

What is the fastest that you have ever gone from hero to zero? You know, when you have had the feeling of euphoria sink straight to the bottom. I can measure it in seconds, myself.

There was the time at work that I went from one meeting, where the project sponsor sang our praises and begged to come back for further tests, directly to another meeting where we got severely chastised for wasting fifty cents worth of printer paper on the same project. It got so bad that the project manager stood up and threatened to get a lawyer! But, we lived through it all.

There is an interesting story about David along this line. You may remember that as David grew in prominence, Saul's daughter Michal fell in love with him, and they were married. Saul was pleased about it until he became murderously jealous of David. When Saul sent men to their house to capture David, Michal let him down through a window, and he escaped. Later, when David was living outside the land of Israel, Saul gave Michal to another man.

When David regained power in Judah and a merger with Israel was offered, he demanded the return of Michal. This was to consolidate power, of course, but also possibly because of his feelings for her. But perhaps she did not want to go back to David; maybe she had adjusted to her new life. Imagine what the reunion was like when David and Michal got back together!

Another part of the story that we're looking at has to do with the ark of God. The ark was lost in the war with the Philistines before the time of Saul or David. It was sort of like a hot potato to the Philistines, and they finally decided that their lives would be much better without it. So, they sent it back to the land of Israel. Under the direction of the two cows driving the cart, it ended up in the town of Beth Shemesh. The people there sent messengers to the people of Kiriath Jearim, asking to have them come and take care of it. There it stayed for twenty years, until Saul began to take it with him into battle. Later, David decided to move the ark to Jerusalem. On the way, the oxen stumbled and Uzzah was struck down when he took hold of the ark. David then decided to wait for a while before moved the ark any more. When David saw that God blessed the house of Obed-Edom, where the ark was kept, he decided once again that it was time to bring it to Jerusalem.

Now the scene is set to tell the rest of the story. David and the entire house of Israel gathered together in a festival parade as they brought up the ark of the Lord with shouts and the sound of trumpets. Everyone was happy because something really Good was happening: the greatest symbol of the Name and Power of God was coming home!

There was one person, however, that was not happy about this and did not join in the celebration. We read in 2 Samuel 6:16 that as the ark of the LORD was entering the city, "Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord, she despised him in her heart." David, not knowing about this, went on and installed the ark in its prepared place. When the celebration was done, he returned to his home exhilarated by the wonderful thing that he had done.

But guess who met him at the door! Michal punctured his balloon by her piercing words: "How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, disrobing in the sight of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!"

David responded with anger, "It was before the Lord, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the Lord's people Israel--I will celebrate before the Lord. I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor." Their relationship was thus broken, and Michal had no children to the day of her death.

Has this sort of thing ever happened to you? It sort of reminds me of the cartoon where Daffy Duck plays Robin Hood battling Little John, and when he strikes the bridge with his staff, it bounces directly back into his face and folds his bill up.

Life can bring many surprises. With some of them the shock is so sudden and unexpected that it takes our breath away. How did we react? We must remember that this happens to good people, like David in the situation described above. It happened to our Lord Jesus, who healed a man and knew that those who saw him went out immediately to plot His death. No matter how good we try to be, not everyone appreciates us. The only thing to do is to do the best we can and not look back. Just watch out for the sudden rebounds.

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