

The Gospel Witness

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IN DEFENSE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.

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

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THE OPENING OF THE IRON GATE

It is characteristic of youth and of inexperienced age that the lack of the sense of historical perspective disqualifies them for any true judgment of the history of their own time. The issues of to-day are usually most accurately appraised when they are viewed in the golden glow of yesterday. Buoyant hope—which is by no means to be despised—is always ready for a morning ramble with who ever will run cheerily to meet the future when the dew is fresh on life's untrodden path; but Wisdom and quiet Assurance are oftener the companions of the eventide.

It is therefore a good thing to look back occasionally, for if we do so we shall find that there is no present pain, nor sorrow, nor anxiety, which others have not felt before us. Since the days and the deed of Cain, red war has had its place in the world of men; if not between nations, too often between individuals. The son of the bondwoman has always scorned the son of the free woman. The Ishmaelitic spirit, like the poor, is with us always. There has always been an Esau to glorify the temporal and material, while despising the spiritual elements of life.

The varying fortunes of the Hamans and the Mordecais make up the history of the race, as well as the political history of the world. Righteousness and truth have always had their witnesses who have become martyrs. Every nation—and every individual—must have its Babylonian experience when its harps hang silent on the willows by the water courses. The truth has never wanted for a Herod to vex it. Our mistake too often is in, supposing that Herod is without a successor. Law and order have always had a struggle to maintain their right to be. Every principle of righteous character and conduct and every principle of civilization have, Moses-like, been hidden in the beginning of their course in some bulrush ark from the power of some lawless hand. And every regenerating principle has had to take shelter in Egypt and Nazareth in the days of its infancy.

Evil waxes bold by its successes, and when it has killed James the brother of John, it proceeds further to take Peter also.

The story of the murder of James and the imprisonment of Peter is not new. Indeed, it is commoner than they who are most familiar with it suppose. Our en-

deavour in this article will be to present it in a frame which is not strange, to hang the picture so that the light of present-day experiences may fall upon it.

I.

It is not, then, uncommon for a Christian to lose his liberty. Peter in prison, absent from the assemblies of the saints, no longer exercising the functions of his office in the church, his voice silenced, and his sword laid by,—all this is analogous to occurrences which we ourselves have either experienced or observed.

It may be said that some invite their apprehension by their own unfaithfulness. It is not always Herod's fault that Peter is absent from the prayer-meeting, that his voice is no longer eloquent for Christ. Of Peter's own surrender to the forces of evil we are all aware. And there are other men and women who have lost their liberty in Christ who have themselves to blame for their captivity. No prison could hold a man more securely than yonder luxurious dwelling holds its owner. There are no chains more binding than those which he has forged for himself in the pleasures to which he is abandoned. There is no jail more impregnable than that of which ease and self-indulgence are the keepers. From that bondage of selfishness none but divine power can deliver.

Even divine Providence is often a jailer to the disobedient. We may not justify our inability to preach as a free prophet in the streets of Ninevah by pleading the invulnerability of walls and bars of whalebone, when, like a vagrant who would rather go to jail than work, like Jonah, we have paid our fare to run away from duty, and have virtually begged admission at the prison gate. But even for such delinquents—and such we all are, or at some time have been—there is deliverance through the grace of God.

But following the analogy of our story, it may be observed that there is a straitness that comes to us in the way of duty; there are Herods from which none of us can altogether escape. It may not be that we shall be circumscribed by any formal legal process, but only by invisible forces which, for the time, are inexorable and irresistible. The pictures of Israel shut in by mountains and the sea, of Elisha besieged in Dothan, of Peter bound

in chains, while historical in fact, are parabolic in principle.

Nor do we speak only of 'spiritual bondage. That is bitter and real, but it belongs to that state to which we have already referred, and for which we are ourselves responsible: a state which we fittingly describe when we complain,—

"Look how we grovel here below,
Fond of these earthly toys;
Our souls can neither fly nor go
To reach immortal joys."

Is there not a bondage of circumstances as real as Peter's prison walls? Are we not thus forbidden to roam abroad? Are we not brought face to face with physical barriers which we cannot break through?

We shall not attempt to go into particulars here, but leave our readers to fill in the details. It may be that into some domestic life the straitness has come. It may be down at the office that you feel the weight and hear the rattle of the chains. It may be that some of your business associates or competitors are "the keepers before the door" who "keep the prison". But if it be true that in this plain, literal, material, circumstantial, sense, the prison doors have closed upon you, if in any of these, or in other spheres of life, the untrammelled freedom of the field, the public highway, and the unconfined air, has been superseded by the straitness of resource and action, and the consciousness of confining walls, we have a word of comfort for you from the Lord.

II.

And that word must be to this effect, that no circumstances can shut out the angel of the Lord. The angel of the Lord came to Peter when the doors were shut against all human helpers. He was in prison, and none could visit him. But into that darkness came the angel of the Lord. The prison, with all its accompaniments, for the moment remained, but the angel was there. And we have not to get out of prison to find the Lord. God's angels are not like some of our feathered singers, the flutter of whose wings is never heard in the winter time. On the contrary, it is their special mission to visit souls in prison. It is one of the functions of grace to provide songs in the night.

Here is one, for instance, to whom the prison has been domestic affliction—disease has been the grim jailer. It may not be personal: it may be that someone else is ill. But we have heard a watcher say, "I do not know how I have endured it. The frowning walls of my prison have been about me; the chains of the jailer have been very real. Life was robbed of its buoyancy and freedom. I was as a bird with wounded wings. And yet, here I am!" Ah, some day you will learn that it was because God sent an angel to be your nurse.

Or another has had a succession of business reverses. He has been moved from place to place—and always into a narrower cell. From without, past the second, and then past the first ward, he has been conducted to an interior dungeon—and yet God has found him, and in his direst distress He has felt the touch of an angel's hand.

How we should like to dwell upon the details of this picture! We must rather, however, gather them up in a sentence or two.

There was, first of all, a light in the prison—enough to show that it was a prison, which, being interpreted,

may mean a deeper consciousness of life's exigencies. It is often so that the beginning of deliverance is marked by an intensification of one's sense of captivity. But then came to Peter the touch—the touch of the supernatural, the ministry of the divine interference. And then the voice that was not human—that message out of the unseen that breathed strength and inspiration, and anon, the falling of the chains and a sense of relief even though the doors were still shut. Then you girded yourself, and put on your sandals, and cast your garment upon you—and stood up as a new man, albeit the walls still shut out the sun. The gates were locked as securely as ever, and in that new light you were more fully aware of your difficulties than ever before. Notwithstanding, in that new companionship you were unafraid.

Thus "unto the upright there arises light in the darkness", and the doors—which are shut "for fear of the Jews"—cannot shut out the King of the Jews, but may open of themselves for fear of Jesus. And that is our second lesson, that no material circumstances can separate us from the help of those ministering spirits who are "sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation".

III.

Our third observation is this: there is always an iron gate that bars our return to liberty. Soldiers iron-armed are forbidding. Iron chains are a formidable hindrance to progress. But when these have lost their power of captivity, the iron gate remains.

And does not the analogy run all through life? There is always a point where the evil appears to be stronger than the good. How full of contrasts and contradictions life seems to be! More to be feared than all the armies of Philistia, there is ever a giant of Gath; and more to be dreaded than the forces of Absalom, the counsel of Ahithophel is always to be reckoned with. Hence, life is never wholly free from the necessity for miracles. Through succeeding generations the conditions are ever the same. Always outside the open gate of the temple called Beautiful a lame man who cannot go in; and inside the iron gate of the prison, a sandalled and girded knight of truth who cannot come out!

There could be no true progress in life if the principle of our story were not always an element of Christian experience. There is always a David for every Goliath, a Joab for every Ahithophel, an angel for every iron gate.

We do not know what the iron gate may be to you,—we mean the gate that leadeth unto the city, the thing that bars your spiritual progress, that which prevents your entrance into liberty, which stands between you and a higher, richer, fuller, life—not the chain or the soldier, but that which lies beyond the first and second ward, the ultimate barrier, the outside door. Ah, that is the supreme obstacle!

Or shall we put it another way: it is the fly in life's pleasant ointment, the thing that mars the otherwise pleasant things of life. In the domestic sphere, perhaps it is the waywardness of a child, or the ill-temper of a husband, or the shadow of disease. In the world of affairs, it may be the power of monopoly, the inadequacy of capital, or the uncertainty of the character of some important human factor.

But is there no way of getting past the iron gate? To which we must answer: There is no way short of a miracle. If that be true, to the child of God the miracle may be expected.

Did we not say that circumstances could not shut God out? The angel was not afraid of the outside of the iron door—why should he fear the inside? He who can go in, can go out again, so that “they”, Peter and the angel—no, the angel and Peter—“came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street”.

The gate “opened to them of his own accord”. And it always does when we have the Angel with us. We called at an apartment one day, and rang the bell. Someone called down the speaking-tube to come up; then the door opened of its own accord,—at least, we did not open it. An invisible hand pressed the button, and open it came.

And do you not think that God can press the button and open prison doors for you and me?

On another occasion He opened the prison by an earthquake. Our only point of insistence is that when God visits one in prison, he may congratulate himself that as no bar could shut Him out, so no bar can shut Him in. If He wills to do so, He can take us out with Him. Therefore we bid you put on your sandals and prepare to go walking. Go on past the first and the second ward, and be not afraid of the iron gate in the morning. One is with you Who has the key, and the miracle will occur when it is needed. He will bring your soul out of prison that you may praise His name.

IV.

We have but limned the picture in barest outline, but we must have this one word more. The reality of life's miracles appears only as we meditate upon them. Peter acted as one in a dream, and “wist not that it was true that was done by the angel”. But the angel did not leave him just outside the gate—but “passed on through one street”. It was not until the angel was gone that he realized the miracle. It was when he “was come to himself, he said, ‘Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews’. Not in the experience itself, but in his reflection upon it, did Peter fully realize the hand of God.

Many a blessing we have missed because we have not sufficiently pondered the divine goodness. We hardly knew what was happening when we passed through that severe trial. It was not a time for anyone to preach to us. We could not have understood. The angel wisely did not preach, and because of that we did not recognize his re-

ligious, his supernatural character. But now that you have passed through one street, will you consider the thing? We know what you will say if you do. “Ah, I did not understand the mystery of the iron gate. I know how impassable it seemed. But as one in a dream I walked through as it swung noiselessly open before me. Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me.”

But Peter still further considered what use he should make of his experience; therefore he came to the place where the button had been pressed, and he learned that prayer is the key which unlocks all iron gates; and he declared what God had done. What prayer meetings we should have if you would, like Peter, “consider the thing”! What a meeting of power and of praise it would be!

We should hear from a mother. She would say, “My prison was a sick-room. My jailers were my sick children, and my chains were the mental and physical weariness I felt from long, long watching. I thought I should never survive the trial. And then, when I thought to escape, I was threatened with complete collapse—that was my iron gate. But it opened to me of its own accord, and I came out. I praised my constitution until I considered the thing, but now I know that the Lord sent His angel.”

The Christian experience of another extends over many years. He would say, “When I was a young man I got into evil company; my keepers were my companions, my chains were the habits by which I was bound. Then a change came so gradually as to be imperceptible, but I saw my bondage, and arose, and little by little I came out past the first and second ward. Then came the iron gate, and I thought I never could make the change which was demanded, but I did—and the gate opened. I was disposed to praise myself, and to boast a little; but on consideration I saw it was an angel's work, and the angel's name was Grace.”

But the angel always comes by invitation. Behind all such deliverances somewhere there is being exercised a ministry of intercession. “Prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.” Yes; by way of the throne of grace it is still possible to loose the chains by which men are bound. We have but to send our petitions heavenward, and the iron gate will open of its own accord, for He Who shutteth and no man openeth, and openeth and no man shutteth, is our Saviour, our Friend, our never-failing Deliverer. Let us talk much with Him.

“ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED”

By Rev. T. I. Stockley, D.D., Dean of Toronto Baptist Seminary.

More than three thousand years ago an anxious thinker asked the question, “How shall man be just with God?” This question is certainly ancient, but it is not obsolete nor antiquated. Indeed it is an “up-to-date” inquiry, a question for each of us at this very hour. That which makes the question truly modern is the fact that it is a heart question, and heart questions are the same in all ages and among all peoples.

Observe that it does not ask, “How shall man be just with *man*?” That need not be a difficult problem. The

question which we have named is a much more serious one than that. Look at it again, “How can I, a sinful soul, be declared just, and be fully accepted in the presence of the Holy God?” In all ages men have felt the pressure of this difficulty, and various methods have been adopted in order that men may be brought into right relations with God. But all human efforts to solve the problem have ended in failure. God alone can give the answer; and we rejoice with joy unspeakable that our God of infinite grace has devised a plan

by which the guiltiest of men may find acceptance before His most holy law. There are two of Paul's great Epistles especially, the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, in which we find a clear and full answer to our great question. Paul, illumined by the Spirit of God, tells us that a lawbreaker may become a justified man, and he tells us how this may be. Let us listen.

The great doctrine of "Justification by Faith" needs to be sounded out with great power and clearness to-day, because the modern pulpit generally has nothing to say about it. We may consider this truth in two ways. First as an act: It is not a question of growth or steady progress in a moral course. It is an act of God. "It is God that justifieth." Men often attempt to justify themselves: But when a man knows that he is guilty, and is compelled to admit it, by what means can he declare himself to be just? Nor can one man justify another, for both are guilty before God. But what a delight it is to know that God does justify guilty men!

He does this by His wondrous grace. The Divine Word says, "Justified freely by His Grace". Grace is the divine Fount whence this blessing flows.

"Grace first contrived a way
To save rebellious man."

Grace plans and provides the way. All through God's wondrous method grace reigns. Human merit finds no place in God's plan of justification: to introduce it would be an impertinence.

Another aspect of this act of God is that it is judicial. Law has much to say against a guilty man, and yet the Judge of all the earth can acquit him and declare him just. If you ask, "How can this be?" the answer is that a sinner is provided with a righteousness which has been wrought out by Another, namely, the Incarnate Son of God. This divine Substitute obeyed all the law of God for sinful men. He did this outwardly and inwardly from His first breath to His last, and also paid its utmost penalty for guilty men. Law and judgment rest with perfect contentment in the finished work of Christ, and with the same complacency they gaze on every sinner sheltered there. So justification is an act of God in the Court of Divine Justice.

This act is not a matter of gradual development. It is an instantaneous act. There are no degrees in Justification. One moment a man may be laden with his guilt, trembling in the presence of a holy and righteous God; but the next moment he may stand fully accepted before that same Righteous One. One moment the clouds of divine judgment may be hanging threateningly over a sinner's head, but the next moment the sky may be blue with love Divine, and bright with the Heavenly Father's smile.

And when God justifies a sinner, He does it completely. "Justified from all things" is the Word of Truth. No charge is left undealt with, no spot of guilt remains. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" Can the work be other than complete when a soul is "accepted in the Beloved"? His righteousness is complete. His resurrection from the dead declares that not a single sin remains unatoned.

Then as an act of God, justification towers up in majesty and in wondrous grandeur. The justified soul may well sing—

"Bold shall I stand in that great day,
For who ought to my charge shall lay,
While, through Thy blood, absolved I am
From sin's tremendous curse and shame?"

This great privilege may be considered too as a comprehensive blessing. It is a blessing which includes pardon, the absolute blotting out of all our sin. Justified souls are pardoned souls. The sins of the justified man are forgiven freely, fully, and eternally. They are "borne away", "cast into the sea", and "remembered no more for ever". Some teachers would tell us that justification ends there, that it is another term for the forgiveness of sins. But forgiveness is a negative blessing, and we need something positive, and this is what God bestows—a positive gift of righteousness.

Bunyan in his story of the "Pilgrim" tells us that while the pilgrim stood before the Cross of Christ, looking and weeping, "behold, three shining ones came to him, and saluted him with, "Peace be unto thee". The first said to him, "Thy sins be forgiven". The second stripped him of his rags, and clothed him with change of raiment. It is this change of raiment which is the positive gift, and it is included in justification. It means that He, the perfectly obedient One through to the very death of the Cross, is "made unto us righteousness". And could anything be more beautiful than this? In the eye of God the Father it is the loveliest thing in the universe; and it is this which is imputed to the believing sinner.

Some years since I travelled from Lucerne in Switzerland to Milan in North Italy by the St. Gothard Railway. It was in the month of February. The day before our journey there had been a heavy fall of snow upon the mountains, but on the day of this journey it was brilliantly sunny. Everywhere the scene was very beautiful. The mountains were dressed in their garment of newly fallen snow, and then, as the sunlight fell upon them, they shone as if they were wrapped in a garment of crystals. It was a scene of spotless and radiant whiteness. I have never seen anything more brilliantly white. But that shades off into the dreariest blackness in comparison with the glorious robe of righteousness which wraps around the justified man. The obedience of Jesus our Saviour is beyond all expression beautiful, and that gift is included in the blessing of justification.

Amazing to tell, this blessing involves every other blessing. Listen to Romans, chapter eight, verse thirty: "Whom He justified, them he also glorified." Justification stands at the beginning of the Christian life; glorification gives the crown to all the rest. Now, if both ends of the golden chain are sure to the believer, it must mean that all the intervening links are also sure. This means that every blessing which the soul may need all the way to glory is certainly his, and can be appropriated and enjoyed.

(To be continued in next week's issue.)

THE WEEK-END IN JARVIS STREET.

Sunday was a very good day, although the beginning of the Shriners' Convention in the city rather disorganized the city's life, and made the regular work of the churches more difficult. We had a very good attendance in the Sunday School for a summer morning, 1,394. The Pastor preached on "The Marriage of the Lamb" in the morning, and the sermon appearing in this issue in the evening. About fifteen came forward confessing their faith in Christ.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"FOR JONATHAN'S SAKE".

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, June 8th, 1930.
Broadcast CKGW 690 k.c. 434.8 metres.

(Stenographically Reported)

"And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?"—II Samuel 9:1.

Prayer before the Sermon.

O Lord our God, we know of no way of access to Thy holy presence but through the rent veil of the Saviour's flesh, by the way that is sprinkled with blood; therefore we bow together this evening at the mercy-seat where Thou hast promised to meet with us. We come with boldness that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Especially, O Lord, we invoke the aid of Thy Holy Spirit that we may render to Thee this evening a spiritual service. We acknowledge that we have sinned against Thee, that we have forfeited all right to come where Thou art; and yet we rejoice that the blood has been shed, that—

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains."

Many of us, by faith, have come to that Fountain, and we have found grace there such as we could find no where else. Thou hast cleansed heart and conscience, and made it possible for us to draw nigh unto Thee with the assurance that we shall find acceptance in Thy sight. O Lord, we come with thanksgiving and with the voice of praise. Thy loving kindnesses are without number. If we were to count them they are more in number than the sands of the sea. Thou hast blessed us in a thousand ways: Thou hast given us health and strength, food and raiment; Thou hast blessed many of us with Christian associations, with happy home life. We thank Thee for all Thy temporal mercies. We especially praise, Thee that Thou hast brought us from strangerhood into Thy family. Thou hast made us Thy children, and if children then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. We thank Thee for our standing in Christ, that we are able to rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by Whom we have received the atonement.

We beseech Thee to grant to every one in this house, and to those who worship with us at a distance, a sense of Thy nearness at this hour. May the Holy Ghost take of the things of Christ and disclose to our wondering view His unsearchable riches! How rich we are! How highly privileged are they who are permitted to come where God is, to hold commerce with the Skies, and to present their petitions before Him Who is the King of kings and Lord of lords! Thus we come with holy boldness at this hour. We thank Thee that there is no need too small, nor a need too great, to bring to Thee.

We pray Thee, O Lord, now that we have Thine ear, now that the Sacrifice of the cross is made real to us by the operation of the Holy Ghost in our hearts, to help us to present our petitions before Thee. We thank Thee that the thoughts of our hearts are known to Thee, and that the Holy Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Hear, we beseech Thee, the unspoken desire; hear the earnest longings of human hearts as we worship toward Thy holy temple through the merits of Him Who is at once the Temple, the Sacrifice, and our one High Priest.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, to bless those who are deprived of the privileges of public worship such as we enjoy this evening: those who have been chosen in a furnace of affliction, those who have long suffered some bodily ailment. Though they cannot come where we are, we rejoice that Thou canst go where they are. We commend them all to Thee this evening. There are some who are aged and infirm:

life, for the most part, is behind them, and they are looking toward the west. Thou hast promised that at evening time it shall be light. We pray that the closing days of life may be to them the brightest and best of all. We remember how Thy servant Jacob did once say, "All these things are against me", and yet before Thou didst call him hence Thou didst enable him to say, "The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads." We beseech Thee to help us all to put our trust under the shadow of Thy wings, and to rejoice that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.

Discover this evening, we pray Thee, the man who is hiding from Thee, the man who has shut his heart against the thousand appeals of the gospel. O Thou conquering Christ, take possession of him and by Thy sovereign grace compel his surrender to Thy gospel and to Thyself. We pray Thee to meet any who are all but plunged into the depths of despair, the man who has tried a thousand times and failed, the man who is being beaten and utterly defeated by his sins and thronged with enemies against whom he has no power. Come in and take possession of that defeated soul. The strong man armed keepeth his palace, and his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and spoileth his goods. Thou Stronger than the strong man armed, bring deliverance to defeated men and women to-night. May Thy gospel prove, in the experience of multitudes, to be the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

Bless the mothers at home with little children. Bless the nurse as she ministers to the sick. Be gracious to any who are compelled of necessity to labour on Thy day. If any, while they labour, hear Thy word, draw near to them and speak that they may hear the voice of God rather than the voice of man.

Help us as we come to Thy holy Book. Unveil its treasures to our view; help us that we may receive something of the wealth of Thine abounding grace. Save those who are unsaved, we ask Thee, and help Thine own dear children to revel in the luxuries of Thy house, to delight themselves in the abundance of Thy mercies.

So bless all congregations assembled in Thy name where Thy word is preached. Be gracious to those who gather in small numbers; and who have perhaps little outward encouragement. May the presence of the Lord enrich all who call upon Him to-night!

Now for this place and for those who hear the message we entreat Thee. Especially we pray that the power of the Holy Ghost may accompany the living word. We beseech Thee to constrain men to come to Christ. Make this a night of salvation since we ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

I think I may safely assume that the characters of our text, David and Jonathan, need no introduction to this congregation, but that we meet them this evening as old friends. Like some magnificent, sculptured, column which has outlived its fellows, and amid the ruins of some old abbey still retains its ancient splendour, unmoved and unmarred by the touch of time, so amid the wrecks of many friendships, and the ruins

of many an unrequited love, the story of the mutual and immortal love of David and Jonathan stands out on the page of history as a golden monument, catching and reflecting the light which shines from the Eternal City, a perpetual reminder of the abiding and ever faithful friendship of our Creator, God Himself.

Saul was the first of Israel's kings, and Jonathan his son was heir-apparent to the throne. It would appear that on the first occasion of their meeting David and Jonathan conceived an unusual attachment for each other. It is recorded that each loved the other as his own soul. By some strange spiritual intuition, it was given to Jonathan to discern that the purpose of God in respect to the succession lay in a direction opposite to that of human expectation; and that David and not Jonathan was the divinely-appointed successor to Saul in the throne of Israel. In anticipation of the accomplishment of the divine purpose, when David should be exalted to the throne, and the kingdom should be established under him, Jonathan proposed that they should make a covenant with each other, by the terms of which David was to guarantee his kindness to Jonathan's house for ever: "Thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever", said Jonathan. To this David assented, and the covenant was made and sealed between them. When years had passed, Saul and Jonathan fell together on Gilboa's mount, and David, you will remember, lamented over his friend, saying, "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." And when other years had passed, and David had come to the throne, and God had put the fear of him and the dread of him upon all the nations round about, from that seat of authority and privilege David asked the question of the text. He remembered the promise he had made to his friend; he remembered the terms of the covenant into which they mutually had entered; and he asked, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

It is not of David and Jonathan primarily that I speak to you this evening, for behold a Greater than Jonathan is here. I shall speak to you therefore for a little while of a sovereign's love expressed, a wealth of love exhibited, and a wondrous love explained.

I.

I begin, then, with an examination of THIS EXPRESSION OF A SOVEREIGN'S LOVE: "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness?" David did not ask that his enemies should be brought into his presence that he might be afforded an opportunity to show his displeasure, to exercise his royal authority in anger and in judgment. On the contrary, he recognized that he was there as God's representative. It was not his own kindness, but the kindness of God he was to dispense. This was he who said: "Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." And of the surplus of the lovingkindness, of the love of God, he desired to distribute to those who were in need. That is my subject this evening: that the kindness of God is no fiction but a fact; that it is a truth which you and I need to believe, of which we need to be profoundly convinced. There is such a thing as the kindness of God; and if men and women who hear me this evening would really believe, there

is not one of us who would not find his or her life transformed, for in the measure in which we believe in the lovingkindness of God, in the measure in which we learn to rest in His love, shall we grow up into Him in all things.

The kindness of God has been expressed in many ways. First of all, it is expressed in the works of His hands; for it is written: "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."

Everywhere God has His witnesses which bear testimony to the truth of the kindness of God. This world is full of evidences of the great fact that He Who made it and arranged it for our habitation is the Lover of our souls. The minerals of the earth—the tin, the lead, the iron, the copper, the silver, and the gold—these are but bells which call us to worship in His temple, Who inhabits the praises of Israel. One hundred fathoms deep, where the coal is mined to warm the feet of little children, to cook dinner for a million mouths, to provide power to a million hands, to bridge the oceans and span the continents, and make men ten thousands miles apart the neighbours of each other,—in the cellars of this great house we call the world, by the light of a collier's lamp, the enlightened understanding can read the message of the Bible that "God is love".

All the great forces of nature, the lightnings which make a way for the rain, the Niagaras, the air we breathe—all these great forces are but our Father's horses which, though running wild in His world, were designed to be harnessed to our purposes, to carry our messages, to drag our carriages, to do for us that which our fathers thought to be impossible. And, if I may paraphrase the Psalmist's sayings, if our ears are trained to catch the music of Love's message, we may hear it thundered by the waters as they break upon the bounds which God has set that they turn not again to cover the earth; it is carolled by the springs of the valley as they run among the hills, and give drink to every beast of the field; we may hear it above us in the trees of God's planting, where the birds make their nests, where they sing among the branches; it is echoed from the high hills where the wild goats find refuge, and from the rocks where the conies dwell; it is borne upon the breeze which plays upon the grass which groweth for the cattle, and upon the herb designed for the service of man; on the great and wide sea where go the ships, where men do business in great waters; on harvest plain, in flowered dale, and on the highest sun-kissed mountain peak, there is left the impress of a loving hand.

The lovingkindness of God is everywhere. It sparkles in the dewdrop of the morning; it shines in the shadowless noontide; it is painted on the rainbow in the cloud, and when wrapped with evening shadows you may read it in the crimson of the sunset; while at night "the heavens declare the glory of God", and the stars bear witness to this everlasting truth. "The kindness of God"—the seasons sing it in their march; the years echo it in their flight; the generations write it as they pass; the centuries engrave it on their monuments, to speak when they are gone—everywhere the lovingkindness of God appears, and this earth, once

deluged with vengeance, is now flooded with the kindness of God; so that as then with wrath so now with mercy the tops of the highest hills are covered. All nature is lighted by the face of God; all nature is vocal with the message of His love if but our eyes were opened to see and our ears unstopped to hear,—

“For he whose eyes the Lord anoints
His tender love may see,
In radiant hill and woodland dim,
And tinted sunset sea;
For not in mockery does He fill
Our earth with light and grace,
He hides no dark and cruel will
Behind His smiling face.”

I know that is rather a popular doctrine in some quarters. Someone will say, “I believe all that, sir. I am responsive to the testimony of nature. I have long believed that there was a testimony in nature, and I myself love to commune with her.” Ah yes, but strangely enough the testimony of nature is not sufficient: You remember how Byron sang—I always call him in my thought “poor Byron”. He was a great genius, and yet his whole life was a tragedy—you recall these words?—

“There is a pleasure in the pathless woods;
There is a rapture on the lonely shore;
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in its roar.”

But poor Byron never found in the “pathless woods” a path that led to God; nor in the “rapture on the lonely shore” was his soul ever caught up in heavenly communion. We read in the Word of God that “the plain of Jordan was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord. . . . But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly.” Oh no, men’s natures are not changed by environment. The human race began its course under the most favourable conditions possible. We began in a garden that was vocal with the praises of God. Yet, notwithstanding ten thousand voices proclaimed the love of God, the voice of the tempter was heard above all the others, and “sin entered into the world, and death by sin.”

Therefore, my friends, the Lord has given to us not only the testimony of nature, but a *written Word*. I have not time to quote this evening the many passages in the Bible which declare the lovingkindness of God. I heard a man say once that he read through the Bible to find out what it had to say of the love of God, and that he found nothing about love until he came to the New Testament. I wanted to challenge him, and ask him to show me his Bible, for that is not true of mine. “As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.” That is in the Old Testament. “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.” That is in the Old Testament. “The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” That is in the Old

Testament. The Old Testament is just as full of the love of God as the New Testament. In fact, the whole Bible is a bound volume of the Father’s love-letters. If He had not loved us He never would have spoken to us at all. I know there are hard things in the Bible—because there are hard things in your life and mine to be dealt with; but it is Love that deals with them. “How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.” Thus God communed with Himself, as though He would ask Himself what He should do with these rebellious children of His. “The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.”

Men have not given heed to the written Word any more than they have listened to the testimony of nature. Therefore *God has given us still clearer evidence of His love for men.*

When I was a boy there was a man who used to sit at one end of old Bristol bridge in England on a camp-stool, with a large Bible on his knees before him, and with a little cup fastened about his neck into which passers-by threw their pennies as he read. His Bible was not like yours and mine; he did not read it with his eyes but with his fingers, for he was blind. He had one favourite passage, and I have heard him read it again and again, spelling out the words with his fingers, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

You will recall that on the eighth day after His resurrection, when the disciples were gathered behind shut doors for fear of the Jews, Jesus Christ appeared again in the midst of them. On this occasion, one disciple who had been absent a week earlier, Thomas, called Didymus, was present. Our Lord said to Thomas—if I may again resort to paraphrase—“Thomas, I have been a long time with you, telling you every morning, every noonday, every evening, always the same old story that God is love. But though I have been a long time with you, yet thou hast not known me, Thomas. And so at last I have brought to you a blind man’s Bible. Come near and read it with your fingers! It is written in my hands and feet and side, that God loves the world.” Since Jesus Christ died at the place called Calvary this sinful world has been left without excuse for refusing to believe in the love of God. God has spoken His last word in the Word Incarnate, and in Him He has proclaimed this everlasting truth that is wrought into the very fabric, into the very constitution of the universe, that is proclaimed by every voice that speaks, by every creature He has made, the everlasting truth, that God is love.

II.

Let us now consider for a few minutes *THE WEALTH OF LOVE EXHIBITED*. “Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him?” David did not issue a general and unrestricted invitation for all and sundry to come and receive the kindness of God at his hand. The kindness of God was offered to particular persons, and only such might receive it from him. Who were they? *It was required that they be members of the house of Saul.* And what

was the house of Saul? The name of Saul was representative to David of the bitterest hostility, the most murderous hatred, of which he had ever had experience. Again and again Saul had prepared a javelin for David's breast, saying, "I will smite David to the wall." In thought and in purpose he had shed the blood of David repeatedly. He hated him, and was therefore his murderer. But now David asks that his enemy be brought before him that he might show the kindness of God unto him.

How unlike some men! I have read the story somewhere of Sir Harry Parkes, once prominent in the public life of Australia, and Prime Minister of New South Wales. He was one who rose to an exalted position from the humblest station. He began as a very poor boy and worked his way up until he occupied the first position in the land. One day as he was sitting in his office in conversation with a friend a servant brought in a card. Sir Harry looked at the card and turned to the servant and said, "Tell him to wait." Then the conversation between Sir Harry and his companion continued. But in a few minutes his visitor said, "Now, sir, I know you are busy, and that others are waiting to see you; I will withdraw." "Oh no," said he quite leisurely, "sit down. Do not be in a hurry." "But sir," said his visitor, "did your servant not say to you just now that there was some one waiting?" Sir Harry replied, as he picked up the card from his desk, "Oh yes, I know the gentleman. He is one of the blue-blooded gentlemen with whom I have had association for many years. There was a time when he despised me and all associated with me. He held me in contempt as belonging to the lower orders of life. Now," said he, "I am up and he is down. Let him wait."

That was very human. It would have been human for David to do a thing like that. But, remember, he was a man after God's own heart; and it was because of that he said: "Is there not any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him?" The same principle is in the New Testament: "But God commandeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The message of the gospel is for sinners. The promise of grace is for sinners. The promise of the wealth of the Father's house, and all the abundance of the heavenly city, is reserved and prepared exclusively for sinners. Nobody else has any claim upon it; we must be prepared to acknowledge our relationship to the house of Saul.

But there are some people who do not subscribe to that somewhat ancient doctrine. They are rather ashamed of their family lineage, and have written another especially for their own satisfaction. I remember some years ago a man who had had a great deal of trouble, who seemed to have been chosen in the furnace of affliction, came to see me to tell me a tale. He shut the door of the study after him as though he had something very confidential to relate. He said, "You know, Pastor, I like to think sometimes that if everybody had their due I should not be as I am to-day; for," he said, "while I do not say very much about it, I am related to a certain outstanding family"—and he gave me the name of an historic family. He told me, in little more than a whisper, that away back there across the sea, where his family had its origin, there was a great fortune. How many millions it was

I do not know, but it was yonder in Chancery, and if only he could establish the line of connection, and prove what, to his own satisfaction at least, was true, he would immediately come into possession of all this vast wealth which had been left by an earlier representative of the family. The family was a titled family—I am not sure whether he would have been an earl or a duke, or what he would have been, if only he could have come into possession of that to which he believed himself to be entitled.

That man told me his tale as though no other tale like that had ever been told. He did not know that we all have a family story like that! Haven't you? I have! We are all blue-blooded folk; we are all related to belted earls, or dukes, or princes, or someone of the sort. We love to tell the tale until some young man goes to university and studies biology. Then he discovers that he belongs to another kind of family altogether! As for the fifth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, it is not true; it cannot possibly be true! Well, if my evolutionary friends are proud of their pedigree, they are perfectly welcome to it. I have not very much to boast of, but so far as my family history preserves any account of the past, I am absolutely sure that there were no apes in my family! I have no ambition to be even a Tarsan of the apes. I have not come of that line. But I have come of a very ancient family, of a very aristocratic family, a family that once had its home amid conditions that were absolutely ideal. I have come of a family that occupied a position of high honour. It was indeed "one of the first families." Decidedly "first"! My great-great-great-great-great grandfather was a very prominent man. Perhaps you have heard of him—his name was Adam! And the thing for which he was chiefly remarkable was that he was a great sinner!

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men." That sin is here, no sane man will question. That it is transmissible, nobody will doubt; for the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generations. Whether you like it or not, it is true, and the most satisfactory philosophy of human history that has ever been written is in the fifth chapter of Romans: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." It is to those who are related to Saul the lovingkindness of God is offered. If there is anybody left of the house of Saul, though a rebel and an enemy against God, to him God will shew kindness. If you will come under that classification, and say, "I have sinned, and come short of the glory of God", I assure you that all the wealth of the universe is at the command of faith.

There was a time when Saul was brought forth before the people by Samuel, who said, "See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people." When the people turned to Saul and saw that "he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward", they said, "God save the king." I suppose he was one of the finest specimens of physical manhood to be found, a man without blemish, a man whom the people felt instinctively was born to command; but now the question is asked, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul?"

Should we not expect to find the house of Saul still reigning in power and great glory? But alas! sin takes the king from the throne and casts him into the pit; it reduces the prince to the level of one of low degree. All that was left of the royal house of Saul was a poor man, lame on both feet: "Jonathan hath a son, which is lame on his feet"—poor, broken, crippled, mortal, who was a burden to himself, and of no use to anybody else. That was all that was left. Thus sin always destroys the handiwork of God; thus sin takes the sceptre from the hand of God's king, for you remember that in the beginning God, Who made all things, last of all made man in His own image and likeness; and to him God said, "Have dominion." Later it was written in the Word: "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands."

We were made to be kings, not serfs; we were made to rule; we were made to tread the world under our feet, and to reign under God as kings over His creation. But what is left of the once royal and glorious house? There is not a man here who will dare to stand on his feet and say, "I am left, and I am a king." There is not one listening to this message through the air who can truthfully say it. You were defeated yesterday. You tried to have dominion—but you failed. You tried to walk in the way of His commandments, but were unable to do so. You endeavoured to walk in the paths of righteousness, but you did not because you discovered the truth in this old story—you are lame on both feet: "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one."

"Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul?" Is there anybody who hears me this evening who will say, "I am glad you found me, for that is a true description of my state. Here I am, helpless, morally impotent, undone, lame on both feet; and I never knew there was a message of comfort, a message of joy and inspiration for a poor sinner like me." That is what the gospel is for. God's programme is to make men over again, to bring them back into fellowship with Himself.

Then Ziba, a servant of the house of Saul, answered David's question, and went away down yonder to Lo-debar. When he came into the presence of Mephibosheth and told him that he had a message from the king, and that the king desired to see him, I fancy Mephibosheth was something like Agag: he may have said, "Surely the bitterness of death is past? Did you tell him, Ziba, who I was? Does he know that I have the blood of Saul in my veins?" "Oh yes, he knows that." I think Mephibosheth would say, "I have been hiding away from him all these years. I did not want him to know that I was alive, but he has found me at last."

You have been like Mephibosheth. You have thought your salvation was to be found in putting as great a distance between you and the King as possible; whereas, your salvation will be found in coming into His presence. "Where art thou?" said a Voice in the garden. What was the answer? "I hid myself." And men have been hiding from God from that day until this, running away from Him and from every representative of the religion of Christ. You, my friend, have assumed that every Ziba who comes from the

King to summon you into His presence is a messenger of death, a messenger who comes to rob you of joy and of pleasure. But you are mistaken. I want to play the part of Ziba and find some Mephibosheth to tell him that the King wants to see him, and that he does not need to be afraid to come. There is kindness in the heart of the King for you, and nothing but kindness, therefore I beg you to come at His call. Your sins, which are many, will all be forgiven. He has promised that "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

But there is another parallel here. Mephibosheth must have said to Ziba, "It is a long way to Jerusalem for a lame man, and I cannot make my own way into the presence of the king." We know it is recorded that Mephibosheth could not go out to meet the king as others. He was lame on both feet—a poor, helpless, creature. But here is a beautiful word: "Then King David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar."

How are you to get from where you are by nature, to where you may meet God? You remember the sweet story in Genesis of how the sons came back after their second visit to Egypt and said to Jacob, "Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt." The house rang with the news, but "Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not". It was too good to be true. I think he said, "It cannot be true. Joseph would not stay yonder in Egypt and send word to me in this far-distant country and bid me come to him. If it were Joseph who is governor yonder he would know how old I am, how infirm I am, and how impossible it would be for me to make the journey." Then one of the sons—I do not know whether it was Reuben or Judah, but one of them I fancy—took the father by the hand and said: "We have told you all the words of Joseph, but that is only half our gospel. Come out and we will show you something else." The old man came out, and he looked at the long train of wagons loaded with all the good things of Egypt, and he said, "What is that?" And they said, "The wagons which Joseph has sent to carry you." "And when Jacob saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived: and Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive. It is just like him. He knew what I needed. I will go and see him before I die."

My message to you, my brother, whether in this congregation or listening from a distance, is that the grace of our Lord Jesus will meet you where you are. Does someone say, "I am glad, sir, I came this evening. I will think that over. There are some things I must put right. I am going to give up this, and I am going to abandon the other thing. And when I have made a little progress, then I think I will go." Oh no! That you will never do.

"If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all."

Come just as you are. Jesus will meet you just where you are, in all your weakness, in all your impotence—but not in Jerusalem. Blessed be His name! If you and I had to get up to Jerusalem before we could be saved, there would not be much chance for

us. But He finds us in Lo-debar, and brings us into His presence. God can save you right where you are this very minute.

Then Mephibosheth came, and when he came into the presence of the king "he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant! And David said unto him, Fear not; for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually." Completely overcome, Mephibosheth said, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am?" That is the publican's prayer in the Old Testament. "God be merciful to me a sinner." The king said, "Ah, Mephibosheth, if that is what you are, then there is all the more need of the kindness of God; and you shall have it at my hand and in my house." I wish I had time to speak of that principle more fully, but I touch it and leave it for you to think about: "Fear not . . . I will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father. Mephibosheth, you have heard the family history, have you not?" "Yes, my lord, O king." "And you have heard that Saul forfeited his inheritance by transgression?" "Yes." "Well, fear not: I will restore it all to you, and I will make you just as rich as you would have been if Saul had never sinned."

What is the gospel for? The gospel is God's way of restoring our souls. He Who made us in His own image and likeness in the beginning is not going to be defeated by the devil: "The Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." And, blessed be His name, He is going to do it. He is going to cleanse this old world until the whole creation is at last delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

John, on one occasion, saw a great multitude which no man could number. One of the elders, pointing to this great multitude, said to him, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" And John said, "I do not know." He threw the question back upon his questioner and said in effect: "I never saw anybody like that. Why, their garments are not soiled as though they had been on a journey. They are not disfigured as those who had been in battle, nor is there any evidence of weariness as those who had borne heavy burdens. This is something new to me. I never saw anything like it before." And the angel answered: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes"—the last trace of sin. As John looked about in the land of glory he could see absolutely no evidence of sin anywhere but in one place: "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne . . . a Lamb as it had been slain."

The Lord Jesus has so completely taken upon Himself our sin that the only mark of sin in Heaven is upon Him. Sin is done away,—

"In Him, the tribes of Adam boast
More blessings than their father lost."

My friend, you may begin life all over again. You may be born again; a new record may be written. You may come at last into the presence of God, by His grace, and stand without fault before the throne.

III.

What is the EXPLANATION OF THIS WONDROUS LOVE? "That I may shew him kindness"—it is the vicarious principle of the gospel—"that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake."

If Mephibosheth had only known it, he might have come knocking at the king's door long before that. He might have said, "I have come to ask a place at thy table." The king would probably have said, "Have you ever served your sovereign in the army? Have you rendered any service to the state?" "No, for I am lame on both feet; I cannot fight." "But have you served in any civic capacity? What have you done for the state?" "I shall have to confess that I have done nothing at all. I am poor and lame, and have been a burden to myself and to all my friends since the day that I suffered the injury which made me lame when I was but an infant in arms. I plead no merit of my own." "Then upon what terms do you ask for admission to my family and to my table?" Mephibosheth might have answered, "Did not the king swear to Jonathan that he would not cut off his kindness from his house for ever?" "I did. But you belong to the house of Saul, do you not?" "Yes; I have the blood of the king's worst enemy in my veins. But I belong to Jonathan too, and the blood of Jonathan neutralizes the blood of Saul. On the one hand, I am related to thy worst enemy; and on the other hand, I am related to the king's best friend. For Saul's sake I deserve death, but for Jonathan's sake thou wilt give me life, and admit me to thy table."

That principle lies at the base of the gospel. "Nothing in my hands I bring. I come as a poor, lame, man; but I can plead the blood of Christ." You have your choice, as we saw in the chapter we read to-night, whether you will appropriate the guilt of the first Adam or the grace of the Second.

Let me tell you a story, and send you away. There was a man who died in England, so far as was known, without an heir and without leaving a will. His solicitors looked everywhere for his last will and testament, but they could find none. They found only a word of direction, a scrap of a will, that the contents of the house should be sold by public auction at a certain time after his decease. The only will they could find was at last probated and executed, and it was supposed that the rest of the great estate would pass into Chancery, for he had made disposition only of the contents of his house.

On the day appointed people came together to buy rare pictures and other things of value. There were works of art by the old masters that brought fabulous sums, some of them hundreds of pounds; and some, even thousands. In the course of the sale the auctioneer held up a little picture. It seemed as though he regarded it as being of little value, but he offered it for sale. No one seemed to be interested in it, and

although he offered it again and again, no one bid; he could get no offer at all.

Presently when there was a lull in the proceedings an old lady timidly approached the auctioneer and said, "You offered a picture for sale just now, but nobody wanted it. I wish I could have it." "What do you want of that picture?" the auctioneer enquired. The old lady replied, "Nobody seems to know what it is. It is a portrait of the deceased gentleman's son. I was a nurse in the family when the child was born. I loved his mother, and when he was a little fellow I loved him for her sake. He grew into a fine lad, and I learned to love him for his own sake. When he was a young man, suddenly disease laid its hand upon him, and took him off in a few weeks. His mother soon followed him to the grave, and his father was left desolate; and not long after he went the way of the other two. Now they are all gone. Nobody seems to know, and nobody seems to care. I thought if I could only have that picture to remind me of all their kindness to me I should feel that I had a real treasure." "Then," said the auctioneer, "why did you not bid for it?" "Because I have nothing, sir, with which to buy it." "You have no money at all?" "All I have in the world is a shilling." "Very well, then, offer your shilling. I have instructions to sell everything without reserve. I will put the picture up for sale again, and you offer the shilling, and if no one offers more, you shall have it."

After a while the auctioneer again held up the picture and said, "How much can I get for it? How much am I offered for this?" The little old lady held up a shilling between her thumb and finger, and the auctioneer said, "I am offered a shilling. I am offered a shilling." Nobody offered more, and presently he knocked it down to her. She put it under her shawl, and, all interest in the sale being over for her, she started for home.

She determined to give the picture of her dead master's son the place of honour in her house, to put it before the door so that nobody could cross the threshold without seeing it. She rearranged her poor pictures on the wall, and as she was about to hang her new treasure she discovered that the back was somewhat bulged. She tried to straighten it, and as she pulled out the tacks something inside rolled up, and dropped on the floor, and she picked up a stiff document. She took it to the window and read it over and over and over again. Little by little it dawned upon her intelligence that she had stumbled upon the last will and testament of the deceased multimillionaire. The terms of the will were very brief: "I bequeath all my estate, without reserve, to anyone who loved my son enough to want his picture." The old lady discovered that she had become heir of her master's estate because she loved his son.

"Whosoever loveth is born of God." Open your heart to Jesus Christ. Pray that He may be formed in you the hope of glory. Ask for His picture, the restoration of God's image in you; and with that prayer all the wealth of heaven shall be yours, for "all things are your's; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

Our time is nearly gone, and we shall not have time to go through with our invitation before our radio period ends. But some have heard me to-night who

need this salvation. We do not see them, but yonder some man in his room has heard who is unsaved. I do not know where they are. Perhaps some man is in an oil-station, far away from God. But God is not far away from him. You can send up a prayer from there, and I am going to ask the congregation to pray, and all who hear me, in a moment, "O Lord, let me have the picture of Jesus Christ. Come into my life, and take sin away, and make me over again so that I may be like Him." If you pray that prayer, all Heaven will stoop and the wealth of eternity will be yours.

Let us pray: O Lord, Thou art everywhere present. Hear the prayers that ascend from many hearts this evening. We come like Mephibosheth saying, What is thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am? May we hear that gracious response, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jesus' sake. We have no merit of our own, we are rebels everyone, we have grieved Thee ten thousand times; but have mercy upon us. Blot out all our transgressions, take away our sins. Bring us from Lo-debar to Jerusalem, from the famine country to the King's table, from strangerhood to fellowship with God, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

More About the Russian Missionary Society.

In the January-May issue of *The Friend of Missions*, published by Pastor William Fetler, a copy of which has just come to hand, on page twelve, there is an article entitled, "Our New Treasurer", where contributors to the Russian Missionary Society are asked to send all gifts to Mrs. M. Billester, Treasurer of the Russian Faith Mission, Toronto. What is the "Russian Faith Mission"? Why is it necessary for Pastor Fetler to change his name? If Pastor Fetler is on solid ground, why should he adopt a new name for the work he proposes to carry on?

The Editor of this paper was in California, as we intimated last week, in the early part of 1928. We have never known a sharper critic of Pastor Fetler and his work than Rev. M. Billester, who was in California at that time. We went with Mr. Billester and Pastor Fetler to the home of Dr. W. E. Blackstone, the author of "Jesus Is Coming", from whom Pastor Fetler received something like \$15,000 for the printing of the book, "Jesus Is Coming" in Russian. We did not know until afterwards the purpose of the visit, but Pastor Fetler went into an inner study with Dr. Blackstone, and we later learned it was for the purpose of receiving a cheque from him, which was a portion of this \$15,000. Mr. Billester later informed us that he had himself seen on the shelves of the Revival Press House in Riga large quantities of Dr. Blackstone's book, "Jesus Is Coming", printed but not bound, and therefore not in circulation.

We write this note to advise our readers not to send a solitary dollar to Mrs. Billester—or to anyone representing Pastor Fetler's work—until they have read the comprehensive statement of the facts of the case which will shortly be issued by the Trustees of the American section of the Russian Missionary Society. The headquarters of the Russian Missionary Society, incorporated by law, on this continent, is still: 1844 West Monroe Street, Chicago, Ill. The Trustees of that Society are impregably established in their legal and moral rights, and determined to discharge their full responsibility to the American and Canadian donors who, during past years, have transmitted funds through them for the work of the Russian Missionary Society. We advise our friends to await the issue of the Trustees' statement.

DR. STOCKLEY GOES TO ENGLAND.

Dr. T. I. Stockley, Dean of Toronto Baptist Seminary, left Toronto for Quebec to-day, June 10th, and will sail by the Empress of Australia, for England, June 11th, where he will spend the summer. Dr. Stockley's English address will be: 501 London Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey, England.

WHAT SEVERAL LITTLE BIRDS HAVE SAID.

This is the month of June, and most of the birds who have been away for the winter are back again. We do not know whether some of our *Gospel Witness* birds were able to go away for the winter or not. Most of them are so warm-hearted and so fervent of spirit that they do not feel the winter cold, and do not need to seek the balmy climate of the sunny south. At all events, winter and summer, like Noah's dove, they fly about *The Gospel Witness* ark. So many birds have visited us lately, and have brought us so much material—whether olive leaves or something else remains to be seen—that we have not found time to put them all together, but we shall tell the story next week.

The subject of the story will be Professor Marshall, late Professor of New Testament Greek at McMaster University, who will shortly return to England. Next week we shall not ask the question, but we shall tell why Professor Marshall is leaving. We shall show that he is not leaving of his own accord. Meanwhile we give our readers a quotation from Professor Marshall's speech at the Stanley Avenue Convention Wednesday evening, October 21st, 1925. Toward the close of his address Professor Marshall said:

"If you do not want me, all I ask you is this. Say the word now. There are plenty of English Baptists who do, plenty, and I am quite prepared to pick up and go back to England at the earliest possible moment.

"If it comes to that, all I have got to say to you is this, and I am sure the Chancellor and Mr. Matthews will not regard me as unkind in saying it: Don't appeal to the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland again for help. I come to you in their name, and if you send me back in that humiliating fashion, you may rest assured that if you want them to help you again they will turn a deaf ear to your appeals."

Next week we shall tell why Professor Marshall is being "sent back in that humiliating fashion", and we venture to express the hope that the Convention of Ontario and Quebec have properly considered the consequences to themselves in cutting off all help from the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland in the future. We promise our readers a very interesting story on this subject next week.

TO OUR RADIO FRIENDS.

The messages which have reached us thus far from our radio hearers this week have been just as encouraging as the letters of the two weeks preceding. We have been especially pleased to hear from many shut-ins who cannot possibly get to church. We received a telephone message from one dear fellow who was terribly injured in the war, and who is a perpetual sufferer. He used to manage to get to church, but could not get up the stairs. His body is held in some sort of steel case. He is very patient, and delightfully cheerful, notwithstanding his pain. He called us up to tell us the benediction the service is to him now that he can no longer get to church. Another man writes of his mother who is seventy-six years of age, who had been receiving blessing. A daughter-in-law writes lovingly of her mother-in-law who is eighty-

seven. This dear old lady husbands her strength by remaining in bed until nearly service time, that she may be able to stand the strain of sitting up to listen.

Last week we playfully told our hearers that we were assured the broadcast was perfect, that voice and music were going out from the station with great clarity, and if any of our hearers were unable to hear clearly it was not due to the speaker's nearness to the microphone, but either to local conditions or defective radio sets. This daughter-in-law says it would be a great boon to her aged mother-in-law if she could have a small set that could be used with ear-phones; so that she could remain in bed. If any of our readers have such a set not in use, which they would like to give away, we should be glad to hear from them.

Radio Contributions.

We have received a number of contributions this week, but at this writing, Tuesday afternoon, not sufficient to meet the weekly expense. All contributions will be gratefully received, and promptly acknowledged.

We should be glad to hear from any of our readers of special blessing coming to anyone. We have heard of some places where as many as twenty were gathered in to hear the service. Why not do a little missionary work? Have a meeting in your house, and invite your neighbours in. Then send us the names of all who have listened in, that we may send to everyone a sample copy of *The Witness* containing the sermon to which they have listened.

A GREAT ACHIEVEMENT.

The new building of the Central Baptist Church, London, of which the one and only James McGinlay is Pastor, was opened June 1st to 4th, Mr. McGinlay preaching morning and evening on Sunday, Rev. W. E. Atkinson on Tuesday, Rev. C. J. Loney on Wednesday, and the Editor of this paper on Monday. Mr. McGinlay began his work in London only about seventeen months ago. He began with a group of about one hundred people who felt themselves forced to withdraw from the Adelaide Street Church because of that church's endorsement of the old Convention in its support of Modernism. The church had no building, but worshipped in a building known as the Merza Temple, in the morning; and in a theatre downtown, seating thirteen hundred and fifty people, in the evening. Within a month or so Mr. McGinlay was preaching to the largest congregation of any denomination in the city of London, and this congregation has been maintained.

The new church, in itself, represents a stroke of genius. They have had many conversions, so that their membership is now somewhere between two and three hundred. Right in the heart of a fine residential district in London, corner of Queen's Ave. and Adelaide Street, they bought a magnificent old residence, on a large lot that to city dwellers looks like a small farm. This old mansion cost \$67,000 to build forty-eight years ago. There were no lath-and-plaster partitions, but the interior walls were of brick, five bricks thick. They took out of these inner walls a hundred and

Spend your Holidays at

FISHER'S GLEN

JULY 26th—AUGUST 4th

twenty-five thousand bricks. The house was full of rich panellings and carved work, which have enabled them to put panelled work around the entire auditorium. The auditorium has a gallery on three sides, and seats quite comfortably eight hundred people. There are many class rooms, and a second Sunday School room or lecture hall that will seat about three hundred. On opening day the auditorium and the Sunday School hall were crowded to capacity, about nine hundred in one and three hundred in the other. By means of an amplifier Mr. McGinlay preached in both rooms at the same time.

The house and lot were bought for a third of what the house cost to build forty-eight years ago, when a dollar in building went as far as five dollars to-day, and perhaps farther. The price was \$23,000. For perhaps about \$50,000 they have erected a magnificent church in the midst of a small park, and having an equipment that could not be touched in the heart of Toronto for less than \$150,000. Indeed, the lot itself would cost far more than that.

In introducing the Editor of this paper Monday night, Brother McGinlay said that up to eight years ago he had never once heard the gospel, although he came from Scotland. He heard the word in Jarvis Street Church, and told us that he yielded himself to Christ in the Pastor's vestry.

Readers of *The Witness* will remember how richly blessed Brother McGinlay was in the Alton revival some years ago. There he established a healthy church, and sixteen months from the time he and Mr. Gordon Brown entered that village a splendid new building in Alton was dedicated. That work has been repeated on a larger scale in London in seventeen months. We believe there are great things in store for the Central Baptist Church, London.

While it must be recognized that Brother McGinlay is a man of special and quite unusual gifts, it cannot be denied that his great ministry in London is a further witness to the mighty power of the simple but glorious gospel of the grace of God. We trust our readers will remember London, and pray that more and more Brother McGinlay and his people may be used of God for His glory.

The Gospel Witness heartily congratulates Brother McGinlay and his church for what they have so splendidly accomplished in the name of the Lord.

JARVIS STREET MEMBERS—ATTENTION!

A Suggestive Action.

We have received a letter from one of the loyal and faithful members of Jarvis St. Church, enquiring about *The Gospel Witness*.

The Gospel Witness is sent to every church family. When new members are added to the church their names are added to *The Gospel Witness* list. But this particular member enquires as to her obligation; for she said she had not paid directly for *The Witness* since she became a member of the church. On learning from our records that she had been a member of the church for four years, and had been receiving *The Gospel Witness* all that time, she promptly sent us a cheque for eight dollars, as she said she wanted to pay for *The Witness* each year. Not content with that, she asked us also about the postage.

We are most grateful to this good friend for this suggestion. We do not want to make it a rule that *The Gospel Witness* will be sent only to such members as subscribe for it. But there must be about one thousand church families to which *The Gospel Witness* is mailed every week. If each of these were to follow this good lady's advice, what a joy it would bring to *The Gospel Witness* treasury! It would mean at least two thousand dollars a year income. And if the members were to do as this sister has done,—pay up for back years—we should certainly have to have a special thanksgiving service.

However, there is much in the power of suggestion; and we call the attention of all members of Jarvis St. Baptist Church to this action.

THE TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY.

Toronto Baptist Seminary will resume classes at the usual time in the autumn. A copy of the new prospectus will be sent all intending students on application.

We remind our readers that the work of this Seminary is maintained principally by Jarvis Street Church and the contributions that come from readers of *The Gospel Witness*. If you have not made your will, make it; and remember Toronto Baptist Seminary. If you have made your will, will you not consider whether you can find a little place in it for an addition, providing something for Toronto Baptist Seminary. Better still: if you are able, make a contribution now. And whether or no, pray for the work of this institution.

ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY FOR INVESTMENT.

We hope our readers will not weary of our mentioning from time to time in these pages needy causes which present worthy opportunity for service. So far as it is possible, *The Gospel Witness* is glad to be of service in this way.

A new church was formed in October, 1928, in North Toronto, known as the Melrose Park Baptist Church. It began with a membership of twenty. They had no building, but rented a room in the Wanless Public School. There they have been worshipping ever since. At their first Sunday School session there was one scholar. They now have an attendance of about seventy, with an enrolment of ninety. The membership of the church has increased to thirty.

This little band bought a lot in a fine location about a year and a half ago. The size of the lot is fifty by one hundred and ten feet, and the price was \$1,900. A payment of \$500 was made on the lot, and interest on the balance has, of course, been paid since then. This faithful little band are badly in need of a building, and if they could get their lot paid for they think they would be able to erect the basement of their church at an early date. By this means, of course, they would be relieved of the rent they pay for the school, and would have a building in which they could hold their week-night as well as Sunday services.

The Pastor of the church is Rev. J. R. Davison, 175 Ranleigh Ave., Toronto. We heartily commend this work to the consideration of our readers, and if there are in our *Gospel Witness* family any who feel led of the Lord to help this little band to clear off the remaining debt on their lot, so that they may go on with their building, they are invited to send their contributions either to *The Gospel Witness* office or to Mr. Davison direct.

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A series of sermons on the parable of the prodigal and his brother.

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A series of Thursday evening Bible Lectures from Genesis to II. Samuel.

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The Union Baptist Witness

These pages (14 and 15) are the official organ of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches in Ontario and Quebec.
337 Jarvis Street, Toronto, Canada.
W. GORDON BROWN, Editor.

REVIVAL.

The appalling need for revival of the old time religion is pressing many of our churches to pray for an outpouring on them of the Spirit of conviction and of power.

Meetings in Courtland.

Rev. Fred S. Kendal, "the powerful Jewish evangelist," is holding a campaign in the church of which Rev. R. D. Guthrie is pastor. These meetings followed the fifty-fifth anniversary of the church on Sunday, June 1st, when Rev. F. A. McNulty preached in stirring fashion morning and evening, in the auditorium of the church, which has been newly decorated. More about these revival meetings later.

And in Mitchell Square.

Evangelist Kendal went to Courtland from Mitchell Square Church, Rev. A. T. Finlayson, pastor. There the church celebrated its anniversary on May 25th, with large congregations, and a good day throughout. During the week following Mr. Kendal had the joy of seeing a number of young people receive Christ as their Saviour. The special meetings have continued with Mr. T. McClure as the preacher, through whom others, one by one, are being led to Christ.

Also in Brownsville.

June 8th was a unique day in the historic Brownsville Baptist Church, Rev. G. F. Watts, pastor. The founder of this church, through whom it was opened, and its building dedicated free of debt, half a century ago, was the preacher to a full house at the morning service; he is the oldest living Baptist preacher in this province, Rev. Dr. J. B. Moore. His message on "Faith" was a challenge to rest for salvation and satisfaction upon the sure promises of God. That evening his grandson, W. Gordon Brown, preached to well over two hundred people; and on the Gospel invitation, a good number of young people responded to the call of Christ. This church has done much for our Lord during the last fifty years; but if last Sunday be an indication, the years before it should be crowned with greatest glory for our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then in Orangeville.

The Emmanuel Male Quartette last Monday completed a ten-day campaign in Orangeville. Their devotion to Christ, their fine signing of the Gospel and their presentation of the claims of our Lord, have been a blessing to the community. Last Friday night a young Englishman, but six weeks out from the old country, deeply moved by the Gospel, confessed Jesus as his Saviour and Lord. Before a good congregation Sunday evening a mother, her babe in her arms, walked the aisle, to be followed a few moments later by her husband. With tears of repentance these two cried to God, and then were glad to confess to others their new-found Saviour. Monday evening a young man, lately come from Ireland,

where he was converted some five years ago, joined the church by baptism.

This Quartette of young men is now assisting Mr. C. Wright in special meetings in Fergus. Please pray for real revival in that town.

* * *

THE FRUIT OF OPEN-AIR PREACHING.

"Nine new members were received into church fellowship Sunday, June 1st, at Calvary Church, Ottawa; eight by baptism and one by experience. One lady was baptized, who was converted when a girl, but had been a backslider for some years. She was attracted to our church through the open-air meetings, held on a street corner near her home. Later, she attended our church services, was brought under conviction, restored, and is now a happy believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Praise God for the open-air work. Two more young people have applied for baptism and church fellowship."

"(Signed) (Miss) Doris Bell."

* * *

DOVERCOURT ROAD, TORONTO.

Revival has come to the church of which Rev. James Boyd is pastor. With Rev. Anthony Zeoli as evangelist, about one hundred have passed through the enquiry room, most of them seeking the Lord. On Sunday, June 1st, Pastor Boyd baptized twelve, about half of them converts from the meetings; and on the following Sunday another eight. On June 5th, he visited the Orangeville Baptist church to deliver a stirring address on the Holy Spirit in revival.

* * *

THE FIGHT FOR THE FAITH.

Pastor James Forrester is stirring things up in North Bay, and they need stirring! The other Sunday night he hit out, and he hit hard the errors of Seventh Day Adventism, a false sect that is working its way in North Bay.

On the same Sunday Mr. W. Wellington, who is working with Pastor Forrester, held services at Redbridge and Widdfield, with blessing attending.

* * *

BAPTISM AND BUILDING IN ST. PAUL'S.

A bright and promising daughter of a family, formerly Roman Catholic, but now associated with St. Paul's Bilingual Baptist Church, Montreal, for two years set aside the influence of her parents and their Gospel church. She was influenced by a Catholic neighbor who said, "If you are baptized and become a Baptist, you may afterwards meet a fine young Catholic whom would like to marry, but he won't have you!" No wonder Pastor St. James says: "So you see that with Romanism, religion is a material thing to serve personal ends, and it is hard to fight, because it appeals to sentiment and to the interests of future prospects". But prayer was answered, and on the first day of June this French girl followed her Lord, in baptism.

To promote such work as this, St. Paul's Church is seeking better material equipment. Their building is going up, and they expect to use it in July. Nevertheless, they must have One Thousand Dollars for the first of August, and they are looking to the Lord for this sum.

Recently, they have been somewhat disturbed by miscreants, as yet unknown, who entered the plumber's shop, which they use as a meeting place, tearing and throwing about Bibles, hymn-books and tracts, so as to do not a little damage. Yes, we are still fighting the world, the flesh and the devil. May the Lord raise up many to help these noble witnesses in this great warfare.

* * *

PASTOR A. C. WHITCOMBÉ ORDAINED.

A Christian home, with parents who knew how to pray; a definite conversion at the early age of ten; a persistent call from God during years in business; a course of study in McMaster University, and successful work as a pastor; exceptionally clear views of the truth of God, and Alfred C. Whitcombe was recognized by a council of ninety-six delegates from twenty-eight churches, meeting in the Collier Street Baptist Church, Barrie, on Friday, June 6th. Rev. H. S. Bennett led in the ordination prayer; Rev. A. Thomson gave the charge to the candidate, and Rev. P. B. Loney, to the church; Rev. D. Alexander extended the right hand of fellowship; Dr. T. T. Shields spoke from the text: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake" (2 Corinthians 4:5); and Rev. A. C. Whitcombe pronounced the benediction. Needless to say, the fellowship of the delegates, in the gathering and around the bountiful tables provided by the ladies of the Collier Street, was a blessing to us all.

Collier Street annual meeting, held on June 3rd, showed additions to membership during the year to be nine; increase in attendance at the Bible School to be 50%; and contributions to outside work, including home and foreign missions and Toronto Baptist Seminary, to be One Dollar out of every Five raised. Surely these facts are an attestation to the work of the pastor.

* * *

ANOTHER ORDINATION.

Thirty-three delegates from sixteen churches responded to the roll call at the council gathered in Jarvis Street, on May 22nd, to consider the ordination of Mr. O. T. Johnston, our Jamaican brother. With Dr. T. I. Stockley as Moderator, the candidate gave a clear statement of his conversion, his call to the ministry—including remarkable leading to our Toronto Baptist Seminary—and his views of doctrine. When the council agreed to fellowship him, Rev. W. J. Thomson, of Long Branch, offered the ordination prayer, Dr. Stockley gave the charge to the candidate; and Rev. A. Thomson, of Mount Pleasant Road, gave

the right-hand of fellowship in the ministry; Dr. T. T. Shields closed the meeting with prayer. Rev. Mr. Johnston has preached in many of our churches, and has there endeared himself to all who heard him. He is now returning to the West Indies to carry on for the Lord.

OUR STUDENTS.

To the list of summer student work given last week, we may add that Mr. George Gorman is carrying on work at Terra Cotta, maintaining attendance at Sunday School and Church; and Mr. C. M. Oliver plans to hold meetings this summer in St. George, a village some ten miles from Brantford; and Mr. D. Baillie is doing evangelistic work as a member of the Emmanuel Male Quartette.

FIFTEEN YEARS IN HAMILTON.

"On June 1st our Pastor, Rev. Clifford J. Loney, entered upon the sixteenth year of ministry in Stanley Avenue Baptist Church, Hamilton, and a resolution was adopted as showing the appreciation and love in which he is held by his people. This work is in an important field, and more and more is the necessity of holding the fort against the inroads of modernistic teachings, particularly with the advent of the University and the need of combating unsound doctrine. Under the strong leadership of Pastor Loney we look for an enlarged and growing cause, bringing the unadulterated Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ within the hearing of all who wait on this ministry. (Signed) Clarence A. Challens."

The resolution thanked God "for the deep, spiritual, uplifting and helpful ministry taken by the pastor in the defense of the Gospel, and for the hundreds of souls who have found Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour, and for the countless numbers of lives consecrated and blessed by the preaching of the Word of God."

SAWYERVILLE, QUEBEC.

Rev. R. E. Jones has accepted a call to the Baptist Church in Sawyerville, P.Q., since Rev. W. H. Vincor has been led by circumstances to retire from the ministry for a time.

A FAREWELL FROM THE HOME CHURCH.

Our readers are much interested, we are sure, in our missionaries-elect for Liberia, Rev. and Mrs. E. Hancox. The annual meeting of the South End Baptist Church, where they have been working, when it was held on June 4th, brought encouraging reports. During the year there had been added to the membership by baptism, ten, three others also being immersed; four had joined on experience; there had been one loss by death, and ten by erasure; so that the net gain in membership was three. This church is self-supporting, although its membership is small, which means that the members have learned something of the grace of giving.

The following Sunday saw the closing services of the pastor's ministry in Owen Sound. The morning subject was "Our Present Responsibility", and with it laid to heart, a large number indicated their desire for full consecration, while several signified their willingness to devote their whole time to the ministry, either at home or abroad. Following the evening sermon on "Our Glorious Hope", one responded to the Gospel invitation.

Mr. and Mrs. Hancox are now touring the churches of our Union. We trust that a great part of our people will be able to meet them personally, so that in a much more definite way they may uphold them before the Lord, as they respond to the Macedonian call.

IS LIBERIA ON OUR HEARTS?

Is Liberia on our hearts? That is the question our returning missionary, Rev. A. J. Lewis, is pointedly asking. He tells again of the challenging need of dark Africa, as we quote from a letter to an intimate friend.

Pray! Pray!! Pray!!!

Are the people really burdened for our work there? Oh, I hope there is going up from them a great cry to God that His light and truth may prevail in this land of darkness and sin. Prayer, prayer, and more prayer is what we need to-day. How we need a great spiritual revival, if the Lord is going to carry a little longer! Yes, and a great missionary revival also. I wonder sometimes if all the pastors of the new Convention have the missionary vision.

Former Cannibals.

I have just recently returned from a long journey into the interior among the Gio people. These people were originally a cannibal people, and probably still are in secret. The man in charge of the government post among them told me that they make the people report all deaths, and then send a messenger to see that the body is buried. Before this there was no need to bury bodies at all.

Anklets and Smokes.

The horrible practices of their former life are indelibly stamped upon their faces, for a more hardened and vicious looking crowd of natives I have never seen, and they were most offensive in their disrespect even of a white man. Our Bassa people are about five feet in height, but these people average about six feet in height. The women of the tribe are coarse, ugly, unshapely and very masculine in every particular. They have the old custom of placing large bangles on their legs and ankles, made of iron, brass or aluminum. Those that have aluminum are very lucky, for carrying about eight or nine of the brass and iron ones around is a task. They are fixed on so they can never be taken off. Some have permanently fastened around the ankle, a big brass ring containing three cups, and in the cups three brass balls, and every time they walk you hear the music of the bells. I imagine they help the husband greatly in knowing just where his wife is, or where she is going! They are quite up to modern fashions in the fact that they nearly all smoke, and worry the life out

of a visitor, trying to get tobacco. They prefer clay pipes, which, of course, is not so modern, or maybe the modern fashion has not advanced that far! Yes, they powder also, only they smear the powder all over the face—usually white powder that shows up better on the black skin; and then they streak their hands through in completing, and when finished, they have something of a zebra appearance. As an aid to their habit of smoking, they extract the front tooth, so that they can expectorate better.

How Many Will One Bed Hold?

Their houses are round, whereas the Bassa houses are all square, and are built entirely without windows. The smoke from the fire in the centre of the hut finds its way through the roof somehow. Since the government enforces a tax for every room, the houses have only one room, and a man and several wives, plus a few children, all live thus together. Privacy is a thing unknown. You are obliged to stoop low in order to enter the hut, the doorways being very small. Inside the hut you find a mud bed about three feet wide, and about a foot high from the ground. This is a seat for the day, and a mat thrown over it makes the bed for the night. This bed stretches all around the hut, and it is surprising how many people it can accommodate.

These people are still waiting for the Gospel message, as they have been waiting for centuries; and now that the Union has undertaken the task of reaching them with the Gospel, we shall have to give an account of our stewardship. May the Lord help us to reach them in a short while, for it only takes a few years to send hundreds of them into an awful eternity.

IMMANUEL CHANGES PASTORS.

Last week we reported that Pastor A. J. Milligan, because of ill-health, had resigned his work at Immanuel, Hamilton. During his nine months pastorate, twenty-five were added to the church, many of them by baptism. At a farewell gathering, members and friends sought to show their love with a presentation. Rev. W. F. Mesley, now of South Zorra, has been called to this pulpit, and plans to take charge on September 1st.

SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE MONTREAL-OTTAWA DISTRICT.

The Second Annual Conference of the Montréal-Ottawa District Regular Baptist Churches will be held with Calvary Church, Ottawa, June 25th and 26th. Five sessions will be held, for which has been arranged an interesting programme, the outstanding features of which will be a Great Missionary Rally on Wednesday evening, when the new missionaries to Liberia, Rev. E. and Mrs. Hancox, will be introduced, and an address will be given by Rev. W. E. Atkinson (with illuminated map and stereopticon views); and the presence of Rev. J. F. Holliday, B.A., of Toronto, who will speak on Young People's work on Thursday afternoon, and will deliver his Hamilton F.B.Y.P.A. Presidential address on the Book of Revelation, on Thursday evening—the closing gathering.

Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

Vol. V.

No. 2

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, Editor.

Lesson 26 June 29th, 1930
Second Quarter.SEVEN NEW CREATIONS.
(Continued)

Lesson Text: Revelation, chapter 22.

Golden Text: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17.

1. THE NEW CITY, (vs. 1-7).

The water of life, (v. 1). The description of the New Jerusalem is continued in this chapter, reference being made first to the river which flows through the city. Concerning it certain things are stated; it is pure; it is water of life; it is clear as crystal; and it has its source in the throne of God and of the Lamb. Rivers are both beautiful and useful, affecting the surrounding land in a beneficent manner; and this river is the best of all. Symbolically it depicts the spiritual blessing which flows from God unto men. Its water is abundant, free, pleasant, invigorating, life-giving, and necessary to man's spiritual nature. Note the outstanding rivers of Scripture and their significance.

The tree of life, (v. 2). Where there is water there is vegetation, and where there is a river there are generally trees. It is so in this case; the tree of life growing by the side of the river. Note, therefore, its delightful location, its wondrous nature, and its beneficent effect upon the nations. We are reminded of the first tree of life in the Garden of Eden, which our first parents were not allowed to partake of after they sinned, (Gen. 3:22-24). This action was one of mercy on the part of God, in that He had something better for the human race than living forever in the midst of sin. In the future the saints will partake freely of the tree of life, and live forever apart from sin.

The new life, (vs. 3-7). A brief description of the future life of the saints is given in the previous chapter, but a few details are added here, in emphasis of its nature. We are informed in the first place, "there shall be no more curse". The curse was placed upon the ground on account of man's sin, (Gen. 3:17), and it has caused much labour and sorrow, but when sin has been banished from God's creation, its consequences will cease, and man will live in unhindered obedience to his Maker. We are next informed the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in this city, implying God's immediate

presence with His people. Note also the union of the Lamb with God, denoting His Deity. "And his servants shall serve him." There will be something for each of us to do. God does not encourage idleness either here, or hereafter. Each child of God should find something to do here, in preparation for, and anticipation of that blessed time to come. The Holy Spirit will guide concerning the nature of the work. "And they shall see his face." Note the blessedness of this statement. "Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face", (1 Cor. 13:12). The full revelation of God will then be given us. In our present state we could not look upon Him and live; but then with our heavenly bodies we shall be able to do so, and glorious indeed will be the sight. "And his name shall be in their foreheads," definitely marking them as His. Further details are then given concerning the light of the place: "There shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever". The light depicted is the most glorious possible, far exceeding that of the sun, and it shall never be dimmed, and darkness will therefore be unknown. Note the blessedness of the life depicted and the occupation of the saints of God. This section ends with a statement concerning the faithfulness and truth of the sayings; a promise of our Lord's return; and of blessing for the one who keeps the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

II. THE EFFECT OF THE VISION UPON JOHN (vs. 8-11).

So wonderful was the vision that after he had heard and seen, John fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who had shown him these things. This action is corrected by the angel, and the apostle is directed to worship God. We learn from this the reality of John's conviction concerning the Divine nature of the revelation given to him. It was not simply a dream which he had been enjoying, but a definite revealing of God had been granted unto him. In these days of unbelief the nature of the revelation requires emphasis with its implication concerning the duty and privilege of studying it. Note also the condemnation of creature worship implied here! angels refuse such adoration; it is certain the mother of our Lord would also refuse it could she express her mind in the matter; and no man has the right to receive it, whether he be pope, priest, or other special official of church or state. Angels are fellowservants of the saints; and worship their Maker. God is a jealous God, and will not suffer another to share His glory, (Ex. 20:5); therefore we ought to give worship to Him alone, and be sure that He receives the glory for all things done in His name. Instruction is thereafter given not to seal the sayings of the book, for "the time is at hand". This is the opposite of the command given to Daniel, (Dan. 12:4), for the time was then a long way off. A solemn statement is then made concerning the condition of men, wherein we learn that in eternity men will be just what they are here, only in a greater degree. It is in time that men are converted,—a second chance would not benefit them. There is a second

thought contained therein, in that, in spite of the condition of man now, this revelation of God must be made known.

III. THE BLESSEDNESS OF OBEDIENCE, (vs. 12-17).

In these verses there is first the renewed promise concerning our Lord's return and the additional statement concerning His judgment of men. It is evident from these statements concerning our Lord's return that He is coming again; that He desires us to know of His coming again; and that we should be ready to meet Him when He comes. When He returns, each one shall be rewarded according to his works, (1 Cor. 3:12-15). Note the solemnity of this statement,—its encouragement and its warning. Faithfulness now on the part of the child of God will bring reward later, lack of faithfulness will mean loss of reward. Note also the various judgments: for believers as above, for living nations, (Matt. 25:31-46), and for the wicked dead, (20:11-15). Our Lord's title is then referred to with its due significance noted in last lesson; and the blessedness of obedience is emphasized. Those who keep the commandments of God will have the right to the tree of life, and the privilege of entering in through the gates of the city. Obedience unto God brings its own reward here and hereafter. The disobedient are not permitted to enter into the city, (v. 15); they remain in their sin in a place of punishment for ever and ever. Explanation may be made of the fact that in eternity we must belong either to the company of the just or to that of the unjust; and that we are choosing our company now. Another title of our Lord's is given: He is the "root" of David, as His Creator; and His "offspring" according to the flesh in His incarnation; and the "bright and morning star" heralding the dawn, both of grace and glory. In answer to our Lord's statement concerning His return the "Spirit and the bride say, Come". They both long for His appearing. "And let him that heareth say, Come"; the one who not only hears with the ear, but with the understanding and surrendered will. Blessed indeed would it be if all hearts were longing for the return of the Lord Jesus. Our love for Him can be measured by the strength of our desire for His return. "And let him that is athirst come", the one desirous of the things of God. "And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely".

IV. A SOLEMN WARNING, (vs 18-21).

The warning is twofold, relating to adding unto the words of the book, and taking therefrom. In these days when this book is neglected and despised by so many, such a warning should be heeded. God gives special protection to the words of His prophecy. We have found the study of the same to be most interesting, and profitable, and by the grace of God, we shall be better servants of His through it. Again the promise is given concerning the return of our Lord. "Surely I come quickly", and in all sincerity the loyal saints of God say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus". The manner and significance of the return of the Lord, and the necessity of readiness for the same may be explained and emphasized.