

The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED WEEKLY

IN THE INTEREST OF JARVIS STREET BAPTIST
CHURCH, TORONTO, AND OF EVANGELICAL TRUTH

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"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."—Romans 1: 16.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14th, 1922.

Vol. I.

No. 18.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

HOW GOD MADE A PRINCE OF A SUPPLANTER.

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Sunday Evening, August 27th, 1922.

(Stenographically Reported)

"And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him."—Genesis 32: 1.

Last Sunday evening we were engaged in a study of the character of Esau, described in the Scripture as "a profane person, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." And we observed that while Esau had many amiable characteristics, the distinguishing feature about him was that he found no place for God in his life. He was of the earth, earthy—a man who lived without holding converse with the skies.

And now this evening we have the character of Jacob before us. A great deal is said about the influence of heredity; and on the ground of the operation of the laws of heredity, there are those who would excuse almost any, and every evil as being an inevitable fruit of some natural predisposition for which the individual is not responsible. The eugenists, on the other hand, would obviate the necessity of regeneration, of a second birth, by effecting the perfection of the natural birth. In spite of these contentions, our story serves to show that the operation of the laws of heredity are very uncertain; and that it is extremely difficult to foretell their influence upon human character. For here are two men who are not only the sons of the same parents, but they are twin brothers—and yet they are as unlike as it would be possible for two human characters to be.

I. Our text tells us that as Jacob went on his way, the angels of God met him. And when they met Jacob—**They Met a Man With a Record**—and it was a record of which no one could justly be proud. It is useless to try to excuse Jacob. If you read his story carefully, you will conclude there is ground for Moody's famous saying, that "We are a pretty bad lot."

It is a most interesting story, which illustrates the possibilities of divine

grace. But certainly Jacob after the flesh was not a very promising subject. His whole history illustrates the truth of a verse of one of our hymns:

"Ah, grace! into unlikeliest hearts.
It is thy boast to come;
The glory of thy light to find
In darkest spots a home."

If divine grace, at last, made a prince of Jacob, changing his name from Jacob to Israel, and making him worthy of the inheritance to which he had been called; there is hope for the very worst of us; for it would be difficult to find anyone whose moral future was less promising than that of Jacob, the supplanter.

To begin with, **Jacob was an untruthful man.** I have heard ingenious expositors try to prove that Jacob told the truth after all. But such casuistry dishonors God's word. There is this difference between biblical biography and biographies written by uninspired men: When an inspired pen writes the record of a man's life, it does not hesitate to tell the truth about him. And in the stories of the lives of Abraham, and Moses, and David, and of all those in whose lives God was pleased to magnify Himself, you will find that there is always a place for divine grace to triumph. And the biographer does not hesitate to tell the very worst.

The truth is that Jacob was a liar of the first order; and when you say that of a man you say the very worst you can say of anybody. Because it is of no value to say that a man is amiable; that he has many attractive qualities; that his personality is extremely winsome; and that in many of the relationships of life, he is an exemplary sort of person, if he has this one serious defect—that you cannot believe a word he says. When you say that of a man, you declare that his character has no ethical foundation; because a man who is not truthful cannot be a good man. And that was true of Jacob. In the story he told to his blind father, he told an unvarnished, unmitigated lie. There is no possibility of explaining it away. And yet, I propose to show you this evening that God made a place for Himself in the life of even so evil a character; and ultimately transformed him, and made him worthy of the new princely name He gave him, and of the covenant to which he was made an heir.

And, if I may communicate to you a little secret, I want to tell you that Jacob is strangely like you and me! We are not much better. "I said in my haste," said David, "all men are liars." And you have all heard the old Scotsman's comment, that "if he had lived in our day, he would have said it at his leisure."

And you will find that society is organized on the assumption that men are liars. That is a strange thing to say, but it is true. You will find that all the checks and balances of business are provided to prevent the modern Jacobs from taking advantage of the modern Esaus. That is why you require your contracts in black and white. The highest compliment you can pay to any man is to say that his word is as good as his bond. Jacob's word was not. He was untruthful at heart. He told that which was not in accord with the facts of the case.

Furthermore, Jacob was actuated by dishonest motives. I suppose there are degrees of culpability in this matter of untruthfulness. Oliver Wendell Holmes has an essay, it is long since I read it, but I think its title is "The Ethics of Lying," in which he endeavors to show that Nature herself is a bit of a liar; that the tree-toad is one of the arch-deceivers; and that the chameleon is by Nature equipped to deceive everybody by taking the color of its surroundings. And dealing with the medical aspect, he justifies the doctor who, when a very

neurotic patient says, "Now, doctor, tell me the truth. Am I going to die?" gives him an evasive answer.

Be that as it may, Jacob lied for his own personal advantage, and without necessity. He declared himself to be his father's first-born, when he knew he was not, in order that he might supplant his brother, and appropriate his father's blessing.

Well, I am afraid that if we—any of us—were to put our character side by side with Jacob's, we should find there are spots in our history which would make no better reading than that of Jacob. And when you read this story—now listen—when you read this story, and pass unmeasured criticism upon the action of Jacob, just take time to be thankful that your life's story has not been written down by an unerring pen, so that all men might read it. And at the same time, remember that by the hand that wrote this story, the history of every life is being written, and that some day we shall be "judged out of those things which are written in the books." Perhaps these biographies are intended to serve as advance notices of the stories that will be read on the day when God shall open His books. For remember, we are speaking now of a single act in Jacob's history; and it is unfair to judge a whole life by a single utterance, when the man is in a bad mood; when he is not quite himself; when he is specially stirred to an unworthy action. For God will judge us with a true knowledge of the relation of one act to another, and of the quality of the life as a whole.

We may observe further that **Jacob was as wide awake to the attractions of this present world as Esau.** Last Sunday evening I tried to explain to you that on one side of his nature, Esau was responsive to every appeal—that to the world of things Esau instantly made response; but there never was from him any response to the spiritual. Jacob loved the world of things as Esau did; and managed to secure a good share for himself; for I read that the land was unable to bear them. Jacob and Esau had to part company just as Abraham and Lot did, because their riches in cattle were so great. Jacob was just as well off, just as rich as Esau was. And when we say that Esau "for one morsel of meat sold his birthright," we must never forget that the "morsel of meat," for which he sold it, was Jacob's, and that he bought it at the highest possible price.

And somebody says, "There are people in the churches to-day who are just as keen business men as you can find anywhere; and I know multitudes of professing Christians who say they look for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God," but they are as keen in their race after the dollar as any man I know." That is perfectly true—and some of them are a little more keen. Jacob was. He was a shrewd business man; and he has a good many successors, after the flesh, in this city in which we live.

I would have you, therefore, weigh these two characters in the balances. Measuring Esau on the natural plane you find him a generous and considerate son and brother; that he is possessed of many qualities which call forth your admiration. The one thing about him is that he never bows his knee, that he makes no response whatever to God. He is a profane man; he is essentially a man of the world. But as you study the character of Jacob you will observe that, while in the beginning he is just as worldly as Esau is, and that he lacks many of Esau's attractive qualities, in spite of it all, he is awake to another world. And it is of that awakening I want now, in a word, to speak.

II. "And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him." **When Jacob Met the Angels of God, He Recognized Them, and Made Response to Their Appeal.** And this is true of every man—that as we go on our way the angels of God meet us. The Bible is full of the stories of the ministry of angels.

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." "Angel" means messenger. And we all meet, at some time or another—somewhere along the road of our pilgrimage—we all meet messengers from the other world. It is true of every man, and of every woman, and of every boy, and of every girl—that as we go on our way, somewhere the angels of God will meet us. Not that they necessarily appear in any supernatural way. The messenger of God may be a godly mother, or a godly father, or a pious wife, or a spiritual-minded husband: the messenger of God may be a little child just dropped down from the purity of heaven: the messenger of God may be a doctor, or an undertaker, or some devastating plague: the messenger of God may be a faithful preacher, or a Sunday-school teacher, or a tract distributor, or some strange providence, that orders your life in a particular direction. But remember this, "God leaves not Himself without witness." He will be justified when He speaks, and clear when He judges; and every mouth shall be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God. But He will not allow any man, or any woman, to go on his way without sending an angel to meet him, to tell him the way in which he should go. God will leave, I say, every one of us without excuse for assuming that this present material world is the only world. He will see to it that some messenger comes to us from beyond, to tell us of that which lies behind the veil of sense—of a life which is more than the life of the body; of a life which is not bounded by the grave. God's messengers will come. And when they came to Jacob, Jacob recognized them.

Jacob's family history had been written by the angels of God. His grandfather, Abraham, had "entertained angels unawares"; and ere they left his tent they made him a promise that a son should be born. And in due time Isaac, that child of laughter, the child of promise, came to bless Abraham's life; and by the fulfilment of that promise, Jacob himself lived. And at a later time, when Isaac was laid upon the altar, and Abraham had stretched forth his hand to slay his son, it was the voice of an angel that said, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad." And still later it was an angel of God who went before Eliezer into the far country to seek the woman whom God had appointed to be Isaac's wife, and to bring Isaac and Rebecca together.

Jacob's history had been written by the angels of God—and so has yours. If we could but read the pages of the past, there is not one of us here this evening who would not see that we owe our very existence, this moment, to the intervention of messengers from another world. God has intervened; He has proved again and again that He is God, and beside Him there is none else.

Could we not sing this evening?

"O God of Bethel, by whose hand
Thy people still are fed;
Who through this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led:
Our vows, our prayers, we now present
Before Thy throne of grace;
God of our fathers, be the God
Of their succeeding race!"

There are men and women here this evening who would say, "Sir, I know something of the religion of Christ. I heard it at my mother's knee. I was taught it in the Sunday School. I heard it at family worship." And in that day when you went on your way the angel of God met you! And I am here this evening to ask you, how far your life's story up to the present is parallel to that

of Jacob? Have you recognized the angel? Have you listened to God's call? Have you made any response to the appeal of the spiritual world?

"It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold.
Peace on the earth, good-will to men,
From Heaven's all-gracious King!
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing."

"Still through the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world,
Above its sad and lonely plains:
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel sounds
The blessed angels sing."

Have you any ear for the heavenly music? Will you respond to the appeal of the angel?

I suppose the angels of God met Esau. He could not live in his father's house where the altar had been built, and where Jehovah's name was honored—he could not live in his father's house without being met by the angels of God. But, as I told you last Sunday, Esau was fast asleep. He was a "profane" man.

But when Jacob listened to the angels of God, when he recognized them as such, he began to part company with Esau. That was the hour in which his selfish, scheming, unlovely soul began to be changed. And his face was set toward the things of Heaven in the day that he met and recognized the angels of God.

And that is the day in which we all begin to be different; when first we make response to the light, the appeal, the call, of the spiritual world.

Let me try to show you where Jacob first recognized the angel. He was going away from home, and he had a dream. Do you ever have dreams? Most of them are not worth writing down; many of them are attributable to the errors of the kitchen, very probably. And yet, after all, perhaps they cannot be wholly ignored. I remember reading somewhere of one godly man who was wont to analyze his dreams, and to humble himself before God if he found any element of evil in them; because he argued it could not be woven into the visions of the night if it had not found a place in his thinking. And he believed it was out of memory's store that in the hour of unconsciousness dreams were made. I do not know how correct he was, but at all events Jacob's dream was of the other world. Whether we have dreams by night or not, I suppose we all have dreams by day. And what do we see in our dreams? What picture do we conjure up before the mind? What castles do we build? What do we see in these experiences? Is it a dream of greater conformity to the image of Christ? Is it a dream born of an earnest longing to be God-like? And out of that, do you imagine the possibility of ascending the skies? And do you anticipate the day when you shall be presented "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy"?

What was Jacob's dream? In his dream he saw "a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven." In his dream Jacob saw this world related to another: he saw a way out of this life into another. And in his dream he heard a voice, for God stood above it and He spoke down the ladder to Jacob, and made him a great promise. And He said, "I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." It was as though He had said: "Jacob, to-night is the beginning of a severe discipline. To-night is the beginning of a new life, and I am going to do something for you. I am going to keep on, and on, and on, and I will never leave you until I have perfected you according to my plan." He was a poor sample to begin with; he was a poor character, I grant you; but that was God's word to him.

Have you seen "the ladder set up on the earth and the top of it reaching to heaven"? How many are there here this evening who really know how to get from this world into another? How many have heard one speak, saying, "I am the way, the truth, and the life"? The ladder was but a type, a symbol, a prophecy of the Cross. And Jesus said to Nathanael, "Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these. Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." In other words, He said, "Nathanael, I am Jacob's ladder; I am the way to God; and the angels will minister to you through Me."

Have you seen heaven open? You may be conscious of the earth and all that is in it, just as Jacob was! But if you have seen heaven open; if you know the way to God—that is conversion; that is the beginning of a new life; the angels of God have met you; and you have recognized them as divine messengers.

III. So far, so good! Now, just a word or two to show you that **The Angels of God Never Left Jacob, Until They Had Brought Him to the Angel**—the Angel of the covenant; none other than the Lord Jesus Himself. And they never left him until that Angel, who is the Angel, had had His way, and had changed him from the wretched, ignoble, supplanter, into a prince, who had power with God and with men.

Is there a discouraged Christian here this evening, who says, "I have made so little progress. I once thought I was a Christian; but I still discover defects of character are with me; and I wonder sometimes if ever I shall be able to put off the old man, and put on the new"? I want to tell you in Old Testament speech how God works in the lives of His chosen.

The angels had rather a difficult time with Jacob. He was an unpromising lump of clay; and he required a good deal of kneading with the fists of God before he was fit to yield an instant response to the delicate manipulation of the fingers of the Divine Artist. But there came a time when this hard, unyielding, man of the earth became really as the clay in the Potter's hand; and He moulded him exactly to His liking, and made him at last what He wanted him to be.

And I suggest to you that we must not be discouraged if we have great difficulties. I knew a man some years ago, who was over sixty. He had been a professing Christian for about forty years. He was a righteous man. So often when I dealt with him—for he was a deacon of the church of which I was pastor—when I dealt with him, I thought of that Scripture, "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die." He was righteous rather than good; and it was a kind of righteousness that was not very attractive. He was hard and unsympathetic. Sometimes when we had a deacons' meeting, and when we would have the membership of the church before us—it was not this church—perhaps some deacon would say, "Well, there is Mrs. So-and-So, she has not been to church for some time." And somebody else would say, "Well, you know, she has a family of little children." "That should not make any difference," said my righteous friend. "My wife had a family; they were brought up in the church; we were never absent from church." He could not understand why anybody should be absent. Strangely enough, he had had no sickness in his family. The children, up to that time, had caused him no anxiety. He had lived a secluded and sheltered life. There came a day, however, when God struck him. There came a day when God laid him low; He began to knead him, to break him up, and mix him up like a lump of clay. And I saw that man, in two or three years, grow more than he had grown in forty years. O what a change there was when the Angel took him in hand, to make a

prince of him! He is still living, and with every year you can see more and more of the tenderness and graciousness of Jesus. He is becoming more and more princely all the time.

Well, now, conversion is not the end, my friend—it is the beginning. In Old Testament language, conversion is the time when the angels of God take hold of a man, and undertake to make a prince out of a supplanter. In New Testament language, conversion is the time when a man's sins are forgiven; when they are washed away by the blood of Christ; when he is justified from all ungodliness, and declared righteous in Christ; and when the Spirit of God begins the long work of sanctification, of transforming him into the image of the Lord Jesus.

But when the angels met Jacob, the nett result of their first meeting with him was to secure a promise of the tenth. After the great promise of the covenant was made, and God had said, "I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee"; Jacob vowed a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God; and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." After the sermon, you see, the angels took up a collection; and all that they got was a tenth. And that may be more than the angels get from some of us! But there was a recognition of God even in temporal things. Jacob began to take God into his business, as a result of that first meeting with the angels.

Follow him to Padan-aram yonder; study the story of his years with Laban; and until he comes back again to meet his brother, Esau. Through all those years Jacob has been really a different man. He was far from being an idle man. He was still a shrewd man of business. He knew how to make a bargain, and how to advantage himself in every situation. He was still wide awake to the material world about him, and yet you find Jacob bowing his knee to God; pleading the promise; believing in the covenant; looking for the blessing—he was a strange mixture! And could you have seen him in some stages of his history, you would say, "I do not want a religion like that: I do not want to be like Jacob at all." Ah, but you must not look at the character of Jacob until God has finished with him. See what God can make out of a man like Jacob. Possibly you and I need that lesson. It may be that we are no lovelier than he; and that grace will have just as difficult a ministry making us over into God's pattern.

And there comes a time when Jacob, in response to God's call, turns his face homeward. Back there is the brother he had wronged: there is the man from whom he stole the blessing; there is the man whom he cheated by a lie—and he is going back to meet him. "And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him." They have not left him. O, the marvel of it! They never left him. "And when Jacob saw them, he said, 'This is God's host; God is with me still.'" And then he hears that Esau is coming to meet him; and he is filled with fear. He has an idea how he would feel if he were in Esau's place. And so he gets down before the Lord, and he begins to pray that the Lord will deliver him, and the mother with the children from the hand of Esau.

But remember, Jacob has made some progress during his absence; for if you read the story you will find that as he spreads his complaint before the Lord, and urges his petitions upon His grace, he says, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands."

And grace has done something for a man who thus recognizes God. The

angels have done something for a man who, when alone with God, exclaims, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies."

The rest is settled over the ford Jabbok. The angels bring him to the place which God had planned long ago; and he finds himself alone in His presence. "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him (not he with the man) until the breaking of the day." And the Man was the Angel of the covenant—none other than the Lord Himself.

And the meaning of the story is just this: It is as though God had said, "Jacob, I have been waiting for you a long time; I have sent my angels; I have given my angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways: thou hast been prospered in a thousand particulars; and now, at last, Jacob, I have something to say to you. I have come to meet you here to determine who is going to be Lord." "And there wrestled a Man with him." We often turn to that story as an example of prevailing prayer. I know that Jacob said, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." But have you observed how Jacob got the blessing? All those years Jacob had been walking in his own way, and putting his will against God's; and God had been dealing with him. But now the angels are succeeded by "a Man," and the grip of Omnipotence is laid upon him; and God demands, "Surrender! Surrender!" Jacob tried to wrestle, but when the Man saw that he prevailed not against him He touched the hollow of his thigh, and Jacob's thigh was out of joint. And the limping Jacob prevailed!

"And now," said the Lord, "I will change thy name. Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince, hast thou power with God, and with men and hast prevailed." The way to be sovereign in the spiritual realm is to surrender to the only Sovereign; the way to be a conqueror is to be a subject; the way to be a king is to be obedient to the King of kings.

And I must tell you why He does that for all of us before I close. Sometimes it is in the hospital; sometimes it is in a business crisis, and sometimes somewhere else—but sooner or later, every true child of God comes to the place where the Man meets him; and it is determined whether his will or God's shall be done.

Did it make any difference? Look at this bargain-driver as he leaves him, halting now, limping on his thigh, a lame man—but yet a prince!

"And Jacob lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, Esau came." And he said, "What meanest thou by all this drove which I met?" And Jacob said, humbly, "These are to find grace in the sight of my lord." But the generous Esau answered, "I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself."

I am not surprised that Jacob should send those presents to buy favor with Esau! He knew how purchaseable he had always been. But that is not the line of the story I want to emphasize. Rather, it is this: "And he urged him." Did anybody ever before know Jacob to urge anybody to take anything from his hand? But now that God has conquered in his life, his hand is open, and his heart begins to love somebody else than himself; and generously he wants to share his wealth with another.

Read at your leisure the sequel to my story, in part at least—the thirty-fifth chapter. You will find that Jacob is walking and talking with God. He now lives in communion and fellowship with God. The angels are with him; and his eyes are open all the time; and while his feet are upon earth his spirit is in heaven. In New Testament language, he is now in the heavenly places; "Blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

And now just a glimpse at the sunset scene, when Israel comes down to Egypt. Joseph brings his sons before him—Manasseh and Ephraim. "And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was

the younger." And you all remember his testimony: "And he blessed Joseph and said, God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long until this day, the angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads." Viewing his life in retrospect, he says, "The Angel has been with me all the time; I recognize that every good and perfect gift cometh down from above." And at last when he pronounced blessing upon his own sons, he said, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." And, like his father Abraham, "he rejoiced to see Christ's day: he saw it and was glad"; and said—I think, in his heart—"Now I know the meaning of the ladder: now I know that Someone is coming from the skies, to redeem them that are under the law, that we may receive the adoption of sons."

I have spoken thus to make it clear that it means more than putting up your hand in a meeting to be a Christian; that it means far more than making a religious profession—it means yielding ourselves to the hand of the Potter, giving ourselves to the Angel of the covenant, that in His own time, and in His own way, He may redeem us from all evil.

What is the difference between Jacob and Esau? Only this, that Jacob recognized the angel; he listened to the messengers from the skies, and gave himself to their ministry; while Esau heard nothing but the voices of the world. And that is all the difference between ruin and redemption; between death and life; between hell and heaven. When the Angel meets you, and the voice of the gospel comes to you—what answer will you make?

THE BAPTIST OPPORTUNITY.

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." There never was a day when Baptists had a greater opportunity to do good unto all men. The gospel of the grace of God is always needed. But in our day there has been, on the part of some other denominations, a wholesale departure from the faith of the fathers. The authority of Scripture is denied; the necessity of the new birth is repudiated; the vicarious atonement is set aside. The very fundamentals of evangelical faith are either openly denied, or else ignored.

It is sometimes assumed that Baptist testimony is less urgently needed today than formerly. The truth is, however, that not only our own distinctive principles, but the doctrines of the whole evangelical position, in some quarters depend upon our continued witness.

One thing for which Baptists have stood, historically, is absolute freedom of conscience, with its corollary, the separation of church and state. But some of the larger denominations seem determined to obtain the aid of the state in teaching religion. It is, therefore, more than ever necessary that Baptists should take an uncompromising stand on this matter. For instance, we believe the great body of our people would reject any proposal to avail ourselves of state aid in our educational work.

But there are even more important considerations pressing themselves upon us just now. The question of church union is still to the fore. If ever it is effected it will inevitably be on the basis of compromise. The growing sentiment in favor of union, we fear, is due to a lessened conviction of the truth of the gospel revelation rather than to a deepening affection for other Christian bodies.

In view of all this, a great opportunity for service awaits us, if we give uncompromising witness to the truth of the Gospel. We say boldly and frankly that we are sure great multitudes of believers in other bodies will be compelled

by their own Christian experience to refuse to consent to the compromising proposals being set before them.

But above all else, our Lord still calls us to the battle. The power of the Holy Spirit is still given to those who continue steadfast in the faith. God has graciously demonstrated the possibilities which lie in an obedient faith in our own experience as a church. What if all the members of our own and of all our Baptist churches were faithfully and systematically trained to become stalwart witnesses to the faith? What if our Convention were always composed of delegates who would consent to no compromise with error? What if all our denominational Boards were composed always of only just such sturdy Baptists? What if our educational institutions, our missionary enterprises, our publication work, were officered by men who in all circumstances would champion the great principles for which our Baptist forefathers suffered so much? Let it be our constant prayer and effort that such a condition may soon obtain in this church and in all our churches.

CONVENTION DELEGATES.

There is one serious weakness in our Convention Constitution, and that is the provision which makes it possible for a person, provided he is a member of a Baptist church, to secure appointment as delegate to the Convention by some other church than the church of which he is a member. The principle of this provision under normal conditions may be safe enough, but it is one which may easily lend itself to much abuse. For instance: Many of our churches are small and are scattered all over two provinces, and wherever the Convention is held there are always some churches so far removed from the place of meeting that it is not easy to secure a delegation from their membership. On the other hand, in a large centre there are hundreds of Baptist church members, only a small proportion of whom can be appointed as delegates of the churches to which they belong. Suppose a small group of men desire to carry some matter through the Convention. It is possible carefully to select a company of men who share their views, to send their names to these distant churches; and to ask to have them credentialled as their representatives. This group of people can then be led as a solid block to commit the Convention to some project to which these same churches might never consent had they opportunity to debate the matter. What is the remedy? The most effective would be to change the Constitution, making it illegal for a church to appoint anyone as its delegate who was not a member in good standing of that particular church at the time. This would be safe; and would make abuse of the Convention franchise impossible. Is there any other remedy? Yes. Let every church appoint delegates from its own membership, and refuse to appoint others, especially when they are requested to do so. When a church is requested to give credentials to non-members, they may always be sure that some person or persons is or are endeavoring to make use of the church for their own ends. We hope our Convention Constitution will some day be so amended as to make political manipulation of Convention representation impossible. In the meantime pastors and churches, we hope, will refuse to allow themselves to be made use of in this way.

A Solemn and Sacred Anniversary.

Jarvis Street Church will never forget September 21st, 1921. We think of it apart from the human participants. Since that night we have found it easy to believe that "with God all things are possible." Present members of Jarvis Street have no difficulty in believing in miracles; we have experienced them. There is nothing in the Old or New Testament more supernatural than

the triumph of truth on September 21st, 1921. From our own experience we know that God can divide the sea and overwhelm superior forces. And the story of the manna, and the quails, and the water out of the rock, is the story of our church life. And we believe the land of promise—of triumphant spiritual progress, is immediately in prospect. May God save us from the forty years in the wilderness!

We have no desire to dwell upon the past except to feed our faith for the future. We must acknowledge the goodness of God. We must and will praise Him for His delivering grace. The very stones would cry out were we to withhold our reverent and adoring hallelujahs.

The Blessing That Has Followed. It would require volumes to record the mercies of the past year. Since September 21st last, one hundred and one have been baptized; fifty-one have united with the church by experience, and sixty-two by letter; or two hundred and fourteen in all. God has supplied all our material needs, and has enabled us greatly to extend our witness through the medium of this paper. The unity of the Spirit, the glorious fellowship of prayer, the joy of service, the conversion of sinners, the restoration of backsliders, the upbuilding of believers, as well as many special tokens of divine favor in direct and unmistakable answers to prayer—these are among the blessings which fill our hearts with thanksgiving.

In addition to this, the Lord has brought into our fellowship three missionaries who have gone from us to China, one of whom was led to see her privilege respecting baptism in our services. Two others, Miss Broughton and Miss Brock, are going out from our membership as missionaries to China; and the church has assumed the obligation of Miss Broughton's entire support. Still another, a young man who was blessed in our service while attending Normal School last term, wrote the Pastor, to say he desired to be baptized and come into the fellowship of Jaryis Street Church while taking his university course. He was baptized two weeks ago. He is convinced God has called him to foreign missionary service, but he will go forth as a Baptist missionary instead of becoming a minister of another denomination. Thus God has given us within six months, six foreign missionaries.

A Night of Humble Thanksgiving. Wednesday evening next will be observed as a night of humble thanksgiving for the victory of September 21st, 1921, and for the year of unparalleled blessing which has followed.

THE CONVENTION OF ONTARIO AND QUEBEC.

For the benefit of our new members we give the following information respecting the relation of the Baptist churches of Ontario and Quebec to the Convention and its various Boards.

The Convention is composed of delegates appointed by the churches. The Convention exercises no authority over the churches as each church is entirely independent of external control. But through the Convention the churches cooperate in missionary and educational work. The Boards of the Convention are eight: **Home Missions**, whose funds are used to help weak churches and open new missions in Ontario and Quebec; **Foreign Missions**, doing work in India and Bolivia; **Western**, collecting money for, but not directing work, in Western Canada; **Publication**, directing the publication of **The Canadian Baptist**; **Education**, directing the affairs of McMaster University, Woodstock, and Moulton Colleges; **Church Edifice**; **Superannuated Ministers**; and **Sunday School**. Each of these Boards is made up of members who are elected by the Convention to serve a term of years, a proportion of whom retire each year, so that only three of four members of each Board change in any one year. In addition to the missionary work done by these Boards, the churches of the Convention give

large support to the **Grande Linge Mission**, whose work is among French Canadian Roman Catholics in Quebec. While Grande Ligne is an independent mission, it is a sturdy Baptist work; and there is perhaps no mission work which has a larger place in the affections of our British churches. The Grande Ligne Mission has always been uncompromisingly true to the faith once delivered to the saints, and its miraculous history attests the presence of God in its ministry. Of each and all of these Boards and their work we shall have occasion to write from time to time as their claims are brought before us. This is merely a glance at the missionary opportunity the work of our Denomination affords.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Open Meeting of the Women's Home Mission Board. The first for the season will be held in Indian Road Church, Thursday, Sept. 21st, at 10.15 a.m. Reports of the summer's activities will be given in the morning. From 2.30 to 4 o'clock will be devoted to special prayer for both the Home and Foreign Mission Treasuries, which are in urgent need of funds. All Circle members are earnestly requested to come together to plead for this important matter.

Bring sandwiches as usual for the lunch hour. Take Dundas cars to Humberside Ave. and walk one block west.

Junior Mission Circle, Sept. 21, 8 p.m. The first meeting of the season on this date will be a consecration meeting. Miss Olive Copp, of Hamilton, will speak.

Sunday afternoon. At the close of the Sunday-school session a farewell word will be spoken to Miss Constance Brock, who will leave in a few days to carry the Gospel to China. Miss Brock will make the eighth Jarvis Street member on missionary service in China. Miss Brock's splendid service in the school will attract many to this service.

A shower of blessing. Monday night the windows of heaven were opened. The meeting was large, but it was also great. God was manifestly there. We have had many wonderful meetings, but Monday surpassed all others. Without planning, simply in obedience to the call of the Spirit, the tide of prayer flowed on and on, for nearly four hours, or until almost midnight. Can Heaven possibly be a happier place? Scores of requests for prayer were made, the people dispersed reluctantly, only to reassemble Tuesday, when another visitation of God was experienced, and hearts were bowed beneath a burden of anxiety for the salvation of the lost. God is bowing down His ear to hear us. There is a sound of abundance of rain.

The Church Calendar

For the week beginning Sunday, September 17th, 1922.

SUNDAY

10.00—Prayer Service in the Church Parlor, Mr. George Greenway.

10.30—Communion Service.

11.00—Public Worship. The Pastor will preach.

3.00—The Bible School will meet.

6.00—Prayer Meeting in Church Parlor.

7.00—Public Worship. The Pastor will preach.

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY and SATURDAY—8.00—Prayer Service.
The Parliament St. Branch, 250 Parliament St. Sunday: Bible School, 3.00; Evangelistic Service, conducted by Mr. W. L. McKay, 7.00; Thursday, 8.00, Prayer Meeting.