

The Gospel Witness

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PASTOR AND EDITOR

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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE SURETYSHIP OF JUDAH AND OF JESUS.

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in the Open-Air, on Jarvis Street Church Grounds, Sunday Evening,
July 8, 1923.

(Stenographically reported)

"I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever."—
Genesis 43: 9.



MOST of you are familiar with the story of Joseph and his brethren, how when he went to visit his brethren, they said, "Behold, this dreamer cometh." They found him in their power, and they sold him to a band of Ishmaelites for silver. He was carried away into Egypt, and passed out of the life of Jacob and his sons. Years later when there was a famine in the land, they heard there was corn in Egypt, and Jacob sent his sons down into Egypt. And when they stood face to face with the governor of the land, he asked them many questions; and they told their life-story, except that they kept back that which related to their lost brother. Their sacks were filled with corn, their money was returned in the mouths of their sacks; but the governor kept one of their number, Simeon, and said to them: "Now, when the corn is spent, and you need more, when you come back again you must bring your youngest brother with you." And he laid down this condition: "Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you." So they went back and told the story of this strange man who was governor of all the land of Egypt, and who had control of all the riches of the storehouses of Egypt. They further told their father that he had stipulated that on their return they must bring Benjamin with them. And then he said: "Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother?" And they said: "Well, we did not know that he would demand that we bring him. We had no idea of that. He asked us, and we told him. We said, Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest

is this day with our father, and one is not." The old man then declared that Benjamin should not go down into Egypt. He said: "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me." But when the supplies grew lower and lower, at last the old man insisted that they should go down into Egypt. And they said: "It is of no use to go. Money will not buy corn. We simply have to take Benjamin with us." And the old man said: "No, I will not let him go." And then Reuben came forward and said: "I will be surety for him. You let him come with us, and I will accept responsibility for bringing him back again." But for some reason or other Jacob refused to accept the offer of Reuben. But when they were reduced to the utmost need again, the father said: "Go down into Egypt and buy corn." But the sons replied: "It is useless for us to go. We cannot open the storehouses. The governor charged us that we were to bring our youngest brother." And then Judah stepped forward and he addressed his father in these words: "I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever." And when Judah said that, Jacob accepted his suretyship, and gave them permission to take Benjamin with them.

Now that is a parable and a prophecy. Our Lord came not of the tribe of Levi, but of the tribe of Judah; and He became surety of a better covenant. And I want to speak to you of this Old Testament story, to illustrate the great truth of the suretyship of Jesus, how He became surety for the sinner, and promises to bring him at last into the presence of God.

I. And first of all, I want you to see that THERE ARE SEVERAL POINTS OF CONTRAST; for Judah in many respects was unlike Jesus. The obligation which he assumed was a lesser obligation than that which was assumed by our Lord. And I love to find when turning to these Old Testament stories, and the New Testament, too, for that matter, that there is no one who can be measured with Jesus. In some respects the lives of many great men parallel the life of Jesus. But in some other respects Jesus always transcends them all; for He is more than a man: He is God.

Now, in the first place, *Judah promised to be surety for one who was himself worthy.* Benjamin was the best of Jacob's sons remaining to him. He had had no part in the betrayal of his brother. He was at home. I fancy there were many amiable qualities about this young man. I dare say he had a multitude of friends. It was not at all surprising that Judah should accept responsibility for one so worthy, and in every respect so amiable. But for whom did Jesus become surety? Not for worthy men, but for unworthy men. I wonder if a man were to come to you to-morrow and say to you, "Sir, I am in debt for a vast sum of money, and I want you to put your signature to a note so that I can get that money from the bank. The bank requires your signature; but, of course, you will not have to pay it anyhow. I will be sure to meet my obligation when it is due"; and supposing you were able to look into that man's heart; supposing you knew he was a liar and deceiver, and that he never intended to pay it; that he had cheated everybody else with whom he had had dealings, and that he intended to cheat you; would you set your signature to a note like that, when you knew he was a bad man, and that nobody could trust him? Would you accept responsibility for the discharge of his obligation? But the wonder of the Gospel is this, that Jesus did not become surety for good men but for bad men, not for saints but for sinners, not for those who sought to serve God but for those who were resolved to rebel against Him. As one of our hymns has it:

"He saw me ruined in the fall,
 Yet loved me notwithstanding all;
 He saved me from my lost estate;
 His loving-kindness, O how great!"

If Jesus had accepted the responsibility for saving only good men, then there would be nobody here this evening who would have any chance of being saved. But I want to tell you this, that if every friend you ever had has forsaken you; if every man that you ever had dealings with has discovered that you are false, that you cannot be relied upon; if you have come even to the end of yourself, and you are saying out there in the crowd, "It is useless for me to think about being saved. I am altogether too bad for that." I tell you that the Lord Jesus undertakes to save the worst of men, men who are morally bankrupt, men who have absolutely nothing to pay. Jesus says before the throne: "I will be surety for him."

Then there is another point of contrast. *Benjamin did not desire to remain away from his father.* He was not his father's enemy; he desired to stay at home. And when Judah said, "I will be sure to bring Benjamin back," he was confident that he would have the co-operation of Benjamin; he would not have to put him in chains to bring him; he had only to say, "Now Benjamin, let us go home to our father," and Benjamin he knew would be glad to come. And after all, it was not such a great undertaking when Judah said, "I will be surety for him," because he knew that Benjamin would help him in every particular. But the wonder of the Gospel is that Jesus said He would be surety for men who do not want to be saved, for men whose carnal mind is enmity against God. If the Lord Jesus Himself were standing here on this platform—He is here; but if you could see Him, if you could look into His face, if He could appear as He did in the days of His flesh, and I were to ask men to come and greet Him, and stand in His presence and surrender to Him, you would not come, some of you. The last person you desire to see in the world is the Lord Jesus. You could not come into His presence without becoming-conscious of your sin. You could not be where He is without feeling that you are lost and undone. And that is why it is that men do not want to be saved. They will not have Jesus to reign over them. They brought Him to the cross, they crowned Him with thorns, they drove a spear into His heart, and nails through His hands, and then they mocked Him and said: "Hail, King of the Jews." And that is the attitude of the natural man toward Jesus Christ always. He resolves that he will have nothing to do with Him. That is the attitude of multitudes of religious professors to-day. They are crowning Jesus Christ with thorns, and crucifying the Son of God afresh. But I declare to you, the greatest wonder of all wonders is that Jesus, looking at the natural heart, and knowing that men are His enemies, dares to say, "I will save you. I will be surety for you. I will bring you into the presence of God." There is not a man or woman here this evening who is a Christian, who does not know that he or she did everything in his or her power against God; and yet, in spite of the wickedness of our hearts, and the defilement of our consciences, and the enslavement of our wills, and the pollution of our imaginations, and the depravity of our whole nature—in spite of that, Jesus has accepted suretyship for us, and undertakes to save us with an everlasting salvation.

Then there is another thing: *Judah was not the only one who offered to be surety for Benjamin.* Reuben had offered to be surety, and for some reason or another that suretyship had been declined. Now the suretyship of Judah

was accepted; but I tell you, my friend, that there is no other suretyship than that of Jesus. If He does not become surety for you, then you never will be saved. There is no other eye to pity; there is no other arm to save. It is Jesus and Jesus only Who is the hope of the poor sinner.

II. Now let me just touch upon THE POINTS OF COMPARISON. Jesus has accepted all the responsibilities of suretyship in our behalf; and the story of the suretyship of Judah is a striking illustration of that fact. In the first place, *Judah did not ask Benjamin's permission*. He accepted responsibility entirely apart from Benjamin's thought and purpose. He said: "I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him." So Jesus has undertaken to pay the debt of the sinner. When He died upon Calvary's cross, He died "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God"; and He died in fulfilment of His covenant promise made before the foundation of the world that He would pay the sinner's debt, and that He would save Him with His own right arm. Jesus undertakes on His own account to save us just as Judah undertook to save Benjamin. He did not say, "I will bring Benjamin back providing he is willing." He said, "I'll bring him back." And the Lord Jesus undertakes to give to every one of us who will believe in Him a salvation which will bring us into the presence of God.

Let me tell you now what grace is. We talk a lot about grace; and I have heard many men say, "I believe in salvation by grace," when they do not believe anything of the kind, because they do not understand what grace is, they do not preach grace. This is what grace means: Judah says, "I will accept responsibility; of my hand shalt thou require him. Do not look to anybody else; hold me responsible for the reappearance of Benjamin in thy presence, and require him of my hand." Now grace means this: that the Lord Jesus takes upon Him all your guilt; He cancels all your obligation; He pledges Himself by an oath-bound promise to the Father that He will save you; and He dares to say, "Of my hand shalt thou require him." Believing on Jesus is just leaving our souls entirely in the hand of Jesus. But somebody here says, "I can understand, sir, how Jesus could pay my debt, how he could cancel the obligation of the past; but what I am afraid of is this, that if I were to make a profession of religion to-night, I should fall into sin to-morrow, and I might fall away, and I would never get into the glory after all." Listen to what Judah said: "Of my hand shalt thou require him." He did not say: "I will see that Benjamin does not lose his life; I will see that Benjamin is well taken care of"; but he said: "I will bring Benjamin back into thy presence; and if I do not bring this son of yours back and put him before thy face, then I will bear the blame for ever."

Now, what is the salvation which Jesus offers? Not forgiveness of sins only: the salvation which is in Christ is an eternal salvation, and He promises not only the forgiveness of your sins, but to give you eternal life: "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." He will actually bring you into the presence of God, and set you before His face. I frankly say, I have no hope of glory in here. I am deeply conscious that I have no strength of my own, no strength of purpose, no continuity of desire, apart from the grace of God within; but I am sure of this, that He Who long ago blotted out my transgressions, and laid His wounded Almighty hand upon me, and held me, and holds me in His grip to-night—I am sure that He will never, never, never let me go until He presents me "faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

That is the promise of salvation, and the weakest sinner here to-night

may yield himself to the almighty grasp of the arm that laid the foundations of the earth, "who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance," to "The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," the Saviour Who is called Wonderful, with all the powers of Deity expressing themselves in His gracious touch; and He promises to save you to-night, and to save you for ever. Faith means going out of yourself, and putting your trust in Jesus alone

And then I like this other word. He said: "If I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever." Oh, if Judah had come back alone, if he had come back into the presence of Jacob without his brother, and his father had said, "How dare you come into my presence when you solemnly promised me that you would bring him back again!" Judah would have borne the blame for ever. And let me tell you now, that if any one for whom Jesus died, who trusted in Jesus could be lost, then it would be to the eternal dishonour of Jesus Christ: He would bear the blame for ever. But He died that He might be glorified in the salvation of His own. And He will never be dishonoured by permitting one who puts His trust in Him to be confounded.

Let me tell you *the story of how Judah exercised that suretyship, and I have done.* He went down into Egypt, and they filled their sacks with corn, and they sat around the table, and the governor whom they did not know set them all in the order of their birth from the eldest to the youngest; he gave portions to each, and to Benjamin he gave a double portion. And then when they were going home again, he returned their money, and he said to one of his stewards: "You take my cup and put it in the sack of the youngest." And they put the cup in the sack of the youngest, and the sack was tied up, and these eleven brethren went on their way home, Simeon with them. They had not gone far on their journey when they were overtaken by a courier who came in the name of the governor to demand why they had stolen the cup out of his house. He insisted that they all return to Egypt, and they came back, all of them declaring their innocence. And they said: "With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my Lord's bondmen." And they took down their sacks, and they opened them, and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. And the governor said, "The rest of you may go home, and Benjamin, this youngest brother of yours, will stay with me." And then what did Benjamin have to say? Not a word. But Judah came into the exercise of his suretyship. Oh, I think I can see him. He steps forward as though he would say to all his brethren, "Silence! I am responsible here. I have sworn; I have given my oath-bound promise." And he said to the governor: "Let me stay, and let him return to his father." "No," said the governor, "the man in whose sack the cup was found shall stay, and the rest of you, get up to your father." And then Judah said: "No, no. We cannot do that. Doesn't my lord remember that when we were here last time I told you about one, the only son of his mother that was left, and his father loved him. And my lord said, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you. And when the corn was spent, and we wanted to come back again, the old man our father said, No, I cannot let him go. And he would not let him go until I became surety for him. And I stood before him, and I said: I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the

blame for ever. I cannot go without him; I won't go without him. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me?" And when the governor heard that, he said: "Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud," and he fell upon their necks and kissed them. And Judah fulfilled his promise, and he came back at last into the presence of his father. He said: "Here he is, Father—the same Benjamin that I promised to set before your face."

Oh, my dear friends, there are great difficulties in the way. When the Lord Jesus undertook to exercise His suretyship, He found that there was a great debt to be paid, but He said: "I have promised, and I will pay it." And He went out into the outer darkness, and he tasted death for every man; He ascended into the glory, and from then until now He has been exercising His ministry of intercession, praying for them for whom He died. And He will lay hold upon you, and when at last that great judgment shall come, and all men are assembled before the Throne of God, we shall have nothing to say. We shall be like Benjamin, silent, while our great Surety will step forward and say, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom." And on the strength of what Jesus has done, on the strength of His infinitely perfect sacrifice, we shall sweep through the gates into the City, and be saved with an everlasting salvation.

"And this I shall find, for such is His mind,
He'll not be in glory and leave me behind."

Will you have this salvation? How many are there here this evening who have thought that salvation was something that you had to do, something you had to work out for yourself, instead of something that has in it all the power of God to make you a new creature, and to keep you for ever? How many are there who will say, "If that is what it means, to leave it all with Jesus for time and for eternity, then I am ready to trust Him to-night?" Will you indicate it by raising your hand? That will not save you; but it will be at least a bold confession that you are going to put your trust in Christ.

THE GREATEST OF NEW YEARS' MEETINGS.

Tuesday morning's meeting surpassed all the meetings we have had in Jarvis Street within the Editor's thirteen years' acquaintance. The Lecture Hall was crowded.

From the very beginning of the meeting the presence of the Lord was felt, and a great spirit of prayer was upon the people. The tide of prayer flowed on till after half-past eleven.

The Pastor gave the New Year's motto—John 1:50: "Thou shalt see greater things than these," and exhorted the church to set its face in faith and effort toward a greater year than Jarvis Street has ever known.

Following this the service was one of testimony, and with four or five frequently on their feet at once waiting to be heard, these glowing testimonies continued until a quarter to one. And when the meeting closed there must have been at least one hundred and fifty people who were burning to give their testimony for the Lord. It was one of the most extraordinary meetings we have ever known. Thus the New Year has begun well!

The offering for the Dorcas Society has been equalled only twice in twenty years.

THE publication of this paper as a missionary enterprise is made possible by the gifts of members of Jarvis Street Church and others, and is sent to subscribers by mail for \$2.00 (under cost) per year. If any of the Lord's stewards who read this have received blessing, we shall be grateful for any thank-offering you may be able to send to The Witness Fund at any time; and especially for your prayers that the message of The Witness may be used by the Holy Spirit for the defence of the Faith, the salvation of souls, and the exaltation of Christ. As our funds make it possible, we hope to add to our free list, from time to time, the names of ministers at home and missionaries abroad.

EDITORIAL

A PASTORAL LETTER.

Our many readers outside of the membership of Jarvis Street Church will, we feel sure, excuse us if we use our editorial space this week to send a message, first of all, to our own church family. We do this because we are sure that the problems we face in Jarvis Street are similar to those faced in all other churches; and the principles by which they may be solved in one place will prove their solution in another. In the words which follow, therefore, we shall endeavour to deal with matters which concern all Evangelical churches.

"WE CANNOT DENY IT."

Wherever men individually or collectively bear witness for the Lord, they are sure to meet with opposition. Certain tendencies of the times may appear in more aggravated form, but general conditions are very much the same in city, town and country. Every pastor and Christian worker who reads these words, wherever his particular sphere of labour may be, will readily acknowledge there are to be found in his community many people who are disposed to deny the reality of the Christian revelation, and the possibility of an experience of supernatural grace. This was so in apostolic times. The religious world of that day crucified the Incarnate Word, and flattered itself that it had buried Him out of sight. The news of His resurrection and of the miracles in His Name must have struck terror to the hearts of those who had a share in shedding His blood. But the apostolic church was endowed with supernatural power, and accomplished wonders by its exercise. The case of the healing of the man who had been laid at the gate of the temple called Beautiful, was so manifest to all that the enemies of Christ admitted, "We cannot deny it."

It is still possible for individuals and churches to demonstrate the resurrection of the Lord Jesus through the experience of His saving power in such a way that it cannot be denied. That, surely, is the task before every church and before every twice-born individual.

What, then, ought the Church's programme to be for 1924? We believe that we can make the largest possible contribution to the defence of Evangelical Christianity by reverting to the apostolic programme, which was to give the first place to prayer and the ministry of the Word.

We offer this testimony to our readers: For three years, ending with the 31st of December, Jarvis Street Church has met five times weekly for prayer—twice on Sunday, and three times during the week. Every sort of entertainment has been abandoned. No effort has been made to win people by secondary means. Even the music of our church services has been relegated to a subordinate place, so that we now have no anthems, nothing but congre-

gational singing. In short, the church has magnified this two-fold ministry—prayer, and the ministry of the Word. What has been the result? During that time we have passed through strange experiences. We have had much conflict, and have had to endure many hardships, and not a little of the vilification that was the common experience of apostolic Christians. On the other hand, God has been with us in power. During these three years 661 have united with the church, of whom 386 have been baptized. During the calendar year just closed 308 have united with the church, of whom 204 have been baptized. Our prayer-meetings have become to the church the breath of life; and nothing is allowed to take their place.

During the first week of January churches everywhere will observe the week of prayer. We have not one word to say against such meetings; but we do venture to suggest to the brethren who read these words, that it is not a week of prayer the churches need, but years of prayer—that is to say a *recognition of the fact that prayer is the sine qua non of spiritual power*. We believe, if our churches would try the experiment, for one year, of putting aside every other matter and devoting all their energy to prayer and the ministry of the Word, such a revival would sweep this country as we have never seen. But if all churches do not do it, why should it not be done by some? Why should it not be done by yours? It is not necessary to advertise it. Begin with the praying group, however few they may be, and continue in prayer until the whole church is set on fire. Then such miracles will be wrought in the lives of the people that the enemies of the gospel will be constrained again to say, "That, indeed, a notable miracle has been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in our town; and we cannot deny it."

MORE PRAYER.

The argument from the foregoing is that we should resolve that this year shall be a year of prayer in Jarvis Street Church as no other year has been. There is a testimony in prayer. The prayerless church proclaims its faithlessness, and by implication its sense of self-sufficiency. If people feel no need of the power of God, they will not ask for it; and the church without a prayer-meeting, or one whose prayer-meeting is but poorly attended and indifferently used, advertises its want of spiritual health to the whole world. On the other hand, a church that acknowledges its own spiritual impotence, its inability to produce spiritual results, and casts itself wholly upon God, and by ceaseless prayer invokes the divine blessing, proclaims to all its confidence in God, and the adequacy of the gospel to meet all human needs. We, therefore, urge every member of Jarvis Street and every other believer who shall read these words, solemnly to reconsecrate himself or herself for this year to the ministry of intercession. Let it be remembered that this is the obligation of every solitary believer. Some are called to preach; all are called to witness and to pray. If, instead of multiplying organizations with a view to effecting by human power that which only God can do, all our churches would endeavour to lay upon the heart and conscience of every member in the church his or her obligation to be an intercessor, there would soon be the sound of abundance of rain.

MORE BIBLE STUDY.

Prayer and the study of the Word always go hand in hand. True prayer is inspired of God; it is based always upon a divine revelation. Only as we know God's plans for us can we pray in agreement with His will. We, therefore, need to study His Word that we may know how to pray.

MORE APPLICATION OF SCRIPTURE.

Some Bible students do with their accumulated biblical knowledge what some rich folks do with the contents of their wardrobe—they are continually buying new suits or dresses which they seldom wear. It is one thing to obtain intellectual apprehension of the truth; it is another thing to translate the principles of the gospel into conduct and character by simple obedience to the Word of God. It is the Word made flesh which triumphs always. We do not plead for a congregation of doctrinaires, but that we may have in Jarvis Street a great company of people who are rooted and built up in Christ, and who by lives of true witness adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

MORE OF THE SHEPHERD'S SPIRIT.

Our Lord bade Peter feed His sheep and His lambs. It is a good thing to emulate the good Shepherd, Who left the ninety-nine and went after that which was lost until He found it. But we must remember that when He had found it He laid it upon His shoulder rejoicing; nor did He then abandon it, but safely carried it home. So must we exercise a shepherd's care for the lambs of the flock. They must be taught in the ways of the Lord; they must be encouraged in times of difficulty; and they must be fed with food convenient for them. There are many ways in which this ministry can be exercised.

The first is, we should pray as constantly for the newly converted as for the unconverted. We should endeavour, also, to help them by a personal word. The more interest we take in the lambs of the flock, the easier will it become for us to remember their names; and we do well to make it a rule, as we meet these newly converted persons, to enquire with respect to their spiritual state. Once more: we may use our public services for shepherding the flock; very particularly, the prayer services may be utilized for this purpose. To do this there must be a recognition on the part of all that the lambs are there. We have observed some wise parents who are especially careful of their speech in the presence of the children. Thus, in our prayers and testimonies, we should remember they are being offered in the presence of young Christians. There should be in the prayer-meeting some milk for babes as well as meat for those of maturer years. The length of our prayers and testimonies, also, may in some degree be regulated by the requirements of the younger members of the flock—younger, we mean, in Christian experience, rather than in years. We are persuaded that the best spiritual results will be obtained from the ministry of a church where the young and the old as well as the rich and the poor meet together, and the Lord is the Father of them all. Every prayer-meeting should be a young people's meeting, where the youngest believer will feel at home.

BUILD UP THE BIBLE SCHOOL.

In our Bible School we have the germ of an organization that, providing it is energized by the Spirit of God and is thus kept true to its spiritual mission, can solve all the problems of church life. It provides an opportunity for varied forms of service. There is no one so dull that he cannot find some employment here; while there is the fullest scope for the exercise of intellectual and spiritual powers of the highest order. We have an organization which will enable the church to teach the flock. Here it will be possible to deal with men and women and boys and girls personally. We have also an organization that is especially fitted to take care of every individual mem-

ber. For these reasons we do well to regard the Bible School as the most important of all our organizations within the church. It is not an organization apart from the church; it is a part of the church, with the entire teaching and official staff co-operating in an endeavour to make the ministry of the pulpit effective. We feel confident that the attendance of the School will be doubled, and we hope trebled, at least, during 1924.

All the above is just as applicable to other churches as to Jarvis Street. The one principle of our recommendation is that we should for this year, also, concentrate upon the ministry of prayer and of the Word.

MORE MISSIONARY ZEAL.

We desire that Jarvis Street shall be a missionary church in a truer sense than she has ever been. God has poured into Jarvis Street Church a flood of new young life. Among the great numbers of boys and girls and young men and women who have come to us, it seems to us there must be great numbers of potential ministers and missionaries. Let us, therefore, pray earnestly that from our own ranks the Lord of the harvest will thrust forth labourers into His harvest. And as we pray that men and women may go, we must pray also for an increase of the grace of liberality that we may be enabled to give more and more money to the cause of Missions.

The time to begin to make this a record year is the beginning of the year. Let us all, therefore, in all these matters, begin at once. Thus we shall find 1924 in the truest sense a happy New Year.

THE WHOLE BIBLE S. S. LESSON COURSE.

Lesson XV.

January 13, 1924.

THE FAMINE—Gen. 43, 44, 45.

These chapters illustrate the method of divine grace and the progress of faith in the soul.

I. They show how the Continuance of Famine Compels Submission to the Governor's Terms. 1. These sons of Jacob illustrate how men try to obtain salvation on their own terms. They came at first with money, but without confession of sin. Thus men would pay anything to avoid uncovering their past. But genuine repentance is necessary to true faith. Hence, Christ is appointed to be a Prince and a Saviour, not merely to prepare a place in heaven for us, but to "give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Sometimes events are providentially ordered, in order to work repentance, and fit us to receive forgiveness. 2. For his own wise reasons the governor had conditioned further supplies upon their bringing Benjamin with them. Thus, too, our Governor insists that there shall be no reserve; that the stories we tell shall be proved by the surrender of everything we have to Him. 3. Their attempt to placate the governor with presents (Vss. 11-14) is illustrative of our human folly in supposing that our "little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts and almonds," and our "double money" in our hand will be pleasing to Him, at Whose girdle swing the keys of life and death. 4. On their coming into the governor's presence, they were richly entertained. So, also, is it always with those who come to Christ. The door is ever open to those who knock, and those who ask will receive. 5. They also discover that the governor had perfect knowledge of them, in that he set them about his table in the order of their birth, so that "the men marvelled one at another." Thus it was the Samaritan woman was convinced of the Messiahship of the Stranger she had met by the well-side; because He told her all that ever she had done. 6. There is a difference between repenting in our

hearts and confessing with our lips. These men had already, in some measure at least, repented, but as yet had not confessed. 7. The principle of the fourth chapter is this: that the governor takes means to compel confession. So will our Governor do. In order to compel a revelation of their attitude toward the sin of the past, the governor cleverly plans to bring under condemnation the one who has taken his place in his father's affection, thereby designing to discover whether they were willing that the loss their envy occasioned their father in the long ago should be repeated by Benjamin's captivity in Egypt. Thus, too, the Lord lays His hand upon our best, in order to reveal our attitude toward Him. (From the 18th to the 34th verses of the 44th chapter, we have Judah's prayer for Benjamin. It is a striking reminder of the chapter of John, which records the high-priestly prayer of our Surety, Jesus Christ. Because of its appropriateness to this lesson, we have printed in this week's Witness a sermon on "The Suretyship of Judah," preached in the open air last summer).

II. How the Blessings of Joseph's Ministry are Ultimately Mediated to his Brethren. 1. He dealt with them personally. So, also, are we privileged to have direct access to God. 2. On discovering his identity they were troubled at his presence. So are sinners when they find themselves in the presence of God. 3. Yet their fears are soon allayed by the promise of abounding grace. Thus, also, does our Lord Jesus deal with all who come to Him. He promises to nourish us until famine shall be no more.

III. How Joseph Commissions His Brethren to Preach the Gospel of His Exaltation. 1. He commissions them to go and tell and bring all their families down into Egypt to share the good of the land. Thus, also, we are sent to our own house to tell of the great things God hath done for us, and hath had compassion upon us. 2. The message they were charged to deliver they received directly from Joseph's own lips (45: 12). So ought we to receive our commission from Headquarters. 3. He desired to share his glory in Egypt with those for whom he had suffered. Thus, also, Christ prays that we may be with Him where He is, that we may behold His glory (John 17: 24). 4. In sending them forth upon this mission, he gave them of the abundance of his wealth to share with others. So we are commissioned to preach the gospel. We are assured that all authority is given, and that we may expect the riches of the grace of the Holy Spirit to be bestowed upon those to whom we preach. 5. He bade them "fall not out by the way" in the prosecution of this important work. And there is nothing that will keep Christians together and prevent their falling out by the way like an effort to bring others down to share the fullness of Egypt's land. 6. The gospel they preached was really a gospel of resurrection. The heart of it all was, "Joseph is yet alive." And that is the heart of our gospel. Just as Jacob's life was impoverished and he was wrapped about with sorrow, occasioned by Joseph's absence; so the whole world is bereaved until it receives the message, "Christ is risen, and is yet alive." 7. Yet a gospel of words had the effect of causing Jacob to faint. The word of the truth of the gospel is so wonderful, and so transcends every possibility of earthly enrichment that it is impossible for men to believe it if they hear only the words. 8. But these men were commissioned to preach a gospel of waggons, too—not only the invitation to come to Egypt, but the power to enable them to accept it. It was this which constrained the old man to exclaim, "It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die." So, also, may we preach a gospel of waggons; for the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation." And when accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit, it leads men to exclaim with a full and satisfying faith, "Jesus is yet alive: I will go and see Him."

CHURCH NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Communion Service of January 13th. The first monthly Communion Service of the year will be held following the evening service, January 13th. The Pastor will be home, and especially wants a great rally of the entire membership of the church on this evening.

Rev. E. E. Shields in the Pulpit. During Dr. Shields' absence, Sunday, January 6th, Rev. E. E. Shields, of Brantford, will preach morning and evening. Jarvis Street has enjoyed days of great blessing when this prophet of the Lord has ministered the Word; and we hope for still greater things Sunday next.

The Pastor's Class in the Bible School will be taught by the President, Mr. George Booth. If you know of men who should be attending this class, get in touch with Mr. Harvey T. Ingall, Lakeside 1488.

On Monday afternoon, January 7th, the Sherbourne Branch of the W. C. T. U. will hold its regular monthly meeting at 3 p.m. in the Ladies' Parlour of the Sherbourne Street Methodist Church. All ladies interested in this work will be welcome.

BIBLE SCHOOL NEWS.

The Men's Class of the Great Tremont Temple, Boston, have invited the Men's Class taught by the Pastor, to enter into a contest with them to increase the attendance of their respective classes. The challenge has been accepted by the Men's Class, and is to begin the first Sunday in January and continue sixty days.

Mere numbers count for little, but other things being equal, they enlarge our opportunity for service. We, therefore, ask every man of the church to assist us in this holy race.

The contest will be decided on the basis of a percentage increase over the average attendance of the past three months.

The Intermediate and Junior Departments of Jarvis Street Bible School are holding their Annual Festival on Monday next, January 7th, 1924. Supper will be served at 6 p.m. to all Pupils, Teachers, and Officers of these two departments. At 7.30 p.m. an interesting programme will be given by the scholars in the Lecture Hall, at which the prizes will be awarded to successful scholars for the past year. A very hearty invitation is accorded to all the "Jarvis Folks" to be present at 7.30, and we hope to have the Hall crowded on this happy occasion, and show by our presence, our hearty appreciation of the unselfish and consecrated service so willingly rendered by the Teachers and Officers of these splendid departments, and also to encourage the scholars themselves.

Notice of change in location of departments. Commencing Sunday next, Jan. 6th, the Junior Department will meet in the Lecture Hall, having outgrown their present accommodation; and the Intermediate Department will assemble in the Church Parlor. We believe that before long our "Intermediates" will also need more room, and whenever this comes to pass, arrangements will be made as quickly as possible to accommodate them elsewhere.

The Junior Mid-week Gospel Lantern Services have resumed once more after holidays, and will meet each Wednesday in the Lecture Hall at 7.15 p.m.

The Church Calendar

Sunday. For the week beginning January 6th, 1924.

9.45—**Bible School**, including an Intercessory Class. W. J. Hutchinson, Supt.

11.00—**Public Worship.** Rev. E. E. Shields will preach.

6.00—**Prayer Meeting** in Church Parlor.

6.30—**Communion Service.**

7.00—**Public Worship.** Rev. E. E. Shields will preach.

Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday—8.00—Prayer Meeting.

Wednesday—7.15—Junior Mid-week Service.

The Parliament St. Branch, 250 Parliament St. Sunday: Bible School,

3.00. Evangelistic Service, 7.00—Rev. W. L. McKay will preach.

Monday—8.00—Young People's Meeting.

Wednesday—8.00—Prayer Meeting.

Friday—7.15—Junior Meeting—Mr. F. Turney and Mr. W. J. Hutchinson.