

The Gospel Witness

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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

HOW WE OUGHT TO THINK OF GOD.

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto.

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John 1: 18.



AN ancient sage observed, "Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground; yet man is born unto trouble, as sparks fly upward." With all the changes accomplished by the flight of time, and all the triumphs achieved by the accumulated wisdom of the ages, the sparks still fly upward, and still, alas! man is born unto trouble. Nor is this birthright of trouble peculiar to any age, or race or clime. Trouble is indigenous to all lands, and is associated with all seasons, and is the companion of all ages.

True, there are those who seem for a time to enjoy an unaccountable immunity, who, when the storm sweeps over others, are "left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers," but sooner or later the wind returns in its circuits, and the man exclaims, "The thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me. I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came."

But there are times when trouble is at the flood, when levels of life which ordinarily stand above the tide and keep their floral beauty unspoiled are covered by the general distress. This is seen in the life of communities, and nations, as in times of pestilence, or famine, or war. But even then some mountain lifts its head above the flood, and there is not wanting some place where the dove of peace may find rest for the sole of her foot. But we have come through days when all the fountains of the great deeps of human life were broken up, until every brook became a torrent, and every stream a river, whose increasing volume of trouble grew into a world deluge.

And in all this I am not retailing the forebodings of a morbid, or doleful, or narrow, or doubting soul. I have spoken of conditions

which thrust themselves before every thoughtful mind. We cannot shut our eyes or our minds to the fact that men's hearts are almost "failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth."

What, then? Can a man ponder these things without feeling profoundly the all but impotence of the individual in the circumstances? Indeed do not all human powers in the aggregate seem helpless before the rising tide? Is there a higher Power than man's? Just as an individual, suddenly confronted with some great peril, instinctively utters the name of God, and by the very utterance, prays, so men in the mass are driven to serious reflection by the perils of the day, and, in view of the end of human resource, think of God.

How, then, shall we think of God? When we are driven to estimate our human experience in relation to Him, our thought of Him becomes cardinal to all our thinking. When you try to relate this sinning, suffering world to God, how do you picture Him?

I.

Let me try to show you **The Inevitable Result of a Man's Trying to Picture God For Himself.** "No man hath seen God at any time." Could any artist paint a portrait of one he had never seen with any hope of producing a likeness? Would not the portrait be likely to be a composite of all other faces which had attracted the artist's fancy and been welcomed to his memory? And must not every human conception of God be a composite of ideas belonging to some realm with which men are familiar? What, historically, have been the results of human attempts to produce an image of the invisible God? They have "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." The history of heathen religions attests the truth of that tendency. But when the superstition of idol worship is abandoned, may not men make idols of their ideas? May they not bow down to mental images of God which are as unlike Him as the idols of the heathen? Is not God, too often, reduced to human levels in our thinking? Do not many, being without "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God," change His glory into an image made like unto corruptible man? To some men God is no greater than can be measured by the rule of their reason; His acts, His providence, His word, are acceptable only if they fall within the range of reason's comprehension. Thus they erect standards by which to measure God, and their norm is "an image made like unto corruptible man." And it is the corruptible element of the human mind which dwarfs a man's conception of God. He cannot conceive the Absolute. He cannot guess at the Infinite as a carpenter guesses a few inches; he can imagine nothing which transcends human dimensions. How, therefore, can the motives, the purposes, and power, of the incorruptible God be understood when judged by the attributes of corruptible man?

The corruptible element of the mind as limiting our vision to the boundaries of Time, also renders us incapable of estimating plans and processes which outrun the astronomer's distances and outlast the everlasting hills, and outshine the brightness of the sun. Ah! my brother, a God whom your reason could measure and ration would not be big enough to manage this troubled world; and a God who

was shut up to your calendar would have no time to make all things work together for good.

But have "birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things" anything to do in determining man's thought of God to-day? We, at all events, make no material images of these things. Yet men think they have found in birds, and beasts, and creeping things the index to the divine mind and method in all realms. There is a naturalism which interprets God by the light of embryology, and by the light of the nature and movements of creeping things. If God is to be conceived of by what a man's own mind can imagine of Him, if the processes of His providence and grace are to be interpreted as being shut up to naturalistic channels, there is little to cheer us in contemplation of this troubled world.

By no such image of God can we be inspired to sing:

"O God our help in ages past,
Our help for years to come,
Our shelter in the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.

"Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.

"Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

"A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.

"Time, like an ever rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly forgotten as a dream
Dies at the opening day.

"O God our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last,
And our eternal home."

II.

If we cannot picture God for ourselves, **How May We Learn What God Is Like?** It never was more important that men should have a true picture of God than it is to-day. When Lord Kitchener issued his call for the new army his portrait appeared in every paper and was even used by Government order to advertise his call. Later the portrait of Sir Douglas Haig was everywhere to be seen, and when Marshall Foch was given supreme command of the Allied armies I suppose there was not a village in any of the Allied countries whose inhabitants were not shown some pictorial representation of the Commander-in-Chief. And there was a sound basis for all this: we all wanted to have a mental image of the man who was to lead us out of our troubles.

And are not men consciously or subconsciously longing for a picture, a good picture, an adequate picture, of God to-day? To the cynicism which inquires, "Who will shew us any good?" there are

many who respond, "Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us".

The assertion of the text is to the effect that no knowledge of God is obtainable except through Christ. In what way, in what aspects, has Christ "declared" God? Some will ask, "Is there not a revelation of God in nature? May not the voice of Science, therefore, teach us something of God?" Yes; "for the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." But there is no revelation in nature which is not part of the declaration of the only begotten Son respecting God.

Let us hear the voice of Inspiration again: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men". And again: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist". And yet again: "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir to all things, by whom also he made the worlds. Who being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power",—thus Christ is set forth as the Author of Creation and of Providence: "by whom also he made the worlds",—"upholding all things by the word of his power". God can neither be seen nor heard, nor can His movements be traced, except through Christ. Through Him the qualities of Deity become visible and articulate.

What then, is the declaration of Christ in Nature by Creation? It is a declaration of law. Whatever else nature teaches about God it unmistakably reveals Him as a God of law. Science is here the handmaid of religion. Her business is to obtain accurate knowledge of facts, of the laws governing those facts, and of the causes which determine their relationship. I am not a scientist; but I can hear when Science speaks; and I have heard her say, that the whole created order is a perfect machine of marvellous design which unfailingly obeys the laws of its Maker, whoever He may be. Long before Sinai "burned with fire", in its very structure, had there been a man of knowledge to read the writing, it proclaimed its Maker to be the Source of law.

"Nature with open volume stands,
To spread her Maker's name abroad;
And every labour of His hands
Shows something worthy of a God."

Revealed religion lifts us to a higher plane. It concerns itself with the realm of morals, it has to do with right and wrong. By revealed religion I mean that knowledge of God which is derived from what is claimed to be a divine revelation rather than upon what men have discovered of God through the study of His works.

The Bible gives us a history of man from "the beginning" in his relation to God and to his fellows. And again God is revealed as a great Law. The Word that speaks through the prophets is the same that speaks through earth and sun and stars. And the declaration of God in the Old Testament is to the effect that law and order obtain in the spiritual world as in the natural. Cause and effect are shown to be as inseparable in the moral realm as in the physical. There is nothing to suggest the possibility of ultimate moral chaos. The prophets as truly as the planets declare one element in the divine glory to be His invariable orderliness. Seed time and harvest follow in regular succession in the moral realm as well as in the physical.

But in the Old Testament dispensation there is another element for which men look in vain in nature. In nature, wisdom and power are seen in co-operative action; but they are wholly impersonal. In the pages of this Book a divine Personality emerges, Who claims to be superior to His works, and sovereign over all His creatures. And in this inspired record of the providential unfolding of His purposes there is the same orderly progression observable as in the lower realm of His operation. And that which unifies all the divine disclosures of the Old Testament is the promise of a still clearer and ultimate revelation.

No one can mark the divine transcendence, a God above His world and even above its law, pictured in the Old Testament Scriptures, and observe God's sovereign overruling of all moral and spiritual opposition to His plans, without being filled with hope. And then at last, we have the mystery of the Incarnation proclaimed. Angels proclaim the coming of God to earth.

Now what is the "declaration" of the Incarnation? How and what is God declared to be in Christ? At Bethlehem, if I may dare say so, God revealed that He is inseparably joined to man. Never could He forsake His world without abandoning the Babe of Bethlehem. And further, it is revealed that He will fulfil His plans by the exercise of powers undiscoverable to us. Christianity is a supernatural religion. Jesus was supernaturally born. But what we call miracle is the result of the operation of laws which transcend our knowledge and understanding. The birth of Jesus shows how God can come into human life, not in violation of law, but by means which are beyond our comprehension. We are therefore to conceive of God as one whose judgments are unsearchable and whose ways are past finding out.

So then, in Christ, behold "the image of the invisible God," at the same time bearing the likeness of man—not however, of corruptible man, but of man at his best, his highest and utmost—becoming such by means transcending our reason.

What then is the central truth revealed in Christ the incarnate God? All virtues are combined in Him, but what is the elemental quality of which all virtues are but manifestations? It is what the New Testament calls grace. It is more than love, it is love in remedial exercise. Jesus stands forth as the incarnation of the remedial resources of Deity. God is the great Repairer and Renovator and Restorer. He saves men by suffering for them and with them. And now we are at the veil of the Holy of Holies. Sin is pitilessly impartial

and relentlessly cruel. No one of woman born has escaped its heavy hand. But of all its victims no one has ever suffered as Jesus did. There was no way of pulling us out of the fire but by going into the fire Himself. He has "declared" God to be a suffering God. Whatever the ultimate explanation of the mystery, this I know, sin hurts no one so much as it hurts God. The atonement means—ah, who dares to say all that it means?—but it means this at least, that the utmost of sin's penalty, falls upon Christ, piercing his very soul:—not arbitrarily, but of necessity, and in the nature of the case, as the only alternative to the sinner's destruction. Sin's deadly power is quenched in the blood of the Son of God.

"Oh, Love, thou bottomless abyss,
My sins are swallowed up in Thee!"

But not at the Cross alone and at last is God declared. The cry of the Son of God in the darkness is not the last word to be said about God. We must see Him in the glory of resurrection and behold in Him the ultimate sovereign triumphs of light, and life, and love.

And as we think of God in relation to the world's sin and woe, we are not to think of Him as watching His world from afar, separate from its griefs, unhurt by its sin, free from its sorrows, and unburdened by its woes. The rather we are to conceive of Him as dwelling in the midst of it all, and by some inexplicable condescension of grace, identified with its sufferings, feeling its want, sharing its hunger, bearing its grief, carrying its sorrows, touching its leprosy, crucified by its sin! And yet, and yet, unafraid of its darkness, undismayed by its rebellion, undaunted by its unbelief, superior to its shame, sovereign of its destiny, enthroned above all its warring elements on the right hand of the Majesty on High—from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. And in respect to all the problems of life as we keep our eye on Him, God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness will shine in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

But what of your own soul in relation to such a God as this? Our sins are many, but His blood can wash them all away. Life sometimes seems a tangled skein, but His hand is on the loom and

"The shuttle of the unseen powers
Works out a pattern not as ours."

How foolish it would be, for any one of us to refuse to submit to such a God as the crucified and risen incarnation of redeeming Love has revealed God to be! I beg of you to trust Him! Trust Him to forgive your sins on the ground of the vicarious sacrifice; trust Him to give you eternal life as being Himself the Author of all life; trust Him to keep you and preserve you unto His everlasting kingdom, as the One Who "upholdeth all things by the word of His power"; trust Him to bear your burdens, to overcome by the power of His Spirit, your evil tendencies, to solace your loneliness, to explore the valleys with you and climb the heights with you, to lighten your darkness, and calm your seas, and to bring you at last through all the storms of life into a haven of peace and perfection and there to wipe away all tears from your eyes. For all this, trust Him now!

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

CONSERVING THE FRUITS.

The Jew's ability to get rich is proverbial. But we have heard it said, and the saying has been confirmed by observation, that, generally speaking, it is the Jew's ability to keep what he gets which makes him richer than his neighbour. When the five thousand had been fed by five barley loaves and two small fishes, the Lord commanded, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." And the twelve basketfuls which were gathered served only to magnify the miracle.

We have read of wealthy men who were prodigal with their wealth; who seemed to regard any sort of economy as an infirmity of the poor. But He Who is Heir of all things, Who has power to create unlimited wealth by a word, insisted that care should be taken "that nothing be lost". Only thus could He be true to Himself as He has revealed Himself in nature—for there nothing is lost. The Shepherd Who would not be denied the hundredth sheep and the Miracle-Worker Who forbade the wasting of a crumb, are both One; and He is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.

We wonder what He must think of the waste of the average church? Converts come in at the front door and go out the back door in a continual procession. Those who are made officially responsible for the care of the public health are accustomed to give much thought to infant mortality. A very high birth rate may be neutralized by a still higher death rate. It is well that the churches should report a growing birth rate; but the strength of a church will be diminished rather than increased unless care is taken to feed and shepherd the lambs. This is a duty devolving upon every true pastor at all times; but it is especially necessary in times of revival, when many converts are brought into the church. A church that has a thousand additions in three years, more than six hundred of whom unite by baptism, may easily find herself like old Mother Hubbard who lived in a shoe; who had so many children she didn't know what to do.

We have read of police court cases where mothers were charged with the neglect of their infants, when the evidence showed that it had been beyond their power properly to prepare for the child's advent; or, after its coming, to give it necessary care. Are not many spiritual children denied some churches because they have neither the means nor the will to take care of them? It is humanly impossible for one pastor properly to care for so many spiritual babes. The Methodist "class meeting" of Wesley's day was an attempt to meet this requirement.

We believe we have found in the principle of the Bible School organization now in operation in Jarvis St., a method whereby this urgent need may, in some measure at least, be met. The constituency of this paper has grown so rapidly that the membership of Jarvis St. Church now represents but a small portion of our readers. Notwithstanding, the need of one church is the need of all; and that which ministers to one may minister to all. Therefore, our extra Jarvis St. readers will not object to our urging upon our own members the necessity of giving their most earnest co-operation to our endeavour to build every new member of the church into some class in the School.

On the other hand, we would urge our young converts to exercise every care to appropriate to themselves the best God has in store. The first requisite of a babe is that it should breathe; and unceasing prayer is abso-

lutely indispensable to spiritual health. Food, too, and the right kind of food, is as necessary as air. Thousands of babies die for want of pure milk; and the ranks of the church are thinned, and many members enfeebled by the low value of much preaching. We have heard that it is an unfailing sign that a baby is of sound mind when it tries to put everything it can get its hands on into its mouth. Spiritual babes have good appetites, and will make an attempt to eat anything that is offered them. Woe be to the preacher who gives them a pretty sermon devoid of spiritual food. Any mother of a family will tell you that, while she loves all her children and they are an unceasing joy to her, their coming has made life for her both serious and busy. The church's business is to be the mother of souls; and having received her spiritual children from God, she must bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

"YE ARE MY WITNESSES."

One afternoon in July a stranger telephoned that he wished to see the Pastor, to talk with him about spiritual matters. An appointment was made. When he came to the church office, he said that he was a storekeeper in a certain district some miles from Jarvis St. Church. He had never attended a service in the church; but among his customers there were three families whose godly demeanor had greatly impressed him. He had himself been living a very irreligious life; and by yielding himself to the gambling mania, had neglected his business and brought multiplied troubles upon his head. But through it all the character and conduct and general deportment of the members of the families referred to, had been to him a standing condemnation.

On enquiry, he discovered that all three families were members of the same church; and he wondered what sort of a religion it was that could produce such results. Under deep conviction of sin he called upon one of the families, and asked the mother of the family to make an appointment for him to come to see their Pastor, and ask what he must do to be saved. That day he came to the Lord: a week or so later he was baptized. Then his wife came, and she was also baptized. We have since heard that no one can now go into that store without knowing that the store-keeper is a Christian; that everything about the place and about the proprietor speaks of a regenerating, cleansing, and uplifting power. In last night's prayer meeting, this brother gave a glowing testimony and was followed by the head of one of the families through whose influence he had been saved.

This week we received a letter from a lady who lives in the same neighbourhood above referred to. She recently was baptized; but felt it her duty to remain in the church to which she belonged, to try to kindle a spiritual fire there. (We always point out to those who propose this course, the inconsistency of trying to find fellowship with people opposed to the principles one holds to be true. At the same time we have not felt justified in refusing baptism if the applicant gave good evidence of conversion). This lady's letter speaks of the many homes which have been transformed by the power of the gospel as proclaimed by Jarvis St. Church and its members. We have many instances of people who have been led to the church to discover what strange power was making over the lives of their neighbours. Is not this what our Lord intended when He said, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me"?

SOME OF THE CONVERTS.

It will be interesting to give a sketch of some of those converted during Dr. Norris' Mission, and of some others who, having been converted elsewhere, were led into a deeper experience of grace, and to obey the Lord in baptism.

To-day (Wednesday), for instance, was visiting day; and among those who went out from 10 o'clock in the morning from door to door, calling upon those who had been touched by our services, or who were absent from some one of our classes, was a young man of twenty-one or more. His is an

interesting story. He had not been to a place of worship for some years: he was without any religious interest; but one evening he followed the crowd as they poured into Massey Hall, supposing he was going to some place of entertainment, and having no idea of its being a religious service. But God was in the place and spoke to his heart. The next Wednesday evening he came to Jarvis St., and was converted. The Friday evening following, he was baptized; last Sunday he was one of the more than one hundred and twenty received into the fellowship of the church; to-day he was telling to all around what a dear Saviour he had found.

Another was not actually converted through our services, but through a street meeting. He is an educated gentleman. He had belonged to a monastic order of the High Church in England, which he tells us is practically identical with the Roman Church. He had taken a year's theological course in London; he had spent much time preaching; he had been very religious,—but not converted. At last the Spirit of God swept his religion away, and he became a Christian. He came to our meetings; saw his duty and privilege, and was baptized. He is now one of our most valuable members. Through the greater part of Dr. Norris' meetings, it was a joy to observe how tactfully, how winsomely, he approached people of all classes, and spoke to them personally of their interest in Christ. He is a teacher of music; and one who is sure to be mightily used of the Lord. At last night's prayer meeting he gave us an inspiring testimony: he told us very modestly and with becoming reserve, of how his landlady had enquired what great change had come to him; to whom he had replied, that he had lost his religion and had been found of Christ. A few days later she came to him and told him that through his testimony she also had been converted.

Another instance: At the beginning of the year, we spoke two evenings in Winnipeg. In July, a lady who had attended those services came to Toronto on a visit to her sister, and brought the sister to Jarvis St. Church. The sister was converted; a little later the sister's husband was converted; the two beautiful children of the Winnipeg lady were baptized and all five became members of Jarvis St. Church.

One evening in Massey Hall, among those who professed conversion was a mother, her two sons, and two daughters, and a son-in-law, restored. The mother, the two daughters, and the two sons were baptized; the son-in-law had been a backslider, but had been baptized before. One of the sons at last night's meeting, out of a full heart, praised God for what He had done for his family.

A Family Saved.

Another example of how God is working in Jarvis St. is furnished by the following facts. A year and a half or more ago a young man of about sixteen was converted. Shortly afterwards he brought his younger brother and he was saved. Both were baptized. One Saturday night as he was praying we heard some youthful voices breathing a quiet but fervent "Amen." Opening our eyes we saw these two boys sitting on the front seat, thus joining in prayer, while another was "leading." The next evening when coming into church, one of the boys met us, and said, "Mother is here to-night, pray for her." At that service the mother was converted. Up to the time Mr. Norris came, seven members of that family, including the mother, had been converted, and baptized, and, in addition, the father had been converted but not baptized. During the meetings another son and daughter were converted, and with the father, baptized, making ten of one family. Last night (Sept. 16th) the mother rose and said, "I thank God for what He has done for me and my family, all but one has been brought into the fold; please pray for the other one." Will our readers join in prayer for that one? We hope soon to report the answer.

Three Ministerial Students.

One was a student for the Anglican ministry, a bright and promising young man. He attended the services; and became concerned about the matter of baptism. His mother also attended. This young man said, "What would be the consequences to me if I were immersed, seeing I am a student for the

Anglican ministry?" We answered him: "You obey the Lord and He will look after the consequences of your obedience; disobey Him, and you will attend to the consequences yourself." He made his decision:—he and his mother were baptized. He will study now for the Baptist ministry.

Another exceptionally bright young man, who had done much preaching in England, came to this country for the express purpose of preparing himself for the ministry of a paedobaptist church. He came to Jarvis Street; his attention was called to the importance of yielding to the authority of God's Word. He also was baptized; and now has the Baptist ministry in view.

A third, of the same denomination as the second, who had done a good deal of preaching, a young man of fine personality and of strong mind, was planning to go to college to prepare for the ministry. He came to Massey Hall; became exercised about the matter of baptism; came forward, saying he desired to be baptized; but, in conversation in the enquiry-room, said he had no intention of leaving his church. We told him, as we have told scores of others, we would go with him as far as he would go in obedience to the Word; but pointed out some of the difficulties he would be sure to encounter if he attempted to exercise the ministry in a church which was not in agreement with his convictions. We showed him that, of necessity, in such circumstances, he would either have to be loyal to the church to which he belonged and teach that which, if the members should heed his teaching, would change the character of the church; or, were he to withhold his testimony, he would be disloyal to Christ and untrue to his own convictions. Three minutes afterwards he crossed the floor and said to us, "What you have said has disturbed me, and I see the inconsistency of it. I will pray about it." Later he was baptized. He is now a member of Jarvis St. Church, with the Baptist ministry in view.

Still another case of family conversion comes to our mind. A young lad and his sister came forward one evening, and came into the enquiry-room. Both professed conversion. In the hallway outside, the father and mother were waiting. An earnest personal worker from another Baptist church in the city directed us to them; and while we talked to the father, she talked with the mother and the mother yielded to the Lord. We asked them to step into the enquiry-room, but the father refused. Then we asked him to come and kneel with us in thanksgiving for what God had done for his wife and children. He said, "I am willing to do that". We stepped inside, and the five of us knelt together. The mother prayed; and the son and daughter prayed; then the father prayed, and surrendered to the Lord. Then each of the four gave thanks in turn for what God had done for the whole family. We received a letter yesterday from the mother, saying they were sorry that they had been unable to come forward for baptism earlier; but all four expect to be baptized next Sunday evening. Here is a case of "household" conversion and baptism,—but all are believers.

LAST SUNDAY.

Last Sunday was a great day in Jarvis St. In the morning School the attendance registered seven hundred and sixty-nine. At the close of the morning service several came forward, expressing desire for salvation or for church membership. In the evening twenty-one were baptized before a great congregation which practically filled the house. At the Communion Service following, one hundred and twenty-one new members were received. The attendance at the Communion broke all records; and the great company went home with "Hosannas" in their hearts.

MISS GEORGINA LINDSAY.

In accordance with the request of the Bible School officers and teachers, the Deacons have appointed Miss Georgina Lindsay to the office staff to have special charge of the Bible School records. Miss Lindsay is a teacher in the Young People's Department and we are sure will render splendid service in her new position. Miss Lindsay began her duties Wednesday, Sept. 17th.

The Whole Bible Sunday School Lesson Course.

Lesson LII.

September 28th, 1924

THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM.—I Kings: 12-16.

Again in these chapters we walk on holy ground, for here we see God fulfilling His Word.

I. Rehoboam the Reckless.

(1) He inherited his father's disfavour with the people. Solomon's reign had become irksome; and his extravagance had imposed intolerable burdens upon his people. Thus many men begin their careers under a serious handicap; but this must never be urged as a justification of failure. (2) Rehoboam declined the counsel of age and experience. It is not unusual for young men to think that wisdom was unknown before their arrival. How foolish it is for men not to be advised by those who have travelled the road before them! (3) Instead, he accepted the counsel of youth and inexperience, as many others have done since his day. (4) Abusing his authority, he lost it. Authority must be justly exercised in order to be retained.

II. Jeroboam the Man of Policy.

Jeroboam is one of the outstanding examples of Scripture of the folly of sacrificing principle to policy, and conviction to expediency.

(1) In the providence of God he was put in a position where he might have played an heroic part in leading the people of God in ways of righteousness. Men who are exalted to positions of leadership bear a responsibility which is commensurate with their opportunity for service. Jeroboam was called to mould a new kingdom when the ten tribes broke away from the reign of David's house; and in that fact, he might have found an opportunity quickly to rid the people of the influences to which they had been subject in Solomon's declining years. (2) Furthermore, he was God's chosen instrument to separate the people from David's house; and he was heir to the promise, that divine help would be given to those who obey the Lord. (3) Ambitious to retain the throne, he sacrificed principle to policy. He feared that if the people continued to go to Jerusalem to sacrifice, the memories of the Holy City would turn them back to David's house: hence he made calves of gold,—not as idols, but only as representatives of Jehovah. How many like him there are! Instead of meeting a difficulty in faith, they devise some politic means of avoiding it. (4) This departure from the way of truth resulted in the ruin of a nation.

III. The Prophet of Compromise.

(1) The 13th chapter tells the story of a faithful messenger of judgment with a clear knowledge of truth and a determination to do his duty. (2) The man is without name: he is called only "a man of God out of Judah". Who could desire a more honourable title? (3) He was warned to allow himself to be under no obligation to those to whom he prophesied. He was, in short, to maintain his independence as a prophet. What a lesson is here for the prophet of the present time! (4) He yielded to the fraternal appeal of another prophet (vss. 17-19) of whom it is said, "He lied unto Him". A preacher may be tempted of the Devil through the medium of another preacher who urges him to be friendly. (5) By disobedience he came under judgment,—as all must do.

IV. The Harvest of Unfaithfulness.

The last part of the 13th chapter and the remaining chapters of the lesson are an illustration of the principle that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. (1) Jeroboam suffered in his own family. Many family troubles are heart troubles. (2) Every succeeding king of Israel walked in the ways of Jeroboam the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin. Let a man do wrong, and he will never want for followers.

MONDAY NIGHT.

Monday night was our first Monday night Teachers' Conference. One hundred and one members of the staff were present. The department conferences met from a quarter to eight to a quarter to nine, when all came together in a united conference; and at nine o'clock the Pastor taught the lesson. Our magnificent staff of teachers and officers thus assembled were a mighty inspiration—at least to the Editor of this paper. Nothing is impossible with such co-workers.

Tuesday night, notwithstanding the gathering of Monday, the prayer meeting was packed, overflowing into the hallway. The testimonies of the young converts, while bringing blessing to them, brought unspeakable joy to older Christians.

NEXT SUNDAY.

We are admonished to forget the things which are behind and press forward to the things that are before. And it is well, so far as possible, to forget battles in which bitterness may have been engendered. We would not now write one word which would increase another's pain, or which might seem like exulting in a human victory. On the other hand, however, we feel that it would be little short of treason not to record what the hand of God has done. The work, indeed, has been so manifestly of the Lord, that the telling of it can bring glory to Him only.

On the 21st of September, 1921, the final vote was taken in the war which had been begun by some outside the church who were determined to remove the Pastor of Jarvis St. as an obstacle to their modernist programme. We have always been sorry for those who unwittingly became their victims. But on that memorable evening the proposal to declare Jarvis St. pulpit vacant was defeated.

Was the stand we then took justified? What has followed the defeat of the attempt to silence the Jarvis St. ministry? The three weekly prayer meetings have continued with unabated interest. In the three years, by a most conservative estimate, an aggregate of not less than eighty thousand people have attended the prayer meetings in Jarvis St. Church; over one thousand new members have come into our fellowship; over six hundred and fifty have been baptized; the membership of Jarvis St. exceeds fifteen hundred; the Bible School is now the largest Baptist School in Canada; although it was freely predicted that our doors would close for want of money, since September 21st, 1921, \$112,705.85 has come into the treasury of Jarvis St.

In addition to all this, *The Gospel Witness* has come into being; and is in the third year of its publication. It has appeared each week at the appointed time, carrying one of the Pastor's sermons stenographically reported. The paper now circulates in practically every State in the Union, in every Province of Canada, in Mexico, China, India; in New Zealand, Great Britain and Ireland, and in France. Its messages are reprinted in many American papers, both sermons and editorials, so that the ministry of Jarvis St. touches all parts of the Continent.

For all these abounding mercies the Lord alone is to be praised. This, we believe, is the testimony of Jarvis St. Church as a whole: "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say; If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us: then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us; then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: then the proud waters had gone over our soul. Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth".

KEEP THE DATE—SEPTEMBER 30th.

A church missionary meeting, with the Rev. C. H. Schutt, Secretary of Baptist Home Missions for Ontario and Quebec, as speaker. Fuller announcement in next week's *Witness*.