

Ambrose and the King's Treasure

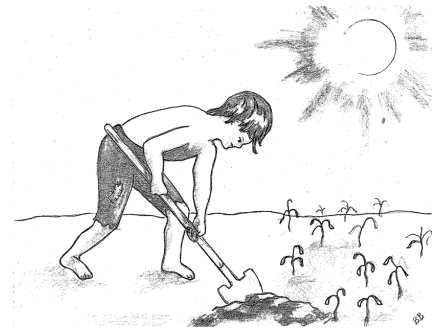
by Therese L. Salazar

Illustrated by Bernadette M. Baca

Once upon a time in the Kingdom of Esdraelon there lived a young man named Ambrose.

Ambrose was kind to others, worked hard and tried to be a good citizen, but sometimes he got into debt. When he got into debt, he always made arrangements to pay what he owed and would do extra work to make up for it. He would spend many extra days working in the hot summer sun and the cold winter winds. He would get up early before sunrise and work late into the dark after sunset. Then one day Ambrose heard about the King's treasure.

The King of Esdraelon was a very, very, rich king. His kingdom was large and had many wonderful and beautiful things. He had many riches and treasures that were kept in the storehouse. Besides being very rich, the King was also very generous. He loved his subjects and willingly gave them what they needed. The queen of Esdraelon and many of the nobles were also very rich. When they saw the generosity of their King, they too, contributed their riches to the storehouse to be given to the King's subjects.



The King had put all these treasures in the care of his Royal Governor. The King gave his Royal Governor the keys to the store house where the riches were kept and gave him the authority to give out these treasures as he saw fit.

One day Ambrose decided that he would go to the Royal Governor and ask for help to pay his debt. So he mounted his donkey and traveled the dusty road to the castle where the Royal Governor lived.

When he was brought before the Royal Governor, Ambrose explained his situation. He said,

“O great and royal Governor of Esdraelon, I am but a poor and lowly citizen of this great kingdom. Because of my weakness and poverty, I have gotten into debt and must pay a great sum of money. I have heard of the generosity of our King

and know that he has put you in charge of his treasures. I have heard that the citizens of this magnificent kingdom can come to you to ask for help in paying our debts. With all humility and great appreciation for your generosity I ask for help to pay my debts.”

The Royal Governor looked kindly upon Ambrose and asked him, “How much do you owe?”

Ambrose replied, “I owe one hundred silver coins.” The Royal Governor then said to Ambrose, “If you will pay forty silver coins from your own money bag and speak kindly of our King, I will pay forty silver coins towards your debt.”

Ambrose was very happy to hear this because he knew that he had forty silver coins saved to pay his debt. With the forty silver coins from the Royal Governor he could pay off most of his debt and with a few more days of work he could earn enough to pay off all that he owed. He also knew that he could freely and joyfully speak kindly of his King to everyone. So, Ambrose said to the Royal Governor, “O great and powerful Royal Governor of Esdraelon, I gratefully accept your offer. I will pay the debt and speak always of the love and generosity of our King. Thank you.”

Ambrose quickly mounted his donkey and rode off with his forty silver coins to pay his debt. Along with him went one of the Royal Governor’s official with forty more silver coins. That day Ambrose was able to pay 80 silver coins toward his debt. For many days following Ambrose worked hard and was able to pay off the last twenty silver coins owed.

Ambrose was happy and at peace for some time, but slowly, and little by little, he got into debt again. He worked hard to pay his debt but earned only one coin each day. It would take him many years of work to pay what he owed. Once again, he remembered the treasure and generosity of his King and decided that he should ask for help. So once again he mounted his donkey and traveled the dusty road to the castle where the Royal Governor lived.



When he was brought before the Royal Governor, Ambrose respectfully approached him and spoke these words:

“O great and powerful Royal Governor of Esdraelon, once again I come before you. I am but a poor and lowly citizen of this great kingdom. Because of my weakness and poverty, I have once again gotten into debt and must pay a great sum of money. I know that our King is kind and generous and willingly helps those who are in need. I know that he has put you in charge of distributing his treasures to those in need, and so, with all humility and great appreciation for your generosity I ask for help to pay my debt.”

The Royal Governor looked kindly upon Ambrose and asked him, “How much do you owe?”

Ambrose replied, "I owe one thousand silver coins." The Royal Governor then said to Ambrose, "Come to me each day with what you have earned to pay your debt and I will grant you an equal amount. You must also remember to speak kindly and lovingly of our King. Ambrose was greatly relieved because he knew that with the help of the Royal Governor, he could pay his debt much sooner. So, Ambrose said to the Royal Governor, "O great and powerful Royal Governor of Esdraelon, I gratefully accept your offer. I will pay the debt and speak always of the love and generosity of our King. Thank you." And that is what Ambrose did.

Each day he earned one silver coin and spoke of the love and generosity of the King to all who would listen, and each day when he presented the coin to pay his debt the Royal Governor also presented an additional silver coin to pay his debt. In time Ambrose had paid off all that he owed. He was very happy and at peace. He was grateful to the King and his Royal Governor and tried very hard not to get into debt again.

Then one day Ambrose heard that his dear uncle Ephrem had crossed over the Sea of Esdraelon on his way to the Highlands of the kingdom. The Highlands of the Kingdom of Esdraelon were the most lush, beautiful and bountiful pasture lands in the entire kingdom. It was the hope of the citizens of Esdraelon to one day be able to live within these glorious lands.

Ambrose' uncle Ephrem had made the journey to the Highlands but found that he was not able to enter because he still owed a great sum of money and no one could enter the Highlands if he was in debt to anyone.

When Ambrose heard about his uncle and the debt that was keeping him from entering into the Highlands, he was troubled and wondered how he could help him. He thought about working harder to earn more silver coins to send to his uncle, but it would take many, many years to earn what his uncle needed. Then he remembered the treasure and generosity of his King. So Ambrose once again mounted his donkey and traveled the dusty road to the castle where the Royal Governor lived.

When he was brought before the Royal Governor, Ambrose respectfully approached him and spoke these words:

O great and powerful Royal Governor of Esdraelon, once again I come before you. I have greatly benefited from your generosity in the past and I will be forever grateful. But this time I come to plead once more for your help, not for myself, but for my dear uncle Ephrem. He has crossed over the Sea of Esdraelon on his way to the Highlands of the Kingdom but is unable to enter the Highlands because he is in debt.

It is known that no one can enter the glorious Highlands of Esdraelon if they are in debt to anyone of the kingdom. It will take him a great many years to pay his debt in order to enter the Highlands. I have come to beg for help on his behalf. What must I do to help him pay his debt? Please consider my petition.

The Royal Governor looked upon Ephrem kindly and spoke these words:

My little brother, Ambrose, it pleases me greatly to know that you have come on behalf of your uncle Ephrem. The King greatly desires that his subjects love one another and help each other. He will be gladdened to know, that rather than wanting treasures for yourself, you seek them for the benefit of your uncle. I will gladly open the storehouse of treasures for you, but first I must ask you, do you know how much your uncle owes?



Ambrose grew silent. He did not know what his uncle owed and did not know what to say. Finally he spoke up,

“O great and powerful Royal Governor of Esdraelon. What I do know is that my uncle Ephrem owes a considerable amount and that it will take him a great many years to pay what he owes. I do not know what I should ask of you. How can I best help him?”

The Royal Governor thought for a moment and then asked Ambrose, “Do you desire a partial payment for the debt of your uncle or a full payment?” Ambrose was astonished. It had not occurred to him to be so bold as to ask for a full payment of his uncle’s debt. Should he dare to ask for so great a gift?

Slowly he raised his eyes, looked upon the Royal Governor and said:

O great and royal Governor of Esdraelon, I am but a poor and lowly citizen of this great kingdom. I have no right to ask for treasures from the storehouse of the Kingdom, for myself or for my uncle. But I know that the King is kind and generous. I know that it pleases Him when we ask great things of Him. Therefore, I boldly ask for all the treasures necessary to fully pay my uncle’s debt.

The Royal Governor looked at Ambrose with satisfaction and then spoke, “You ask a great deal for your uncle and I will be happy to release the treasures he needs. But because you ask so much, I too, must ask of you. Are you willing to do what I ask of you?”

Ambrose quickly replied, “Yes, great and royal Governor of Esdraelon, I will do what you ask.” Then the Royal Governor motioned for Ambrose to sit on the chair beside him. When Ambrose was seated the Royal Governor said to him, “I will ask you to do five things in order to gain the treasure you wish for your uncle.” Ambrose replied, I will gladly do them. Please tell me what I must do.”

The Royal Governor leaned toward Ambrose and said, “First you must humble yourself before the King and His prelate by confessing your failings and weaknesses. This will help you strive to overcome them. Will you do this?” “Yes,” said Ambrose.

The Royal Governor continued, “Second, you must attend the Royal Banquet of the King. It will make Him happy to see you there. You must speak to him and listen to what he has to say. You must become his friend. Will you do this?” “Yes,” said Ambrose.

“Thirdly,” added the Royal Governor, “You must speak well of me to the King. Let him know what I have done for you and what I do for others. Will you do this?” “Yes,” said Ambrose.

“Fourth,” said the Royal Governor, “and this is the hardest,” he warned, “you must be willing to never get into debt again. You must make up your mind that rather than getting into debt you will do without.” The Royal Governor looked intently at Ambrose and asked, “Will you do this?” Ambrose’s eyes grew wide. He became silent and thoughtful. He considered the fun times and desirable things that he would have to give up. Could he do this? Could he stay out of debt? And then he thought of his dear Uncle Ephrem at the foothills of the Highlands. He pictured his uncle working and waiting for many years to pay off his debt. Ambrose could help him if was willing to stay out of debt. He could help him enter the Highlands immediately! Yes, he thought! I can do it. With confidence Ambrose locked his gaze on the Royal Governor and declared, “Yes, I will do this!”

The Royal Governor smiled with pleasure and spoke, “There is one last thing that you must do.” “What is it?” asked Ambrose. “You must read the sacred writings of our people for an allotted time. Will you do this?” At once Ambrose stood up and proclaimed, “Yes, I will do this!”

“Very well,” pronounced the royal governor, “your request shall be granted. When you have completed what I have asked of you, all the treasures necessary to fully pay your uncle’s debt will be supplied to him. His debt will be completely paid and he will enter the Highlands of Esdraelon.”

Ambrose was so excited! He wanted to begin right away. He bowed low to the Royal Governor and thanked him over and over again. Then he turned and ran out of the castle. He hopped on his donkey and rode home.

Within a week Ambrose completed all that the Royal Governor had asked and got word that his uncle had entered the Highlands of Esdraelon. In gratitude he journeyed to the castle and came before the Royal Governor. When the Royal Governor saw Ambrose, he smiled and greeted him saying, “Greetings to you Ambrose. I pray that all goes well with you.”

“Very well, indeed, Royal Governor,” replied Ambrose. I come to express my gratitude for myself and for my Uncle Ephrem. Because of your generosity, he is now enjoying the glory of the Highlands of Esdraelon.”

“I am glad for him”, said the Royal Governor. Is there anything else I may do for you?”

Ambrose thought for a moment and then expressed a question that had been growing in his mind. “Royal governor, I was able to ask for treasures from the storehouse of the Kingdom in order to help my uncle Ephrem. Why are there not many others asking for these treasures?”



The Royal Governor looked thoughtfully at Ambrose and said to him, "Come with me." Ambrose followed the Royal Governor to an area of the castle that had two large wooden doors. The Royal Governor explained, "This is the storehouse where all the treasures of the Kingdom are kept. Then he took his key and unlocked the doors and opened them. As they walked into the storehouse Ambrose was astonished. Everywhere he looked there were piles of coins large and small made of copper, silver, and gold. He saw heaps of jewels made from diamonds, emeralds, pearls, amethysts opals, jaspers, sapphires, topaz, and rubies. He saw vessels of all sizes and shapes made of marble, alabaster and onyx. He saw shimmering rich cloths of silk, velvet and fine linen. There were many other riches he saw that he couldn't describe because they were so beautiful. The room appeared endless and the treasures without limit.

The Royal Governor saw Ambrose' amazement and said to him:

"These are the riches and treasures of the King, the Queen and the Nobles of the Kingdom of Esdraelon. They are here for the use of the citizens of the Kingdom. The King has given me charge over them and has instructed me to be generous in distributing them. But I cannot give them out if the citizens of Esdraelon don't seek them and don't appreciate them. There are very few like yourself who seek and appreciate what the King wishes to give."

"But, Royal Governor, why do the citizens not seek and appreciate these abundant treasures?" asked Ambrose. "Do they not know of our King's wealth and generosity?"

The Royal Governor thought for a moment and replied, "It is true that many don't know about the wealth and generosity of our King and so they don't seek these treasures; others don't take the time or make the effort."

"Royal Governor," continued Ambrose, "what of those who do know of the King's generosity and kindness, if they, like myself, have already received treasure from the storehouse are they not permitted to ask for more?"

"There is no limit to what you may ask," explained the Royal Governor, but the effort to ask must be made. So many citizens would benefit greatly if they made this effort. The King desires that the citizens of Esdraelon come daily and seek his generosity, and I am happy to open the storehouse and distribute all that is needed."

“Oh, good Royal Governor,” declared Ambrose, “I will gladly come daily to request treasures from the storehouse of the Kingdom of Esdraelon for myself and for those who have crossed over the Sea of Esdraelon but are unable to enter the Highlands. I will do all that is necessary to gain these treasures. I will count on the generosity, goodness and kindness of our King. What a wonderful King we have and what a wonderful Kingdom” exclaimed Ambrose!

From that day on Ambrose made every effort to gain treasures from the storehouse of the Kingdom. He praised the King daily; he stayed out of debt and satisfied the debt of many who had crossed the Sea of Esdraelon to enter the Highlands. In time he grew in goodness, dignity and stature. The King was pleased with Ambrose and one day asked him to join the ranks of the Nobles of Esdraelon.

Little Ambrose, who considered himself a poor and unworthy citizen of Esdraelon many years before, had now helped himself and others to gain the Kingdom's treasures and because of this, was now a great Noble of the Kingdom of Esdraelon.



The End

This story is protected by copyright and may not be reproduced for sale or publication without writing to Bayard, Inc. and Catechist.com.

Permission is granted to make copies for classroom or personal use only.