest wrong and insult, he shows himself to be humble, unselfish, generous, and submissive, is one of the noblest in his whole experience. Never was the ruler of Israel more truly great in the sight of heaven than at this hour of his deepest outward humiliation" *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 738.

If we are going to think about greatness we must use heaven's yardstick. The greatest hour in David's life was when he revealed the loving, forgiving, merciful spirit of Jesus. Never was he more truly great in the sight of heaven than at this hour.

David's son, Solomon, came to the kingdom, placed there by David in his old age. As young Solomon faced the tremendous problems of the kingdom, and realized that to him had been given the commission to build the temple, he longed for wisdom which he knew he didn't have of himself.

"And now, O LORD my God, Thou hast made Thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in" 1 Kings 3:7.

Why make a man a king who is like that? We want a king that stands up and says, I know what to do.

Notice a comment on this:

"Solomon was never so rich or so wise or so truly great as when he confessed, 'I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in.'" *Prophets and Kings*, page 30.

That was a great day in Solomon's life. Oh, if he had only continued in that attitude. But he allowed the great wisdom God gave him in answer to this prayer to turn his head. He became proud and self-exalted like Lucifer before him. Although he was the wisest king that Israel ever had as far as knowledge and insight, yet he allowed that wisdom that God had given him to make him a leader in apostasy. He lost the greatness.

Thank God, before he died he repented. He spent his few remaining days in an earnest endeavor to lead his people back. That was when he wrote the book of Ecclesiastes in which he shows his sorrow and repentance over the way he had gone. Solomon's greatness was in his humility. When he lost that, he lost the real greatness.

Now let's see the most beautiful example of this quality in all the universe:

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" Philippians 2:5-11.

No one ever went so low in the path of humility and self-abnegation as Jesus did. No one will ever be exalted as Jesus was. And the whole universe, loyal and disloyal at the final judgment day, will unite in recognizing Him as the One worthy of the highest worship. Every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess His greatness.

When was Jesus' greatest hour? Not when He was crowned and the whole universe united in praise. Christ's greatest hour was at Calvary. There is where the greatest revelation of the character of God was made. As He went to the lowest depth in humiliation in giving Himself He revealed the truest greatness of our Lord.

The greatness of God does not lie in His power, or even in His wisdom, as much as in His love. Ah, if His almighty power were not linked with love, what a tyrant He could be. If His wisdom were not linked with love, what a feign He could be.

But thank God, in Jesus we behold a Creator who is not only all powerful and all wise, He is all loving. And in Christ we see the greatness of humility.

Jesus taught His disciples that lesson as in the upper room He washed their feet. He told them, You call me Lord and Master, and I am. But you have seen that I have washed your feet, and I want you to give your lives in loving service as I have.

Was Alexander great? Ah, friends, how his greatness shrivels in comparison with David. And when we contrast the greatness of Alexander with the life and death of our Lord, Jesus Christ, I don't want to be like him. I want to be like Jesus.

Everyone of us is choosing from day to day which way we are going. Do you really wish to be like Jesus? Are you willing to give up the praises of men? Are you willing to be insulted and derided, criticized, persecuted, falsely accused? Are you willing to have those about you feel that you are throwing your life away as you give yourself for others?

This was the experience of Christ. Men could not see why One who possessed such power could walk out in such poverty. Men could not understand how possessing such wisdom He would allow Himself to be taken by His enemies.

The remnant are soon going to be in a position where the only way they will go through will be to have settled in their hearts what it means to be truly great. They must come to the point where they hate that kind of greatness which is represented in Alexander—The cruel triumph of might over might, power over power, force over force. We must come to the place where the only greatness we admire and intimate is the greatness of loving humility that Jesus exemplified.

Jesus and Alexander died at thirty-three,
One lived and died for self, One died for you and me;
The Greek died on a throne, the Jew died on a cross,
One's life a triumph, is seemed, the Other but a loss.

One led vast armies forth, the Other walked alone,
One shed a whole world's blood, the Other gave His own;
One won the world in life and lost it all in death,
The Other lost His life to win the whole world's fate.

Jesus and Alexander died at thirty-three,
The Greek make all men slaves, the Jew made all men free;
One built a throne on blood, the Other built on love,
The one was born on earth, the Other was born from above.

The one won all this earth to lose all earth and heaven,
The Other gave up all that all to Him be given;
The Greek forever died, the Jew forever lives,
He loses all who gets, he wins all who gives.

Blessed Lord, rightly interpret to our hearts this glimpse of two lives. Oh, may we be cured forever of the selfish ambition that motivated Alexander. May we be filled forever with the sacrificial love that moved our Blessed Lord, and that moves Him still to intercede for us.

Spoil this world and all its selfishness for us. May we no longer be impressed with its glitter and tinsel and glamour, its fool's gold.

Oh, may we embrace the greatness of humility, the greatness of loving service, the greatness of being like Jesus. Do it for us and in us and through us, I pray, my Blessed Lord, Amen.

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