

Real Life Stories
"The Stroke, Which Was My Due, Fell Upon Him"

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J. C. Massey told the beautiful story of an incident long ago when he lived in a Georgia plantation home. He said that his mother was a beautiful and winsome woman, quiet and dignified. She was the law in the home, and one of her laws was that the children should never play on the beds.

Dr. Massey said that his mother's beds were wonderful structures. There were no springs, just a crisscross of ropes. The mattresses were made out of cotton grown on the farm. On top of the mattress was a featherbed made up of feathers, including the down, taken from the flocks of geese and ducks. Over all was a coverlet, snowy white, also made of cotton.

When he was about seven years of age, J. C. went outside one morning after a night of rain and began making mud pies. Later in the morning, wearying of his play, he came into the house, muddy from head to toe. Passing down the long hall of the old colonial home, he found the guest chamber door open. The snowy white bed was making a tremendous appeal. The next thing he realized, he had jumped into the middle of the bed, still wearing his muddy shoes and clothes.

His mother had one very bad habit – being in the most unexpected places at the most undesirable times. He heard the swish of her skirts. Looking up, he saw her standing in the doorway. Her usually sunny face was overcast with a cloud as black as midnight. Lightning was flashing from her eyes. Dr. Massey said, "I hid my face and waited for the blow to fall."

Just at that moment there was another rush of feet. He said, "My brother, just 21 years old, was passing through the side yard and glanced into the window. "Taking in the full significance of scene and loving his brother more than anything else, he ran through the guest chamber door, across the room and threw his great 200 pound body down over the boy, completely covering him. Then his older brother said, "Lay it on, Mother; I will take it for him."

Dr. Massey said that was the sweetest music he had ever heard. "He had covered my sin in covering the sinner. I waited for a breathless second, then peeked out from under his big body to see the cloud disappear from my mother's face. On it was the sunlight of tremulous joy in reconciliation." With trembling lips, she said, "Get up from there, you rascal, and take him away before I do with you both."

He said, "My brother rolled out of the bed, lifted me up on his shoulders and carried me down to the gate." He was safe in the hands of his brother.

Dr. Massey said that there was another day when he found himself in the place of the sinner, lost and condemned. "I knew that the wrath of God was upon me. Just then Jesus interposed his body between God and me as he died upon the cross. The stroke which was my due fell upon Him. He was wounded for my transgressions, He was bruised for my iniquities. The punishment of my peace was upon Him, and with His stripes I was healed. In Him, I became the righteousness of God. He covered me. He covered my sin."

Need I say more? The picture is clear. The hope for the sinner – "in Christ Jesus."