

# The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF EVANGELICAL PRINCIPLES AND  
IN DEFENSE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.

\$2.00 Per Year, Postpaid, to any address. 5c. Per Single Copy.

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

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Vol. 8. No. 15.

TORONTO, AUGUST, 29th, 1929.

Whole No. 381.

## "Is There Any Taste in the White of an Egg?"

A Toronto evening paper, in a recent editorial note, called attention to the violation of the rules of the Canadian Clubs by the Right Honorable Winston Churchill, Ex-Chancellor of the British Exchequer. Mr. Churchill dared to discuss politics at a luncheon of the Canadian Club of Toronto, and it is a rule with the Canadian Clubs, and a recognized practice whether a rule or not with most of the service clubs, that religion and politics must not be discussed by any guest of the club who is asked to deliver an address. The Toronto paper in question congratulated Mr. Churchill on having smashed the rule to smithereens, and expressed the hope that other speakers would follow his example, giving as its reason for doing so the fact that when speakers are forbidden to discuss matters of such vital interest as religion and politics, their speeches are without any positive flavour except in the sense that they become a positive bore.

The psychology of this observation is worth studying. Of course the reason for such practice by the clubs referred to is to avoid all controversial subjects. Speeches from which every controversial element is eliminated are likely to remind one of Job's enquiry, "Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? or is there any taste in the white of an egg?"

We have been informed from many quarters that the public services in many of the Baptist churches of the old Convention of Ontario and Quebec are becoming as tasteless and listless and lifeless as the average so-called "service club" luncheon. That is not because the preachers are without ability; but the Home Mission Board set the example two or three years ago when they implicitly forbade the pastors of every Home Mission church to discuss the denominational controversy.

Think what that meant to a pastor. Every time he sat in his study, with a view to preparing his message for Sunday, he had to ask himself the question, Will this be likely to lead to a discussion of the controversy? And if it was, he had to put that message aside. He could not speak of the authority of Scrip-

ture without discussing the controversy. He could not preach on the Atonement without discussing the controversy. He could not expound the scriptural doctrine of human depravity, or its corollary, the necessity for regeneration by the power of the Holy Ghost, without discussing the controversy. In fact, it would be impossible for him to discuss any fundamental of the faith without, at the same time, discussing the denominational controversy. Every pastor knew there were people in his congregation whose own convictions of truth were such that if they had knowledge of the issues involved, they would be sure to take sides against the denominational leaders in their support of Professor Marshall and McMaster University. Therefore these hard-pressed pastors must say nothing about these things in order to keep the controversy out of their churches.

No doubt the course required of Home Mission pastors was adopted by many others. To our certain knowledge it was so. Thus they kept the controversy out of their churches, but with what result?

With what result to themselves? When the Word of God has thundered at the pastor's conscience again and again, demanding that he be the mouthpiece of its rebukes and admonitions, and he refuses to allow the Scripture to utter itself through him, how must such suppression of conviction and such stultification of manhood react upon himself? It is not possible that a pastor, consenting to such restrictions, should continue to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ".

And what effect has this muzzling of the pulpit had upon the people? The people who have been the burden-bearers of the churches, the spiritually vital members of the churches, have missed their necessary food, because the very things which the preachers omitted from their messages were the truths which every truly regenerated soul requires for his sustenance. Not being quite sure what was the matter, many of these godly people have found themselves spiritually hungry. As they have enquired the cause

of it, they have discovered that their pastor was not giving them the vital elements of the gospel.

Thus, while the pastors may have succeeded in keeping one controversy out of the churches they have succeeded in introducing another controversy far more dangerous to themselves than that in which the Denomination was engaged. There is not a minister of the Ontario and Quebec Convention who can support the policy of the Convention without permitting himself to be shackled in his conduct and muzzled in his speech.

Worldly men of large wealth, especially those of

them who are not over scrupulous in their means of increasing their wealth, will be likely to give large sums to universities and colleges that will turn out ministers taught to avoid all controversy. But those who know the joyful sound, and who have an appetite for the Word of God, will miss the heavenly manna, and will insist on going where it can be obtained. If anyone questions the accuracy of this appraisal of present conditions in the churches of the Old Convention of Ontario and Quebec let them pay a visit to one or two of them, and they will discover how appetizing a dish an egg without a yolk or salt can be!

## Welcome to Our Fellowship, Editor Orson P. Jones

Some weeks ago we published an article entitled, if we mistake not, "An Editor Takes a Vacation". Editor Orson P. Jones, of *Faith and Fellowship*, published in San Diego, had just issued the fifty-second number of his paper, and indicated that he was rather tired, and that he was not sure that *Faith and Fellowship* would reappear. We expressed the hope that he would get back to work, for we did not believe he needed a vacation! He has evidently accepted our suggestion because we have before us number three of volume two.

As a sample of Mr. Jones' writing we publish below an article from the issue of August 20th entitled, "Troubles and Tasks". It illustrates Mr. Jones' usual penetration. He has ability to get to the heart of a problem such as is possessed by few men.

We say, Amen, to Mr. Jones' article. Institutions and organizations which depend for their support upon denominations or churches of denominations have no right to refuse to carry a share of their burdens. There are interdenominational organizations which would pass out of existence in a month were it not for the support the denominations give them. In the vegetable and animal world things which subsist upon some living organism, receiving everything and giving nothing, are called parasites. We would not apply that ugly name to such institutions as Biola because they do give back to the denominations in the form of trained workers, pastors, missionaries, and others, something of what they receive.

But we like Brother Jones' designation, "Fellowship tasks." And, by the way, we urge all our readers to subscribe to *Faith and Fellowship*. Editor Jones makes a special offer for August,—the paper for a year for 50c. We are not going to advertise it at that rate. Indeed, we are writing this without Brother Jones' knowledge or consent. But no one has a right to accept a paper like *Faith and Fellowship* for 50 cents. And furthermore, Brother Jones will find if he offers it for 50c for the first year, when he goes back to the regular price a great many of his subscribers will think he has increased the subscription rate. We suggest therefore that our readers send to Brother Jones a list of names, and send him at least \$1.00 for every name. The article we publish below is worth a dollar of anybody's money. We hope hundreds of our readers will subscribe for *Faith and Fellowship*.

### TRoubles AND TASKS.

Orson P. Jones.

In the President's greeting, W. P. White of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles makes this optimistic announcement: "We shall take no part in denominational troubles."

Joy be! *Faith and Fellowship* goes a step further and suggests a law against all denominational troubles. It will be some trouble to get it passed and there will be minor troubles in enforcing it but think of the benefits to follow!

#### What is a Denomination?

There is nothing evil about a name. Every reader of *Faith and Fellowship* has a name. Every store and business house has a name. Any important group or fellowship of Christians will eventually receive a name. Any group that carries a name is a denomination. And that's that.

#### What Are Troubles?

The farmer contends against troubles: weeds infest his garden: bugs attack his fruit: cattle break down the fences: and neighbors are sometimes mean. After all, is not the word "troubles" simply a contemptuous name for work. The business man contends against hard times, inefficient help and stiff competition. He pays high wages to get men to help him meet his "troubles". When we feel grouchy, or weary, or discouraged, we call the ordinary duties of life "troubles" and reach for the martyr's crown. There are home troubles, business troubles, church troubles, and troubles in the larger fellowships called "denominations." When we wish to pass a disagreeable job on to someone else we call it "trouble" and pass by on the other side of the road.

#### Farming Troubles.

A beautiful farming country is a joy to behold. It takes good farming to produce bounteous crops. Industry and courage are mainsprings of the business. Spiritual harvests on our denominational farms can only be produced where there is brave, courageous faith. Of late, our denominational farms have produced poor crops. The yield per acre has fallen off and the quality is deplorable. Too many farmers are "preaching the truth in love" (for the weeds). Everybody is calling the work "Difficulties" and tasks are now "troubles". Weeds are taking the land and it is hard to tell where the farm leaves off and the wilderness begins. Under such conditions it is natural to want to abandon the farms and move to town. But troubles follow right into town and we are already considering the abandonment of the cities on account of high taxes. The next step will be a raft on the Pacific and fish for a living. And all because we insist on calling work "troubles". When "denominational troubles" become "fellowship tasks" there will be some reaping.

#### Fellowship Should Match Faith

For twenty years we have seen men contending for the faith who have refused to contend for a scriptural fellowship. The results are before us. Fundamentalists preachers working in modernist fellowships! Loud-speaking concerning the old-time faith! Silent concerning the men and in-

stitutions they support! Nonsense! The fellowships we embrace should match the faith we preach. And that is why this paper carries the title, *Faith and Fellowship*. They go together.

#### The Secret of Popularity.

Certain Bible teachers are as popular as princes because no divisive movements follow their meetings. They are not "poison" to modernism. Crowds rejoice in their "interesting" ministry and resume modernistic church life after their departure as though nothing had happened. Such men are called "Constructive Teachers," because they keep off from the Devil's grass.

#### Merely Modest.

The President of Biola didn't mean a word of what he said about denominational troubles. We are sure that the man who waded into "institute troubles" as he did, must dine on saber-tooth tiger. Why he should be so choosy about touching our dainty little denominational troubles, we cannot imagine. Perhaps he is waiting to be asked.

Dr. White, step right up and help yourself! There are plenty for all! But please don't call them "denominational troubles". Call them "fellowship tasks".

## More About Roman Noses

In our issue of July 11th we referred to a paragraph in *The Oregon Baptist Bulletin*, which we were informed was written by "Rev. W. T. Milliken, M.A., D.Sc., Ph.D., D.D., Th.D., who is Director of Religious Education for Oregon, and the Dean of the Western Baptist Theological Seminary next September." In this paragraph Dr. Milliken intimated that he did not like Roman noses. In reply to this, among other things, we said:

"We are sorry Roman noses are so offensive to Dr. Milliken. We wonder if grapes are sour? Will someone please send us a photograph of our critic so that we may judge?"

We have just received two prints of Dr. Milliken of the same sort. We suppose this photograph is a good one, and may be taken as showing Dr. Milliken as he now appears. We have never seen him, so we are grateful for this photographic introduction. He is really rather a good looking man! But the extraordinary thing about it is that he would pass for a twin brother of Dr. H. C. Wayman, deposed President of Des Moines University. If there is anything in physiognomy—call it art, or pseudo-science, of what you like—the Western Theological Seminary may some day be very sorry that it did not elect to the Deanship of the Institution a man with a Roman nose!

As the person or persons who sent us the portraits of Dr. Milliken (for they came in two separate envelopes) is or are unknown to us, we take this opportunity of saying, Thank you; for we presume they are readers of *The Gospel Witness*, otherwise they might not have known of our desire to possess a portrait of Dr. Milliken.

We think there is little doubt that the grapes are sour!

### A WORTHLESS PLEA.

Orson P. Jones.

Martin Colson and Lee Cochran, former rum runners and high-jackers, held up a money car in San Diego, killed the

two guards and obtained \$85,000, nearly all of which was in checks. The money was enroute from Agua Caliente to a local bank. Agua Caliente is a gilded gambling resort near Tia Juana, Mexico. Presumably the money car was carrying one day's receipts.

Both bandits were captured a few days later. Cochran promptly confessed. Colson refused to speak and for weeks feigned unconsciousness. Attorneys entered a plea of guilty of First Degree Murder for both of them. As they were about to be sentenced Colson broke his silence and made a dramatic plea in which he assumed the entire guilt, asked for the death penalty for himself, and that the court spare the life of his companion in the crime. These are his words as reported in the *San Diego Union*.

#### A Dramatic Plea.

"Your Honour, I beg of you to spare the life of Lee Cochran. As an act of human kindness to a fellow man, I ask you to put the blame for this atrocious crime upon my shoulders and spare the man I love, Cochran. I beg of the court that I be put to death. I want to die and thereby pay in full my debt to society. Society has been outraged by this crime for which I am responsible. I have no desire to live. AT THE SAME TIME I WISH TO MAKE THIS SACRIFICE FOR LEE COCHRAN, a man who is loved by all who know him.

"So, Your Honor, I beg of you to sentence me to death, an end which I earnestly desire. But please, Your Honor, spare the life of this boy, Lee Cochran, who knew not what he did."

#### Plea Unavailing.

The following day, Judge C. N. Andrews passed sentence upon Cochran, first, in these words: "Under the law and with the power invested in me as judge of the court, I sentence you to pass the rest of your natural life in prison."

#### Changed His Mind.

After sentencing Cochran, the judge asked Colson if he still desired the death penalty. After a pause, Colson said he would leave the matter to the discretion of the court. He received a life sentence. Think of all the flowers he would have received; the letters from sentimental ladies; the newspaper notoriety; think of the pleas for executive clemency that would have been made to the governor, if the judge had listened to his plea and allowed him to assume the guilt and go to the gallows for his friend, Lee Cochran!

#### Who Can Die For Others.

This brings us face to face with the great doctrine of the atonement, in the Bible. The gospel is stated by Paul in these words: "How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures". The man who is truly a preacher of the gospel, is constantly telling the world of One who died in our place for our sins. Nothing else is the gospel. A person who hears, believes and accepts this One who died for our sins, is a Christian. No one else is.

#### A Sinless Saviour

But this sinbearer who bore our sins in his own body on the tree was one "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth". He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us. Such was the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Calvary was more than an exhibition of love; it was justice in the most extreme sense. Had our Lord Jesus Christ ever committed a single sin his sacrifice would have had no value.

#### Foolish Talk From a Bandit.

When a self-confessed murderer, facing the gallows for his own crimes, generously offers to die for a friend also, the performance borders on nonsense. And yet it is about as sensible as most of the talk that we hear about sacrificing ourselves for others. When a hopeless debtor to the love and grace of God decides to do something for others, it is almost funny. Pay your honest debts to God before you start on a career of philanthropy. When you face those awful debts, you will confess your bankruptcy. There is only One who can truly do for others. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Let us stop this foolish talk of "service" and tell folks about the only One who could truly sacrifice and do for others.

# The Jarvis Street Pulpit

## HOW TO BE HOSPITABLE TO THE TRUTH.

A Sermon by the Pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields.

(Stenographically Reported).

"And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread.

"And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually.

"Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither.

"And it fell on a day, that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there.

"And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunamite. And when he had called her, she stood before him.

"And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee? wouldest thou be spoken for the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, I dwell among mine own people." II Kings 4:8-13.

As "all the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again"; so whatsoever things are true, and honest, and just, and pure, and lovely, and if there be any virtue and any praise, these have their source and end in Christ. He is the ocean whence all goodness rises to be distilled in rain and dews of grace; and He is the end to Whose attraction every virtuous impulse of the soul is due

So that we are safe in identifying any and every "man of God" with the Lord Jesus Christ, for it is He Who makes him a "man of God". We should be quite satisfied in finding Christ in this narrative, even if we had no specific New Testament warrant for calling Elisha a type of Christ. Indeed, I venture to think this chapter has a special significance and has particular teaching for us, such as it could not have if it were found in the New Testament; for there are Old Testament elements in every Christian life. That is to say, Christ comes to us still anonymously. He comes to us in types and in shadows as well as in the clearer and more direct revelation of His Saviourhood.

I. And so I want to use this story, first of all, to illustrate THE HIGH AND HOLY PRIVILEGE WHICH BELONGS TO EVERY ONE OF US OF EXTENDING HOSPITALITY TO THE TRUTH.

The text is the story of an hospitably disposed woman, who is described as "a great woman". In what respects was this Shunamite "a great woman"? She was not in any sense a public character. She lived a quiet, somewhat obscure life. She was a housewife; she cared for the things of her husband. She dwelt among her own people. And yet, although she was not conspicuous in the life of the nation, the inspired writer describes her as "a great woman". Wherein, then, lay her greatness? First of all in this, that she had the discernment to recognize the messenger of truth. That is the beginning of greatness: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Elisha came, first of all, without a name, without credentials. He came as a stranger who needed hospitality. The door of her humble home was thrown wide to welcome him, and he was hospitably received for his own sake; for she perceived what some other people did not perceive, that there was a divine quality about him, that

he was in communication with Heaven, that he was in very truth a "man of God." She said, "I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let him find in Shunem one place of welcome; let him have a home with us." And thus, my dear friends, the Lord Jesus comes still in the person of His representatives. He comes to us through the principles of His own Word, through the precepts and promises of this holy Book. And they are the wise men and the wise women whose hearts are receptive to the truth by whatsoever messenger the truth may come. There are some who do not so receive the truth, the doors of whose minds are fast locked by pride and prejudice. Will you refuse to listen to the song because you do not know the singer's name? Will you refuse to hear or to read the message because for some strange reason you are prejudiced against the messenger? Will you refuse to open your letter because you do not like the colour of the postman's hair, or because of some peculiarity in his walk? Will you receive God's Word, the principles of His gospel, when they come to you, no matter who may bring them? Are you prepared to receive the Lord Jesus, when He comes anonymously? There is never a chance for a gracious deed, there is never an opening for a kindly word, there is never the knock of a beautiful thought at the door of the mind, but the sound of the Master's feet is behind it, and He will enter by the open door. We are thronged with holy messengers: Is it not said of the angels, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" That is what Jesus meant, I think, when He said: "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." We, too, have opportunity of receiving the message of truth as it comes to us, even as did this "great woman" of Shunem, of long ago.

But this woman not only recognized the "man of God" for what he was, but she offered him a generous, a cordial

*hospitality.* It is said, "She constrained him to eat bread." She did not give him a mere formal invitation, but she pressed him to make his home with her. I remember some years ago going to a certain place to hold some evangelistic services. I had been there for a few days when our Brother Brownlee, whom you all know, came to lead the singing. When the service was over, we were accustomed to walk along the main street of the town in company with the Pastor to a certain corner where he turned to go down to his home. And I remember the first night when Brother Brownlee and I walked along with this good brother, when we came to the corner, he said exactly what he had said to me every night when I was there alone. Looking down in the direction of his home, he said, "Well, I suppose you won't come down, will you?" And after he had gone, Brother Brownlee looked at me and said enquiringly, "Was that an invitation to go with him, or to go home?" "Well," I said, "that is what I have been wondering the last few nights. Needless to say I have not accepted his invitation." That is the way some people invite you to dinner. But when people invite us like that, we usually say no, don't we? And there is a way, of course, of absolutely shutting the door against the truth, but no Christian does that. But there is a possibility, too, of extending to it a grudging, a reluctant hospitality. There are some people you have to persuade to believe things; you have to argue the point with them. The "man of God" must stand almost like an insurance agent at the door, and then force his way in. But when one is hospitably disposed toward the truth, as was the Shunamite, the door is thrown wide open, and he says, "Come in. I am glad to see you."

Thus, my dear friends, we may welcome the truth in every good book we read, in every testimony offered to the power of God's grace—in every promise and precept of this holy Book we may be hospitably disposed toward the truth as it is in Jesus. And as surely as we do, *we shall find, as did this Shunamite, that our Elishas love to come, and coming they stay with us a while.* For it is said, "that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither." He knew where he was welcome. He came without embarrassment to this door; and he knew they would be glad to see him within. It is possible to close our ears against the truth, I say, or to receive the truth so reluctantly that often the things which are good, and pure, and honest, and lovely, and of good report, pass us by. Somebody recommended to you a book from which they had received some great blessing. And when you read it, or tried to read it, you said, "I found no interest in it whatever." Somebody expressed enthusiasm for the Word of the Lord; but you declare that it is a task for you to study the Bible. Some people there are who come eagerly to the house of God, and who can scarcely wait for Sunday to come. There are others to whom the sermon is always more or less of a bore. And, of course, they say it is the fault of the Book; the Book had no message. And as for the Bible, there are parts of it, they say, they think we can do without. As for the sermon, some man says, "I think twenty minutes ought to be the limit." It ought to be the limit for you, my friend. I remember hearing that once when Dr. Justin D. Fulton was delivering one of his great messages, there were a few people there who were evidently bored by the great preacher's utterances. And after enduring it for a little while, they got up; and as they were walking down the aisle, he said,

"That is right. As soon as you are full to capacity, go home." And there are people who think they are reflecting on the preacher because forsooth the preacher could not interest them. The trouble is, my friend, there is a spirit there which is inhospitably disposed toward the truth.

There were many in Shunem who offered no welcome to the "man of God"; but this woman did, and because of that, "as oft as he passed by he turned in thither." Have you not noticed that when you are in the right frame of mind, that when the Spirit of God has touched you, and you have a clear view of the face of Jesus Christ, that somehow or another all your friends speak to you as prophets? You meet a man in the morning, and words of wisdom seem to drop from his lips. You open, perhaps, in the few minutes you have at your disposal in the morning, God's Word, and, behold, it is like a bush that burns with fire. You glance at your newspaper and by contrast or comparison, even that has a religious message. As often as the truth passes by it turns in thither to the heart that is hospitable to its coming.

But what was the secret of it? This woman said unto her husband, "Behold now, I perceive that this is a holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick—let us make within our home a home for him, and let us tell him that it belongs to him and that whenever he comes he may open the door and walk in and feel at home in our home." *And so they made a home for the truth within their own home.* I do not wonder that Elisha loved to tarry there.

What is a Christian? What makes a Christian? It is not in any external act. The thing that differentiates a Christian from everybody else is that he or she has a little chamber specially reserved for God, a place within his or her heart where God dwells. The Psalmist said, "I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids, until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob." He would make a little chamber; he would find a place where God could be at home. I read the programme of a certain church not far from here, in which it said that the church will magnify the command: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And somebody reads that and says, "That is very good indeed." O yes, so far as it goes. But it is indicative of the awful drift of the time—"This church will magnify the command: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'" If we were putting out a programme for this church, I think we would say, "This church will magnify the first and the great commandment: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,'"—a place for God, and then a place for your neighbours, too. But don't you see that that is the tendency of the time, to welcome all the inhabitants of Shunem but to have no place for the prophet of God? A Christian is differentiated from all others by this fact, that there is a place within that belongs to God, and to God alone. And God shall have the first place, and be made at home within the human heart, if you extend hospitality to Jesus Christ, my friend. "Oh, I love my neighbour." Well, I question it, unless you love God. As a matter of fact, I do not believe it. Now, that is very plain.—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"; but no man loves his neighbour as himself who does not love God first. Some neighbours are not

very lovable—and you are not very lovable to your neighbours either; it takes a good deal of grace to love most of us. And indeed, we shall never do it unless first of all we make a little chamber for God, and “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” Then we can love everybody. The first and the great commandment is always the first and the great commandment—it is never the second—a little chamber on the wall reserved for the “holy man of God”, a place reserved for the truth.

Now this woman *wanted to have as much of the presence of this “man of God” as she possibly could*; and so she gave him, as I have said, a home within her own home. And the only way by which she could give him the freedom of her house was to give him first of all a little place for himself alone. I do not mean that we should confine God to a little chamber. We cannot confine Him to a little chamber. When I say that there is a compartment in life which should be kept for God, I do not mean that God should be excluded from all other departments of life. You give a guest in your own home his room, and say to him, “This is your room”, and as he feels at home there, he will feel at home in all the rest of the house by your invitation. The truth is, therefore, it is our privilege to invite the Lord Jesus to come and live with us, giving Him His own place—the supreme place—and then every room of the house will be blessed by His gracious presence.

## II.

WHAT WAS THE REWARD? What was the result? Does it pay to entertain angels unawares? The grace of hospitality, to make literal application of this, is almost a thing of the past, in some quarters. There are people who seem not to know how to entertain strangers, nor how to entertain anybody. I suppose it is the high cost of living, and particularly the high cost of rents; so that the little chamber on the wall is an expensive sort of luxury. It is not, perhaps, that we would not have it if we could. But does it pay? What was this woman's reward? Well, first of all, her reward was *the presence of the man of God himself*. And that was a benediction. Somehow or another the house was different while Elisha was living there. He brought something with him; there was an atmosphere about him that all the servants felt. But I believe she found her chief reward in the presence of Elisha himself. Some good housewife throws up the windows and opens the doors, and you say to her, “What are you doing?” “Oh,” she says, “I love to entertain the fresh air. I love to open my house to the sunlight. I love the music of the birds, and the fragrance of the flowers.” But do you say to her, “What do you get by being so hospitable?” If you did, her answer would be, “I get fresh air; I get sunshine; I get music; I get the fragrance of the flowers. They are their own reward.” And you cannot entertain the Lord Jesus without being rewarded by the simple fact of His presence. You cannot entertain a beautiful thought but your life is enriched by it. You cannot open your heart to goodness anywhere but you are the better for its incoming. There is a “dear delight in doing good,” and even if there were no great day of rewards when God will reward His servants, there is a delight, a satisfaction, in the truth itself.

But then *there was a very special reward in this case*. She entertained the prophet, and one day the prophet said to Gehazi his servant, “Call this Shunamite. And

when he had called her, she stood before him.” And he said, “Thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee? Wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host?” What if some day some humble stranger were to come to your door, and you were to entertain him and give him a place in your home, and if he were to come down in the morning and disclose his identity, and you were to discover that he was one of the richest men on earth, that he had so much wealth, and so much influence, and so much power, that he scarcely knew what to do with it, and he were to say to you, “Now you have cordially received me. You have extended the hospitality of your home not knowing who I was; and now all my wealth is at your disposal. What shall I do for you?” Wouldn't that be a great day? But that is just exactly what the Lord Jesus does. That is why He comes. He comes to take up His abode within our hearts—and then forthwith, “Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.” “What shall I do for you?” is God's call to all of us. The programme of the church, to which I referred, would rather suggest that it was man's chief obligation to say “What shall I do for God?” God has never asked you to do anything for Him. There is not a word within the pages of this Book that suggests that any man is ever required to work for God. He does not need your work. “If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.” We are “workers together with God,” and God is doing His work in the world. He does not need your puny effort; but being the channels of His grace, and the instruments of His power, touched by the Holy Spirit, we may be used of God to do God's will in the world. But never has He said to anyone, “Work for Me.” We are to work *with* Him. But He does say to us, “What shall I do for you?” The thing we need to learn, my brethren and sisters, is that we need God to do something for us. David once sent for his Pastor, Nathan the prophet, and said unto him: “See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains—I would like to build an house for the Lord.” “And Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that is in thine heart.” But when the prophet was alone with God, the Lord gave him another message. And if I may paraphrase it, he said: “When did I ever ask anybody to build an house for me? When I require an house, I will build it myself.” And then he drew the curtain, and said, “Look, David, there is a plan. The Lord shall build thee an house.” And then David fell prostrate before God, and he said, “I thought I had to do something for Thee; and I have just learned that all that Thou requirest is that I be willing that Thou shouldst do something for me.” “What is to be done for thee?” That is what Christ asks of every one of us. That is why we meet three times a week for prayer—it takes us so long to tell out the desire of our hearts. What a wonderful privilege is accorded this church! And every church. If we have given to Jesus Christ His place in the life of this church, He comes to us and says, “What shall I do for you?” He is the head of this church; He is the power and the glory of it. He is the same Jesus, and He can do to-day what He did in time past.

“Shall I speak for you to the king,” said Elisha, “or to the captain of the host?” Would you have the Lord Jesus speak to the King for you? I think we do not make enough of that. Never lose sight of the fact that

"Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." He went down into the grave, and He was raised again, and "he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs." Hold fast to the truth of the resurrection. He is our risen Saviour; but where is He now? The clouds parted, and He went up, up, to take His place at the Father's right hand until He shall come again. He is now in the presence of God interceding for us. "Wouldest thou be spoken for to the king?" The modern church is not asking Him to do anything; and the great mass of professing Christians fall below this high and holy privilege; for the Lord is in the midst of His people, saying, "What shall I do for you?"

Do we not need Him to do something for us this morning? I want Him to do something for me. Whatever it may be, He comes with that question this morning. He will speak to the Captain of the host: "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." He is the Captain of the Lord's host, and He will look after you, my friends, if you ask Him.

But I must hasten to say this: *The wonder of it all was that this woman had no request to make.* She could not think of anything she wanted. And when he said, "I am going up now: Shall I speak to the king, or to the captain of the host?" she said, "I cannot think of anything I need. I dwell among mine own people. The fact is, I am perfectly content." How much her contentment was due to the visits of the man of God, perhaps she herself scarcely knew. But I do think it is possible sometimes so consciously to dwell in the presence of God as to feel that holy contentment, to come to a place where we just want to talk to Him without petitioning Him for any particular blessing. We may often be there, when, for the moment, a holy contentment fills the soul.

And what then? *Somebody else will do our thinking:* "He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." And there was one thing this woman had longed for this many a year; but she never thought of asking for it, because it was exceeding abundantly above all that she could ask or think. It involved a miracle; it involved the stoop of God; and she never dreamed that God would do that for her. And so the prophet thought for her, and planned for her, and gave her his promise which exceeded her utmost imagining. And in due course there came into that house another life; and

there was needed another little chamber. And oh how different, and how happy was that home! Jesus never dwells alone. He makes the spiritually barren life fruitful; He fills the life with joy and gladness, and does for us beyond all our imagining. Have you ever had God do that for you—something you desired but dared not utter? Now this woman had prayed for this very thing and did not know it. It was an unuttered desire. It was a longing of the soul which had somehow or another registered itself with God. The other day when I was in London, one of the old deacons, a man of eighty years of age, said to me, "I am going down on the train with you to-morrow just for the ride and for a talk." He had served with a railway corporation and he had his pass. And as we were riding together, he said: "You know I never had much money. I managed to save a very little. I worked for forty years, and then I retired with a little pension. And," he said, "that little pension and the little bit I managed to save, just keeps my wife and me. It does not take very much, as we live very simply. But it just keeps us so that we are not dependent on the children; and in my old age—I am just eighty—I am quite independent. I desired that all my life, and I have rebuked myself that I did not put that desire into a prayer and daily ask the Lord to do that very thing. But I have recently been thinking it was a prayer after all; that maybe the Lord knew what I desired, that I might just be able to live my closing years without depending upon anybody else. And I have come to the conclusion that I was praying all the time and did not know it, and that the Lord answered my prayer, and that now as the shadows gather about me I am just receiving the answer to my prayer." I told him I had no doubt about it at all. "Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee—not only the request on thy lips, but—the desires of thine heart." There is a holy contentment, and there is a time when we cannot put into words the desire that is within. But the Spirit of God Who dwells within us, interprets our desire; the Holy Spirit with groanings which cannot be uttered makes intercession for us according to the will of God; and the answer comes: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." Now unto Him that is able to do "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end, Amen." Let us pray.

## FROM SHUNEM TO PHILISTIA AND BACK.

A Sermon by the Pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields.

(Second in series appearing in this issue on "The Ministry of Elisha.")

"And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done."—II Kings 8:4.

Last Sunday morning I spoke to you of "a great woman" of Shunem, who recognized Elisha as the prophet of the Lord, and hospitably entertained the truth, constraining him to abide with her, proposing to her husband that they make "a little chamber on

the wall", furnished with bed and table and stool and candlestick, that the truth might find a home within her home. And then Elisha, you remember, asked her if he should speak for her to the king, or to the captain of the host, to which she replied: "I dwell

among mine own people." But great changes have taken place since then. Although she had no request to make for herself, the prophet did for her exceeding abundantly above all that she could ask or think. And there came into her heart a new joy, and into her home a new life and a new light. Thenceforward the prophet often called, and stayed with them as an honoured member of their family circle. What a picture that is—the happy home at Shunem; the harvest-field where the reapers sing about their work, and where a little child plays among the sheaves! It is a picture without any cloud, or shadow, without any admixture of sorrow, but a representation of undiluted joy.

But you say, "That is not quite true to life. When I was younger, I should have thought such a picture was. I used to expect to find life a long, unclouded summer day." But instead you found what this woman found. The shadows came; death crossed the threshold; the precious life was terminated. And Elisha found this woman just where we have been found—at the meeting of extremes. She found her chiefest sorrow where she had found her greatest joy. And then as the child who had been miraculously given to her was miraculously restored, she found her greatest joy where she had experienced her greatest sorrow. But still other changes came. The prophet saw that famine would come upon the land. Cruel war visited the country; and this "great woman" of Shunem by the prophet's counsel emigrated from Shunem to Philistia, and was away from home during the seven years of famine. "And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land. And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done. And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body to life, that behold the woman whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, My Lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life." And in all the world there was no one so well qualified to speak on that subject as this woman of Shunem now returned from Philistia. "And when the king asked the woman, she told him." Let us look for a few minutes this morning at this further chapter in this interesting life.

### I.

I begin with this observation, that THIS "GREAT WOMAN" OF SHUNEM FOUND THE GUEST OF HER SETTLED HABITATION TO BE THE GUIDE OF HER JOURNEYING YEARS. When first she opened her home to the prophet in Shunem, she was living a quiet pastoral life. She dwelt among her own people. She had no desire whatever to explore the larger world. She even declared that she had no request to make to the king or to the captain of the host. But she received as cordially as she could, and offered to him the most generous hospitality, the "man of God" who passed by her dwelling continually. But she little knew what she was doing when she made a little chamber on the wall for him, when she made a friend of the "man of

God." She could not see into the future. She did not know how urgently she would require his assistance in the coming years.

And my dear friends, by God's good grace, most of us are given the opportunities of the quiet life of Shunem in order to prepare us for the more stressful and trying years that are to come. Happy are ye if now ye entertain as Guest one who in those darker days shall prove your Guide. It was given to the prophet to see that famine was coming upon the land he loved, and upon the land she loved, and that there would be no sustenance for her there. And then the Syrian bands came down in, one of their victorious invasions, and the country was rent with war; so that the godly family of Shunem had to emigrate. The little house was vacated, and they set out on the long road to Philistia. And very probably during those seven years the prophet often passed by that little house where he had been so royally welcomed. Perhaps he may have longed for the quiet and comfort of the little chamber on the wall. Possibly the Syrian soldiers spent the night beneath that roof. Perhaps some captain of the Syrian host found rest for his body on the very bed upon which the "man of God" had lain. And often as he passed by, this "man of God" remembered the woman who had been kind to him, and, doubtless, often prayed for her.

And I have been long enough a minister to see this story repeated again and again—the family broken up, the members of the family scattered, the family fortunes reversed, prosperity give place to adversity, and the clouds cover the face of the sun until men and women say as Jacob did, "All these things are against me." If now you live a quiet life in Shunem, my friend; if now you are able to say, "I dwell among mine own people—there is scarcely a desire that is not gratified"—I venture to remind you that there are many changes in life, and to-morrow you may have to take the road. Do not say, I am not kind to prophesy disturbance, or the breaking up of the nest. I am only forewarning you of the possibility, in order to urge upon you the necessity of making the acquaintance of the Man of God, of the Godman—for Elisha was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ—and of seeing to it that you have someone who is able to speak for you to the King or to the Captain of the host.

All we know about the Shunammite's life in Philistia is that while she did not become wealthy, she was preserved from famine, and was not suffered to want for bread. The Psalmist said: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." And somehow or another, through all the trying years this woman was preserved, so that she returned again at last to her own country with her husband and with the child that God had given to her—and she returned just in time.

We may rejoice that the Lord is pledged to go with us all the way, through whatever experiences we have to pass, if only we have made a little chamber for Him; if only we have received Him as our Guest; if only we know Him for ourselves: He will never leave us nor forsake us.



## II.

Another simple word is this: HER SOUL WAS ENLARGED IN FAMINE AND HER LIFE ENRICHED BY POVERTY. I know that is paradoxical, but life is full of paradoxes, because most of us see things inverted. This woman dwelt among her own people with no larger view of life than Shunem. Her reply to the prophet was not an unworthy one. She lived an humble life, and was content with that which God gave her. And yet it was a life that was very circumscribed, she had few interests, and lived a life that centered very largely in herself and her husband; her sympathies were few; her correspondences were few; her views of life were restricted. She was "a great woman" because she had a capacity for greater things than the quietude of Shunem could possibly afford her. So the nest was broken up and she went abroad.

And when she came home we find her passionately pleading her own case before the king, or ready to do so. She came, first of all, "to cry unto the king." That was the very thing that Elisha had suggested to her. He said: "Wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host?" And she said, "Why should I speak to the king? What should I ask from the treasury of the king? Why should such an humble soul as I visit the palace? I dwell among mine own people; leave me alone." But the time came when she learned that above all things she needed the privilege of access to the king. Ah, yes, it is possible to be content with Shunem. I have seen many an individual and many a family like that—doing the daily task, thinking of their own personal affairs, concerned about themselves and their families, with absolutely no interest in life outside of that; until God comes in and disturbs them, and leads them out on to the long road and gives them a vision of the larger world and of the larger life; and by many a bitter experience teaches them their own limitations, until the time comes when the greatest privilege of life is to be permitted "to cry unto the king." I wonder if there is somebody here disposed to repeat the disciples' prayer: "Lord, teach us to pray." They little knew what they asked—teach us to pray unto the King, translated into the language of our story. They little dreamed that Pilate's hall was down there on the road. They little knew that Gethsemane was in the path; that Calvary's cross must be met and understood and experienced; that there must be a grave and a resurrection and a pentecost before they could learn to pray. Thus, my friends, you are not going to learn "to cry unto the King" by reading books, nor by shutting yourself up to some cloistered existence. We shall learn these lessons not in the quietude of Shunem, but on the long and rough road that leads to the land of Philistia. We learn to pray as men learn to swim, by doing the thing, not by talking about it. It is strange that some churches have no prayer-meeting; that churches should be content to say, "I dwell among mine own people. Come and visit us at Shunem. We are the happiest little social club you ever knew. We come together to admire each other, and we tell each other all the nice things we can think of. We are a lovely little family circle." Of course no one says this in so many words,

but that is their inarticulate confession. When it is so, sometimes God comes into the life of the church, and sends it out on the road to Philistia to teach the church to pray. He has His own way of accomplishing His purposes; but we shall learn this lesson only on the road.

So the "great woman" came back "to cry unto the king," to avail herself now of the opportunity which "the man of God" had offered her. She came "to cry unto the king for her house." When "the man of God" spoke to her before, she said, "I dwell among mine own people." But out yonder she had learned to go out of herself and to think of other people. And she came back to "cry unto the king for her house and for her land," and for the larger interests of life. Have you learned to pray for other people as well as for yourself, to cry unto the King for somebody else? Until we learn thus the ministry of intercession, we do not learn to pray at all. Poor Job had a hard time, hadn't he? He lost his family; he lost his property; he was worried by his friends; he went down into the depths; and if any man in all the world's history might have been justified in praying for himself and persuading himself that he needed all the help of God as nobody else did, that man was Job. And yet, the old record tells us that "the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends." Begin to pray for your friends, pray for your house and for your land, and for all the needy of the earth, and in the very exercise your own soul will be enriched.

And then I think there is another sense in which she prayed: she wanted to have that house back again. She had had it from the Lord, and now she came longing to get back to that little home in Shunem. It never was so attractive as it had been to her while she was in Philistia. Ah, you English people—I come from that land myself—but if I could have met you a few years ago on some rainy day in that old land, I should have heard you grumbling at the weather, and at everything that belonged to it. My, what a sad tale you would have had to tell! But you had not been in this country six weeks before you began rather to weary the people about you by telling how the birds sang in old England, and about the primroses, and about the daisies, and about those wonderful country lanes, and about the hawthorn hedges, and the glorious green fields, and all the other things that are characteristic of that wonderful land, which you never appreciated when you were there. You had to get away to get a perspective view of it, and then it appeared to you a glorious land. Some people are too close to their blessings to appreciate them. The little chamber on the wall, and all its accompaniments—it is such a commonplace thing until God threatens to take it away from us, and then we learn to appreciate it. But the principle in this, my friends: *we never really possess anything until we get it from God the second time.* Abraham was never sure of Isaac until he got him from God the second time. He came to him by God's gift in the beginning, and then he laid him on the altar, and gave him up to death. When he received him back from the King this second time,

he was his own. Thus this woman now came to ask for her house and for her land.

### III.

I touch now upon something to which I think I will return next Sunday morning, if the Lord so orders, because it is enough to occupy us for a long time. When the woman came back, she came back wondering, I think, what had happened. While she was yonder in Philistia, she may have wondered what "the man of God" was doing, and whether he was still the mighty man he was when she was there. War had swept the country during her absence; many heroic deeds had been done; famine had been the portion of her people, and many a tragic tale could be told of sacrifices made and endured. And coming back, she may have wondered whether Elisha would still have a place in the public mind. "After the war!" Do you remember how people talked about what was going to happen "after the war"? Everything was going to be changed "after the war." And one might have supposed that preachers would have nothing else to do for the rest of their lives than discuss the war, and the heroism of the war. But now if they talk too much about the war, they may expect all the ex-soldiers in their congregation to say, "Tell me where we can go to hear something else." As a matter of fact, they do not want to hear about the war. A very quiet sort of man came to see me last night saying he had decided to enter the ministry. And I said, "Tell me about yourself." He said, "I was in the air force for seven years." "Did you do any flying?" "O yes, flying all the time." "Were you a pilot?" "Yes—not so very long, only about six months." Only about six months in the air in France, over the German lines—that is not very long is it? He did not want to talk about it at all; it was out of his mind. But we were to be occupied with all these things "after the war." When this woman came back, notwithstanding the experiences through which the country had passed, as she came into the king's presence, she heard the king asking this question, making this request: "Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done." Elisha was still the centre of the national interest, because he was "the man of God," and had brought God near to the people. And there is nothing this old world needs to know—and I believe, properly understood, nothing this world wants to know quite so much as the great things which our Elisha hath done. That is what every man in the office, and in the shop, and on the street, wherever you meet him—that is what every man is saying in his heart to every Christian, "Tell me the great things that He has done Whom you call your Saviour. I would rather hear about that man than about earthquakes, or about stocks, or about the war, or about the exploits of the most heroic of earth. Tell me all the great things that Jesus hath done." Well, we will talk about that next Sunday morning. In the meantime, read this second book of Kings, beginning with the first chapter. Read on to this eighth chapter, and read of all the great things that Elisha did. Elisha was the type and prophecy of a Greater than Elisha, think therefore of all the great things which you have seen your Elisha do, and of which you may be telling

every day; because—and I suggest this to you; my long announcement this morning prevents my further exposition of the subject—this woman, as I intimated at the outset, was better qualified to respond to that request than anybody else. She was herself the witness. And as she came in Gehazi said, "My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life." And Gehazi stepped back as though he would say, "It is your turn. You tell the king the great things Elisha has done." So also if you have been saved by God's grace; if you have been partaker of the power of His resurrection; whether you have been to college or not, you have a story to tell. How foolish it would have been if anybody had said to this woman, "Now you write it down. You cannot write very well; you cannot put it in very good language; but write it down as well as you can, and we will edit it, and we will present it in due course to the king." O no! The woman was to be herself the witness of the great things which Elisha had done. And so are we. That is to be the programme for the week, my friend, if you are a Christian—to go out and tell the great things which Jesus has done. Our friends who call themselves the "Brethren," say that they do not believe in a one-man ministry—and they are perfectly right. The New Testament does not teach a one-man ministry. There is a place for the minister. But we ought all to be preachers; we ought all to be witnesses. And no church will accomplish much for the Lord who leaves its testimony wholly to the pulpit. Every Shunammite must tell what she knows.

"Suffer a sinner whose heart overflows,  
Loving his Saviour, to tell what he knows;  
Once more to tell it, would I embrace—  
I'm only a sinner saved by grace!"

Will you go out and tell it, and keep on telling it, and tell the same people the same thing over and over again? Do you suppose this woman of Shunem ever got tired of telling that this son was God's gift to her? Do you suppose she ever wearied of telling how "the man of God" came and stretched himself upon the child until his soul came into him again? Did she ever weary of telling that it was by the touch of this "man of God" that this son of hers lived again? But we also have a story, my friend, that will occupy us to the end of time, and even eternity is too short to utter all His praise. Do you believe that? If you do, say so. Do you believe eternity is too short to utter all His praise? Well, then, the logic of it is to begin to utter it now. Let us tell the great things our Elisha has done. Let us now ask His help.

**Editorial Note:** Dr. Shields was called out of the city on business this week before having time to prepare material for *The Gospel Witness*. We therefore publish three sermons this week. They may prove suggestive to some ministerial readers for a series of studies in the life of Elisha; but whether or no, they are useful for the truth they contain. We are sorry the printing of three sermons has necessitated the omission of *Coals for the Altar Fire*; they will appear as usual next week.

## "THE GREAT THINGS ELISHA HATH DONE."

A Sermon by the Pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields.

(Third in series appearing in this issue on "The Ministry of Elisha.")

"And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, "Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done.

"And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body to life, that, behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life."—II Kings 8:4-5.

This was our text for last Sunday morning. Two weeks ago we saw that it is our privilege to entertain the truth, to afford hospitality to the Word of the Lord. And we observed how the Shunammite made a little chamber on the wall, and welcomed the prophet to her home. That sermon was in last week's *Witness*. Last Sunday morning we had another view of the Shunammite. War and famine had intervened. She had emigrated to Philistia, and had spent seven years away from home, and then returned to her own land again, wondering, perhaps, just what position "the man of God" still held among her people. And as she came to the king's house Gehazi was in conversation with the king, and the king was asking him about Elisha: "Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done." Gehazi endeavoured to respond to the king's request, and to tell him how he had restored a dead body to life; but while he was in the act of describing the miracle, the Shunammite came in, and with her, her son. "And Gehazi said, My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life." And very appropriately he stepped aside to allow this great woman to tell some of the great things that Elisha had done.

We shall carry our story forward, therefore, a little farther this morning; for you will remember that when Jesus began His ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth, He found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor"—on that occasion He referred both to Elijah and Elisha as being types of Himself. The story of their lives is a prefiguration of the record which God hath given us of His Son.

### I.

First of all, we shall find this lesson in the text and in its surroundings—THE PERENNIAL ATTRACTION OF MORAL AND SPIRITUAL REALITIES. There are some things of which we soon weary. There are some books which may be read only once. There are stories which will bear but one telling. But there are other things of which we may continue to speak with the assurance that people will be interested in the message we bring.

When this woman returned to her own country, as we observed last Sunday morning, notwithstanding all the thrilling events of the war which had intervened; notwithstanding all the experiences of the seven years of famine; she discovered that from the king upon his throne to the humblest of his subjects, there was nothing so interested them as "The great things which Elisha has done." Not so very long ago it was predicted that the gospel would lose its

charm, that the Great War would blot out all that had preceded it; and that for the rest of our lives we should talk of nothing else but the war. But the war was scarcely ended until the whole world wearied of talking of it. It remains true to-day that there is nothing which will command the interest of men and women like the story of the great things which our Elisha hath done.

Now the miracles wrought by both Elijah and Elisha were much more than mere physical wonders. Elijah restored the son of the widow of Zarephath to life; and when he had done so, she declared: "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." Through the physical miracle, she learned the moral and spiritual lesson God designed to teach. "I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing." But behind the great things which Elisha did were the great things of God's law, the great principles of His government, the great principles which govern our relationship to Him. And the same is true of the miracles of the New Testament. Whether you consider the miracles wrought in the days of His flesh, the things which Jesus began to do and to teach; or open the pages of the subsequent history of the Christian Church where by the power of the Holy Ghost the same wonder-working God showed His hand,—it all has the same message. Behind every physical wonder there is the moral and spiritual reality in which men and women are concerned.

It is significant that the one who asked to be told about "the great things which Elisha had done" was Jeroboam, the son of the notorious Ahab and Jezebel, of whom it was said: "There was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up." Notwithstanding his training, Jeroboam was supremely interested in the great works of Elisha. As a matter of fact, there had been no person in all Israel who had so commanded the attention of Ahab and Jezebel as Elijah.

I suggest to you a problem for your consideration. What is the explanation of the interest of a bad man in religion? Why is it that bad men are interested in religion? A book was put into my hands only this last week, which I hope to refer to in next week's *Witness*—a book highly commended by *The Christian Guardian* as an exhibition of "assured scholarship"; a book that absolutely denies everything that is fundamentally Christian. And I said to myself, "Why in the

world did the man write it? If he does not receive the benefits of religion, why doesn't he leave it alone?" Why write about Christ? Why talk about Christ? Why concern ourselves about Him at all? Why should we be interested in "the great things that Elisha hath done" if we will have none of His message? But evermore the message of the Lord is the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death. Hence men cannot leave religion alone, even if they would. They are compelled to consider the great things which God does in the world; for God will leave not Himself without witness; and the day will come when every mouth shall be stopped, and all the world shall become guilty before God. He will be justified when He speaks, and clear when He judges. I venture the assertion, therefore, that there is nothing in the world that will command the interest of men in our day like the great things which Jesus has done. Religion is still a subject of the most absorbing interest. Even false religions are an expression of the soul's dissatisfaction with all mundane things, and of the hunger of the soul that was made for God, for something that this world can never supply.

## II.

But we have reason to praise God that WE HAVE IN THIS WORD A RECORD OF MORAL AND SPIRITUAL ACHIEVEMENT WHICH IS COMMENSURATE WITH OUR MORAL INTERESTS. The hunger of the soul may be satisfied at this table. There is nothing that will satisfy the soul like the story of the things which Jesus has done. How satisfying to the intellect, to the heart, to the conscience,—I do not know how you feel when you have wandered through the fogs of evolutionary guesses;—but how unsatisfying the whole thing is, just groping after something, just seeking to push the great First Cause back as far as possible—on the other hand how satisfying, I say, to intellect, and heart, and conscience, are the triumphant and certain words of Scripture! "In the beginning God created." It is the beginning of the story of the great things, as Dr. Neighbour reminded us on Friday night, which Jesus has done. For if you are going to believe the whole story of His exploits, you must go back to the beginning; "for all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made."

One of the wonders of the gospel of the grace of God is THE MARVELLOUS PROVISION IT EXHIBITS. God has anticipated our every need. The gospel of God's grace is no after-thought. Redemption is not a work of repair: it is a work of re-creation, foreordained of God from the very beginning. I do not cease to wonder at the riches of God's Word. Some young man goes away from home; and while he was at home he was accustomed to having his clothing looked after and all his needs anticipated. And he wonders how he will get along when he gets away. His mother packs his trunk for him, and he leaves for the city. By and by he opens the trunk, and he discovers something there that he had never thought he would need—but there it is. And after a while he discovers another need, and he goes to his trunk and turns it over, and behold, his mother has thought of that! He may, indeed, need some thread and a needle—young men do sometimes—and he wonders where in the world

he will get it, or how he can buy it. But he looks into that wonderful trunk, and even that has been provided for; and he marvels that his mother has anticipated his every need. That is what the Lord has given us in this Book. It is a trunk packed for the journey; and no matter what you need you will always find it there. It is among the great things which our Elisha has done. He has anticipated your utmost need; and I do not care where you travel, what rank or condition in life may be yours, you will always find that God is equal to every emergency.

Let me now remind you of *some of the outstanding miracles of Elisha's time*. They are so suggestive of the wonders of divine grace wrought in our experiences; and they are suggestive of the subject about which you and I ought always to be talking, for about us there are men and women asking us to tell of the great things which our Elisha hath done. Now what things have we to tell? It is my ambition that every member of this church should be a preacher, a witness for the Lord Jesus; that we should be holding services all the day, on the back of the street car,—anywhere and everywhere, always telling "the great things that Elisha hath done." A preacher is supposed to have some little idea of what he is going to say before he comes to the pulpit; and you ought to have some idea of what are you going to say to-morrow before you go to your place of business. You ought to have some idea of what you are going to preach about to-day, for that is your business. No matter where you work, your business is to be telling the great things that your Elisha hath done. Now what are they? Will you turn them over in your mind; so that your mind will be ready furnished; so that the story will be upon your tongue; so that you will have an answer to give to everyone concerning the hope that is in you?

I read of one of the great miracles that Elisha wrought, how he met the enemy in the very heart of his own camp, where the king of Israel was; and the very men who had come to take it, found themselves in Samaria surrounded by the armed men of Israel. And the king said, "My father, shall I smite them?" And the prophet said, "No, get them a good dinner. Make sure that it is a good one." And he set provisions before them, and they had a good meal, when their eyes had been opened. "And now," said the prophet, "Go home to your master." And they went home to their master, spared, forgiven their attempt to destroy the prophet's life. Now, my friend, you and I have been just there again and again, in the hand of divine judgment. God in justice could have crushed us. He could have visited us with His wrath, but instead of that, He set great provisions before us. He forgave us our sins. If you ask me the greatest miracle I know, it is this: so far as I am concerned, the forgiveness of my sins. That is the thing I cannot understand. Nothing but the grace of God could ever have made it possible. And if we realize that great truth, that when justice said, Shall I smite him? Mercy pleaded in our behalf, gave us the bounties of His grace and sent us on our way rejoicing. And there is nothing the men and women of Toronto need to hear more than that. There is not one who has not some consciousness of his past, some sense of blame-worthiness,—not in the deep spiritual sense of con-

viction of sin, notwithstanding the story of divine forgiveness will interest the world as nothing else will. And it is for you and for me to tell that story to-day and to-morrow and all the days, that our Elisha spared us, forgave our sins, washed us in the precious blood, robed us in garments of righteousness, and set before us all the dainties of the King's household that we might be fat and flourishing as the children of God. Will you tell that? Never mind discussing the weather and all the events in the newspaper. Nobody wants to read yesterday's newspaper. Haven't you observed that it is out-of-date? It is a story that is past; it does not need to be repeated. But this is never out-of-date, the story of your forgiveness will always be fresh.

Then there is that matchless story of the cleansing of Naaman, the "great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper." And Elisha came into that life, and cleansed him of his leprosy, and made him a whole man. It is one thing to be forgiven of our sins: it is another thing to have the sense of cleansing, to rest in the assurance of it: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." And haven't you a story to tell, that whatever prosperity you enjoy in this world, whatever accomplishments you had to your credit, whatever rank or prestige you may have enjoyed, that there was something within and beneath it all that nothing but the power of God could touch. You know how God came and how He cleansed the leper; and you could tell that story of "the great things that Elisha hath done." Down in the city, my dear friends, there are great men, there are men who are prosperous,—and please do not reserve your gospel for the man who sweeps the street. It is very easy to talk to the man whose hands are soiled and who is clad in rough garments. But remember this is the story of what God did for a man in an exalted position, a man who was next to the king, great with his master and honourable. And I venture the assertion that there are people in this city, who are ranked as successful men, who are prosperous in business, who live in great houses, who have at their command all worldly pleasures, who are envied by their neighbours; and yet who know in their own hearts that, beneath all that appearance of prosperity, there is a deadly something that they have never been able to cope with; and they need a message that you can give them, they need the story of the great things that our Elisha can do for the captain of the king's host. I think we have all failed here. We do not carry the gospel as we ought to people who are somewhat difficult of access. You all know how true that is. A man who is accustomed to receive the commands of others, who is in a somewhat subordinate position, we all think we can go to him; and yet it is the other man very often whose heart is hungry for the very thing we have. Now if the Lord by His Spirit should lay it upon your heart during this week to go to some man of high position, dare to go in His Name, and tell him "the great things that Elisha hath done;" for remember, it was the king himself who was asking this question. The king was anxious to know; and there is that in the gospel of

the Lord Jesus which will minister to men and women in the most exalted, as well as in the humblest station of life.

There is also a story of a supernatural birth, and a supernatural resurrection. By the blessing of God a new life came to the house of the Shunammite, and then that life went out again, and then it was received from God the second time—born again out of death. That was the message which the Shunammite had to tell. Wouldn't you like to be a boy again? Wouldn't you like to be a girl again? Wouldn't you like to live your life over again? How we have spoiled it! What a record we have written! What a story we should have to tell if we had to tell it from the beginning until now! There is not one of us who would not like to tear out many of the pages of life's record, and begin it all over again. And that is the story of the grace of our Elisha, that He makes it possible for us to begin again, makes it possible for every poor sinner to begin again. "Ye must be born again." It is the most wonderful story in the world to take to a man whose life is wrecked and tell him that you know of Somebody Who can take the record of that life and blot it all out and then by His power let him begin life again,—be born from above, begotten of the Spirit of God, and live his life all over again. That was the story that Gehazi was trying to tell. Just at that time he was speaking of how Elisha had raised a dead body to life; telling how when all the hopes of life had crumbled, when life was a long record of disappointment, when everything had failed—Elisha came, and behold, the lad lived again by the power of God through him. And that is the story of the gospel of grace. "I will restore to you the years that the locusts hath eaten."

There was still another aspect to Elisha's ministry. It was a record of preservation through war and famine. The life that had been given had been preserved, until at last the woman actually stood in the presence of the king, and at her side the life that had been restored and preserved through all the war and famine years. Some people wonder that the church of Christ does not make greater progress. The existence of the church of Christ, of a true church, is itself a miracle. What if you were to find some morning in the garden, when the thermometer registers twenty below zero, say in January or February,—what if you were to find some delicate exotic flourishing and blooming in a snow-bank? The whole city would come to look upon it and wonder that it had escaped the frost and survived in the winter's climate. But that is the wonder of grace. We are born from above. The life that is in the believer is not indigenous to this climate at all: it comes from heaven; it is a hothouse plant; it belongs to another country altogether: and if you can find a man or woman trusting in Jesus, walking in fellowship with God, a plant which the heavenly Father hath planted, bearing the fruits of the Spirit in this world, then it is one of the miracles that our Elisha hath accomplished; and you had better call the whole city to come and look at it. It is a marvelous thing. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." In the book that I referred to a moment ago the writer

says that the mind of Jesus was filled with the mythical story of angelology and demonology, that Jesus believed in angel and demon possession, which, according to the writer, was not true. Do you believe in angels? I do. Some of us would not be here if it were not for God's angels. What of the story of the horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha? I was talking to some of my ministerial friends one day, and I said, "I have no difficulty with that miracle at all. You may deny the horses and chariots of fire as much as you like; but I have ridden in one of the chariots myself, and I know they are real." O yes, that is the story we have to tell, not only that He gave life but that He preserves it; and by His good grace we are here to-day to praise His name.

### III.

And now this simple word: WHO IS GOING TO TELL THIS STORY? What is God's way of publishing "the great things that Elisha hath done"? There you have a man asking that somebody should tell him the story; and he is a type and representation of the whole wide world. "Tell me . . . all the great things that Elisha hath done." And you have Gehazi trying to tell the story. I am a little bit puzzled about Gehazi. He was the servant of "the man of God." Now if the story of Naaman's cleansing is in its chronological order, then either Gehazi was himself a leper; for after that he went out from the presence of "the man of God" a leper—either he was himself a leper—and it is scarcely conceivable that he should come into the presence of the king if he was still a leper—or he must, like Naaman himself, have been cleansed of his leprosy. If he was a leper, I do not wonder that Gehazi did not tell his story very well; for if he was uncleansed it meant this, that he had lived in the presence of Elisha; he had seen Elisha do these wonderful things by the power of God; he had seen him heal the leper, raise the dead; he had seen him make the iron to swim; he had seen him do one thing after another, showing that the power of God was in him; but if he was still a leper, he himself had not been subject to that miraculous power. What a terrible thing that would be, to have the whole world asking for somebody to tell of the great things that God has done, and to have no story to tell ourselves! But I rather think that Gehazi's leprosy was a temporary experience, like that of Miriam. I think he must have been cleansed of his leprosy; although we have no record of the fact. And if so, then he himself would have been able to say, "I can tell you of how he cleansed Naaman, but I have a greater story than that." But to have told that would have forced him to confess a story of which he was ashamed. I think there are a lot of people in the church just like that. Theoretically, if you talk to them quietly, they say, "I suppose I was a sinner like others, but please do not bring that up against me. I do not want to go and tell people I am a sinner saved by grace. I am prepared to discuss this matter in an academic fashion, but you must not ask for my personal testimony. I would rather tell what Elisha did for somebody else." Gehazi was trying to tell the story, and in walked the woman, and Gehazi said, "This is the woman, and this is her son. She can tell you better than I can." Of

course, she could. It is the voice of Christian experience that prevails after all. You can theorize about these things as much as you like; but it is the man or woman who can tell what Jesus has done for him or for her who will prevail in the lives of others. I wish I could encourage every saved man and woman here this morning to begin. I believe we should study the Word. I believe we should try to qualify ourselves for a larger ministry. And if there are some young men here who have the ministry of the gospel in view, then I suggest to you that the gospel deserves the best; that we ought to do our utmost to train every power of the mind so that it can be exercised at its fullest strength in the work of preaching the gospel. But do not wait until you have been to college before you begin to tell the great things which our Elisha hath done; because possibly when you get to college somebody will tell you that Elisha has not done any great thing; and you had better be sure of it before you go, and you had better form the habit of telling what He has done, and then they cannot stop you. The man who has been blind all his life was more than a match for the doctors of the law. He said, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." And that is the testimony we have to give to-day each for ourselves, to tell "the great things that our Elisha hath done." Why should we not get back to the simplicity of the Bible? I was going to say of the New Testament, but the same is in the Old Testament. God never commissioned His Church to build up a great institution, an elaborate organization, with all kinds of societies and every facility for entertaining and amusing worldly minds. He gave His church but one commission: we are to go and witness for Him—just to tell "the great things that Elisha hath done." One of the things that inspired me during this past week and thrilled me through and through was this, that in every address this principle was observed, and the Lord Jesus was exalted. And that is your supreme duty and privilege and mine, everywhere to bear witness to the reality of Jesus Christ. May He help us so to do for His Name's sake. Let us pray.

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# The Union Baptist Witness

This page is the Authorized Official Organ of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches in Ontario and Quebec.

W. GORDON BROWN, Editor.

*Communications for this department should be addressed direct to W. Gordon Brown, Box 502, Orangeville, Ont.*

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## MINER'S BAY FIELD.

Under the supervision of Mr. Gordon Mellish real pioneering work has been done in the vicinity of Miner's Bay. Assisted by Mr. Charles Hardie, it has been possible to have eight or nine services at different points each week. The Word of God has been proclaimed faithfully and fearlessly by these two missionaries, and recently there have been two baptismal services when some ten believers on the Lord Jesus Christ confessed Him before men in the waters of baptism, in accordance with His command.

It has been possible, through Mr. Mellish's interest, to locate a permanent Pastor at Corson's Sidings and Mr. and Mrs. Victor Reid are taking charge of the work there. Mr. Reid is an arts graduate of McMaster University, a Regular Baptist Fundamentalist, a member of Stanley Ave. Baptist Church, Hamilton, and the Lord has very wonderfully led these ambassadors to their field of service and provided, by Christian friends in Toronto, for their support. Pray for them and for those who have so recently confessed Christ under the students' ministry.

\* \* \*

## MAPLE GROVE CHURCH AND FIELD

The people are attending the services splendidly. Some have consecrated themselves afresh and an offering of some \$34.00 has been made for Missions. The student-pastor, Mr. John H. Garbig, is having the privilege of proclaiming the glorious Gospel message to a large congregation in a United Church and will continue until October. He asks the prayers of Christian friends that God's Word will indeed run and be glorified in the saving of souls.

\* \* \*

## KENORA.

Mr. W. C. McIvor, a Toronto Baptist Seminary student, has been conducting Open Air services in Kenora and has supplied for Rev. E. E. Hooper of Kenora Baptist Church on occasions.

\* \* \*

## NORTH BAY.

The following letter has been received from Mr. James Forrester, now in charge of the North Bay Regular Baptist Mission:—

"During last week I was able to bring the work here into proper perspective. A fair survey of the ground over which

dear Brother Allen has gone compels me to pay him tribute. He has done a noble work in gathering about him such a fine nucleus of God's children in the face of such opposition as we find directed against the work here. I trust he will soon be restored to full health and strength. Sunday's services proved very encouraging. The attendance at each service was good. In the morning about thirty folk turned out. Sunday School brought about twenty children including some big Catholic girls as well as six or seven adults. At the Gospel service in the evening we had a turnout of twenty-five. Three men to whom I spoke were under deep conviction. One broke down completely but none would accept Christ just then.

Most of the North Bay people have been informed of the work of the Regular Baptist Mission. The Italians whom I have visited are very bitter. There are very many French-speaking people in the town but I have not yet come into contact with any who would listen to the Gospel. (Mr. Forrester speaks French.—Ed.)

The folk who are interested in the work and who have attended the meetings since their inception are standing right behind me and it is most encouraging to know that they are willing to cooperate so wholeheartedly.

Mr. Douglas Brown has proved of very great service by rendering gladly to the work of his musical talent. We appreciate his support in a way we cannot express.

We are proud to participate in and to be identified with a work that stands for the teaching and the preaching of God's precious truths. To unfold to hungry, seeking hearts the 'unsearchable riches of Christ' is the most glorious and most noble of all tasks although possibly fraught with the greatest dangers."

\* \* \*

## ROUYN-NORANDA.

For the prayer helpers supporting the Wellington Brothers in their mission work in these mining towns, we report word of continued blessing and encouragement. The ministry has been extended to Larder Lake. Keep praying.

\* \* \*

## FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST CHURCH, FORT WILLIAM.

Pastor Gordon W. Searle in charge. A church property has recently been secured and reports come from various sources of the splendid work being done by Mr. Searle. Open Air meetings, in which Mr. Searle co-operated with the Rev. R. J. Campbell, of the West Fort

Baptist Church, have been blessed. Prayer is requested for these two testimonies in that needy Western city.

\* \* \*

## WORK IN QUEBEC PROVINCE.

Remember St. Paul's Field Day—  
October 1st!

Montreal Regular Baptists are campaigning for souls during the summer months. Tent meetings have been held under the supervision of the Rev. Arthur St. James in Montreal and under the Rev. C. H. Leggett in Verdun. In connection with the latter, Mr. Leggett reports:—

"Our Gospel Tent Meetings are in full swing and much blessing is given although the attendance is not large in this wicked and formally-religious metropolis. Quite a number of uncovered people are attending, however, and a deep spirit of thoughtfulness prevails. On Sunday, August 18th, at the Children's meeting a large number of children came forward and signified their acceptance of Christ as Saviour. The evening service was the most moving of any which we have experienced for years, about ten persons definitely accepted Christ as their personal Saviour. A father and two daughters were among these."

In connection with the work of Emmanuel Regular Baptist Church, Verdun, Mr. Leggett tells us that three mothers have recently been baptized. The baptismal service was held, through the courtesy of the Pastor and people of the Verdun Baptist Church, in their building.

As our readers know, Emmanuel Regular Baptist Church, Verdun, is greatly in need of a building. Plans have been carefully gone over by the Building Committee of the Church and most of the details settled upon. One of the best locations in Western Verdun has been secured and the tent meetings have consecrated the ground to the service of our God, but money comes in slowly. Members of the Church have done nobly but they cannot go forward and grasp the opportunities of the present time unless some stewards of the Lord will come to their assistance. Modernists are coming into the community with thousands of dollars to back them in their destructive work. Emmanuel Baptist Church should claim the attention and support of Fundamentalists who are jealous for the "sure word of prophecy".

Cheques may be sent to Rev. W. E. Atkinson, Secretary-Treasurer of the Union, and amounts will be promptly forwarded to Emmanuel Church, Verdun, Quebec.

## Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

Vol. IV.

No. 3

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, Editor.

Lesson 37. September 15th, 1929.  
Third Quarter.

### CONTROLLING THE TONGUE.

Lesson Text: James, chapter 3.

Golden Text: "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth." James 3:5.

#### I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TONGUE, (vs. 1-5).

1. The tongue is a little member but it has great influence. It has power for evil and corresponding power for good, and James brings clearly to our attention the importance of this member. The chapter opens with an exhortation to those who would be teachers, probably having in mind some who were not fully qualified for the duties and consequently not divinely called thereto, wherein the warning is given that greater judgment comes upon those who do such work, (v. 1). This implies that according to the privilege and responsibility so shall the judgment be. It is not a light thing to take part in the work of the Lord. 2. This is followed by a statement concerning the imperfect nature of the work of the teachers, "in many ways they stumble", (v. 2), referring to the matter of speech. Words are uttered at times which were better left unsaid, and unwise statements are made. "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man", of mature character, "and able also to bridle the whole body". There is then the possibility of reaching such a state, and when one is able to control the tongue he gives evidence that he has mastery over the whole body. 3. The importance of this little member is illustrated from the use of the bit in the horse's mouth, (v. 3), and the helm on the ship, (v. 4). Both are small but powerful, and provide the means for complete control. "Even so the tongue is a little member and boasteth great things", (v. 5). What great swelling words it can utter, and what great damage it can do. "How great a matter a little fire kindleth". One match may set a whole forest on fire, and one tongue may upset a whole community, and cause untold misery. It has tremendous potential power either for good or evil. Consequently its control is of the greatest importance. 4. In this paragraph then, note the responsibility resting upon those who teach, the necessity of being definitely led of God before one seeks to do so, and the importance of carefulness in speech. Emphasis may be also laid in teaching upon the tongue as a sign of the inward condition of the man, (Matt. xv:18), upon its great influence, the results of its use,

good and bad, the necessity for its control, and the means of that control.

#### II. THE NATURAL BENT OF THE TONGUE, (vs. 6-12).

1. The succeeding verses indicate the natural bent of the tongue. It is a "fire", a world of "iniquity", (v. 6). This is very strong language, and yet experience and observation corroborate the truth of the statement in relation to the uncontrolled tongue. What great mischief it has done, what sin it has caused, what defilement it has wrought; how even whole nations have been affected, and at times the world has been stirred; truly it has been set on fire of hell. Man in his unregenerate state is under the power of Satan, (I John 5:19), his whole nature is corrupt, (Rom. 3:10-18), and the consequence is a defiled tongue. A Christian has been delivered from the power of Satan, but is never free from his temptation. He has a new nature, but still retains the old, although it should be in the place of death, (Rom. 6:11) and he must ever be on the alert, lest the Adversary use that old nature for the carrying out of his purposes, (Matt. 16:23). 2. The untameable disposition of the tongue is then stated, "every kind of beasts", etc. "hath been tamed", "but the tongue can no man tame, it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison", (vs. 7, 8). Brute beasts can be brought under subjection, but the tongue cannot be tamed, its nature never changes, there lurks in it always the possibility of evil. But it can be controlled and it is the duty of every child of God to see to it that the tongue is fully surrendered to the Lord and under His control, (Rom. 12:1, 2), for He is the only one who can gain the real mastery over it. Left to itself it is an unruly evil, dividing homes, churches, and nations, and leading to much suffering, both mental and physical. 3. The phrase, "double-tongued" is illustrated in the following verses, (vs. 9-12), wherein it is shown that blessing and cursing proceed from the same mouth. This is stated to be contrary to nature, for sweet and bitter water do not come from the same fountain, a fig tree does not bear olive berries, nor a vine, figs, and no fountain can bring forth salt water and fresh; therefore no tongue ought to be used for the purpose of blessing God and cursing men. To use it in such a manner is to act the hypocrite and our Lord was most severe upon such persons, (Matt. 23:14). The fact of this double stream emphasizes the fallen nature of man, his condition of total depravity, and the necessity for the new nature. Note also the cause for the tongue's disposition, the consequences of its uncontrolled use and the necessity for its strict control.

#### III. THE HEAVENLY AND EARTHLY WISDOM IN CONTRAST, (vs. 13-18).

1. No one likes to be acclaimed foolish: the desire is to be wise, and to gain the reputation of such, but the desire is not fulfilled unless the actions correspond. James says, if there is any wise man among you, "yet him show out of a good conversation his works with

meechness of wisdom", (v. 13). In the previous chapter he had taught the necessity for faith showing itself in works, and here a similar thought is expressed.

There is no use claiming wisdom or knowledge unless these are made manifest in the life, and assuredly if they are present, they will show themselves in the general conduct. It is of the utmost importance that the child of God should live in accordance with his Father's will, and be an example unto the world of that which is good, uplifting, and holy. 2. But sometimes the evil nature predominates and its works are seen in bitter envying and strife. This is contrary to the new nature, and gives no ground for glorying, (v. 14). It is not from above, but is "earthly", sensual and devilish", (v. 15). "For where envying and strife is there is confusion and every evil work", (v. 16). This is both a description and a warning, a description of the result of the uncontrolled life and tongue, and a warning against permitting such a condition to pertain. It is sad indeed when the old nature is allowed to assert itself, it works untold harm in the individual and through him in the church, creating disturbance, arousing ill-feeling, and hindering the work of the Holy Spirit: Surely one ought to realize that such things ought not to be. To act in such a manner is to sin grievously against God. 3. The wisdom which is from above is the opposite of such. It is "first pure", (v. 17). It descends not to any evil work, but acts always according to the law of holiness. It may always be differentiated from the other in its motive and actions. It never stoops to anything unworthy of its source, but always acts on a high plane and in the best interests of others. It is also "peaceable". The tongue is under control and is used only in accordance with the mind of God, and never to stir up strife. It is "gentle", or "courteous", never discourteous, even to enemies, always treating others in a loving spirit. A discourteous Christian is one out of touch with his Lord. It is "easy to be entreated", not self-willed. How many professed Christians there are whose service is spoiled through self-will. They say and do things which are clearly wrong, simply because they are in accordance with their desires and they make trouble when things are not done to suit them. Such self-will should give place to God's will, then peace shall reign. 4. It is "full of mercy and good fruits", or "compassion and good actions". It looks upon men through the eyes of God, and seeks to serve them in His Spirit. It is "without partiality" or "favouritism", treating all alike and "without hypocrisy". It never pretends to be what it is not. It is always what it appears to be. It is then worthy of trust at all times. And righteousness is the fruit of such conduct, (v. 18). In dealing with the tongue, certain things may be pointed out in addition to those already mentioned, such as, the original purpose of the tongue, the cause for the lack of self-control, the heinousness of sins of the tongue, the preventives of such sins, negative and positive, and the beneficial influence of a controlled tongue.