

The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED WEEKLY.

IN THE INTEREST OF EVANGELICAL TRUTH, BY JARVIS STREET
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T. T. SHIELDS, *Pastor and Editor.*

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

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No. 27

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

GREAT NEWS—JESUS IS COMING AGAIN!

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Massey Music Hall, Toronto, Sunday evening, Nov. 9th, 1924.
(Stenographically reported)

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

"In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

"When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

—II Thess. 1: 7-10.



HERE is no more thoroughly attested fact of history than that Jesus Christ came into the world. There are comparatively few of the most extreme critics who attempt to deny the fact that Jesus Christ once lived upon earth. What did He come for? I answer you in the words of Scripture: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners". He came; and He came to save sinners. There is no doubt about that. I shall not argue the point this evening, but simply proclaim the fact. I know absolutely nothing about the future. Nor does any other man know anything about the future. We know nothing of the future life beyond what is written in this Book. If this Book be not true, then we may as well close our churches, and cease our preaching, for we have no message at all; but if it be true, then it is possible for us simply and plainly to declare the word of the truth of the Gospel.

I have said it is an established fact that Jesus came. This Book tells us that He is coming again. I do not know why so many people should be inhospitable toward that truth. There are many professing Christians nowadays who seem to be specially opposed to the doctrine of the Lord's return. I shall not quarrel with anyone as to whether He will come before or after the Millennium. I have the profoundest conviction myself that there can be no

Millennium until Jesus comes. I have no doubt about that; but I am not going to make that a test of fellowship. But this is cardinal, is fundamental to the Gospel,—the fact that as surely as Jesus came once, He will come again. Now, if that be denied, then the whole Gospel is denied; for we have precisely the same authority for believing that Jesus Christ will personally, visibly, and even audibly, return to this earth, as we have for believing that He came the first time.

I.

It is about His second coming I want to speak to you in simplest terms this evening; and to remark that according to the teaching of this scripture I have read to you, the second coming of our Lord will mark the end of the gospel dispensation. When He comes again, He will not come as the thorn-crowned, crucified, Saviour. When He comes the second time, He will come without a sin offering. He came once to give His life a ransom for many; He laid down His life; He poured out His blood for the cleansing of sinners; He paid the price of our redemption; He ascended into glory; He sent His Holy Spirit, and from then until now it has been the work of the Holy Ghost to convince men of sin, and righteousness, and judgment. He has been doing that work; but when Jesus comes again the dispensation of the Holy Ghost will be at an end. There will be no offer of salvation to anyone; He will come without a sin offering. He will not come the second time to stand at the door and knock; He will not come again to plead with men to be reconciled to God; He will not come that men may believe on Him, and receive Him as Saviour. He will come in an entirely different way and in a different character the second time. Now I know that it is popular to-day in some quarters to believe in a further probation beyond the grave. Not very far from this hall, as I speak this evening, there is a gentleman holding forth on that theory; and teaching men that there is another probation, that there is another chance beyond this present life. I affirm that there is not one solitary passage in the Word of God that affords the slightest foundation for hope that when the Lord Himself shall come the second time the door of mercy will still be open. I remind you, my dear friends, that the time is, certainly coming when the last gospel hymn, such as we have heard this evening—the gospel hymn of invitation—will have been sung; the time is coming when the last offer of forgiveness will have been made; when the last gospel sermon will have been preached, when the door will be closed; and there will be no possibility of a reconsideration of the decision made respecting the soul's relation to Christ. Human opinions on this matter are of no value. Let us come to the clear teaching of the Word of God; and, beyond peradventure, the Bible teaches that space for repentance is limited to this life. Sometimes you see down town: "Going out of business. Everything must be sold". And after a few weeks of sale there is some re-adjustment, and the company continues in business at the same stand. But I assure you that the time when the gospel will be preached to sinners, and when offers of salvation will be made to rebellious men,—that time will come to an end. I don't know when it will end for you. For some of us we have no fear, for we have trusted as poor sinners in the precious blood of Christ. I don't know when it will end for you; but here is a point clearly marked in Scripture, that when Jesus Christ shall come the second time there will be an end for ever of all offers of mercy.

II.

Then another thing: According to this text, when He comes the second time everyone will see Him; His coming will be a revelation. When He came

the first time He was born as a babe in Bethlehem; and there came wise men from the East, saying, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him". But when He comes the second time, no one will need to ask where is He; for the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire with all the angels of His power with Him. "Behold," saith the seer, "he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." My dear friends, the time is coming when the word of the truth of this Gospel will be amply vindicated. What a day that will be for the Dr. Fosdicks and the Dr. Faunces, and Shailer Matthews, and all the modern infidels who have denied His virgin birth, His essential Deity, His vicarious sacrifice, His personal return! Who is going to prove that Jesus will come again? Jesus, blessed be His name, will prove it Himself. He will come; and in that day the great men of the earth and the kings and the captains, and all the mighty men, will pray for the rocks to fall on them to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. Why, believer, if you are troubled a little bit to-night; if sometimes you feel as though the battle were going against the old faith,—Cheer up! Cheer up! our day is coming; for our day is the Lord's day, and He will come Himself. He will be revealed from heaven; and there will be no doubt as to Who He is, or whence He came. To-day men question, Did He actually come from heaven? Was He begotten of the Holy Ghost? Was He really the incarnate God? or was He Joseph's son? Did He come into the world by natural generation, or was His birth a miracle? and was He God manifest in the flesh? Let me tell you, my dear friends, the time is coming when He will be revealed from heaven, and there will be no doubt about it then. Everyone will know whence He comes; everyone will know Who He is; everyone will know what is the measure of His power when He comes with flaming fire, with all His mighty angels, with the angels of His power.

I am glad He is coming again. I confess that sometimes I feel weary. I expect you do, too. Sometimes I feel rather tired, not of the work of the Lord, but in it; sometimes the battle is strenuous; sometimes it seems as though the powers of darkness were gaining the ascendancy. But whenever I am tempted thus to be dissipated, I turn back to the great promise of His coming again; and I say to myself, "He has said: 'If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.'" It is a glorious promise to the believer, a glorious prospect to the child of faith,—that our Lord Jesus is coming back again.

III.

I remind you that His coming will be a day of judgment. He will come taking vengeance. We hear a great deal to-day about the meek and lowly Jesus; we hear much about the Fatherhood of God, and God is pictured very often as an indulgent father. I ask you men and women if you have not seen things in our own social life that needed severe treatment? Have you not seen men who were such flagrant sinners that your conscience flamed out in indignation against the wrong, until you said in your heart, "If there is no judgment day there ought to be; or else the moral government of the universe is at fault." There ought to be an opening of the books; there ought to be a payment of debts; there ought to be a re-adjustment of things. Oh, yes, there are still the beggars who sit at the rich man's gate; there are still the widows who plead against the injustices of earth. Things are not equally distributed

here. I do not wonder sometimes that people who lose sight of God's judgment, who look at the things of this life only, and lose the perspective of eternity,—I don't wonder, I say, that such a view of life should produce Communists and Bolshevists. And let me remind you, my brother,—now listen—that religious teacher who diverts the thought of men from the future, who denies that there is a day of divine reckoning, a day when the Judge of all the earth shall come,—that kind of teaching, whether in a university professor, or in the pulpit,—that kind of teaching breeds Communism and Socialism, inevitably. It breeds anarchy; for I declare if I did not believe there was a righteous Judge who was going to order all things according to His word, and who will have His sovereign way at last, I think I should find it difficult to hold myself in check. If I did not believe that Someone is going to adjust things, I should sometimes feel like taking the law into my own hands. But this is the teaching of Scripture: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." And He will,—He will! Oh, let me drive it in upon your heart and conscience, He will repay; for He is God, and He will not be denied.

Quietly, sweetly, graciously, at the beginning of His public ministry, when He stood up in the synagogue at Nazareth, and there was handed to Him the roll of the prophet Esaias, He found the place where it is written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book and gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." "Gracious words"—"I have been specially sent to bind up the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,"—and when He got to that, He closed the book. Turn to the prophecy of Isaiah and read the next sentence. Listen! "To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God". And as He closed the book and announced the first part of His programme, some day He will come down the skies to open the book and proclaim the second part.

He is coming to take vengeance. Yes; I think we need that note to-day. We have not had enough of it in Toronto, nor in other cities. But look abroad. I remember making a tour of the battlefields of France while the war was still on. Many returned soldiers are here this evening. You saw the horrors of it. When I saw hundreds of dead lying upon the ground; and miles, and miles, and miles of territory in the region of the Somme where not a living thing remained; where towns and villages had been blotted out of existence, and the whole face of the earth changed: and I said to some friends who were with me, "This looks as though something superhuman had been at work. It really looks as though hell had here been let loose." I used to say during the war, "The Kaiser ought to be brought to judgment," and I still think so. I think if he and his war lords had been hanged for their sins it would have done more to restore peace to the earth than all the conferences of Europe. But whether that be so or not, I remember this coming

to me; as I looked at that awful devastation, the passage I have quoted came into my mind with a new significance: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." And He seemed to say to me, "I will repay, because no one else can repay." You cannot punish a man in this life sufficiently for his sins.

I heard a brother say a striking thing a few months ago: "The more a man sins the less he suffers." A lot of people say you get all the hell you are going to have here. This man said, "The more you sin the less you suffer." I have thought much about that. I have seen some man depart by only a step from the path of rectitude; and he was in agony: he could not sleep at night. He may not have been absolutely honest; he may have cheated someone of a dollar or so; but his conscience was so tender he could not rest until he had made it right. But if that man still goes on in his sin, he will take not only a dollar, but will take a thousand; and instead of a thousand he will take a million; one sin will be multiplied to a thousand; until he becomes so hardened and so calloused that nothing can touch his conscience or his heart. His heart is hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. It may be his "eyes stand out with fatness; he has more than heart can wish;" and he continues on the wrong road, and perhaps ends his life apparently without judgment.

IV.

No, my friends, there ought to be a future reckoning; and the Bible says there will be. When He shall come "with flaming fire, taking vengeance"—on whom? On the inhabitants of the penitentiary? On the very wicked people? On the outcasts of society? No! That is not what our text says. The Bible, you know, always goes to the root of matters,—"taking vengeance on them that know not God." Surely a man will not be punished for his ignorance, will he? There is a striking phrase in the Bible referring to the creation of the world. Referring to the Genesis record of how the worlds were made, the pen of divine inspiration says of those who mock at the truth of the Lord's return, "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old and the earth standing out of the water and in the water." Elsewhere it is said, "They did not like to retain God in their knowledge." Now, my friends, if we shut out the light, we are responsible for our own darkness; if we refuse to respond to the instruction of the divine Spirit, then we are ourselves responsible for our ignorance. I wonder if there is a man here who says, "Well, sir, respecting all these matters I confess myself to be agnostic,—that is to say, I don't know. You talk to me about a God, and I admit there is something in nature I cannot explain; there is an undeniable, invisible, intangible Something that the microscope cannot discover, that the telescope cannot reveal. There is a Power behind it all, a Something that designs and works out things according to law. I don't know what it is. Religious people call that power, 'God', others call it, 'Law', someone else, 'Force',—I call it the Great Unknown. I don't know God." You had better be careful, my friend, for when Jesus comes, He will take "vengeance on them that know not God". You ought to know God! "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork". "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; so that they are without excuse". There is not a man living who has not been placed, by God's revelation of Himself, without excuse for being ignorant of God.

You see, therefore, how this word goes to the heart of the matter: Christ

is coming to judge "them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." Perhaps someone says, "That is very narrow. Do you mean to tell me, sir, that I am to be judged for not obeying the gospel, when I am a perfectly moral and respectable man, just because I don't accept the gospel? Do you mean to tell me I am to be judged for that?" No, I do not; but that is what the Bible says. Mr. Philpott, in this hall last Sunday night, preaching in my place, I believe, said, the greatest thing a man can do is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. And that is true. "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? * * * This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." On the other hand, the greatest offence any one of us can commit is to refuse to believe on Jesus Christ, for that is the foundation sin: that is the sin from which all other sins spring. And the Word says He hath appointed a day in which He "shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."

Now there is a terrible word here I do not understand. I shall make no effort to understand it. If the Lord had wanted me to understand it, I think He would have explained it fully. I believe no one else can understand it either. There are some things in the Bible I do not want to understand. They belong to experiences I pray God none of us may ever have. When He comes to take "vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ",—what follows?—"who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." Now what does that mean? I don't know what it means, except that it means exactly what it says. It means that when Jesus comes those who have not received the gospel will find themselves at the end of their opportunity, and it will be to them a day of judgment; and they shall be punished everlastingly from the presence of the Lord;—not in the presence of the Lord, but from the presence of the Lord. They shall be expelled from His presence, and from the glory of His power.

I said just now, there is a gentleman not very far from here who is preaching the very opposite of that this evening. I ask you as reasonable men and women, those of you who are not converted, to consider these two positions for just a moment or two. There are those who tell you (this gentleman among them) that there is no place of eternal punishment; there is no future retribution. We believe the word of God teaches there is a judgment to come. Now, supposing those who teach that we should presume upon the mercy of God, and go out into the other life with the expectation of a larger hope,—I say, suppose those who thus teach should turn out to be blind leaders of the blind; suppose that in accepting such teaching you are following a false guide; suppose this so-called "Judge" Rutherford should be wrong, and if that Bible be true,—as it is,—he is wrong, and mistaken as a man can possibly be; I say, suppose such teachers should prove to be in error, what then? Suppose the solemn words of this text be true, surely the safe thing, the wise thing, is to take no risks. Yield to Christ now; receive salvation now; open your heart to the gospel now. What hope is there that if we reject Him now we shall be more amenable to the influences of the Spirit in another dispensation? Oh, I beg of you, my friends, to heed this solemn teaching, which is to the effect that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming again; and that when He comes He will come in judgment.

V.

Yet I must say a word or two at this point before I close, that you may see that He is not coming for judgment only, but "to be glorified in his saints,

and to be admired in all them that believe." Do you know what it will be for Him to be glorified? His glory is not what all the angels, and archangels, and cherubim and seraphim, and all the innumerable hosts of heaven think He is. God's glory is not His reputation. It is not what men think He is, nor what angels say He is. God's glory is what He really is. And He will be glorified just in the measure in which He is manifested; and when He is revealed from heaven He will be glorified in His saints, because His redeemed people will show—it is a wonderful truth—His redeemed people will show who and what Jesus is. Here is a poor sinner who explored the utmost bounds of the far country; he went down into the lowest depths of the horrible pit; and he is washed in the blood of the Lamb. He is made a new creature in Christ Jesus, he is clothed in the righteousness of Christ, he is without fault at last before the throne of God; and he will be one of the jewels which will be glorifying to Christ. It will be a great thing to see a man like Saul of Tarsus.—How wonderful it will be to see a man like Saul of Tarsus, whose hands were red with the blood of the saints, leading in the praises of the Lamb! I trust, dear friends; the same will be true of many of us. I hope it will be so of everyone of us. If we were to sing that hymn over again to-night:

"When the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there."

and if we had time for a personal testimony from everyone in this hall, and if we could go from seat to seat, how many could rise and say, "I will be there, sir, because I have been washed in the precious blood, and I know I have everlasting life."

He will "come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." We admire Him now, do we not? We praise Him for all His boundless grace; but when we shall see Him as He is—His long patience, His tender mercy, His pardoning grace, His matchless, boundless love,—there will be no language in which we shall be able to express our admiration of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you believers wish He would come to-night? Paul refers to a class of believers as "those who love His appearing." There are some people who wish He would come to-night. I confess it would be the greatest news that could come to me. I wish we might be awakened from our sleep, I wish we might hear the cry, "Behold the bridegroom cometh". There is not anything in this life that I would not gladly surrender, if I could see Him face to face, if I could know that there was an end to this toiling and striving, and fighting against all the powers of darkness. If I could see Him coming down the sky, I believe I would shout, "Hallelujah!" like a salvationist to-night. Blessed be God, He takes away the fear as He destroys the power of death; He puts within us a passion for Himself, so that we would rather see Him than anyone else to-night. I beg of you to choose between these two to-night. He is coming;—but is He coming as your Judge, or as a Bridegroom for His Bride?

"The bride eyes not her garment,
But her dear bridegroom's face;
I will not gaze at glory,
But on my King of grace.
Not at the gift He giveth,
But on His pierced hand,
Whose grace is all the glory
Of Immanuel's land."

How many of us, then, are waiting for His coming? I have done when I have told you this simple story: A young man was arrested, charged with

the commission of a certain crime, and was lodged in jail. He was brought before the magistrate for his preliminary hearing, and remanded for further investigation of his case. One day as he was sitting, gloomy in spirit, in his cell, the jailor opened the door and admitted a stranger. The stranger appeared to be a young man; he was plainly clad, and not of particularly striking appearance in the gloom of the prison cell. But he came and sat down beside the prisoner and spoke to him very kindly, and said that he was sorry to find him in this state. And he said, "I understand you have no friends?" "No, I have not many friends," said the young man. "Well," said the stranger, "you will need someone to appear for you when the day of trial comes; and I am myself an advocate, and if you will put your case in my hands I think I can do something for you; indeed, I will make bold to promise you absolute acquittal." The young man was very cautious, and said, "That is very kind of you, sir, but I really have not made any selection yet of anyone to appear for me." To himself he said, "If this man were a man of ability and prominence, he would not come begging a case. I should have to send for him; and further, he would be differently appraised, there would be evidences of prosperity about him. I am afraid he could not do very much for me." To him the stranger was without form or comeliness. To gain time he said, "I will not make a decision to-day, sir. I hope to select an advocate some time before the trial, and if you will come and see me again I will think the matter over." The stranger went away.

Some time later the jailor admitted another, and this time a man of very striking appearance, and of pleasing dress, with flashing diamonds upon his fingers, and every appearance of a man of the world who was exceedingly prosperous. He too said, "I am sorry to see you here. I suppose you have not yet appointed anyone to appear in your behalf on the day of Assize?" And the young man said, "No, I have not. A stranger came a little while ago and offered me his services, but I asked him to give me further time to think." "Well," said the stranger, "I am an advocate, and I have influence at court; and I am inclined to think that you are not guilty. I have read of your case, and I am profoundly sympathetic with you; and I should be very glad indeed to undertake your case, if you will put it in my hands." Again the young man reasoned with himself, "This man seems to be a more likely advocate than the other; at least, he promises more; and I think I had better close with him at once." And so he said, "Very well, sir, I gladly accept your offer, and I will put my case in your hands."

A day or so later the first stranger returned, and having put his case before him as he had done before, he said, "I hope you have now arrived at a decision." "Yes," he said, "I have. After you called the other day, another came, and I must frankly say he greatly impressed me, and I accepted his offer, and handed over my case to him." "I am sorry to hear that," said the stranger, "I wish you would re-consider it, for I know the other advocate, and I am sure he can do nothing for you, and I am sure if you put your case in his hands you are a lost man; whereas I will promise you acquittal." And he pleaded with him most earnestly, but he said, "I am afraid it is too late." "Well," he said, "I give you my offer again. I ask you to reconsider it." The young man refused; and the stranger went away. Thereafter, day after day the stranger came back again, always offering his services, and begging him to reconsider the matter. And then as the day of trial drew very near, the stranger came more frequently; and was more insistent, and more earnest

in his appeal. At last, one day he said to the prisoner, "I have come with my last appeal. I give you one more opportunity to change your mind, and on this occasion I must tell you, I was present when you committed the crime. I saw you do it with my own eyes. I know that your hands are red with blood, and that you are guilty of murder; and yet I have a way whereby I can secure your acquittal." The young man looked at him, pondered it over, and at last said, "I don't believe he saw me do the deed. I don't believe him." And he said, "No, I am afraid it is too late. I have engaged my counsel." The stranger moved toward the door, but, moving, he paused and said, "Will you change your mind?" He opened the door and stepped outside, and then he pushed it open again and said, "Did you call me back?" "No," said the young man, "I have made my decision." And the door closed behind him.

The day of trial dawned at last, and the prisoner was brought to the bar. The counsel for the prosecution and the defence were present, and all the witnesses were there. The courtroom was crowded, and everyone was breathlessly waiting for the appearance of the judge. At length in the courtyard without was heard the trampling of horses' feet as the judge's carriage drove up accompanied by an armed escort. A solemn hush fell upon the court as the judge in all his robes of office took his place upon the bench. All eyes were fastened upon him, particularly the prisoner's. But the moment the prisoner looked into the face of the judge his heart almost stood still; his face took on an ashen hue, his knees knocked together; for he recognized in the judge upon the bench, the one whom he had refused to allow to become his advocate. There was no pity now; there was no mercy now; there was no offer of repentance now. And as the trial proceeded, and witness after witness was called in the prisoner's defence, the prisoner's head was bowed in utter dejection and hopelessness, for he said, "What avails all this evidence, when my judge knows that I am guilty"?

"You know the moral of my parable. "Behold I stand at the door and knock." He comes as an Advocate to-day. I beg of you to put your case in his hands. "If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." He has never lost a case. He will not lose yours. But if you reject Him, He will come as your Judge, and all hope will be at an end. I beseech you to be reconciled to God! Oh, let this be a night of decision for Christ!

JARVIS STREET MEMBERS AND THE MASSEY HALL MEETINGS.

Last Sunday evening we began to feel at home in Massey Hall. There was a great congregation which obviously included large numbers of non-churchgoers. The power of the Lord was present; and a number were gloriously converted.

But this note is written specially for members of Jarvis Street Church. We are sure that hundreds are praying for blessing upon the services; and great numbers also are doing their utmost to bring the unconverted under the sound of the gospel. But when the unconverted come, and the gospel is preached, what then? When the invitation is given to confess Christ, what tremendous powers come immediately into conflict! We ask all our readers to pray for blessing upon these services; but we ask our members specially to pray for grace to be able to speak to the unconverted in the service, and while the invitation is being given to volunteer to accompany them to the front. Many, even of the strongest, require the helpful ministry of a personal word. Let us come prepared to do this next Sunday.

As this paper goes to press, we are unable to announce Sunday evening's subject, except to say that it will consist in a pointed, personal, gospel appeal. The subject will be announced in the Saturday city papers.

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

THE CANADIAN BAPTIST AND THE LONDON CONVENTION.

It is with great regret that we find it necessary to correct *The Canadian Baptist* in its report of the London Convention, appearing in the issue of November 6th. Both the editorial on the front page, bearing the Editor's initials, and the report of the Educational Session, appearing on pp. 4 and 5, contain such serious inaccuracies as to be absolutely misleading. We had been informed that the Editor's attention had been called to these inaccuracies; and that they would be corrected in the next issue. We have just received (Wednesday afternoon) a copy of the issue of November 13th. Such corrections as are made are put in the editorial column, where they are much less likely to be read than on the front page of the paper, where the misleading report of last week appeared.

On reading this week's issue, we immediately endeavoured to get into communication with the Editor, and found that he was out of the city. It is impossible, therefore, for us to consent that the second issue of *The Canadian Baptist* following the Convention, should go to the churches with the second misleading report, without following it immediately by a word of correction.

In the front page article of the issue of November 6th, in the third paragraph from the bottom, the Editor gives what purports to be the resolution adopted by the Convention, in the following terms:

"Be it resolved, that in view of the discussions which have from time to time taken place in connection with the conferring of honorary degrees by the Senate of McMaster University, this Convention without intending any reflection on the Senate, relies on the Senate to exercise the greatest care in conferring degrees of religious leaders whose theological views are known to be out of harmony with the cardinal doctrines of the principles of evangelical Christianity."

The exact wording of the resolution, however, was as follows:

"Whereas discussions have arisen from time to time within this Convention regarding the action of the Senate of McMaster University in granting certain honorary degrees, therefore be it resolved, that, without implying any reflection upon the Senate, this Convention relies upon the Senate to exercise care that honorary degrees be not conferred upon religious leaders whose theological views are known to be out of harmony with the cardinal principles of Evangelical Christianity."

It will be observed that the Editor's version says that the Convention "relies on the Senate to exercise the greatest care in conferring degrees—"; whereas the resolution actually says: "This Convention relies upon the Senate to exercise care that honorary degrees BE NOT conferred," etc.

The second inaccuracy is much less important, but under the circumstances, should be corrected. In view of the prominent part the Editor of this paper had taken in the controversy, it was only natural that his personal attitude to matters before the Convention would be likely to have some influence one way or the other in the Convention. In the fourth paragraph from the bottom, Mr. Kipp says: "It was a happy thought of the chairman, Mr.

Albert Matthews, who suggested a committee composed of Dr. Shields, Dr. Whidden, Dr. Farmer, Rev. John Linton and Mr. S. J. Moore, to retire from the Convention and, in private, seek a mutually acceptable ground." The fact is, it was the Editor of this paper who made the suggestion. Leaving his place, he went to the platform and proposed to the Chairman that a committee be appointed; and it was on his suggestion the matter was brought before the Convention.

In the last paragraph of the front page article, Mr. Kipp says:

"There is one thing absolutely essential now. The past must be forgotten. It must remain forever a closed book. The denomination is sick and tired of this strife. It longs for peace that it may carry on its real work with a united front. The bones of contention have been buried. The battle axes have been destroyed. Woe betide the ghoul, whoever he may be, who digs up the horrible past or forges new axes for more conflict. Let there be peace. Let suspicion and hatreds be forgotten, and with a solid, unbroken front, let the whole church line advance."

We regret very much the tenor of this paragraph. We have no doubt that "the denomination is sick and tired of this strife." We have been "sick and tired" of it from the beginning; but loyalty to principle compelled us to take the stand we have taken. We believe a sound conclusion was reached at the London Convention. By that, we are prepared to abide; and upon the basis of the principles there expressed, to co-operate in our educational work. But we do not propose to throw away our battle-axes. Our sword is unsheathed against Modernism. We believe the decision at London makes it perfectly clear that the Convention is determined that it will not suffer Modernism to find a place in McMaster University. We hope everybody concerned will respect the Convention's expressed will, in which case our sword, at least, will be employed in fighting Modernism elsewhere.

We come now to the official report of the Convention on pp. 4 and 5 of the issue of November 6th. At the top of the first column, p. 5, the following occurs:

"About seven o'clock it was proposed that Dr. Shields' amendment and the amendment to the amendment be dropped, and that the resolution the Toronto Association adopted last May be introduced. This was done."

This is not a statement of fact. After the Senate's report had been submitted and its adoption moved and seconded, we moved the following amendment:

"Whereas there has been much discussion as to the propriety of the action of McMaster University in conferring an honorary degree upon one who is known to be a leader among modernist theologians, the Convention, without intending any reflection upon the distinguished recipient of the degree, hereby declares that the action of the University must not be interpreted as an endorsement by this Convention, of the theological views of the modernist theologian referred to; but reaffirms its adherence to the doctrinal standards incorporated in the Trust Deeds and Charter of McMaster University; and further, that the Convention relies upon the Senate and Board of Governors in the future to refrain from conferring a degree upon any religious leader whose theological views are known to be in opposition to the principles of Evangelical Christianity."

This was followed by an amendment to the amendment, moved by Rev. J. D. McLachlan, in the following terms:

"That this Convention reaffirms the confidence expressed by the Walmer Road Convention, in 1922, in the Senate and Board of Governors of McMaster University, in the administration of the trusts re-

posed in them; and that this Convention call upon the churches to continue their full moral support of the University and the Colleges."

After many speeches, Professor Keirstead proposed the withdrawal of both the amendment and the amendment to the amendment, to permit the report to pass; suggesting that after that, the resolution passed at the Toronto Association last May, should be submitted. To this we consented, and offered to withdraw our amendment; but Mr. Evan Gray, a member of the Senate, refused to consent to the withdrawal of the amendment to the amendment, and insisted that the matter must go to a vote.

We come now to the editorial corrections in *The Canadian Baptist* on page 8 of the issue of this week (November 13th). In this connection, Mr. Kipp quotes the amendment we proposed, and comments as follows:

"After this amendment had been seconded Rev. J. D. McLachlan moved, seconded by Dr. Rose, an amendment to the amendment expressing confidence in McMaster University.

"A long discussion took place upon the situation. After many speeches had been delivered, Dr. Keirstead proposed that the two amendments should be withdrawn and that the report of the University for the year should be adopted. Then the resolution which had been adopted last May by the Toronto Association should be introduced and considered. This seemed to provide a way out of the deadlock of the afternoon. Many were willing to withdraw the amendments; others wished a vote upon the two amendments. In a standing vote the amendment of Dr. Shields was sustained by 264 to 262 votes. But on the understanding that the Toronto amendment was to be introduced, Dr. Shields withdrew his amendment and the University report was adopted unanimously."

The fact is, our amendment was never put to a vote. The vote was on the amendment to the amendment quoted above, asking the Convention to reaffirm the confidence expressed in the Senate and Board at Walmer Road. It was this motion of confidence in the Senate of McMaster University which the Convention refused to pass by a vote of two hundred and sixty-four to two hundred and sixty-two. In other words: the Convention was asked to repeat the expression of confidence in the Senate passed at Walmer Road; and this, the Convention refused to do, thereby virtually reversing the Walmer Road Convention vote by a majority of two. Thus for the first time in thirty-six years, or since the establishment of the University, the Convention refused to express confidence in the Senate.

We regret exceedingly the necessity of correcting *The Canadian Baptist* in this matter. We have tried to do it in the best spirit; we are anxious only that the facts should be put before the people. But we must hereby request that *The Canadian Baptist* shall make this correction next week; and that they shall publish the amendment to the amendment given above—which the Convention refused to pass—in order that the Denomination as a whole may know the facts.

We should like to express our appreciation of the Editor's effort to correct the mistake of last week; and we assume that the further inaccuracies contained in his attempted correction must be due to not having an ordered report of the proceedings before him. At the same time, this is not an excuse; for *The Canadian Baptist* is the official organ of the Convention; and the churches have a right to expect an absolutely accurate report of the Convention proceedings.

We hope we have made it clear that the Convention did not vote upon our amendment at all, but voted down the motion of confidence; whereupon, in order to keep faith with the Convention, we withdraw our amendment. *The Gospel Witness* does not reach all the readers of *The Canadian Baptist*; and it

is therefore imperative that these corrections should be made in the denominational organ.

In view of the failure of *The Canadian Baptist* to give a correct report of the proceedings of the Educational Session at London, thereby leaving the Convention constituency without the information necessary fairly to appraise the significance of the London Convention's action in respect to our protest against the honoring of Dr. W. H. P. Faunce, we remind our readers that in the statement covering the matter issued by the Senate January 14th, the following paragraph occurs:

"That this Senate call the attention of the Baptists of Ontario and Quebec to the manner in which Dr. Shields has discharged the responsible tasks imposed on him by the Convention, and express the opinion that the circumstances hereinbefore recited are but symptoms of a general attitude toward the University, characteristic of Dr. Shields. That this Senate further declare its belief that the actions and attitude of Dr. Shields make it obviously impossible to co-operate with him longer in any constructive work with any hope of success."

With this statement of the Senate before it, and after nine months' deliberation, and following immediately upon five hours' debate, the Convention refused to reaffirm the confidence in the Senate expressed at Walmer Road in 1922, and in spite of the Senate's strictures, by a ballot vote which was no snap and uncertain judgment, re-elected the Editor of this paper to the Board of Governors for another term of four years.

We should have preferred that these facts should have been given to the churches through *The Canadian Baptist*; but as that paper in two attempts failed to do so, we give the simple facts here, and leave it to our readers to appraise their value.

SOME AFTER-CONVENTION REFLECTIONS.

Appointment of Delegates.

There is a possibility that some have formed a somewhat exaggerated estimate of the number of delegates sent to the recent Convention by Jarvis Street Church. In our issue of October 2nd (No. 21) we made the following suggestion:

"We have begun to receive letters from distant parts of the Convention, from brethren who express regret at their inability to attend the Convention. We venture now openly and frankly to say to every church that approves of the principle for which we have been standing in respect to the honoring of Dr. Faunce, that if they desire to be represented at the London Convention, and have their vote recorded in favour of the aforementioned principles, we will undertake to find members in good standing of Regular Baptist Churches who will accept appointment as their representatives to go to London to vote in support of these principles,—that is to say, we will send to any Baptist church who cannot afford to send delegates to London, the names of Baptists who will go to London as their delegates, to vote in harmony with the principles outlined in the foregoing article. We should be glad to hear from any church, through its pastor or other officer, who desires to be represented by such proxies at London. Let us hear from such by letter or wire at once!"

We held no communication with anyone privately, but made the above suggestion, as we said, "openly and frankly". We did it with great reluctance; and only because we knew that efforts to secure a large attendance of proxy delegates were being made in other directions.

In response to the above paragraph, we were requested by three churches to supply two delegates each; and by four churches to supply one delegate each.

We sent the names of two persons not members of Jarvis Street Church to one of the churches asking for two delegates; and the other eight delegates were members of Jarvis Street Church—making ten in all. In addition to this, the membership of Jarvis Street entitled us to send seventeen delegates; and the full complement were present. Jarvis Street was thus represented by twenty-seven delegates.

We should have been glad to have had all these proxy delegates appointed by Jarvis Street, unseated, by a general application of the principle that delegates must be members of the appointing church. We were confident, however, that no attempt would be made to do this, because the application of that principle would have resulted in the disqualification of a very much larger number who would be expected to oppose the principles for which we stood.

Now that the Convention is over, however, and the next Convention is nearly a year distant, it might be well for the Convention constituency to consider the advisability of some amendment to the constitution respecting the appointment of delegates. In this connection it may be useful to give a little history. A special Educational Convention was convened in Guelph, March 27th, 1888, for the purpose of considering the location of McMaster University—whether it should be established at Woodstock or at Toronto. It would appear from the Year Book of that date (1889) that the Convention included a large number of proxy delegates. We quote from the Year Book of 1889, pp. 9 and 10:

“The Chairman was asked to rule on two questions before proceeding to business:

1st. What is the basis of representation?

2nd. What is the principle which controls church election?

The President ruled that the certificates of delegation from the churches are the basis of our Convention.

Moved by Rev. J. McLaurin, and seconded by Rev. P. A. McEwen:

That this Convention affirms that the delegates composing this body must be members of the appointing churches, and that this is the meaning of the Constitution of the H. M. Society of Ontario.

The Chairman ruled the motion out of order, as the same would amount to an amendment of the Constitution. He then gave his ruling as follows: What the Constitution does not prohibit, it permits. The Constitution does not prohibit a choice of delegates outside of membership. Some churches have understood this to be their privilege, and have acted upon this interpretation. The delegates sent up by them must, therefore, be accepted. Rev. J. McLaurin rose and appealed against this decision. The ruling of the chair was sustained by a large majority vote of the delegates present.”

From that date, the practice of requesting churches remote from the place of meeting, to appoint others than their own members as their delegates, has frequently been resorted to. We are ourselves convinced that the principle is an unsafe one; and may easily lend itself to much abuse. Only in self-defence, knowing that the principle would be so largely used by those who were not in agreement with the position we had taken, did we make the suggestion to which we have above referred. The ruling of the Chair at the Guelph Convention was to the effect that what the constitution does not prohibit, it permits. Obviously, therefore, to do away with this practice altogether, it would be necessary to amend the constitution so that it would prohibit any church appointing others than its own members as delegates. It is a significant fact, however, that the special Educational Convention at Guelph, in 1888, was so largely composed of proxy delegates; and that the location of the University at Toronto was settled by the vote of that Convention.

The Whole Bible Sunday School Lesson Course

Lesson LX.

November 23rd, 1924.

JOASH, ATHALIAH, AND JEHOIADA, II Kings, chapters 11 and 12.

In Ecclesiastes, the first chapter, verses four to ten, the wise man enunciates this principle: "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new-thing under the sun." Out of that principle comes the proverb that history repeats itself. The chapters before us are a repetition of earlier history, and a prophecy of the future.

I. We Have Here the Age-long Attempt to Destroy the Seed Royal (vs. 1).

1. The seed royal in this case was a defenseless child. Truth often thus appears among men; yet God has His own way of taking care of the truth. God's purpose was wrapped up in the babe that was hid in the bulrushes, and in the Babe of Bethlehem; but, defenseless as they were, God's angels preserved them until the striking of His hour. 2. The attempts to destroy the male children in Egypt and in Bethlehem are illustrations of the same principle contained in the text. 3. Thus the enemy of souls also would destroy the holy seed in the believer's life. The martyr fires were an illustration of the same satanic rage against the royal seed. The record of the corrupting influences which played upon the Christian church from the beginning, supplies many an illustration. The present opposition to the Word of God is a present-day example of the rage of Athaliah. 4. The seed royal is always preserved. The might of Egypt was powerless to destroy the babe in the ark of bulrushes; all the power of Herod could not slay the Babe of Bethlehem. And the murderous intention of Athaliah failed in the destruction of Joash. Again and again the striking words are written: "They are dead which sought the young child's life."

II. The Emergence of the Royal Seed from Obscurity.

1. There were faithful men who contended for righteousness; and carefully guarded the legitimate heir to the throne. So God always has His seven thousand and who have not bowed the knee to Baal. 2. The ultimate coronation of the king shows how "truth crushed to earth will rise again". The true prophet will emerge from his hiding place: some Elijah will challenge the prophets of Baal; and some Mordecai will wear the chain of gold while Haman is hanged on the gallows prepared for Mordecai. This is the record of history repeated again and again. 3. The enemy's overthrow (vss. 13-16): The sword of judgment may sleep long in its scabbard, but it does not rust; and the transgressor feels its keen edge at last. It is ever God's way to accomplish His purpose through some one man who remains true to his trust. Jehoiada the priest was Judah's saviour, and was God's instrument in the preservation of the seed royal.

III. The Primary and Secondary Ministries of Truth (chapter 12:2).

1. That which seemed to be primary was really secondary. "Jehoash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord"; and we do well to be grateful for all who thus walk in righteousness. 2. What seemed to be the secondary, was the primary ministry. The king did right "all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him". It was really Jehoiada the priest who was the power behind the throne. So the Lots have always been in the habit of keeping company with Abraham; and they are largely what they are by Abraham's influence. The principle is illustrated in many a family. Behind the man of prominence, often there is a praying wife or a praying and sacrificing mother; behind the king, a priest who gives him instruction; behind the man of fame, distinguished for some public service, some humble teacher or professor from whom he derived his inspiration. 3. But when God writes the history of a

human life, He always reveals the source from which the goodness springs; and when His books shall be opened, the cup of cold water shall receive its reward. 4. But Jehoiada died at last, as all priests must: "And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death." We have a Priest Who never dies; and Who would fain stand with us and instruct us all the way. Therefore, it is possible for us to do that which is "right in the sight of the Lord", for our Priest ever liveth to make intercession for us.

IV. How the House of the Lord was Restored.

1. There are always some breaches to be repaired: "Change and decay, in all around we see." In this life everything wears out: walls crumble, houses decay; and however well built the house, it needs taking care of. So of the temple of truth. Though the faith was "once for all delivered to the saints", we must needs contend for it and repair the breaches. 2. The breaches were repaired when the priest put the interests of the house of the Lord before his own. God's work will prosper when we put Him first. 3. Jehoiada's simple plan of opening a treasury in the house of the Lord, and giving all the people opportunity freely to contribute, has never been surpassed. God's work is prospered by the multiplied offerings of His poor saints.

Conclusion:

The closing verses (17 to 21) are but a repetition of what has been said before a hundred times,—the conclusion of one life, the end of opportunity, the shadow of death; and the beginning of another generation. Who is it that writes this Book that tells the story of dying men succeeded by their sons, who also, in their turn, pass on? Yet the Spirit that breathes in this Book, carries one unfaltering purpose through it all, and proclaims it to be "the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

ENCOURAGEMENT FROM WITNESS READERS.

The postman hardly ever calls at the office now without bringing us good news of some sort from *Witness* readers. Sometimes appreciation is expressed by new subscriptions, or the renewal of old ones; sometimes by an order for certain special numbers of *The Witness*, indicating that their messages have proved useful; sometimes we receive more extended letters, telling us how the Lord has been pleased to use the message of the printed page.

One brother writes this week from Pennsylvania, saying, "I have just received my 'gold nugget' in the shape of *The Gospel Witness*"; another letter comes to us from the Shetland Islands—the most northern point in Great Britain.

The writer is a member of a little Baptist church of twelve people; and tells us that his pastor received *The Witness* from someone and was in the habit of passing it around among the people. On account of his wife's health, this pastor has to retire from this little church; but our correspondent gives a glowing account of his pastor's faithfulness to the Word of God. He says they are praying for another pastor to be sent to them. He expresses his regret that he cannot send us a contribution for *The Gospel Witness*; and explains that they have to do all they can to support the work of Home Missions in Scotland, by which their little church is assisted; and that they are doing what they can for the Russian Missionary Society, which he believes to be a very worthy work. Then he tells us of his anxiety for the salvation of his own children; and requests us earnestly to pray that God may bring them to Himself.

We confess to have been thrilled to discover that the message of Jarvis Street was reaching the Shetland Islands. We are going to send several copies of *The Witness* each week to that little church in the north of Scotland as a missionary contribution; and we ask our readers earnestly to pray that God's blessing may be upon His faithful people at that distant point.