

The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED WEEKLY.

IN THE INTEREST OF EVANGELICAL TRUTH, BY JARVIS STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, TORONTO, CAN., AND SENT FOR \$2.00 PER YEAR (UNDER COST), POSTPAID, TO ANY ADDRESS, 5c. PER SINGLE COPY.

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

Address correspondence: The Gospel Witness, 130 Gerrard Street E., Toronto.

Vol. 2

TORONTO, JANUARY 17th, 1924.

No. 36

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE DYNAMIC OF A DREAM.

A Sermon by Dr. W. B. Riley.

Preached at the opening of the new First Baptist Church Auditorium, Minneapolis, Minn. (of which he is pastor), Jan. 6th, 1924.

"And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the Lord, and the wall of Jerusalem round about.

Only the people sacrificed in high places, because there was no house built unto the name of the Lord, until those days.

And Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places.

And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.

In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.

And Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.

And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in.

And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?

And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.

And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment;

Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.

And Solomon awoke; and, behold, it was a dream."—I Kings 3: 1-15.

This hour witnesses the fruition of many hopes, the consummation of long cherished plans, and as we believe, of divinely guided purposes. For me, at least, it is the waking realization of the dream of my ministerial life, and for you, my people, it is the attainment of another goal in the race of Christian accomplishment.

In the very introduction of this discourse, I want to acknowledge my personal indebtedness to the sainted George Lorimer, under whose matchless leadership and marvelous vision, Tremont Temple, Boston, was builded, and twice

afterwards rose increasingly resplendent from ash heaps. It was my first visit to Tremont Temple, made in 1899, that impressed me with the utter necessity of holding the hearts of our cities for Christ, and the clear realization of the fact that only a church great enough in all spiritual appointments to dominate a city centre could hope ever so to do. A few years only, and this great auditorium, to be dedicated this afternoon, will be as certainly located in Minneapolis as Tremont Temple is now strategically situated in Boston, and as that evangelical centre has stood like a Gibraltar against the beating waves of New England rationalism, so the creators of this house and the members of this church believe and expect it shall stand against the wave of skepticism rolling westward.

My very theme this morning reminds me of multiplied experiences in the form of pleasant dreams that have delighted the night hours, but vanished into nothingness with the breaking day. In the memory of them, I have been tempted to this utterance. "Is it true that we have come to the full and material realization of our building hopes and dreams, or shall we waken suddenly to find that it is only another instance of the wish being father to the thought and that the whole task remains yet to be undertaken?" No; yonder great gallery, seating as many people at this moment as the whole church formerly held, this splendid floor space, alive with men, women and children, come together to rejoice and joy in the Lord; this great choir space filled with men and women to whom God has granted the special gift of song, the mighty sweep of this room, beautiful in its artistic arrangement and decoration, these all tend to reassure me and set my soul in tune with the triumphant music of the day!

But I have a more serious task than that of mere joy and rejoicing, namely, to interpret for you another portion of God's matchless Word. I shall attempt this by calling attention to the divinely given dream, the divinely guided desire, and the divinely answered prayer.

I. THE DIVINELY GIVEN DREAM.

Solomon's dream is preceded by strange statements. "And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the Lord, and the wall of Jerusalem round about. Only the people sacrificed in high places, because there was no house built unto the name of the Lord, until those days. And Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father; only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places. And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place; a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar." (3:1-4.)

(a) *Then this dream was vouchsafed to an imperfect man.*

Easily there is a dual violation, if not a triple, of the law of the Lord in this text. "He made affinity with Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter." He also "sacrificed in the high places," and there is an intimation at least that he may himself have slain his own sacrifices, "for one thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar".

History repeats itself. In all ages, affinity with the potentates of the world and the fellowships of the flesh have endangered God's saints. Worship at false shrines has imperiled the faith and the attempt to put aside the High Priest, who alone can make an acceptable offering, has closed the divinely appointed way to God.

Why then does the Lord appear to Solomon? Why lay the treasures of heaven open to his hand? Why exalt him to office and honour, when weakness of character is evident and sin of conduct is recorded against him? The answer is not far to seek. God is shut up to such. So long as He chooses to commit His world work to the hands of man it will and must remain with imperfect ones, since "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God", since "there is none righteous, no, not one", "they are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable", "there is none that doeth good, no, not one". (Rom. 3).

Sad as is this confession, serious as is this indictment of Scripture, it holds for us a content of comfort. Our imperfections we realize, our iniquities we dare not ignore, our hurtful sins we may hate but cannot deny, but blessed be His name, He does not refuse us access to His presence on that account, nor yet withhold from us appointments to service on that account, nor even refrain from accepting and blessing our endeavour on that account!

It is said that a young apprentice took the bits of glass that were flung from the hand of the master as he worked on his cathedral windows, and in his leisure hours wrought them into such a mosaic of beauty that when the product of his endeavour was finished, even the masterpieces were put to shame. Whatever may be the historic basis of such a story, one thing is sure, it suggests God's methods with man. To be convinced of this, read Begbie's "Twice Born Men," and see not alone what can be done for the sinner, but how through the same grace that saves them, even the off-scourings of earth can be made vessels for the service of God. The conversion of a sinner into a saint may be a miracle of psychology, but the empowering of a man, who, though saved, is a sinner still, to perform the will and work of God is a miracle of pragmatism, or the making of deficient men to discharge the Divine will. The parable of the talents was spoken for both encouragement and condemnation. The two-talented man who forgot his three-fifth's deficiency enjoyed the same Divine favour as the full-orbed five-talented one, but the four-fifth's deficient, who sought to excuse his conduct on the ground of incapacity, fell under the fiercest condemnation. God is not demanding of us what we do not have, namely, perfection, but God is demanding, and righteously so, the consecration of our talents, and when they are on the altar He accepts the sinner's offering and treats him who is sinful still as though he were a saint.

(b) *This dream was experienced in a peculiar place.*

The "high place" at Gibeon was a long remove from the holy place at Jerusalem. It was even four miles from Bethel, the house of God. God can bless men outside of His house, yea, He can bless them in places that are themselves unblessed. The work of Begbie's "Angel Adjutant" was not commonly done in the Salvation Army Hall, but in saloons and bagnios instead, the holes of vice and gambling hells. God's power is not limited to place, nor His grace restricted to locality. Amos, voicing the Lord, may have been writing of judgment when he said it, but had he been writing of grace it would still have been true, "Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them". David learned this truth and spoke it, "Whither shall I flee from thy spirit or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there!" (Psa. 139: 8.)

I have a great and good friend, who sat in a semi-gambling room, in Indianapolis, dealing cards on a Sunday morning, when the sound of the church bells became to him the voice of God and pulled him out of that place straight-away to the sanctuary, to be saved. The voice of God in the unholy room was as perfectly heard as was the sermon later clearly understood. Cloistered Christianity has never been a success with the individual, nor of service to the world. At the best it can produce only a tender, consequently a fruitless, plant.

No man ever knew the world's sinful spots nor understood the terrors of its temptations as did the Man of Nazareth, and yet concerning his own disciples he prayed, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil".

There may be men and women here this morning who have seldom seen the inside of a sanctuary. To me that would be no proof that God has never spoken to you, in the home, in the shop, on the street, yea, possibly in some utterly unholy place His voice has been heard, and though it were as in a dream the Divine message got in and you will never go free from it.

Samuel, sleeping in the temple, heard the voice of the Lord, but Solomon, sleeping at Gibeon, received an equal revelation. It is vain to imagine that one's conscience will never be disturbed if he keep away from the sanctuary, nor his irreligion endangered if he put distance between himself and the house of God. Begbie's "Puncher" was visited of God in a prison cell; old "Born Drunk" heard the voice of the Spirit as the Salvation Army passed him in the streets; the "Copper Basher" in prison was visited by the Spirit and suddenly reminded that "If God can save Puncher, He can save me," while the "Plumber" was convicted of sin when cursing his wife in a saloon.

We have not built this house because we believe that here alone, or in any other sanctuary of beauty only, can men be saved. We have built it instead, knowing that when God does reveal Himself to man, in saving power, he will seek out his fellow saints and long for a sanctuary, the earthly home of the soul.

(c) *Again, this dream was related to the whole plan of life.*

Solomon was a young man; great and important decisions must be made

if life is to be a success. The very position to which he had come as an heir, the importance of the office he was to hold as David's successor, the necessary influence he must wield upon all society, these considerations combined to compel a proper facing of the problem of life. God was only doing for Solomon what He does for every normally constituted and righteously ambitious young man. He was moving him to consider life's value, to study the problem of life itself, to debate both methods and objectives.

The biographical portions of the Bible are devoted almost solely to men who in their youth met this question of life and its responsibilities squarely. It was Joseph's dreams, entertained when yet a boy, that account for Joseph, the Egyptian premier. It was the consideration that Moses, the princely youth of the palace, gave to the oppression of his kinsmen, that made him Israel's deliverer. It was David's ambitions, expressed when he saw Goliath defy the host of Israel, that predicted his eventual pre-eminence and put him on the throne.

Victoria, England's greatest queen, showed, immediately upon the announcement of her elevation to the throne, the realization of her responsibility, besought the Lord in prayer for wisdom. Abraham Lincoln, the greatest President America has ever produced, is reported to have said, "I have been driven many times to my knees by the conviction I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom and all about me seemed insufficient for that day." When Joan of Arc determined to attempt the salvation of France, she did it solely on the ground that God had spoken to her.

The probable reason why only a few individuals rise to great heights in human life, undertake the difficult and accomplish the apparently impossible, is in the single circumstance that they have dreamed and then dared.

Martin Luther saw Rome's defections in both faith and conduct and determined at any cost to turn the people to the truth again. John Brown knew that slavery and the State could not exist together and dared to believe that the first might be destroyed and the second preserved, and then to undertake it. "Where there is no vision the people perish" and without it the individual is dead; and even where there is a vision, indecision will shortly paralyze all one's powers. Newell Dwight Hillis, the great essayist, remarks truly, "By his eager aspirations man lives and builds. The vision before reason reveals to the toiler a better tool or law or reform, and the realization of these visions gives social progress. The vision of conscience reveals new possibilities of character and these give duty. The vision of the heart reveals new possibilities of friendship and these give the home. As the sun standing upon the horizon orbs itself first in every dewdrop and afterward lifts the whole earth forward, so the ideal repeats itself first in the individual heart and afterward lifts all society."

Life's power depends upon the plan in the execution of which life itself is expended. Low motives will never reach exalted objectives. If those of us who have realized our ideal in this Temple of stone do not to-day dream new dreams of possible spiritual experience, have new vision of personal and church attainments, fix new objectives for the remaining to-morrows, we have come thus far in vain, and the very Temple we have completed will stand more in mock than mark. God give us, having dreamed these buildings, to feel the dynamic of our own visions, to dream again under the soft touch of the same Spirit, and then awake to do!

II. THE DIVINELY GUIDED DECISION.

"In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father; and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the middle of thy people whom thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" (3: 5-9).

(a) *Past mercies were brought to his memory.*

God reminded him of his mercies to David, of His matchless grace toward

that man, of His mercy to Solomon that He made him the one son to sit on his father's throne. It is a great thing to regard the past. Apart from it there is no explanation of the present and independent of it no man can interpret the future. David himself often so indulges his memory and cries, "O, give thanks unto the Lord for He is good. To Him that smote Egypt and their first-born and brought out Israel from among them with a strong hand and with a stretched out arm; to Him who divided the Red Sea into paths and made Israel to pass through in the midst of it; to Him who overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea; to Him who led His people through the wilderness; to Him Who smote great kings and slew famous kings and gave their land for a heritage; for His mercy endureth forever."

We would be an ungrateful people this morning were we not to remember the past; were we to forget that small but noble band of pioneers who, seventy-one years ago planted this church on Helen Street at the river side, when our city was scarce a village; who braved sacrifices to construct its first church house on Third Street; who proved themselves more faithful still when at Fifth and Hennepin they raised their second and enlarged structure; nor would we be worthy successors of those greater men of but yesterday, some of whom survive, who dared at Tenth and Harmon to erect one of the most beautiful auditoriums known to the American Baptists and even now dismantled not from lack of grandeur nor yet because it was poorly appointed in creature comforts, but solely because our numbers demanded more space.

Some of us count ourselves fortunate to have overlapped the lives of so many of them, fortunate in the rich fellowship they gave us before God took them hence; fortunate that they stood for the faith dear to us and defended the democracy that makes this institution possible.

In the history contained in the booklet of dedication used this day, the roster is called of that noble line of ministers who have occupied this pulpit; only a single one of whom survives, Thomas W. Powell. Godly names they were and great—Cressy, Russell, Gale, Manton, Allen, Woods, Chase, Hoyt. But while set in the prominence of pulpit, no greater were they than the noble laymen who lived beside them and wrought with them—Pillsbury, Wolverton, Hohlitt, Lansing, Barnes, Francis, Lawrence, Buckbee, and others. "And what shall I say more? For the time would fail me to tell of the men who through faith have wrought righteously; out of weakness were made strong; waxed valiant in the fight and turned to flight the armies of aliens.

(b) *His present station was properly appreciated.*

He was a king with all the responsibility attached to that office. He was not there by merit, but by birth. The throne had not come to him by conquest, but as an heir. Too often such successors to power poorly appreciate either the providence that put them there, the responsibilities of the office itself, or the opportunities attached. One of the things that has increased my love for this, my adopted city, Minneapolis, is the circumstance that the sons and successors of great Minneapoltans of the past are, in so many instances, showing themselves worthy of their station. I do not care to be personal and call the names of a dozen comparatively young men whose fathers have had to do with the making of this city, and who, standing each in his place, is carrying on worthily the work committed to him.

This is not true in business only, but in the church of God as well. I could call the names of some mighty men of yesterday who linked their lives with the early history of the greater churches of this metropolis, and a careful study of the roster of those same churches would find their sons holding equally honourable offices and making noble contribution to the present victories of the church of God. It is not always so.

The elder Pitts are only occasionally succeeded by even more brilliant sons, or the great ministers such as Increase Mather, by greater sons as was Cotton Mather.

There is a disposition on the part of each generation to feel anxiety for the future and to wonder if the men coming to the stage of action will ever equal those who are passing from it, and often with occasion. With all the facts before him, one would hesitate to say that Solomon was as a king the equal of David, and yet the eminent success that did attend his life and reign are attributable in no small degree to his proper appreciation of his responsibilities, and his earnest request for the guidance of God.

Give me a young man controlled by such traits and the crown will be on his brow, and give me a church that keenly appreciates both its station and its responsibility, and I will show you one making continual progress and with which expansion is a watch-word and evangelization a passion!

(c) *His personal responsibility was deeply felt.*

He knew that the interests of the kingdom rested upon him. That is the very ground of his prayer, and the occasion of his anxiety. The greatest goad to industry and stimulus to efficiency is in the sense of responsibility.

Did you ever run through the Scriptures to see how the word "*must*" runs in the life of the Master and His chief apostle, Paul? At twelve years of age Jesus said, "Wist ye not I *must* be about my Father's business." "The Son of Man *must* suffer many things." "I *must* go unto Jerusalem." "I *must* preach the kingdom." "I *must* abide at thy house to-day." "These things *must* first come to pass." "That which is written *must* yet be accomplished." "The Son of Man *must* be delivered." "All things *must* yet be fulfilled." "The Son of Man *must* be lifted up." "I *must* increase." "I *must* work the works of Him that sent me."

Of Paul it was said, "I will show him how great things he *must* suffer." "I *must* by all means keep this feast." "I *must* also see Rome." "I *must* bear witness also at Rome." "We *must* all appear before the judgment seat." "The servant of the Lord *must* not strive."

I love the word "*must*." It voices a holy necessity, and the man who never feels it, fails to comprehend the spirit of the Christ or to exhibit the character of an apostle. Men sometimes rebel against what they call the hard necessities of life, but the blakest of them are blessings in disguise. Johnson wrote his immortal "Rasselas" because he *must* have money to buy his mother's coffin. Lee invented the loom because he *must* make money enough to drive the wolf from the door. Mrs. Trollope took to authorship because she *must* support her fatherless family. Coleridge was described by Wordsworth as "the most myriad minded man since Shakespeare," and yet the fact that his friends foolishly contributed to him sufficient for life's comforts without the necessity of toil, left him with a lack of responsibility to become the easy prey to drugs and the victim of destruction.

Give me a man with a sense of responsibility and in that circumstance alone he has the first element of success. The prayerful lad, Solomon, approaching the throne, is the prophecy of the potentate who ruled the world, astonishing all kings and queens with his wisdom, and this also is a part of his dream.

III. THE DIVINELY ANSWERED PRAYER.

(a) *It was a prayer that pleased God.*

The highest point to which prayer ever attained was reached, of course, in the petitions of Jesus and voiced in these words, "Thy will, not mine, be done," a revelation of the utter humanity of our Lord and the reality of His flesh, and yet at the same time, an expression of a faith that rose triumphant against what He knew to be the malignity and murderous spirit of man, and also against that natural shrinking which the sensitive sinless feel at misunderstanding, misrepresentation and injustice. The problem of true prayer is not so much the securing of one's own way as it is the discovery of the Divine will, and even when one cannot be assured, he knows it is yet a triumph of faith to be able to say to God, as did the only Begotten Son, "Thy will."

Such a prayer raises one to the Source of infinite power. It is a great consciousness to feel that we are workers together with Him; that plans upon which we are engaged are His plans, and projects in which one invests means, time, thought and life are His projects. I confess very frankly to you that that has been to me the inspiration of this whole endeavour. I have never doubted from the day of our beginning together that our progress was the Divine pleasure and our plan perfectly approved of Him. Doubtless we have failed Him at a thousand points. The disappointments He has endured through our dilatoriness, the grief that has been His because we have gone so slowly about His service, and have so imperfectly comprehended and co-operated in His great plan for us, we shall not know until we see Him face to face, but in spite of that fact, I am profoundly convinced to-day that the holding of the heart of this city for Him is His will; that the erection of this great block of buildings, devoted as it is to be for the advocacy of Christ's name, is His

pleasure, and I do feel and through it all have felt, the stimulus, yea, even the exhilaration of that potent fact.

A. J. Gordon tells how a friend of Coleridge, standing by his bedside not long before his death, was led to comment on the Lord's prayer, and Coleridge suddenly broke out in the statement, "O, my dear friend, to pray, to pray as God would have us; to pray with all the heart and strength, with the reason and the will; to pray vividly that God will listen to your voice through Christ, and do the thing He pleases, this is the last, the greatest achievement of the Christian's warfare on earth." And it is an achievement possible only in Christ. As Gordon remarks, "If Christ's will covers, interpenetrates and absorbs our will, there can be no conflict between our will and the sovereign wishes of God.

Doubtless that is the sort of a prayer to which the promise is made, " whatsoever things ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them." (Mark 11: 24). "And this is the confidence we have in him, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us". (1 Jno. 5:14.)

(b) *It was a prayer perfectly and promptly answered.*

God does not always answer promptly. To save us from becoming spoiled children He decides what is best for us and oftentimes justly and profitably delays us.

As we review this morning the way by which we have come to this hour, it is dotted with delays, delays that were at the time difficult to understand; delays that were a trial to patience; delays that left the heart faint and even raised the question whether the answer would ever come; but in the light of present events, delays that we now know were not fatal nor even harmful or unnecessary.

While we have waited our answer, God has enlarged both our vision and expectation. If our impatient prayers were promptly answered, we would bring God down to our little level, but through importunate prayer He lifts us to the level of His larger plan for us. "In God's school it is no more true than in man's, that pupils can step immediately into the highest attainments with no previous study or diligent mastery of the first principles of faith."

Our failure is the lack of our importunity. Two years ago we were at a critical point in our history. We had talked of this temple so long, but to see no material evidence of it, and the temptation to turn from the ideal and treat it as a dream never destined to realization, was strong. In spite of the fact that when I came to this pulpit, I came expecting to see this day, and on my knees again and again pledged God never to weaken until it was done, and never to let multiplied difficulties flood me with doubt, I did feel profoundly the downward pull of that particular time and in late and early watches of the night, wondered if I had been visionary and for a quarter of a century had led only a forlorn hope.

Who will tell us how many times we have ceased to pray just when our petitions were having God's most careful consideration? Who will tell us how many desirable enterprises have perished from lack of importunity and how, oftentimes, the plan of God has suffered at our hands because just when faith should have fruited, it languished and failed?

It is a great and exhilarating experience to come into the presence of God with our petitions and to have Him instantly and perfectly answer. Under the mighty impress of such an event, we always pledge ourselves afresh and with fervor. With my officers in Chicago I prayed for a sick man, a loved official, and he was immediately healed. I said then, "I will never doubt God again."

In Brantford, Ont., six or eight of us knelt around the couch of an aged woman and begged God to lay His hand upon her and lift her up and let her go to the house of God and hear His Word again, and when the prayer was over and the Spirit suggested, "Take her by the hand and in the name of Christ command her to walk," I was obedient and beheld such an instant response as to drive every doubt of God's power from the mind, and fill me with the purpose to pray often and expect always.

When in the White Temple, Portland, Ore., a half dozen of us laid hands upon Elizabeth Strickland, who for six years had known no use of either limb as a result of infantile paralysis, and she was raised up to normal health and strength, I shouted my joy and assured my own soul I should never doubt again.

But the sudden emotion of an immediate answer to prayer, like all sud-

denly coming things, shortly passes, and leaves a disappointing deposit of faith, while the desires that survive the years and are voiced a thousand times, when at last they are accorded it, produces an impression as permanent as the prayer itself was importunate, it makes a deposit of faith that will never fail.

I think I speak truthfully and at the same time soberly when I say that in God's multiplied responses to my appeals, no instance of them all has so impressed me with His personality, His love, with the fidelity of His promises and the infinity of His power and the riches of His grace, as the realization this day of this dream of the years.

Here, as with Solomon,

(c) *God has given more than asked or thought.*

Listen to His response, "Behold, I have done according to thy words. Lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart, and I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked: behold riches and honour so that there shall not be among any of the kings like unto thee all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my commands and my statutes as thy father David did, then will I lengthen thy days". Riches, honour, length of days! These are the "pressed down" answers of God. They represent "the heap" of His grace, "the overflow" of His love.

Has God changed? Nay, verily. Shortly after this pastorate commenced, we began to pray together for and about the temple we dedicate to-day. Then we neither saw nor expected the Northwestern Bible School. Then we had no vision whatever of the six buildings it now owns and no dream of the students who throng its halls, being equipped as ministers and missionaries. Ten years ago, yea, even five, Jackson Hall had hardly taken form in our thought, and three years ago this auditorium, a dream now made as permanent as the stone and cement and steel of which it is constructed, was not perfectly visualized, but to-day they are all ours. It is God's good measure. It is another proof that His answers exceed all we expect or think.

What grace to give us the valuable property of the old school building and its grounds, the beautiful and attractive Lyman Court, now Russell and Stimson Halls and the third yet unnamed; to give us the corner of Thirteenth and Yale Place, our future school, considered a location almost as superb as Lyman Court itself, and, then Jackson Hall, a memorial to the name of one whose widow, by generous gifts, stirred our hopes at the moment when such stimulus was most needed; and beside whose offering you laid yours in ardor and love to raise to heaven one of the most attractive houses yet builded in the name of the Lord! Now, as if to prove Himself our adequate Lord, this splendid fane which from foundation to final speaks in stability of construction and grace of appearance, in simplicity of adornment, grandeur of sweep and sacredness of hallowed associations. Oh, what a God!

With a single illustration, I conclude. Samuel W. Allerton, a famous lover of horseflesh and a multi-millionaire, through his kindness to my church soprano, became to us thirty-five years ago an individual of interest. I picked up a Chicago paper one morning and saw that the day before he had lost from his shirt front a diamond valued at \$3,500 and had offered to the finder a handsome reward. Two days later the same paper announced that Celine Seelman, of 3652 Wabash Avenue, only two blocks from our home, on returning from a shopping tour stood near the cable tracks and a furious wind had torn one of her bundles from her arm and sent it rolling to the gutter. The young woman pursued her departing purchase and finally, when it stuck in the mud against the curbstone, she stooped to pick it up. Her hold was poor, and the package slipped a second time from her hands and rolled more deeply into the dirt. Again she frantically plunged after it, but this time a point of light shot up from the mud and dirt. Turning from the inexpensive package she lifted it out. It was Samuel Allerton's diamond, for the recovery of which she later received a liberal reward.

It is a parable! We have bent our knees for the lesser thing, but lo, while we stooped we saw the greater! We coveted the good; we were granted the best; and when, this afternoon, this building is dedicated, it will not voice the joy of the pastor of the First Baptist Church and his wife and family alone, nor even that of the church family, 2,700 strong. All through this city, all through this land, across the Atlantic, beyond the Pacific, there are friends and fellow-Christians who would join with us in giving God the glory and in attributing the triumph of this day to the riches of His grace.

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

McMASTER AND DR. W. H. P. FAUNCE.

In our issue of November 29th last, we published letters which had passed between the Chancellor of McMaster University and the Editor of this paper, in which the Editor protested against the action of McMaster University in conferring a degree upon Dr. W. H. P. Faunce, President of Brown University, on the ground that Dr. Faunce was a champion of Modernism. In the Editor's letter, he requested that his protest be brought before the Senate of McMaster University as the body responsible for conferring the degree.

The meeting of the Senate was held January 14th. At that meeting the Honorary Degree Committee made a report which was adopted by the Senate—the Editor and one other voting against it—in which the Senate justifies its action in honouring Dr. Faunce. At the same meeting there was passed a resolution strongly condemning the Editor of this paper for his criticism, and informing the denomination that the Senate was of the opinion that there was no hope of their being able to work harmoniously with this critic. This resolution was strongly opposed by one member of the Senate, and we believe several others did not vote.

The Editor of The Gospel Witness welcomes the opportunity to explain to the denomination in particular, and to the Christian world generally, some matters which have long needed to be cleared up. He has, therefore, announced that two meetings for this purpose will be held in Jarvis Street Church, Thursday and Friday, January 24th and 25th. He originally intended that the meetings should be held Monday and Tuesday; but a representative of the student body of McMaster communicated with him, requesting that, if possible, the meetings should be held at a later date, in order that the students might be free to attend, as they would be engaged in examinations the first three days of that week. Being very anxious that the students of McMaster should hear what will be said, we have very cheerfully changed the dates.

At the first meeting we shall review the history of McMaster University, and endeavour to show the denomination who are responsible for bringing the institution into its present deplorable condition. Some things that ought to have been said long ago will be plainly stated. We shall avoid the discussion of personalities so far as that may be possible; but a moment's reflection will show that it will not be possible wholly to avoid mentioning names. We are quite prepared for the charge that we deal in personalities. A little thought, however, will convince our readers that the Senate's course in this matter is chiefly dictated by personal considerations. Modernism in the Baptist Denomination of Ontario and Quebec has been persistently championed by a little group of men who seem to be outstanding illustrations of the principle that faith and a good conscience go together. When men depart from the faith, it is usually an indication that they have previously lost a good conscience. This is the philosophy of the methods employed by Modernism. It is wholly con-

scienceless. It is a habit of Modernists everywhere, like Ahab on the field of Ramoth, to hide behind some conservative, Jehoshaphat, who was too weak to refuse to pull Ahab's chestnuts out of the fire. Thus many men who are personally sound in the faith are made the weak and unsuspecting tools of satanically inspired enemies of the truth. The Editor will endeavour in his address of January 24th to strip the mask from the face of some Modernists, and to expose the ugly features which that mask conceals. As the god of this world blinds the minds of those who believe not, so he also endeavours to disguise his purpose in the presence of those who believe. We are confident the time has come when Baptists in the Convention of Ontario and Quebec ought to take a stand on these matters; and, at all costs, in the address to be given next week, the Editor will tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, about that modernist group that have led McMaster University to the edge of a precipice.

The Editor hopes to complete his address on Thursday evening.

Friday evening there will be a great meeting for prayer for McMaster University, when we shall ask the Lord to arise in His might and by His own power to deliver the University out of the hands of those whose principles have blighted the denomination for so long, and to deliver it to the management of those who will be true to "the faith once for all delivered to the saints."

We earnestly beg an interest in the prayers of all Witness readers for these two services. We who profess to believe in the supernatural must put our profession to the proof by invoking supernatural power to fight our battles. This is our only hope: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

Remember the date—Thursday and Friday, January 24th and 25th.

THIS WEEK'S SERMON.

The sermon we publish this week was preached by Dr. W. B. Riley in connection with the opening of his great auditorium in Minneapolis. The Editor of The Gospel Witness was privileged to preach the dedicatory sermon Sunday afternoon, and also to preach at the evening service; as well as giving three addresses on Monday, three on Tuesday, two on Wednesday, and one on Thursday.

The great work, of which our esteemed friend, Dr. Riley, is the human head, is a monument to the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In addition to his great church of over twenty-six hundred members, there is the great North Western Bible Training School, with over one hundred and ninety resident students. These are housed in commodious and attractive buildings, and prosecute their studies in the spirit of the great church by whose life they are so largely influenced. The church buildings are probably unequalled, certainly unsurpassed, on the American continent. Jackson Hall is an architectural delight. It is said to have an accommodation in all its classrooms for a Bible School of more than three thousand. The great auditorium seats somewhere from twenty-three to twenty-five hundred persons. By actual count, January 6th, at the three services, there were just four less than eight thousand present—the afternoon congregation, including many from other churches, numbering three thousand and forty-two. Hundreds of these, however, were standing. The morning congregation numbered about twenty-six hundred, and the evening, approximately twenty-four hundred.

The sermon contained in this issue of The Gospel Witness was the first preached in the new building. We feel sure that many of our readers will be glad to share the inspiration which came to the great audience to whom it was addressed, and will share in the rejoicing of this noble church in this crowning accomplishment of Dr. Riley's great ministry. The influence of this great preacher extends all over the continent, and the reading of this sermon, we are sure, will lead many to pray that "his bow may abide in strength, and the arms of his hands be made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob."

THE WHOLE BIBLE S.S. LESSON COURSE.

LESSON XVII.

JANUARY 27TH, 1924.

ISRAEL'S BONDAGE—Exodus 1-4.

In our studies in Genesis we have seen something of the long conflict between good and evil. Beginning with Eden, with Abel and Cain, these two principles are seen on every page contending for the mastery. In the story of the flood we have a prophecy of the ultimate triumph of good. Following upon that, we have seen the two principles still at war, finding their incarnations in Abraham's family in Isaac and Ishmael, in Isaac's family in Jacob and Esau in Jacob's family in Joseph and his brethren. In the book of Exodus, as in every other book that ever has been written, we find a repetition of this history.

I. THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Here we have the story of the multiplication of the chosen seed filling Pharaoh and his servants with fear; and yet in spite of all their devices continuing to multiply. It is suggestive of the early chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. Throughout the Book the principle of the bond-woman and of the free persists.

CHAPTER TWO—THE BIRTH OF MOSES.

He was, as he himself recognized, a type and prophecy of a Greater than he. Stephen described the darkness of the day "in which time Moses was born". Thus, too, "Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king". This life of good purpose begun in Egypt, the power of evil sought to destroy. Herod was the successor of Pharaoh, though centuries lay between. From then until now the Devil has always been able to find a Pharaoh or a Herod through whom to voice his hatred of the chosen seed. But Moses outlived his would-be destroyers, and returned again into Egypt, even as it was said concerning Jesus, "They are dead who sought the young child's life". But observe here the contrast between Moses and our Lord. It was necessary that Moses should be trained for his work, that he should become learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. Hence he was providentially brought into the home of Pharaoh's daughter. Christ, on the other hand, being the incarnation of eternal wisdom, needed no such training, so that even the greatest scholars of His day enquired, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" The second chapter records Moses' heroic attempt to deliver his brethren from the Egyptians, when he discovered that his brethren understood not the divine purpose. Here is a further contrast: Our Lord Jesus never acted prematurely, never made a mistake. Moses in his use of force typified the law, through whom it was given; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER THREE—MOSES COMMISSIONED.

Through the revelation of the burning bush Moses is advised of the Lord's purpose, and commissioned to deliver his people out of the hand of the Egyptian. Like his great Antitype, he was sent of God. Unlike, too, his great Antitype, he showed some reluctance to obey. Note the contrast in Hebrews: "And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we".—(Heb. 3: 1-6.) Moses is sent in the Name of God; so Jesus came in His Father's Name. He was warned of opposition to his ministry. So, also, did the spirit of evil oppose the ministry of our Lord.

CHAPTER FOUR—THE MINISTRY OF SIGNS.

This chapter shows how Moses was clothed with a supernatural power, and authorized to exercise that power as a credential certifying his divine commission. So the Lord Jesus began His ministry with a sign; and to the end of it, his ministry was characterized by the exercise of supernatural powers. If we eliminate the supernatural from the Bible, we have no Bible left. On every page it challenges us to believe in God. Incidentally, it is wise when leading classes through these Old Testament Scriptures to show how every page insists that God has spoken, and the whole Book assumes its own divine inspiration.

CHURCH NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Last Sunday. In the morning the Rev. A. W. Banfield, General Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society of West Africa, gave an interesting and instructive account of the work of the Lord in that dark land. The Bible Society deserves the support of every believer who believes the Bible to be the Word of God. This Society is auxiliary to every Missionary Society in the world, and exists solely to give all people the Word of God in their own language.

In the evening there was a great congregation. Ten were baptized. Three came forward in response to the invitation. At the Communion service following thirty-four new members received the hand of fellowship, making over two hundred additions since October 14th, for which we praise God. The actual attendance at the Communion Service was 527. But we ought to average at least 700. Let every member plan to be present Feb. 3rd. Remember also the weekly Communion every Sunday evening except the first in the month, at 6.30.

Sunday Next. The Pastor's evening subject will be

**"Why Some Individuals and Institutions Need to Be Blown
Up With Dynamite."**

The Week: Tuesday's Bible lecture by the Pastor will be on "Israel's Bondage." Thursday the Pastor will speak on

"McMaster University's Approval of Dr. Faunce's Infidelity,"

in which he will review McMaster's recent history, and appeal to the Baptists of the Convention of Ontario and Quebec to awake to the denomination's peril, and unite to clean out the Senate of that institution.

Friday Evening, 8 o'clock—A Great Prayer Meeting for McMaster, to which all Baptists and others are invited, that we may pray that God will Himself arise and remove from the Senate those influences which have so long been a blight upon the denomination's spiritual progress, and make the University a centre of spiritual power, of evangelistic passion and missionary zeal, true in fact as in profession to the University's motto, "In Christ All Things Consist." Those who profess faith in the supernatural should invoke the supernatural in defense of the truth, as Elijah did on Carmel. The God Who answered prayer and purged Jarvis Street Church and made it a blessing to thousands, can purge McMaster University. Let us pray that God will answer by fire—not of judgment but of mercy.

At both services an offering will be taken to pay the expense of the printing of the Pastor's address (which will be stenographically reported) in such numbers as will enable us to send it through all the denomination. We ask for at least \$2,000. Bring your purses.

The Dorcas Society will meet in the Church Parlor Thursday afternoon, January 24th, at 2 o'clock. All ladies of the church and congregation are invited to come early to sew. There will be a business meeting at 5 o'clock, when messages from missionaries who received "Comfort Boxes" will be read. A good attendance is requested. Supper will be prepared by some of the ladies from the Parliament Street Branch, and served at 6.30, to which we welcome the gentlemen and young people. The tea hour gives the membership of the church and their friends an opportunity to meet each other and become acquainted. A collection is taken at the tables to defray expenses of the supper.