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

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CHRIST THE MUSICIAN.

A Sermon by the Pastor.

"In the midst of the church will I sing praises unto Thee."—Heb. 2: 12.



THESE words are quoted by the writer of this epistle from the twenty-second Psalm and are cited here as a prophecy which finds its fulfilment in Jesus Christ. We have, therefore, New Testament authority for believing this to be a Messianic Psalm. That anyone should ever have questioned it is only a proof that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." The Psalm presents such a perfect portrait of the Crucified that only they who have never seen Him can fail to recognize the likeness.

Its address "To the Chief Musician" is most fitting; for since "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" when the foundations of the earth were laid, Jesus has ever been the inspiration of the sublimest music, the theme of the sweetest of human and angelic songs.

The Psalmist sings in the title to the psalm of the "Hind of the Morning." Jesus is represented as a young hart surrounded by many foes. In the Song of Solomon also He is described as a "roe or a young hart" "leaping upon the mountains and skipping upon the hills"; but "until the day break and the shadows flee away," Shulamith prays him to be like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether," i.e., division, mountains that separate. And in this Psalm, "The Hind of the Morning" is hunted "upon the mountains of Bether, on rugged Golgotha He appears "forsaken" of His God, beset by "strong bulls of Bashan," by "a ravening and a roaring lion," by "dogs and unicorns." They fall upon Him in their fury and bring Him into the dust of death." But in fulfilment of the desire of the concluding prayer of the Song of Songs, "Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices," He comes again, when, on His resurrection morning, the day breaks for the world, and "The Hind of the morning," "The Light of the World" exclaims, "I will declare Thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee."

The Psalm begins as a solo, set in a minor key: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Why art Thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" But at the twenty-second verse the plaintive minor strain is dropped, and the psalm concludes in a magnificent burst of choral symphony: "My praise shall be of Thee in the great congregation * * * all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's and he is the Governor among the nations. All they that be fat upon the earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before Him: and none shall keep alive his own soul. A seed shall serve him: it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this."

I shall try to show you how the Man of Sorrows converted discord into harmony, and changed the voice of weeping into a new song which is sung before the throne of God, and which none but the redeemed can learn. I shall ask you to think of *The Divine Master*, of *The Theme of His Music*, and of *The Auditory of His Great Masterpiece*.

I.

Let me speak to you, then, of the skill of THE DIVINE MASTER. We have pictured Jesus in many characters, as Saviour, Teacher, Brother, Friend. I desire to introduce Him to you this morning as the Author of all the world's music; as the greatest of all organ builders; among composers, the Master of all whom we call "the great masters"; as the Organist Whose fingers wake the music of the spheres. For it is no fanciful metaphor which describes Him in the text as a Singer; it is a matter of fact, which I shall attempt to show, that the world's Master Musician of all ages is none other than Jesus Christ.

You have but to remember that *Christ is the Creator* to recognize the truth of this. I need not stay to prove His creatorship save to quote a passage or two: "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." "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: all things were created by Him, and for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." Faith will find in the dictum of Scripture sufficient proof of Christ's creatorship. That established, let us think of His works.

May I attempt a definition of the province of music? Music is the eldest sister in the family of fine arts. The litterateur crystallizes thought and emotion in silence; the sculptor petrifies life; the painter makes space and relation the handmaids of beauty; the actor holds the litterateur's crystals up to the light; the architect trades, or wars, or revels, or worships, in stone. But the musician melts the litterateur's crystals into a rippling brook; gives voice to the statue; fills the painter's spaces with singing angels; dissolves the actor's flashing crystals into goblets of wine; and fills the architect's temple with devotion; and employs sound to express what, in other arts, would be an *unutterably* beautiful soul.

But what is sound? Do you know that the difference between sound and light is merely a difference of vibration? The slower vibrations of the air, which, scientists say, are from eight to forty thousand per second, we detect by the ear and call them sound. By the sensitive nerves of the eye we perceive the very rapid vibrations of the ether, which are from nearly five hundred to seven hundred trillions per second, and call them sight. The difference of pitch in sound, and of color in light, is said to be wholly a difference of vibra-

tion. Sound is impossible where there is no air, for sound is transmitted by the vibrations of the ether. Who then created the medium of sound and light and made possible the expression of a beautiful soul? Who designed and created the acoustics of the universe? It was the voice of the Singer of my text which broke the silence of the formless void and set it vibrating with music; the more rapid vibrations, moved by the impulsion of His will, which filled the worlds with light.

But in redemption also, this Singer is the Master Musician. Sin is discord; and he must be devoid of all capacity for the perception or appreciation of spiritual harmonies, who can walk in the world and fail to detect it. "Sin is the transgression of the law." It produces irregular vibrations which result in false notes, in unmusical sounds. When "sin entered into the world" the world was caused to vibrate irregularly; it was set out of tune with the will of God.

This world was a stop, that is, a set of pipes, in the grand organ of the universe; and it was the stop which pleased the Master's ear more than all others, played singly or combined. For He delighted not chiefly in the Vox Angelica or in the Vox Celeste, not in the voice of angels, or in the voice of celestial spirits of superior rank. The Master's favorite stop in His great organ of creation was the Vox Humana, for "His delights were with the song of men."

But a serpent got into His organ and put that favorite stop, every pipe of it, out of tune; so that when the Master came to inspect the organ to see whether the Vox Humana was *all* bad, His verdict was: "There is none righteous, —none in tune with the divine will,—no, not one." He might have closed that stop and played on without it. Angels and archangels would still have sung to His accompaniment; cherubim would have chanted their wisdom; seraphim would have sung their flaming sonnets of love; and the denizens of unfallen worlds, in unbroken harmony, would have poured forth their volume of praise and joined to swell the mighty hallelujah chorus of the skies. But the Master would not have it so. His organ was incomplete, for a world was out of tune. And what true musician can play with pleasure an organ that is out of tune? The Master missed His much-beloved Vox Humana. Angels may have wondered at His taste and marvelled at His choice. The Jews have a tradition that Lucifer rebelled in Heaven when he learned that God would love men better than angels. If the tradition were true, it would serve to show that there was jealousy in the first of all choirs—a chorus of worlds—because the Master selected this world to sing a solo.

At all events this Master of all musicians could not delight in His organ while one stop was out of tune; and clothing Himself in flesh He came down to tune it: "God was in Christ reconciling—attuning—the world unto Himself." It cost Him much to tune His organ; "They pierced His hands and His feet," the psalm, from which our text is taken, tells us. But He finished the work at last. He restored the stop, *one pipe at a time*, to more than its ancient sweetness. He made it the "principal," the diapason, the foundation stop on the great organ, "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God."

I have spoken of Christ, the Organ-builder, and of Jesus, the Organ-tuner; but will you bear in mind that He is *the Composer and Organist* also? For in things natural and spiritual, it is His hand which preserves, as it originated, the harmony of the universe; "Upholding all things by the word of His power."

Is your ear trained to the appreciation of divine harmonies? Do you stop and listen when His hand sweeps the keys? Do you hear His music in the tree-tops, in the song of birds, and in the thunder of the sea?

What are day and night, the seasons of the year, but stops in this great organ, drawn, controlled, played by the Master's hand?

"Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
 Adown enormous ravines slope amain,—
 Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
 And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
 Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
 Who made you glorious as the gates of Heaven
 Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
 Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
 Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?—
 God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
 Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!
 God! sing, ye meadow-streams, with gladsome voice!
 Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds!
 And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow.
 And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost!
 Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest!
 Ye eagles, playmates of the mountain-storm!
 Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!
 Ye signs and wonders of the elements,
 Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!

Thou, too, hoar Mount! with thy sky-pointing peaks,
 Off from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
 Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene,
 Into the depth of clouds that veil thy breast,—
 Thou too again, stupendous Mountain! thou
 That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
 In adoration, upward from thy base
 Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
 Solemnly seemest like a vapory cloud
 To rise before me.—Rise, oh, ever rise,
 Rise like a cloud of incense, from the Earth!
 Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,
 Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
 Great Hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
 And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
 Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

And have you heard what I may call *His providential playing*? What strange stops He draws! What mysterious combinations! To the untrained ear, what apparent discords! What plaintive minor tones! And yet withal what heavenly harmonies! Have you heard His sweet far-off "salicional," like Zephyrus whispering among the willows which bend over the Silent River? Ah? This Singer knows how to accompany His own song. And, though we may need many lessons, we shall learn by and by,

"All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
 All chance, direction, which thou canst not see;
 All discord harmony not understood;
 All partial evil, universal good."

Therefore, fear not to listen to His music. If you are one of the pipes in the Vox Humana which He has attuned to His will, and through which the heavenly Wind, Who bloweth where He listeth, waits to breathe the power which gives the whole organ voice, you may well respond to the tender touch of His wounded hands, or the firmer but still gentle tread of His pierced feet;

for there will be no false note in life's music while He is at the keys. Sometimes He will strike a chromatic chord, or set life's music in a minor key; but the time and tune will be perfect, and the harmony such as angels love to hear.

"To-day, our hearts, like organ keys,
One Master's touch are feeling."

Shall disobedience spoil the organ's repetition?

You have no doubt heard the story of the great composer Mendelssohn's visit to Friburg cathedral? He asked permission to play the organ, but the organist, not knowing him, at first refused the request. At last, after much entreaty, he consented to let the stranger go to the organ; but, when Mendelssohn began to play, it is said, the old organist burst into tears, and asked him his name. When he heard who he was he wept afresh, and said: "Only to think! I had almost forbid Mendelssohn to touch my organ!"

And a Stranger comes into the temple of our hearts to-day and asks our consent to His making melody in our hearts unto the Lord. Do you know Him? But for grace, we had all refused until now to let Him touch the organ. Look at Him closely and if it be that

"In His feet and hands are wound-prints
And His side"

give Him the key to the organ and bid Him play when and what He likes.
Say to Him:

"We see not, know not, all our way
Is night, with Thee alone is day;
From out the torrent's troubled drift,
Above the storm our prayer we lift,
Thy will be done."

"Strike, Thou the Master, *we* Thy keys,
The anthem of the destinies!
The minor of Thy loftier strain,
Our hearts shall breathe the old refrain,
Thy will be done."

II.

Let us consider more briefly THE THEME OF THE MASTER'S MUSIC: "I will sing praise unto Thee."

God is the incomparable theme of His melody, and He leads the great choir of human and angelic voices: He plays the organ of many manuals and unnumbered combinations; the "great organ" with notes of trees and flowers, of birds and brooks, of mountain and plain, of land and sea, and its matchless human diapason; and the "swell organ" of suns and systems—of brilliant stars and circling planets; the "choir organ" of all the constellations; the "echo organ" of invisible worlds; He plays the deep-toned "pedal organ" of dark clouds, and reverberating thunder, and rolling billows, "when He maketh the clouds His chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind," when "His way is in the sea and His path is in the great waters, and His footsteps are not known"; this organ of numberless combinations, this choir of innumerable voices, the Master plays and leads in rendering in faultless harmony His oratorio of praise. But all the leading parts are rendered by human voices, each proclaiming some glorious but distinct attribute of Deity; and while singing different parts, each contributes to the sweetly flowing harmony of the universal chorus of praise to God.

There is one, a leading soprano, who was called to the choir in the house

of Simon the Pharisee, and was known as "a woman who was a sinner in the city," it is her joy to sing in praise of *divine mercy*. She sings of other glories, which her enlightened understanding has apprehended, in concert with all the redeemed, but she is at her best when the praise of mercy is on her tongue. I hear her voice ring out in clear and bell-like tones in perfect consonance with the Master's accompaniment:

"The Lord is merciful and gracious,
Slow to anger and plenteous in mercy.
He will not always chide;
Neither will He keep His anger forever.
He has not dealt with us after our sins;
Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
For as the heaven"—

(and the vaults of heaven ring as she sings it):

"For as the heaven is high above the earth,
So great is His mercy toward them that fear Him."

(and the voice rings out until it girdles the world with its melody):

"As far as the east is from the west,
So far hath He removed our transgressions from us."

And here a soulful tenor, it is the voice of one once known as "Saul of Tarsus." the persecutor of the Church, takes up the song:

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation,
That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,
Of whom I am chief."

And again the voice of a Magdalene soars aloft in praise of *grace* divine:

"But God who is rich in mercy,
For His great love wherewith He loved us,
Even when we were dead in sins,
Hath quickened us together with Christ;
(By grace ye are saved;)
And hath raised us up together,
And made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus;
That in the ages to come
He might show the exceeding riches of His grace
In His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.
For by grace are ye saved through faith;
And that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God;
Not of works, lest any man should boast."

And when the "great organ" has sounded forth a few harmonious strains of interlude, in expression of the wealth of their inheritance, who are children of God, to whom belongs the earth and the fulness thereof, another (he was wont to lean on the Master's breast) bursts forth in praise of love:

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us,
That we should be called the sons of God."

"Behold, now are we the sons of God,
And it doth not yet appear what we shall be;
But we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him;
For we shall see Him as He is."

And, while still far voices sing of everlasting love, the Master's fingers sweep the keys, and the full organ peals forth, accompanying the voices of a multitude, which no man can number, who sing in praise of *justice* divine:

"For there is no difference: for all have sinned,

And come short of the glory of God;
 Being justified freely by His grace
 Through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;
 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood,
 To declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past,
 Through the forbearance of God;
 To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness:
 That He might be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

But there is a holy jealousy among the members of the choir, for each thinks that he or she is best qualified to sing His praise who is "mighty to save"—David sings of *power*:

"God hath spoken once;
 Twice have I heard this;
 That power belongeth unto God.
 Also unto Thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy."
 "I waited patiently for the Lord;
 And He inclined unto me and heard my cry.
 He brought me up also out an horrible pit, out of the miry clay;
 And set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.
 And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God:
 Many shall see it and fear.
 And shall trust in the Lord."

And the great choir answers in unison:

"The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins.
 Yea, He hath redeemed us to God by His blood
 Out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;
 And hath made us unto our God, kings and priests:
 And we shall reign on the earth."

And still the tide of song rolls on in praise of the Redeemer's *faithfulness*:

"I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever;
 With my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations."
 "And the heavens shall praise Thy wonders, O Lord;
 Thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints."
 "O Lord God of hosts,
 Who is a strong Lord like unto Thee?
 Or to Thy faithfulness round about Thee?"

And then shall all the works of His hands articulate His praise; and as the Master's fingers touch the keys, inspired by His presence, and ever taught anew by a view of the prints of the nails, the thorns, and spear, like the noise of many waters, the voices of the redeemed shall swell and flood the throne of God with harmony in praise of the Creator's *holiness*, singing:

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and is, and is to come.
 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor, and power;
 For Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they were and are created."

Thus, through sanctified human lives and lips, in consonance with worlds where God's will is done as it is in heaven, the Master will fulfil the promise of the text: "I will sing praise unto Thee."

III.

And now, in a very few words, I must speak of THE AUDITORY WHEREIN THE MASTER WILL RENDER HIS GREAT MASTERPIECE: "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee."

There may be a confusion of metaphor, but there is no contradiction of fact, when, having spoken of the church as the mouthpiece of the Singer of the text, I now speak of the church as being at once the auditorium and the audience, in which, and to whom, He sings the praise of God.

There is a remarkable verse in the Psalm of our text: "But Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel." That is to say, God dwells in a temple of praise. I told you that the difference between sound and light is a difference of vibration. There is a harmony of color, of shape and relation, as there is a harmony of sound. There is music in a landscape; music may be written, though silent, in a piece of statuary; there is harmony in architectural design and proportion. And the Musician of whom I sing is the Architect of the great building in which God is to be praised. His organ was made for the building, and the building for the organ, and all for God's praise. As the architecture of many of the old cathedrals give musical effect to every vibration, and sends the singer's voice ringing through the nave, playing about in the vaulted roof, echoing in every corner, and trembling away into silence down the long adjoining cloisters; so every tone in the great spiritual auditory where the Master plays and sings, is designed, by its relation to Him, and to every other part of the building, to give effect to His music.

Stones brought from far quarries, of different strata and texture, and each polished after the similitude of a palace; the giant cedar, and the bruised reed; gold from deep mines and from fount streams, refined in fierce fires; and draperies of divers colors, woven in strange looms, of seemingly tangled threads—these are some of the materials of which the Master will rear and furnish an auditory of praise, which shall stand a perpetual monument of spiritual architectural sublimity, reverberant with music of whose glorious theme it is itself the sublime articulation. There every thought of worship shall find its sweetly answering echo, every whisper of love, every song of adoration, in the proportion and acoustics of that great auditory shall find fullest and meetest expression.

And while every stop in the grand organ of creation peals forth its tribute, and worlds untouched by grace because unspoiled by transgression, and spirits unwashed by blood because unstained by sin, unite to swell the chorus of praise; in this great auditory, "in the midst of the church," shall rise the song of songs, the Master's masterpiece, the highest hallelujah, the chorus obligato, rising, ringing, loud and clear above the universal music: "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father: to Him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen."

THE GOSPEL WITNESS FOUR MONTHS FOR 50c.

It is not too late to send in names for *The Gospel Witness* on our 50c offer. The paper will be sent to *new* subscribers from the first of March to the end of June for 50c. Hundreds of subscriptions were entered on our three month offer; and already a considerable number of four months' subscriptions have reached *The Witness* office. If you have shut-in friends, friends who live some distance from a place of worship, ministerial friends who labour in isolated places, or missionaries who are deprived of the inspiration of meeting with God's saints, send them *The Witness* for the next four months, March 1st to June 30th.

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

"HIS EYES WERE AS A FLAME OF FIRE."

"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 us by His Son." And in all the words of the prophets, and the works of the priests, and the wars of the princes, there was a message, and a ministry, and a power, of superhuman greatness; and yet in it all there was an incompleteness which echoed alike the world's cry for another and completer Saviour, and the divine promise of all the moral glory, and the saving and satisfying grace of Jesus. Especially was the need and the promise of the coming of the Author of an eternal salvation typified in the tabernacle, and later in the far more splendid temple, built in the city which God had chosen to set His name there.

The false witnesses which the chief priests suborned, and who clamoured for the death of Jesus, said, "This fellow said, I am able to destroy this temple, and to build it in three days." They did not know that He spake of the temple of His body; and were still without knowledge of the mystery when at His last loud cry "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." Now we know that He is the temple's glorious anti-type, at once the Altar, the Sacrifice, and the Priest. "Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith." The New Testament expressly states that "the Holy Ghost signified" by the ritual of "the first tabernacle" that "the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest." Shall we find in Him who is "the Way" anything to correspond to the supernatural fire which was ever to be burning upon the altar, which was never to go out? Is there in Him "whose eyes were as a flame of fire" an unkindled and inextinguishable flame,— "the light of the world," which shone before the worlds were made, and which shall shine on when suns and stars have burned themselves out?

The ever-burning altar-fire of the tabernacle flamed in the sky for the eyes of the wise men, it blazed forth in blinding glory upon the shepherds in the fields, it softly illumined the stable of the inn, by the luminous Child of the manger, in Bethlehem. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee: therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." That is the only possible explanation of the generation of Mary's sinless and sovereign Child. The light of His life, the supernal glory of His character, had no earthly origin: He is the radiance of "a Fire out from before the Lord."

The light of this foreign Flame glows in all the words of Jesus. There has never been another teacher like Jesus. No wise man will postulate the possi-

bility of fathoming the mystery of the being of Jesus. Bethlehem, and Nazareth, and Calvary, are names of different aspects of the infinite Mystery.

What of the first twelve years? "The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him." But what is the measure of that saying, "Filled with wisdom"? It enabled him to "sit in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers." But that might have been said had he been nothing more than a very precocious child. Indeed, if the ancient doctors were no more learned in the law than some modern infallibles, the ability to answer them would be representative of a lesser degree of intellectual or spiritual precocity than the ability to understand them.

And what of the eighteen silent years? "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Is there anything in this record of development incompatible with His becoming ultimately absolutely infallible as a teacher? Was not His earthly ministry manifold? Is not the purpose of the Incarnation to make human perfection ultimately possible? While honouring the law by His obedience, and working out a righteousness for us, was Christ not our Exemplar to show how righteousness must also be wrought in us? When, at last, we shall be "without fault before the throne," shall we not have certain knowledge of the way from earth to heaven, and know men as we are known? When we have talked face to face with Moses and Elias shall we not know what authority belongs to the law and the prophets? In view of Christ's dogmatism, is any view of His limitedness as a teacher consistent with belief in His absolute moral perfection? Are not infallibility and impeccability synonymous terms as applied to Christ? Can one be attributed to Him without the other? Or can one be denied without the other? If Jesus spoke of that which He did not know, or testified of that which He had not seen, where is His righteousness? Or, if He was silent with respect to questions of which He had perfect knowledge, and allowed His hearers to retain, without correction, views which in these latter days are alleged to be both false and foolish, how can He be called "the faithful and true witness"?

I believe that when God designed to give His Book to the world, He did what many human authors do, *He prepared the pictures first*. I believe there is not a New Testament truth, nor an aspect of a truth, which does not find its best illustration in the Old Testament. The Old Testament is the Gospel picture-book.

The specifications for the tabernacle were most minute. Everything was to be "according to the pattern showed in the mount." Its plan was wholly divine. The builders were made, "wise hearted, in whom the Lord put wisdom and understanding to know how to work." There was a Spirit-given, super-human, wisdom wrought in its very texture, so that it was unlike any other building ever reared. And it was not built in a day. There was a period of preparation for its ministry. There were seven "silent years" during the construction of Solomon's temple: "And the house when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither; so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building." It was after Aaron's consecration, at the beginning of his public, high priestly ministry, that a fire came "out from before the Lord." It was at the dedication of the temple "when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven."

We have already seen that by the breaking of the Saviour's body, "the Holy

Ghost signified" the rending of the veil of the temple, and the opening of the way into the holiest of all. Will anyone say that it is "fanciful" interpretation if we venture to suggest that there is some special significance in the lighting of the altar-fire by a heavenly flame when Aaron began his ministry, and when the temple was opened to be an house of prayer for all nations?

John the Baptist was looking for "the Desire of all nations," and he said, "After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for He was before me. And I knew Him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God." It surely is significant that Jesus uttered no word as a teacher until after this heavenly anointing, until a voice from heaven had said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

When the Baptist was told of the auspicious beginning of the Saviour's ministry, that He was baptizing, and that all men came to Him, he answered: "He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. And what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth; and no man receiveth His testimony. He that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him."

There is but one passage in the New Testament which suggests that there was any limitation to the knowledge of Jesus: "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." "The times and the seasons," Jesus said, "the Father hath put in His own power." The time of the second advent is the one profound secret. But it must be admitted that this was a special reservation, and was not incident to the Saviour's emptying of Himself: *that* involved His being made "a little lower than the angels." In His unacquaintance with the time of His coming again the angels share; and the very fact that through all His teaching ministry He singles out only the time of His return as the one matter beyond His view, serves to emphasize His perfect knowledge and absolute infallibility with respect to matters of which He speaks, or with reference to which He is silent. He would not have left us in ignorance of essential truth. He laid down the rule of His ministry with respect to the unknown: "If it were not so I would have told you."

Had Jesus known that the historicity and authority of the Old Testament Scriptures were open to question, He surely would have anticipated the supposed wisdom of some modern teachers, and, when training the apostles, upon whose words the very foundations of the church were to rest, He would have made them face these "problems" that they might find their solution while under the guidance of their Teacher, rather than allow them to go forth to stumble upon them in later life. The fact that no such question was ever suggested by Him; and that the students who sat at the feet of the world's only infallible Teacher, regarded the Old Testament as the Word of God, is, to us at least, conclusive proof that it cannot reasonably be doubted that it is God's voice to the world: If it were not so, Jesus would have told us.

Abraham Lincoln is said to have studied by the light of a log fire. They are the wise men who study nature, who read history, who read the Bible, who

study themselves by the light of the ever-burning altar-fire. The teachings of Jesus are luminous with the fire that never goes out. Here is a Light that is brighter than your study lamp; believe what it shows you to be true of God, of yourself, of the Bible, of the universe. "All things are naked and opened to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." "His eyes are as a flame of fire."—"The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out."

THE EDITOR ABROAD.

Observations of the Baptist Work in the West.

We arrived in Vancouver Saturday morning, February 14th. Notwithstanding the early hour we were greeted at the station by about ten stalwart Vancouver Baptists, and felt perfectly at home from the beginning. We went immediately to the Hotel Vancouver, and there we had one of the most refreshing prayer meetings we have ever attended. The spirit of prayer was upon all the brethren; and

"Heaven came down our souls to greet,
And glory crowned the mercy seat."

At half past one a large group of brethren, with a few ladies, gathered for lunch in a private room in the Hudson's Bay establishment. This was held under the auspices of the executive of the Vancouver branch of the Baptist Bible Union. After the luncheon some hours were spent about the table discussing Baptist interests throughout the Continent in general, and Baptist interests in Vancouver in particular. We have attended many meetings of various branches of the Baptist Bible Union. It has been our privilege to be associated with the organization of the Union in various states, and on every occasion we have found the most delightful fellowship with brethren who are brought together by common interests in the faith "once for all delivered to the saints"; but we have never met a finer group anywhere than that which assembled on this occasion. The men who composed it are obviously men of strength of character, and with a fine spiritual conception of the gospel as the only means of salvation for the individual, and the only possible remedy for the ills of the world. We have so long been accustomed to a Saturday evening prayer meeting that the thought of Saturday evening without a prayer meeting seemed intolerable. We suggested, therefore, that such a meeting be called in the Mount Pleasant Church by telephone. This was done, and at eight o'clock a large number gathered for prayer, and again from the spirit of prayer which was so clearly manifested in the prayers of the people, we were assured that God would bless the mission in which we were about to engage.

At the Sunday morning service the Mount Pleasant Church was well filled but not crowded. In the afternoon the church proper was crowded and a few had to sit in the adjoining Sunday School Hall. At the evening service both church and Sunday School Hall were crowded, and some we are told were turned away. A crowd may count for much or little, it is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit that makes any meeting, large or small, really worth while. At all these services we felt that God was very near, and many testified to blessing received. We are writing this Thursday evening, the 19th. We have had four afternoon and three evening meetings since Sunday, and each afternoon the building has been well filled and at the evening meeting every seat occupied. So much for the attendance thus far.

We should like to give a few impressions we have received of the meetings themselves. In the first place, it is evident that there is a great company of

people in Vancouver who love the Word of God and the gospel of His salvation, and who are determined to contend for the faith "once delivered." We are separated from those with whom we are accustomed to meet at this writing by thousands of miles; between us and them are vast stretches of prairie which are veritable oceans of land, and great mountain ranges which are the wonder and admiration of the world. But geography makes no difference to God, or to His Word; the gospel of His grace fits the requirements of the human heart wherever it is preached, and the response of those who love the Lord in this beautiful city of Vancouver is the same as the response to that Word elsewhere. God has His faithful children everywhere and in Vancouver they appear to be a great host. We are sure that those who have attended these services have richly enjoyed the hospitality of Mr. Baker and his splendid people at Mount Pleasant Baptist Church.

The meetings have been attended by a large number of ministers, including nearly every Baptist minister in Vancouver. We regret to have to record that the same lines are obviously drawn in this part of the world with which we are familiar in Ontario and Quebec and throughout the United States. There are people who love the truth so passionately that they are unwilling to surrender it and are ready therefore to make any sacrifice in its interests. There are others who hold the same doctrines and beyond doubt love them, but who, because of personal relations with others less devoted to the gospel, fear to take a stand in its interests. Those Scriptures which declare that the love of father and mother and others, and even of life itself, must be subordinated to our love for Christ, are in these days acquiring new significance. We have seen in many other places what may so clearly be observed here, that many people who are doubtless the Lord's, have not yet learned to put Him first. There are still others here as elsewhere whose orthodoxy seems to be of an intellectual character. There is a type of orthodoxy that is interesting to talk about and to use on convenient occasions as a lady wears her jewels, but seems to have absolutely no relation to life and conduct. There is a type of intellectual orthodoxy that professes to believe in all the fundamentals of the faith, and yet keeps step and is on terms of fellowship with those who deny everything for which evangelical Christians profess to stand. This type, however, has, we have reason to hope, few representatives here.

Studying the situation in Vancouver we have been impressed afresh with the necessity of giving the people information. We have seen how men can profess to stand for truth while they vote for that which is destructive of the truth they profess. It is necessary that the rank and file of our church membership should be informed of the tremendous issues of the day. We have gathered in Vancouver a mass of information concerning the Baptist situation in this Province, and its relation to the Western Baptist Union in general; and to Brandon College in particular. In the few moments at our command between meetings it is not possible to give our readers a detailed statement of these matters, but we are taking all this information with us and expect to publish in *The Gospel Witness* a series of articles which will deal with great frankness with the whole situation, and in which we shall not hesitate to name the men who are retarding the progress of Baptist work in this part of the world, if indeed they are not paving the way for its destruction. We confess to be deeply moved by the manifest duplicity of those who are the tools of conscienceless modernists, and we are resolved to turn on the light. Baptist churches in Ontario and Quebec have a right to know what is being done with their money, whether it is being employed for the propagation of the faith, or for its destruc-

tion. We are greatly encouraged by the discovery of the fact that in Vancouver God has a great band of people who are taking to themselves the whole armour of God, that they may be able to withstand in the evil day. We believe that the Bible Conference now proceeding is being used of God to increase that number; and that it will have the effect of putting iron into the blood in some cases where it may be needed. We promise our readers some articles which will be most interesting, and we hope may be used of God to strengthen the hands of his people in the West.

We expect to spend Saturday, the 21st, in Seattle, going from Vancouver at midnight, looking into the arrangements necessary for the Baptist Bible Union meeting there in June. We shall leave Vancouver Monday morning, the 23rd, and speak in Calgary in the Crescent Heights Church, Tuesday, the 24th. We shall leave Calgary the night of the 24th and speak in Edmonton the 25th. We shall leave after the meeting in order to be in Winnipeg for Sunday. It will be time enough to write about Winnipeg and to give to our readers the significance of these services in later articles.

We have these general words, however, in conclusion. We have said it before, we say it again, the need of the hour is boldness. We hear much about love, when love means only soft talk, cowardice, compromise with error. When Paul wrote to the Christians at Ephesus and begged for their prayers, he did not ask that they might pray that he be given honeyed words and pleasant nothings to speak, but asked them to pray that utterance might be given him that he might open his mouth boldly; and it is recorded of Peter and John that their enemies knew that they had been with Jesus when they saw their boldness. Only the companionship of Christ will suffice to inspire His disciples in this day of double speech, and double dealing, and merciless persecution, with the courage necessary to press the battle to the gate. Hence it is necessary that more and more we should call people to pray. It is only as we pray and are endowed with power from on high that we shall have courage to go on with the war.

The Whole Bible Sunday School Lesson Course

Lesson LXXV.

March 8th, 1925.

COMMISSION AND COMMAND OF JONAH—Book of Jonah.

Like the lesson of last week, and, indeed, like all the lessons of the Old Testament, the book of Jonah has a very intimate relation to the New Testament. In the view of faith there is no question of its spiritual import, even as there is no doubt as to its historical accuracy. We have the authority of our Lord Himself for regarding it as being literal history. (Matt. 12: 39-41). The men of Nineveh were real men, whom the Lord said would rise up in a real judgment to condemn the men of His generation, because they had repented at the preaching of a real Jonah. And in the same passage Christ teaches us its typical and prophetic significance,—a figure of His own death and resurrection.

I. A Preacher Receives a Difficult Commission.

He was sent to cry against the wickedness of the world's metropolis. That is the duty of every preacher and of every Christian witness, to bid men to repent and turn from their sins to God.

II. A Preacher Runs From Duty.

1. Jonah endeavours to flee from the presence of the Lord. A study of the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm will serve to show the impossibility of

success in this direction. 2. There is always a ship going to Tarshish to carry men away from God! It is dangerous to conclude that a course is right because it is easy; or to excuse one's conduct on the ground that circumstances favoured it. 3. Jonah was a poor preacher; yet he was able to pay his fare on this long journey. Whenever a soul wants to go to Tarshish the Devil stands ready to give him a free ticket. 4. The Lord can always find the runaway—even on the sea: "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known." 5. It would appear to be comparatively easy to put conscience to sleep; for notwithstanding his dangerous course, Jonah went to sleep, and was not even awakened by the storm. 6. This story, in principle, explains many another troubled sea. We do well to ask the reason for the storm. 7. Jonah confessed his guilt only when he was discovered. In this he is like many another. 8. The native generosity of the mariners is noteworthy; they did their best to get to land without throwing Jonah overboard. Whether from generous, or other, motives, many others make the same attempt. But the sea will never be calm while Jonah is on board! The inevitable occurs at last. Jonah is cast overboard,—and the sea ceases from its raging. Thus sin leads to death.

III. A Preacher Repents.

1. Jonah had rather an uncomfortable prayer-room (chap. 2:1). It was a striking proof of the perversity of human nature, that often men who in luxury, or even comfort, are prayerless, begin to pray when they are cast into the depths. 2. It is, perhaps, no wonder that a prayer offered under such circumstances should be so vividly remembered. How vividly the closing moments of any life are recalled: the last word, the last act! Thus Jonah remembered all that passed through his mind when he went down to the bottoms of the mountains, and the earth with her bars was about him; when he was cast into the deep, in the midst of the seas, and the waters compassed him about, the depths closed him round about, the weeds were wrapped about his head. 3. When he repented of his sin and cried unto the Lord, He was entreated of him; and Jonah was delivered out of the prisonhouse. So is it written in Romans 10:13: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

IV. A Preacher Returns to Duty.

1. The Lord gave Jonah the second chance. It would go ill with all of us if the Lord were not thus merciful and patient with us. If we have disobeyed the first time, let us see to it that we go when He appears to us the second time! 2. Jonah did as he was bidden, for he had learned his lesson. Let us not complicate the gospel. It is very simple: trust and obey. 3. Jonah's experience in the deep gave a peculiar authority to his message. The rich man in hell said his brethren would repent if one should go to them from the dead. This is precisely what Jonah did; and the Ninevites did repent. Thus, too, the gospel is clothed with the authority of a resurrection, even, the resurrection of Him Who died in our room and stead. For as peace came to the seamen of the ship of Tarshish vicariously when Jonah was thrown overboard, so peace comes to us through the death of Another. 4. The people repented; and God forgave them. So will He do for all who turn from their wicked ways.

V. A Preacher Who Needed To Know God Better.

1. One might have supposed that Jonah would have learned more as the guest of the whale than in any university. And he did learn much—but he had much more to learn. So also had so great a preacher as the Apostle Paul: it

was ever his ambition that he might know Christ better. 2. Jonah found it difficult to understand the measureless mercy of the Lord. He had preached of judgment; and apparently desired that judgment should fall. He seems to have been more concerned for his own reputation than for his hearers' salvation. What a terrible indictment that is, when it can be laid to the charge of any preacher! 3. We may learn from this story how impossible it is to judge the actual from the hypothetical. How much easier it is to judge other people than ourselves! Jonah felt abundantly justified in being angry at the withering of the gourd; but could see no reason why the great city which sheltered scores of thousands of men, women, and children, should be spared. Preachers and professors need to learn life under the gourd; and put their theories to the test of personal experience. Then they will be wiser men. 4. How great is the contrast between Jonah and his Antitype! Jonah was angry because the sparing mercy of God refused to destroy the city which had repented; while Jesus beheld the city and wept over it, because it knew not the things that belonged to its peace.

DR. W. L. WALKER OF ELYRIA, OHIO.

In response to the very earnest solicitation of a group of laymen in Winnipeg the Pastor is prolonging his visit in the West by another Sunday. Theatre meetings are being arranged in Winnipeg for March 1st.

We are exceedingly fortunate in securing the promise of Dr. W. L. Walker, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Elyria, Ohio, to take the Pastor's place in Jarvis St., on that day. Dr. Walker was formerly Pastor in Dannville, Kentucky, where the Pastor of Jarvis Street held a ten days' mission a year ago last October.

Dr. Walker is a true man of God, a faithful, able, and mighty preacher of the gospel, and one of the most delightful Christian gentlemen to be found. Jarvis Street people will be sure to enjoy Dr. Walker's ministry. He will teach the Pastor's Bible Class in the morning, and will preach at the eleven o'clock hour and at seven o'clock in the evening.

The Pastor expects to return to Toronto Wednesday, March 4th, and will give the Bible lecture Thursday evening, the 5th.

WOMEN'S MISSION CIRCLE.

The monthly meeting of the Women's Home and Foreign Mission Circle will be held in the Church Parlor, Thursday, March 5th, at 2.30 p.m. Mrs. Gonder, who has spent many years as a missionary in China, will tell of the work in that land. Let there be an attendance worthy of the speaker and her subject.

Will all who have "Mite and Mercy" boxes please bring them to this meeting without fail?

Five members of our "Tithers' Band" will tell what tithing has done for them.

Collectors please report.

LAST SUNDAY IN THE BIBLE SCHOOL.

Last Sunday morning at 9.45 there were one thousand and twenty in the Bible School. The Pastor's class, taught by Dr Maguire, was over three hundred and fifty strong. Having again reached the four figure mark, let us endeavour to not hold this gain, but to go on to greater things. Remember our objective for Easter Sunday is fifteen hundred.