

The Gospel Witness

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

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Editor: T. T. SHIELDS.

Associate Editors: T. I. STOCKLEY, ALEXANDER THOMSON, W. GORDON BROWN.

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

Address Correspondence: THE GOSPEL WITNESS, 130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto, Canada.

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"A Man More Precious Than Fine Gold"

Included in "the burden of Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amos did see" is this remarkable declaration of the divine purpose, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." It is a prophecy relating to historic Babylon. But we shall not, in this article, concern ourselves with chronology or geography. All history is prophecy: "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done." If one should read of a man's being blown to pieces while lighting his pipe over a barrel of gunpowder, that would be history; but it would also be a prophecy of the fate of every other man who should be guilty of similar folly. And there are moral explosives and moral sparks. The history of Babylon's destruction prophesies the ruin of all who commit Babylon's sins. The context of our scripture speaks of "the day of the Lord. . . cruel both with wrath and fierce anger" wherein men shall be so scarce that a man shall be "more precious than fine gold".

Under certain conditions, therefore, a man is worth more than gold. And since it is God Who says, "I will make a man more precious than gold", we shall not strain our scripture's meaning by saying that God intends that a man should be worth more than his weight in diamonds. It is with that principle, the value of a human personality, we shall concern ourselves in this article.

I.

First of all, then, here is a principle worth pondering, that a man may be worth more than money. That does not appear always to be true. Napoleon is reputed to have said, "The lives of a million men are nothing to me". One might suppose that many lesser men have learned of him, for human life is often lightly valued. There are times, however, in the experience of the individual, and in the history of a nation, when it becomes abundantly evident that a

throbbing human heart, an active brain, all the potentialities wrapped up in a man, are worth infinitely "more than fine gold".

This principle has frequently been found true in the experience of the individual. Gold has its uses: it may be a true friend. It can wrap the babe in eider-down; it can carpet the path for little feet with velvet; it can spread the table with dainties; it can open the door of all the halls of learning; it can buy the concentrated wisdom of a hundred generations; it can shut out the storms of winter, and temper the heat of summer; it can throw wide the door of the mansions of the great: a golden key may turn back the lock which admits to the banqueting hall of kings. Notwithstanding, there are times when money is of less value than a man, when personality means more than purse.

The finger posts which point to paths of righteousness are seldom made of gold; and when they are, they only point, they do not lead the way. The print of human feet along the narrow road is worth more to weary pilgrims enquiring the way to God than an unmarked pavement, though it be all of gold. The mother in the humblest cottage teaching her little one to pray, and living a cheerful life of trust, is infinitely more precious than the godless millionaire who leaves his family a heritage of no moral, but only material, wealth.

You cannot fill a vacant chair with "the golden wedge of Ophir". There are no jewels like those sparkling human eyes which, ere God closed them, looked so lovingly upon us. There is no upholstery which gold can buy, no luxuries of any kind which wealth can purchase, so restful in their ministry as the hearty clasp of a loving human hand. You know what we mean! The walls of your house and the furniture within do not make your home. There is a human personality which pervades the place, and fills each room with an unseen presence, and he, or she, makes

home. A house of fine gold built upon foundations of precious stones would not be home without him, without her. Those who have been to the graveside know the meaning of our scripture. No costly silken bands can bind a bleeding human heart; and not even the waters of Pison "which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold", can refresh a soul bereaved, like the sympathetic splash of common human tears. In the most ordinary life, this principle is fulfilled a hundred times between the cradle and the grave, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir".

This principle, moreover, is often exemplified in the various aspects of social or national life. To the life of a community or a nation can a man be more precious than gold? Gold may build a legislative hall, it cannot frame wise legislation; it may build a battleship, but it cannot design one, or use it when it is built. Material wealth is largely secondary, personality is primary. When Europe was at its wits' end Wellington was more precious than fine gold. When evil walks abroad on human feet you can only stay its progress by righteousness incarnate in a man. You cannot kill a tyrant by machinery. Napoleon will always have his way in spite of flashing swords and booming cannon, until he meets his Wellington.

The principle finds its exemplification in every phase of social life. Not property but persons, not gold and silver and precious stones, but men, and women, and little children, constitute the real wealth of the world.

II.

Our scripture promises that men shall be precious because they are scarce. God will visit Babylon in judgment, and "will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible", and in this way "will make a man more precious than gold".

But men are not scarce. There are plenty of men. There are men and men. Our scripture says that when the divine judgment has swept over Babylon gold will be more plentiful than men. And yet Nebuchadnezzar lived in Babylon, and talked about "great Babylon which I have built"! But when "the arrogance of the proud and the haughtiness of the terrible" are swept away by the judgment of God, that which was called a man is no more. And that is the meaning of this scripture. According to the divine standard, real men are scarce. Indeed, by nature, there are no real men. A man is the product of grace. For that is here promised also.

Men may be scarce; they may be few who stand the test of fire, but by God's grace, a man shall be found more precious than fine gold. There is therefore hope for the race. Sin has spoiled God's handiwork. One may well say with Jeremiah, "How is the gold become dim! How is the most-fine gold changed! the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street. The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter!" And Jeremiah's lamentation will find an echo in the heart of many of our readers. We know our own hearts, and apart from what divine grace may have done for

us, we know that there is nothing golden in our characters. The heart is not a holy temple lined with gold and radiant with divine glory. The imagination is not like the interior of Solomon's temple wherein were carved figures of cherubim, and palm trees and open flowers—it is no art gallery where bright angels, who love the beautiful and holy, minister to a spirit who thinks on things that are true, and honest, and lovely, and of good report. The memory is not a library wherein are stored the chronicles which record the goodness of God. The will is not a reigning prince acknowledging only the sovereignty of the King of kings.

However white the exterior of these lives, by nature there is not much that is beautiful within. But our scripture comes with a promise of restoration to the man whose heart has become the habitation of an unholy spirit; whose imagination has become the rendezvous of black-winged thoughts; whose memory is a storehouse of evil, and whose will is the vassal of the devil. Take heart, my brother! God can make a man who can stand the test of divine judgment,—“A man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.”

III.

We may then enquire, Is there any person in whom this promise finds a complete fulfilment? Is there a man more precious than fine gold? Who is worth his weight in diamonds?

There is a Man Whose character will bear the closest inspection; Whose character has been the subject of both friendly and hostile investigation for nearly two thousand years. People of all nations and languages have studied Him. They have weighed His words, and examined His actions, and scrutinized His motives. They have regarded Him in all lights; and from every possible point of view; when they have tested Him in the crucible of their criticism, the universal, unanimous verdict is, "We find in him no fault at all."

Yes, there is a Man Who has stood the test of divine judgment, who, when God's vengeance swept over the world stood forth as gold; a Man in Whom God finds no fault; a man in Whom God is well pleased; a Man Who is the express image of God Himself—more precious than fine gold.

And this Man has been worth more to the world than all its gold. By His own death He purchased the freedom of all the slaves of sin. His blood has been, and still is, incalculably of more worth to the world than the blood of all the millions who have died on all the battlefields of earth, fighting for their own, and others', liberties. By the influence of His life the nations of the earth have been more enriched than by all their commerce, and all their wars of conquests. The words He uttered have been, and are to-day, of infinitely greater value to the world than all human learning, and invention, and industry, than all the pearls of the ocean, the gold of Havilah, and Ophir, and all the diamonds of Golconda. His precepts have done more to protect the weak, to relieve the oppressed, to liberate the enslaved, to enlighten the ignorant, to enrich the poor, than all the world's soldiers, and legislators, and educationists, and philan-

thropists combined. This one Man is an inexhaustible fountain, whence have flowed rivers of refreshment, which have made the world's moral wilderness and solitary places glad, and its deserts to rejoice and blossom as the rose. He is the great Teacher at Whose feet the world's leaders have learned those principles (if they have learned them anywhere) which have enabled them to inculcate in others that righteousness which surely exalteth a nation. More than the song of all birds, or the music of all breezes, or the loveliness of all flowers, or the beauty of landscapes, or the glory of sunsets, or the strength of all mountains, His strong and glorious character, His beautiful and beneficent life, the music of His message of redeeming love, have taught men to love God and keep His commandments, and to love their neighbours too.

There is a Man Whose Name is more precious to the world's mothers than gold. He knows their heartaches, and the anxiety of their wondering gaze into the future of their little ones. They love Him—many of them, because they know He loves them and their little children, and gathers out the stones from beneath their little feet. He is a Man Whom children love, Whose Name is dearer to them than all their treasures; they fall asleep with His Name upon their lips, and if, perchance, the angels come for them before life's sun is high, even when they have said farewell to all about them whom they have loved the most,—last of all they speak His Name, and spread their hands abroad, as though they had heard Him call, and were in haste to go to meet Him. And in that hour, to every witness of the holy scene, His Name is more precious than all the hoarded millions of the world.

There is a Man Who is the young man's friend, and knows full well the young man's foes. He has walked the young man's pathway, and lived the young man's life. He, too, has been asked to dare to break God's law, and show Himself brave. He, too, has been offered wealth, even all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory as the wages of sin. As a Counsellor He is more precious to any sane young man than all the wisdom wealth can buy. He is a Companion Whose strong right arm is mightier than armies. He slays the lion in the way; He holds you by His hand as you walk the road that skirts the precipice, which drops sheer away to the lake of fire; robbers flee from His presence; He knows the narrow path through the marsh, and the road that leads on up the mountain to the gates of pearl, and the streets of gold. And that Man as a Counsellor, as a Companion and Helper, a Guide, in a word as a Saviour, is worth more than the golden wedge of Ophir to any young man.

There is a Man Who never scorns the outcast—that woman whose character gold cannot redeem; the drunkard whose will gold cannot enfranchise; the felon whose liberty gold cannot purchase; the blighted life, the ruined soul—there is a Man Who has an interest in all these; Who has only words of pardon for the outcast who repents; Whose strong right hand can conduct a drunkard safely and in soberness past the place of temptation; Who can set a soul at liberty; and restore the years which the locusts of sin have eaten. There is a Man Whose door is always open to the poor, Whose table is always laden for the hun-

gry, Whose healing balm is always freely offered to the morally afflicted, Whose best robe is always ready for the prodigal who will come home. There is a Man, Who, Himself a Prince, delights in this wondrous title, "The Friend of Sinners".

He meets them where they need Him, and never leaves them more. He leads them on their journey, and when they stand beside the grave He comforts them, and tells them that soon He is coming back for them. He wipes their tears away, and binds up their broken hearts, and gives them beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. And at last, when the shadows lengthen, and life's day is done, He throws wide the door of one of His many mansions, and they enter into the joy of their Lord. And this Man is "more precious than fine gold,—even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir".

Would you make His acquaintance? Would you be enriched by His friendship? Then do not try to dress up for the occasion. Come to Him just as you are. You will not find Him surrounded by a retinue of servants in a royal palace, though He is a King and is the Lord of hosts. You will find Him at a place called Calvary. He is not arrayed in royal robes—save the crimson of His own heart's blood! What, this Prince of men in blood! This Benefactor of the race, this Helper of the fallen, this Lover of all mankind, in blood! Ah, yes! Hear the conclusion of our story. You will find Him at a place called Calvary arrayed in crimson. He is nailed to a cross. His head is crowned with thorns.

But why this death of righteousness? this death of the Incarnation of the beauty of holiness?

Let us finish our story! The cross is not on Calvary now. There is a grave. That is where they laid Him. Neither is He there to-day. The grave is empty: "He is not here: He is risen".

"Then He is not dead?" No; He is alive again, and has ascended into heaven that He may fulfil in us the principle of this promise, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir".

He is the one Alchemist Who can transmute earthen pitchers into the most fine gold. The secret of the miracle is with Him. It is a chemistry of which He has the monopoly. This only we know of the mystery, and He has authorized us to tell others, that when we trust Him He makes us more precious than gold by means of His own blood:

"Lo! The incarnate God, ascended,
Pleads the merit of His blood;
Venture on Him, venture wholly,
Let no other trust intrude;
None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good."

And now we have told you His Name. He is more than man: He is God. But He was made in the likeness of men that we might be made into the likeness of God—even as men "more precious than the golden wedge of Ophir". He died and rose again, and "when he ascended on high he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men . . . he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some,

pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." "Behold, the Man!" "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world."

FEAR.

The Editor of this paper receives a very heavy mail. People write us on almost every conceivable subject. One writes us requesting that we ascertain the reliability of a certain firm which advertised lessons in showcard writing! But many letters reach us enquiring respecting certain courses of conduct: Would you advise me to do this or that? We are compelled to answer some of our correspondents telling them that we are incompetent to advise. But sometimes we do try to offer counsel where it is thus requested.

But running through many of these requests, and often more clearly expressed in the reply to our counsel, there are statements, arguments, and excuses, which simply amount to this: I know what I ought to do respecting certain matters, but I fear—then follows a list of the things: the consequences or the persons they fear. Is it not a fact that the principle of fear lies at the basis of all so-called "problems" of conduct? Men do right or wrong because they fear; and whether they do the one or the other will depend upon whom they fear.

"The fear of man bringeth a snare." If we permit the fear of man to compel us to wrong-doing, or to restrain us from doing that which we know to be right, we shall soon be in a snare from which it will be difficult to extricate ourselves. Half men's trouble is really of their own making. Their cowardice led them into the devil's trap.

Why, then, do men do wrong? All reasons are summarized in this one phrase descriptive of the wicked, "There is no fear of God before their eyes." Those who do not fear God will be sure to fear somebody else. It applies to every possible situation in life: husband and wife, parents and children, neighbour with neighbour, employer and employee, pastor and people—it applies to everybody's relation to everybody else.

Men fear the frown of their fellows; the ostracism of their class; the skill of their competitors; the possibility of pecuniary loss, directly or indirectly, by loss of position or loss of money—the fear of a hundred things of which men ought to be independent drive them into innumerable difficult situations, and all because there is "no fear of God before their eyes".

On the other hand, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom". It is the highest wisdom to recognize that His eye is upon us, and that our supreme duty is to please Him. To the Christian, it ought to be the supreme passion of life, as with Paul: "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." This principle should regulate the conduct of every Christian, in all circumstances, in all relationships. A Christian should be willing to brook the displeasure of any man, to face the frowns of kings rather than to offend his Lord.

And surely this ought to be the guiding principle of a minister's life. He should so live, and so preach, as to be well-pleasing to God.

This also should be the directing principle in all church affairs. Churches will be what they ought to be when their pastors and deacons and people are more afraid of offending God than of offending anyone else. Or if the pulpit be vacant, the first question should be, What would God have us do? What sort of man would He put in the pulpit? And when pulpit committees seek to identify God's man they may well ask respecting anyone whom they think of calling, Has he put God first? Has he proved himself to be unselfish, willing to sacrifice, willing to endure hardness, willing to be anything or nothing if only the truth of the gospel may be furthered and God glorified?

The fact is, there are no real "problems" of conduct. We shall find life very simple, after all, if in all things we are actuated by the fear of the Lord. Putting Him first, fearing Him more—no, fearing Him only—we shall have no difficulty in deciding what course we ought to take; and having taken such a course, we shall always find it was the wisest course, and prove again in our own experience that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

ABOUT THE RUSSIAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

In *The Friend of Missions* for July-August, 1930, on page thirty-seven there appears the following announcement:

"A Notice to Legators and Testators.

"A number of our friends in America and Canada have made out their wills formerly to the name of The Russian Missionary Society. In view of the fact that Mr. E. E. Shields has been dismissed from the work of the Society, and is no longer entitled to receive any funds whatever, and in view of the fact that he is still, without justification, continuing to use the name of The Russian Missionary Society, and is spending a great deal of money donated for missionary purposes in a way altogether different from the objectives of the Society, we hereby request all friends who have mentioned The Russian Missionary Society in their wills, to kindly immediately change the designation, and instead of the Russian Missionary Society, to write in the will, The Russian Faith Mission, Pastor William Fetler, Founder and General Director.

"For the benefit of intending legators the following is the full text to be used when bequeathing any legacy to The Russian Faith Mission:—

"I give and bequeath to The Russian Faith Mission, Canada (Pastor William Fetler, Founder and General Director), the sum of _____ dollars, to be used for the purposes of the said Society, and to be paid by my Executors to the Treasurer of the Mission, whose Receipt shall be sufficient discharge for the same."

The Gospel Witness has already referred to the sad state of affairs in the Russian Missionary Society, brought about by the mal-administration of its General Director, Pastor William Fetler. But we here remind our readers that the above notice contains a gross misrepresentation of fact. Pastor Fetler's idea of Trustee Boards or Councils or Committees, for many years has been that they were useful in order to credential his enterprises; but he has almost invariably refused to be guided by their counsel. He wanted to use their names, but whenever his extravagances or foolish policies were called in question, he "dismissed" them, or took up such an attitude toward them that, rather than be bothered with the trouble involved in reorganization, they resigned. It would not be an exaggeration

to say that in the United States and Great Britain there is plenty of wreckage of Pastor Fetler's "boards", or Councils, or whatever they were called.

In the present Trustees of the Russian Missionary Society, Pastor Fetler found a company of men who refused either to resign or to be "dismissed", because their own honour was bound up with the cause they had espoused; and they felt it an obligation to keep faith with those who had contributed in good faith to the Russian Missionary Society, and also to take such steps as to prevent their being further victimized by Pastor Fetler's extravagances.

There is a valuable property in Chicago, held by the Trustees of the Russian Missionary Society. If Pastor Fetler has any moral or legal right to "dismiss" any of his Trustees like a Russian Czar, why does he not come and dispossess the Trustees of the property held in Chicago? Pastor Fetler knows that he has not a leg to stand on legally, and is utterly impotent in the premises.

Why should Pastor William Fetler now call himself "Founder and General Director" of "The Russian Faith Mission", when but a short time ago he was "Founder and General Director" of "The Russian Missionary Society"? Why should it be necessary to change the name of the organization?

In this same copy of *The Friend of Missions*, in at least three different places, the Treasurer for the American and Canadian section is named as Mrs. M. Billester, 476 Lauder Ave., Toronto, Canada. We called attention once before in *The Gospel Witness* to the fact that to our certain knowledge Rev. Michael Billester was one of Pastor Fetler's sharpest critics, and beyond all question was himself a witness to his wild extravagances. Following this, we received a letter from Mrs. Billester calling this in question. We repeat what we then said: we heard from Mr. Billester's own lips on more than one occasion his opinion of Pastor Fetler's trustworthiness respecting money matters.

We believe a great work has been done by the Russian Missionary Society. We believe that its sphere of operations is one of the most needy in the world.

The American Trustees of the Russian Missionary Society, with Headquarters at 1844 West Monroe Street, Chicago, have been taking every precaution to make their reply to Pastor Fetler's pamphlet thorough, comprehensive, and final. This, we take it, has been the reason for the delay in its issuance. Furthermore, we think it was most wise for them to have withheld the issue of their reply until the autumn, because, in the summer months, such printed matter is liable to be laid aside unread. The reply of the Trustees of the Russian Missionary Society, we are assured, will now soon appear. We suggest therefore to any who read this that they should not leave a dollar to be administered by Pastor William Fetler until they have read the reply of his Trustees.

Whatever may be said of Pastor Fetler's original evangelical fervour and of his power as a promoter, the Editor of this paper has been compelled, by Pastor Fetler's own financial record, absolutely to withdraw all confidence from him as an administrator of mission funds. This note is published without the knowledge of anyone connected with the Russian Missionary Society. We have written this with reluct-

ance, and with great sorrow, because of our profound disappointment in Mr. Fetler. It is our earnest hope that the authorities of the Russian Missionary Society will be able to redeem the good name of the Society by prosecuting the work with greater vigour than ever; and, by conducting its affairs under the white light of day, commend it to the confidence of God's stewards.

PRAYER.

By Dr. Joseph Parker.

Behold us, Father in heaven, at the Cross of Thy Son our Saviour. We have no other altar; we have no other Priest. Jesus is our Mediator, our Advocate, and Paraclete. He is mighty to save; He will carry our prayer to Thine ear, and behold He shall send down upon us answers of peace. We will sing of goodness; for the Lord's hand hath been stretched out toward us in great gifts of love. Our song shall be of judgment and mercy. We have heard the rebukes of the Most High: who can stand before Thy cold? Who can answer Thy morsels of ice? Yet will we sing of mercy, for the rain hath been as the tears of pity upon our way, and all the day long we have heard, even in the sighing of the wind, tones of entreating love. We will look up, therefore, and be glad, Thou wilt not rebuke us to our destruction; the chastening of the Lord is for our good, the correction of His rod is for our strengthening. May we accept life as becometh children who trust in the living God; may it be to us no chance, but a providence, a revelation of the Most High. Build Thou the temple of our life, and it shall be strong and shapely and full of music; may we lay no stone upon it but at the Lord's own bidding. Thus shall our life be a house of God, our whole history shall be a record of His love. We know how great Thou art and terrible in righteousness and in judgment, but we still more truly know how tender Thou art, how redeeming and elevating and protecting is all the grace of Christ. Thou has brought us to this day with songs in our mouth; when we thought the harvest was failing, Thou didst find for us unexpected sheaves; we went out with tears, we came back with songs, the Lord hath loved us, therefore we will love the Lord. We love Him because He first loved us. We thank Thee for all Thy care, Thy patience, Thy tender tears; may we not be lost, may we endure unto the end and be amongst those who are saved. How far away the end is, Thou only knowest; how near it is, Thou alone canst tell! There is but a step between the strongest and death; the Lord cometh at an unexpected time; the Lord will suddenly come to His temple: may we all be ready, with burning lamps, and plentifulness of oil; may we be ready to welcome the Bridegroom when the cry of His coming is heard. Deliver us from all fearfulness of soul. Thou knowest how easily we are depressed and beclouded and hindered; Thou knowest the number of our spiritual enemies, the strength of all the forces embattled against us; Thou knowest our weakness and our proneness to look unto the dust. Give us to feel that we are made in Thine image and likeness, that though the body is of the dust, the soul was enkindled at the Eternal Flame; and may we by the power of the grace of Christ live our best life, real-

ize our noblest selfhood, and come before God and man as worshippers of the one and servants of the other. We bless Thee for our home life: how thick are the walls which Thou dost build around us, how sure is the roof with which Thou dost cover in the ark where Thy loved ones rest! We bless Thee for all our business activity and energy and enterprise; we thank Thee that we can take an interest in these things and yet live in heaven; we come down from the higher citizenship to the lower, and return to the skies as those who long to be there for ever. Prosper Thy servants in basket and in store; give them an abundance of bread; and as for their fields may they bring forth richly. Be with all for whom we ought to pray; specially with those who cannot pray for themselves, who have struck away from themselves the last foothold on which they could stand: Thou knowest where they are; Thou canst prevent their eternal sinking. O, thou Healer of men, be Thou our Physician to-day! Be with all who are contemplating great business schemes, all who are about to undertake important journeyings and voyages; be with them in their outgoing and in their incoming; yea, hasten their homecoming, and bring them back with great joy. Be with our loved ones in the Colonies, and in America, and in all the dependencies of the British crown, wherever they are in the world: and if they be prodigal in soul, be with them all the more, let their very sin endear them to their Saviour, that He may by His mightiest miracle redeem and reclaim them all. Be with all men who are in distress of soul, wondering about pain and loss, apprehensive about to-morrow, full of solicitude regarding incalculable events. Thou knowest all the wonderful workings of anxiety in the human soul; sanctify them, subdue them, turn them to the advantage of the spirit; and thus make the wrath of man to praise Thee, and out of the clouds bring showers of rain. The Lord comfort us, for our souls are weary; the Lord will bring back the sun into the heavens, that He may pour down His vernal light and give pledges of His summer glory. Thus shall our hearts revive, and we shall forget the night. Lord, hear us at the Cross; wash us in the all-cleansing blood; save us with a mighty salvation, Amen.

FAREWELL MEETING TO OUTGOING MISSIONARIES.

On Thursday evening, September 11th, there will be a great meeting in Jarvis Street Church under the joint auspices of the Executive of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches and Jarvis Street Church, for the purpose of bidding farewell and Godspeed to Rev. Edward and Mrs. Hancox who leave a few days later for Liberia, where they will join Rev. Horace and Mrs. Davey; and Mr. Samuel Jeffery, a graduate of Toronto Baptist Seminary, who will leave September 15th, for work in China under the auspices of the China Inland Mission. We extend a very hearty invitation to all our readers who are within reach of Toronto to come and help us to make this one of the greatest of all our missionary meetings.

Mr. and Mrs. Hancox did a splendid work in Owen Sound, and during their tour of the churches have endeared themselves to all our people. We feel sure that these two consecrated people will be greatly used of God in Liberia.

Mr. Samuel Jeffery is one of our Jarvis Street boys. We remember when his older brother, Mr. Bernard Jeffery, now himself a student of Toronto Baptist Seminary and Superintendent of the Junior Department of the Jarvis Street Sunday School, first attended the church. He came to us at

the close of the service and said he had a brother who was not converted, and that he had a feeling if he could get him to come to Jarvis Street he might be saved (The family were than in attendance upon a church of another denomination); so, like Andrew, who first found his own brother Simon, Bernard brought Samuel. And the second or third Sunday "Sam" was converted. The two boys, with their sister Mary, were soon after baptized, and with their mother, who was a Baptist, united with Jarvis Street Church. Some time later Bernard's older brother and his wife were converted and baptized.

Here is a list of Jarvis Street missionary members:—
In Africa: Rev. Bruce Brillinger, Rev. and Mrs. G. P. Near, Rev. Geo. Reeve, Mrs. H. E. Stobbe. In China: Miss Marie Barham, Rev. and Mrs. John Bell, Rev. and Mrs. George Bell, Miss Florence L. Collins, Miss Grace Emblem, Mrs. George Henderson, Miss Alice Lay, Mrs. W. H. Nowack, Rev. and Mrs. F. Olsen, Mrs. E. A. Sadler, Rev. and Mrs. Roy A. Seaman, Mrs. E. A. Sadler, Mrs. J. E. Thompson, and Mrs. W. G. Windsor. In Jamaica: Rev. O. Johnston, Rev. and Mrs. G. Wilfred Smith. In South America: Rev. Edward Haugh.

Mr. Samuel Jeffery therefore will make the nineteenth Jarvis Street member in China, and the twenty-eighth Foreign Missionary member.

In addition to these, the following have been in membership in Jarvis Street Church, or have gone forth from Jarvis Street: Revs. John Byers, Onilia; A. S. Whitcombe, B.A., Barrie; H. S. Buchner, B.A., Trenton; Robert Guthrie, Courtland; William Fraser, Windsor; Donald Fraser, Ottawa; James McGinlay, London; Wilfrid Charlton, Chatham; Thos. Summers, B.A., Hespeler; Leander Roblin, Fort William; A. E. Dallimore, B.A., Cannington.

Many besides these have been baptized and have come into the membership of Jarvis Street, who have gone to the West, and some to mission fields, whom we should fear to attempt to name lest some should be overlooked.

With the exception of Miss Mary Waterman and Rev. and Mrs. F. Olsen, every one of those named above came under the influence of Jarvis Street Church during the last ten years. For the missionary interest these splendid witnesses for Christ represent, we humbly thank God.

THE WEEK END IN JARVIS STREET.

Sunday was an extremely warm and rather uncomfortable day, and the day before a holiday. But how thankful we ought to be that the Lord is not affected by public holidays! Sunday was a day of blessing. In the morning the attendance at School was 1,071. We were happy to have with us at the morning service Rev. R. J. Schell, Pastor of the Second Baptist Church, Chicago, who kindly assisted in the morning service by leading in prayer.

Among many other ministers we were happy also to have in the morning congregation Dr. A. J. Johnston, Pastor of Temple Baptist Church, Detroit, and Mrs. Johnston. Dr. Johnston kindly consented to have part in the evening service, and led in the evening lesson and the evening prayer. What is in a voice that indicates personality? Dr. Johnston read part of the fourteenth chapter of John, at our request, and he had not uttered three words until he had gripped everyone in the great congregation which practically filled the auditorium. In the prayer we felt ourselves led into the heavenlies, and many who had been able to say, Amen, to Dr. Johnston's giving of thanks, testified to blessing received as he led us in our evening worship. Several responded to the invitation both at the morning and the evening services.

Dr. Johnston also consented to relieve the Pastor at the great open-air service, and he delivered a most effective message by relating the experience of his own conversion. What a blessing it is when a preacher, after years of experience, still delights to tell how the Lord saved him! That was characteristic of the great Spurgeon. Again and again throughout his sermons we find him telling with the same wonder and amazement the story of how Divine Grace saved him. When a preacher finds no joy in telling of his own conversion there must be something sadly wrong with his own spiritual life. That was the master argument of the Apostle Paul. When in a difficult situation, in justification of his faith, and in defense of the gospel he preached, he loved to tell how Christ had met him on the Damascus road.

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THE NOBLEST THEME FOR THOUGHT.

By Dr. T. I. Stockley, Dean of Toronto Baptist Seminary.

So far as we know, Paul's second letter to Timothy was the Apostle's last epistle before he laid his head upon the block and suffered death beneath the headman's axe. Paul earnestly longed to see Timothy, and John Mark too, once more before his death. If these two younger men did reach Rome in time to see that noblest of men then on earth, we can picture the aged and worn veteran in chains welcoming them with deep affection, then pleading with them, praying with them, weeping over them, and as with his latest breath entreating them to be true to their Lord, and unflinching in their grasp of the great facts and verities of the gospel of Christ.

But Paul was not sure that he would live to see his dearly beloved Timothy again, and so he addressed him in this letter and sent him these loving and imperative messages. The apostle urged his son in the faith to be strong in the grace of his Lord; to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; to take particular care that the gospel of Christ should be handed on faithfully to the new generation of living preachers; to address himself to the life and labour in which suffering was inevitable, and to do it with a single mind; and to remember that, whatever became of Paul, Jesus Christ lives. Thus Paul says, "Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel." This word of exhortation supplies us with a suitable motto for ourselves, and it has the advantage of being both brief and comprehensive. "Remember Jesus Christ." What lovelier Object could we set before us? What more inspiring exercise than to "remember" Him?

In our meditation on these words we will consider first of all,

The Theme for Thought.

In the revised version it is a fact, a mighty event in our Lord's history that we are bidden to remember: "Remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead." This is a fact of enormous importance, and is most inspiring—a fact whose value we cannot prize too highly. But the revised version translates the word of the apostle differently, thus, "Remember Jesus Christ . . . raised from the dead." This rendering brings into prominence not merely the fact of the resurrection of Christ, but *the person of the Risen One Himself*. This greatly increases the delight of the exercise—we are bidden to remember Him, the living Lord Himself.

There are many things, and many persons perhaps, whom we do well to forget; but the inspired command concerning the Risen Saviour is, Remember Him! There is gathered up in Him all that is saving, lovely, enriching, inspiring, and comforting. Can we do other than remember Him?

We should remember the mighty works of Christ, but never apart from the Almighty Worker. We should remember the life-giving words of Jesus, but while we are listening to them we should be ever gaz-

ing into the divine Speaker's face. We lose more than half the beauty and blessedness of the gospel story if we think of it apart from the Person of the Lord Himself. The profound doctrine of the Atonement is seen in its glory only when we remember that "*He is the propitiation*". And the great truths of justification and sanctification are shorn of their glory when considered apart from the Person of Him Who is "made unto us righteousness and sanctification". But what unspeakable splendours cover these great doctrines when we remember that the blessings they represent are in Christ the Lord! To separate aught from Him is to strip it of its vitality, its fragrance, and its bloom.

Remember Jesus Christ. He is the chief among ten thousand, the altogether lovely One; the embodiment of all the splendours of the Godhead, and all the beauties of humanity. Christ Himself must ever be the eternal Sun of our thought, and He must illumine all.

It is instructive to observe,

What We Are to Remember About Him.

Paul says that we should remember *Jesus*—that is the personal name, the name of human tenderness, and yet the name that tells us He is Saviour. No attainments of the spiritual life can ever place us beyond the need of Jesus the Saviour. We must ever remember that it is He Who saves, that it is in Him we take refuge and find salvation, that to the very end we shall need One Who does for us what we can never do for ourselves. Remember *Jesus!*

"Remember *Jesus Christ*", the anointed and sent One in Whom all prophecy finds its fulfilment, all type and symbol their reality, and all hope its centre and realization. Remember Christ the Anointed Prophet, Revealer of God, and His very mind and heart. The Anointed Priest Who stands between us and God, Who makes sufficient atonement for our sin, and goes into the Holiest with the merit of His own blood, having rent the veil of separation and opened the way into the Holiest of all. The Anointed King, exalted far above all principality and power and might and every name that is named. "Remember *Jesus Christ*."

"Of the seed of David", says the apostle. A devout writer remarks: "The aged apostle has entered the shadow of death. He feels with one hand for the rock of history, and with the other the pulse of Eternal Love. Here was the Rock: the Lord of life was the Child of History, Son and Heir of an historic King; and, as such, the Child of prophecy too. Here we have an historic Personage to remember. Not a transcendental somewhat, but the last link of a pedigree—a legitimate Heir to a glorious throne. Remember Jesus Christ as such.

Also remember Him "risen from the dead"—that He rose and remains ever more the Risen One. We cannot allow ourselves to forget His death. "So awfully literal, so unfathomably wonderful, so infinitely necessary; that though it looked like utter destruction, it was all the while the way to an eternal success in the redemption of sinners and the glory of God." But let us remember with joy unspeakable that He is dead no longer, but the risen, living Jesus. This fact cannot be called in question, for, says one of the most cautious writers of our time, "There is far

more evidence for it than for the invasion of Britain by Caesar, or for the battle of Hastings."

Remember, then, that Jesus is risen, that He is the triumphant Victor over Whom death has no more dominion, and time no power. What He was He is—the same Jesus is the "power of an endless life", and possessed with "all authority in heaven and on earth." When Alexander the Great had overthrown Darius, King of Persia, he took among the spoils a most rich and beautiful cabinet. A discussion arose on the question as to what use the cabinet should be put, and finally the conqueror decided that the costly cabinet should become the treasury in which he would place the books of Homer, in which he found his greatest delight. A sanctified memory is a rich cabinet in which the holy name of Jesus Christ should ever be enshrined. Never let it be thought, however, that He is only a memory, for He is the risen, victorious One, and He says, "Lo, I am *with* you all the days." Thus we are to remember Him as at our side, a living Presence near us, with us, all the days. Therefore, above all, more than all, in the midst of all let us remember Jesus. (To be Continued.)

ON HARSH JUDGMENTS.

From a French Author.

If they, who are always eager to judge harshly of others, could see the fearful and heavy indictment which they are preparing against themselves before God, they might, perhaps, be led to confine their judgments to their own conduct, and to leave alone the lives and conduct of others. For, in the first place, in condemning others, they pronounce sentence of condemnation upon themselves; and that, a sentence without appeal, and which, unless they truly repent before they die, will most surely be carried into effect. For if they criticise harshly the good actions of others, as though they required in them a more perfect fulfilment of their duty, by the same rule, be it known to them, and most justly, will God require that more perfect fulfilment of His will from them; nor will He hold them to be good stewards of their own gifts, who have been harsh and unjust in their judgment of others. Or, if in passing judgment against the open sin of their neighbour, they have forgotten the restraints of pity and kindness, let them not hope for any better treasure in their hour of need; for Holy Scripture plainly tells us, that "he shall have judgment without mercy, who hath showed no mercy," John ii. 13. But when the judgment goes to condemn a good action, and men rush with eager haste to speak evil of another, God will seek no other witness against them than their own judgment, which clearly shows that they judge of others by themselves. Thus, Paul says, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?" and, again, "therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." Romans xiv. 4; ii. 1. He does not mean that he who judges another's fault, himself commits the same fault; for it is often not so; but that he who is always ready with a censorious judgment is, in his heart, prone to the fault which he condemns in another. As for example,

a man with an impatient temper, who sees another suffer quietly, will not believe that he is really patient, and, judging from his own heart, sets it down for dissimulation. Worldly and irreligious persons can see nothing but hypocrisy in those who are earnest and constant in their prayers and religious exercises; and the good works which they see others do, they deny to spring from any holy intention, but, judging from their own case, they attribute them to selfish and worldly motives; not to any pure desire to please God, but to a wish to stand well with men. Experience gives us abundant proof of this. For instance, two men are witnesses of the same good work, be it a religious exercise, or prayer, or fasting, or a charitable deed, and one, who striving for edification, grieves for himself that he has not done as much, and beats his bosom, and bewails himself, at the same time giving glory to God for the grace and virtue displayed in his servant. The other, who sees the same work, finds in it nothing but evil. And this is from no other cause than because men form their judgments, not by reason, but under the influence of their own passions and affections, and the worse they are, so much the worse are their judgments.

So, again, one man, seeing the sinful life of his neighbour, grieves for him, and tries to hide his sin, and to turn him from it; another thinks only of exposing it, and punishing him, and bringing him to shame; thus the very same thing which moves the former to compassion and pity, urges the latter to indignation and cruelty. Hence it is true that he who passes a hard judgment on another, condemns himself; for as the root of evil in his own heart, such is the judgment which he passes on another. And although it is never lawful to pass a favourable judgment on an evident sin (for that would be to contradict God's Law), nevertheless, by the moderation of our judgment, as well as by the effect which the sight of another's sin has upon our heart, may be known the good or bad condition of the heart.

They who feel within themselves an inclination to this vice of always seeing the worst in what others do, will do well to bear in mind that, in God's sight, they themselves are worse than all other sinners, and that they owe it to His grace alone, that they have not already plunged into every sin that human wickedness can contrive. Let them try earnestly to bridle their tongue, that, at least, their sin may be known only to God and themselves. Having done this, whenever such wicked judgments of others spring up in their hearts, let them drive them from them, and confess their misery and sin before God, and bewail that root of evil within them, which His eye seeth, and which is the source of all. Let them further exert themselves in trying to find out reasons for defending the conduct of their neighbours; and where that is not possible, let them confess themselves before God as far more culpable and wicked, as in fact he is, who is hard and cruel towards his fellows. And let them also consider that if the man they judge could see his own sin, as they see it who judge him, he would tremble and repent; therefore his sin is less by reason of his blindness, whilst theirs is made greater by reason of their maliciousness.

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

WHITHER DOES THE SOUL GO AT DEATH?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, August 31, 1930.

Broadcast from Station CKGW, 690 k.c., 434-8 metres.

(Stenographically Reported.)

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

"And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

"Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."—John 14:1-6.

It is now, apparently, quite generally supposed that people in possession of health and strength, with the right use of their reason, are not particularly interested in the future life; and it is assumed that if the preacher would command popular attention he must engage in the discussion of matters of more immediate concern. Yet I venture to think that the assumption is a false one; and that, after all, there is nothing in which men are more profoundly interested than in such a subject as the question I have asked for this evening service suggests, Whither does the soul go at death?

How many people there are who are busy going to and fro in the earth seeking pleasure, travelling from one place to another! When I am motoring west I meet crowds going east, and when I go east I observe a great company going west, and sometimes I ask myself, Why could we not exchange interests and each stay at our respective end of the line and avoid the passage to and fro? I know there are many who thus travel that they may buy and sell and get gain, but multitudes are travelling merely for the pleasure of travelling, because they would see new places, they would study new conditions of life, they would meet with new people. They are interested in things that are beyond the reach of their present knowledge, they hunger for change.

Perhaps there is nothing that more interests people than the story of the unexplored parts of the earth, and the speculations of those who seek to estimate that which no eyes have yet seen. We are able to understand, in part at least, with what interest Columbus and others of his day, and those who lived before him, followed the lure of their dreams when they thought of a new world and of the possibilities which lay beyond the sea.

But what are all these excursions and explorations compared with the great adventure from which no one of us may ever successfully plead exemption? We are here to-day, but a wise observer very long ago remarked, "The living know that they must die." Nothing is surer than that we shall not always abide in the place which now we call our home. Whither shall we go when, by and by, we cut loose from the shores of time?

A man spends years of study in order that he may equip himself usefully to employ what years remain. He goes into some form of business, he selects an occupation which will yield him sufficient remuneration to provide a livelihood. He marries, the family grows up about him, and he finds in the affections of home at least a temporary paradise. He prospers in business, he erects great buildings, he amasses a great fortune, he makes for himself a great name, and is happy in his achievements. It would be folly to say that men do not find some temporary satisfaction in concerning themselves with the affairs of this life. But sooner or later the shadow falls across his threshold, for it is ever true,—

"There is no flock however watched and tended

But one dead lamb is there!

There is no fireside how so e'er defended

But has one vacant chair."

And the one vacant chair sometimes makes an almost empty world, and the man suddenly discovers that he is divorced from his business and from all his material and temporal interests, and he begins to ask, What lies beyond the shadow whither the spirit of the departed has gone? Nothing is of greater importance certainly, and I believe nothing is of greater interest in the last analysis of things, than this great question of what lies beyond the boundaries of time.

Where shall we find an answer? We live in an age, I know, when we are accustomed to hear men boast of their achievements. I think when this day is historically viewed, and when its spirit is recorded by the historian of the future, if, indeed, the Lord should tarry, it will never be remarked that this age was particularly distinguished for its modesty. Most people, it seems to me, suffer from what the psychologists call a "superiority complex". One might suppose that all wisdom belongs to the men of our generation!

But what answer shall we find to such a question as that which engages our thought this evening? There was One in the ancient times Who became locally famous. They said He was a great Teacher, and those who had heard His words of wisdom declared that "never man spake like this man". Miracles, it was alleged, were wrought by His word of power.

It was said that even the winds and the waves were obedient to His command, that disease was wont to depart at His coming, and that before His almighty power even death itself spread its black winds and flew away. There was a rumour that there was something mysterious about His birth, that suggested He was more than human. He gathered about Him a great company of disciples. The number varied: sometimes there were multitudes, sometimes but a few. After some time He began to speak to them strangely about taking a journey, about going away from them somewhere. He was not an old man, but quite young, and still there was an other-worldliness about Him which distinguished and differentiated Him from all His fellows.

Little by little, with increasing clearness, He told His disciples that sometime He was going away: "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father." They turned to each other and said, "What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?" But at last He spoke to them quite distinctly of the future. He told them not to be troubled, that in the land whence He came, and whither He was returning, there were many mansions; and He said they were in His Father's house, and that He was going there to prepare a place for them, that some day He would come back and receive them unto Himself.

Then He said a strange thing, "And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." One of them said, "We know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" We can join with that disciple there, for we too have come into the place of the shadow; we too have heard those whom we love say strange things to us. They have talked of leaving us, and by and by they have left. We have touched the cold form, and we have said instinctively, "We do not know why or how, but they are not here. He or she is gone. That is but the tent, the tabernacle, but whither are they gone?"—"We know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?"

If my voice could reach half a million men this evening, and if every one of them were a doctor of philosophy in science, in all the sciences, if every one of them represented an almost unlimited erudition, I would venture to issue to them this challenge, "If I must stand beside the bed of the dying to-morrow, and I am asked by one who is conscious that ere long his soul-ship will loose her moorings, and put out to sea, if he enquires, 'Into what port shall my soul sail out of the storm? In what haven at last shall I drop anchor?'—can ye tell me, ye masters of science, whither that soul goeth, that he may know the way?" The voice of Thomas was the voice of universal human experience. That is what everybody must say, "We know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?"

What wisdom has science to communicate to us on a subject like this? I know she has made a path through the sea; she has opened a way into a new world; tracks which have been travelled since by countless millions. Now she is busy improving the methods of transportation. It was rather thrilling, was it not, when we were wakened from our morning sleep between four and five in the

morning by the roar of the engines of the R-100 as she sailed over our houses? In a few hours she accomplished that which took Columbus weeks to cover. But after all, these achievements all belong to the material realm. That does not answer the great question which everyone of us must ask, and which every one of us requires to have answered.

I know men have elaborated theories of the life beyond. They have taken the findings of science and have formulated their philosophies, they have speculated about life beyond the grave; and in due time they have set sail to put their theories to the proof. Andree, years ago, within the memory of some of us, sailed away with his two companions from Spitzbergen in his balloon, the first man to attempt a passage to the north pole by air—but he never came back again. Recently men found his well-preserved body in the arctic wastes after thirty-three years, and that of one of his companions, together with his diary; and they hope to find the body of the other buried somewhere beneath the accumulated ice of the years. But he came not back with a voice of authority to direct others. Now we know that he never reached the pole.

Of those who have left this life for another, no one has ever come back. You will not tell me that the mutterings of a witch can avail, will you? You will not tell me that I must be shut up for knowledge of another life to such signs as may be interpreted from the rapping of tables, and other such wizardry? The fact is, we know nothing at all about the future. After all the experiences of men, albeit the world's libraries are crammed to the roofs with volumes recording their discoveries and their dreams—if all that has ever been known and all that has ever been written, in all languages and all literature, were placed under tribute, you would find there was not a book nor a voice on earth anywhere that could speak with authority of the future life. The wisest could only say, "We know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?"

Is there then no voice to answer the enquiry of our aching hearts? Oh yes! There is one, and there is no other. He declares, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Of all the names in human history there is but One that is a repository of a knowledge of both worlds, of time and eternity. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." Jesus Christ is the only Guide, dear friends; His is absolutely the only voice that can break the universal silence. We must hear from Him; or, otherwise, if someone is called to stand by the open grave to-morrow, apart from Jesus Christ and the revelation of the future which we have in Him, that mourner can know no more than did Mother Eve when she stood beside the first human grave. Respecting a knowledge of what lies beyond the grave, by its own discoveries, the human race has learned absolutely nothing in all the millenniums of its history.

But here in this blessed Book we have a record which God has given to us of His Son. And always remember that that record is found not in the New Testament only, but in the Old. The record "which God has given to us of His Son" is the entire Bible; for Jesus is in Genesis just as clearly as in the gospels. You cannot

part with any part of the Bible without parting company with Jesus Christ Himself.

Some people wonder why we stand so tenaciously and so uncompromisingly for the "faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints", why we insist upon the divine inspiration and consequent infallibility and supreme authority of the Bible. I will tell you why: because it is our life, because if you take that from us you take everything from us. You leave us absolutely without hope for the future. If the Bible be not the very word of God, there is not a star in the sky; there is not a voice to speak to us; we have neither Saviour nor Guide; we should be in the outer darkness without the Bible, for you cannot have Jesus without the Bible. What nonsense men talk when they say, Let us get back to Christ—when by that they mean get away from the Bible. What Christ, I should like to know? What can you know of Christ apart from the Bible which is the very word of God? The promise of His cleansing blood binds all the books together and makes them to be the Book. His personality indwells it; His Spirit inspires it. There is not a chapter—there is not a word, there is not a syllable—that you may take away from it. Cut it, and it bleeds, for it is the living Book; it is the "word of God that liveth and abideth forever".

On this great question our glorious Lord has much to say, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

He is the way, but how shall we know anything about the way until we receive Him for what He really is? Let me quote to you that first verse, which you have read and heard quoted a thousand times: "Let not your heart be troubled." Have you ever been exposed to trouble? Have you ever found that you were required to sail a troubled sea? Said one long ago, "Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." It is just as natural for us to be in trouble as it is for the sparks to fly upward. We cannot escape it. We are neither immortal nor incorruptible. We are frail children of dust.

What is the cure for trouble? "Ye believe in God"—do you? Do you? Do you believe in God? What sort of God? The Infinite Spirit; the great First Cause; Natural Law; Force; Energy—how many names will you invent for God? The Creator? Oh yes; we will make it more personal, shall we! And who is He? One replies, "It is in Genesis: 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.'" That is quite true, but that was a long time ago. The Creator? the Ruler of the universe? the Source of law and of order? Oh, do not weary me with your definitions. Do not ask me to be interested in your abstractions. That does not cure my trouble! That will not dry the mourner's tears. That will not tell a man whether he is going to see his child again, whether he will ever meet with her who was more than life to him, who has been taken from his side. That will not help him.

"Ye believe in God"—spell it with a capital! What then? "But I wish I knew who He is. I wish I could be sure—but again science cannot help me." No human investigator has ever discovered Him, any more than men have discovered the life beyond.

"Ye believe in God"? Yes, as a rationalist I must. "Every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God." "I am familiar", say you, "with all

your arguments in support of the theory that God is, but that does not help me. I am in trouble. My heart is breaking. Everything is slipping from my grasp. My friends are leaving me. Oh, sir, I must go to the cemetery to-morrow. I saw in the paper that you were going to talk about these things. I could not go to church, but I said, I will stay in and listen to what the preacher has to say about this future life. He tells me to believe in God, but that does not help me. I do not know who He is. I never saw Him."

But listen. Said He who spake with infinite tenderness and with grace incomparable, "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me." Nobody else ever talked like that. Nobody else ever dared to say, "Put the same confidence in me that you put in God." Why? Oh, let me say it to His praise as we worship Him, because JESUS CHRIST IS GOD!—"From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." He is the only One Who can tell us about these things. He came from the Father into the world, and again he left the world and went back to the Father, and He says, "I am the way." If you are going to take that way you must believe in Him just as you believe in God. This is how He speaketh:

"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no foundations abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him."

And again: "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?"

There is only One to Whom God can be likened: liken Him to Jesus. Think of Him in terms of the revelation given to us by Jesus Christ. I say it worshipfully, I say it gladly, I say it gratefully: *Jesus Christ is the only God I know.* I want no other. I fall at His feet and cry, "My Lord and my God." How I bless Him that He came from the glory to show me the way home!

I should like to speak about that for six months. One reason I want to go to Heaven, Dr. Johnston, is that I shall have plenty of time to preach! When we get to heaven time shall be no more. We are trying to prepare for that condition here in Jarvis Street!

But I must gather up in a few sentences what I desire to say. Having laid that foundation, that all that we know of the future life comes to us through Him Who is the Incarnate Word, the eternal Logos, the Second Person of the Trinity, with the Spirit and the Father, one God,—He says that He is the way.

I heard my father say, many years ago, that in England—I heard him say it in England—there were two great engineers, one named Stevenson and the other Brunell. One of them showed his skill by avoiding difficulties: the other showed his ability by overcoming them. One, if building a bridge, would discover the place where it could be thrown across the gulf most easily: the other would always choose the more difficult place in order that he might show his skill by overcoming the obstacles in the way.

For long centuries men tried to find a way from this life into the other by avoiding the difficulty of death. The scientist, so-called at least, tried to discover the secret of life that it might be prolonged, that he might not die. But the heart flickered at last, and went out with his candle—and the mystery remained unsolved. Jesus Christ did not avoid the difficulty of death, He went through death,—and, blessed be His name, He died my death and your death. "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Through the grave, into the glory, went our Lord, and He says, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Is not that glorious? You have heard it a thousand times, but some day it will come home to your heart with special sweetness when you need a voice from across the river.

The way home is through Christ. This is the gospel, that Christ "died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." Do you believe that? Do you believe such old-fashioned truths as these?—"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin"; "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world"; "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Yes, but what lies beyond? Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many mansions. I have been there. I have seen them." He did not say, There shall be; He said, "There are." "I go to prepare a place for you, and when everything is in readiness I will come back again."

I stumbled upon a beautiful illustration of that here in the City of Toronto. I was driving with a friend, and we passed a residence that was a veritable palace. He said, "Do you see that house? Mr. So-and-So is the owner. He has three daughters who are all married. They have their own homes. They had all left home before he built that house. He built that great palace although there were none but him-

self and wife to occupy it. But in that house he built three other houses, three complete apartments splendidly equipped. When it was finished he gave to each of his daughters a key to the outside door, and then a key to her apartment where she and her family could come and have her own home, where she could be in her own house under her father's roof. The apartments are always in readiness; the servants keep everything in order, so that whenever they come to Toronto they have but to go and open the outside door, and then each one can go to her own apartment with her family."

I believe I am going to have an apartment, a mansion in my Father's house, up there. I will let you come and visit me, but you cannot have it for yourself, because it is mine. I shall be glad to go and visit you, because you, if you are Christ's, will have yours also. There will be "many" mansions. We shall each have his or her own place prepared in the life that is to come, if we go home by way of the Cross, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some who hear me to-night are asking, "Sir, I have recently been bereaved", and, as a mother said to me not long ago, "I cannot visualize my child. I cannot sketch a picture of her over there. If only somebody would tell me where she is and how she is faring, I could be content; but I cannot see her." Did you ever feel like that? You have often said when your friends leave you for another country, "Be sure to tell us how you get on, how you like your new home, and what friends you meet in the new land to which you go." Have you not wished that you could have a letter from heaven? If they could only send back and tell us how they fare!

We do not need that, dear friends. We know where they are. I will tell you what one to whom an abundance of revelations had been given, who had first of all seen God in Christ, said: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." I do not know what the house is like, but I know that I have one. I know that it is mine, on the authority of God's Word; and He is the only One Who knows anything about it.

You say, "That does not answer my question, because I am not so much concerned about the circumstances of our loved and lost as I am to know whether they dwell in a state of consciousness, whether they know anything. Is there anything in what I am told by some people that the soul departed goes to sleep and will sleep on until the resurrection morn?" I answer, I do not know anything about that personally. I only know what the Bible tells me, and it certainly does not teach soul-sleeping. I am shut up to one authority, as I have tried to tell you, because nobody knows anything about it but the Lord Jesus.

There is only one Person competent to speak on this subject, and that is Jesus Himself. We know nothing beyond what the Bible tells us, and we must abide by that.

Speaking by inspiration the Apostle Paul said, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better"—very far better, a superlative word—"nevertheless to abide in

the flesh is more needful for you." The man whose life throbbed with energy, who never had an idle moment, I am sure, did not want to go to sleep forever, or until the resurrection. He would not have described the sleep of the soul as "far better." He said, "For myself, I would set sail to-morrow and be with Christ. Great as my joy has been here, it would be greater yonder."

Does any mother ask me about her little child, or about someone who died in the faith of Christ? I think we shall not be far wrong if we sing that old hymn,—

"Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on His gentle breast;
There by His love o'er shaded,
Sweetly my soul shall rest."

Some men are very awkward with babies, but I am sure the Lord Jesus can carry a child more comfortably and safely than its own mother. O broken heart! Leave your darling child with Jesus. He is eternally safe and happy in His keeping.

I do not know much about the present state of the departed, of those who have died in faith, but I know all that I want to know, and that is, that they are with Christ." That is heaven! As we sang just now, "That will be glory for me." I can wait for the golden streets and the jasper walls and all the rest of it, if only I can be assured that the moment I am absent from the body, I shall be present with the Lord. That will be heaven enough for me. That is what the Bible says, and we can leave it there.

By and by there will be a still greater glory, but if you would know anything about the future life you must come to the One, and only One, who knows anything about it; and it is said of Him that He "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." In ancient times men were said to be "gathered to their fathers," but they did not know much about the other life. But Jesus passed through the grave on to resurrection ground, and then appeared in His resurrection body, "the first fruits of them that slept." Thus He brought life and immortality to light. Now we may know what life and immortality are as we see them exemplified in His resurrection life.

Some day we shall all rise in His likeness, if we are His. "Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body (the body of our humiliation) that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

I do not want to be like you. (Laughter). You are a fine-looking lot, I know, especially when you are dressed up; but I do not want to be like you at all. And I am sure you do not want to be like me. But I rejoice to know that I am going to have someday a body that will be like the body of Jesus Christ: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For

this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." I am going to have a body sometime that will not need the doctor's care, a body that can never be sick, and can never grow old, and over which death has no power.

What will that body be like? I cannot tell you, except that it will be similar to the body of Jesus. I am glad to know that those who had seen Jesus before He died, who saw Him after His resurrection, recognized Him as the same Person. He was changed in some respects. He appeared unto them in another form, and yet there were the marks of the nails in His hands, and of the thorns about His brow; and you remember how He said to Thomas—this same Thomas who uttered the words of our text—"Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." There was something about the body of Jesus Christ that made it possible for Thomas to identify it as the same body in which He was crucified. That is all I care to know.

I hope you will be better-looking than you are now! You will not need any vanity cases then! When you are fashioned like unto His glorious body; you will be without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. (Mr. Long: "Hallelujah!"—You need to say that, Brother Long.) We all do. Why do you not all say it? (Great chorus of, Hallelujahs.)

But there is one passage in the Book that always charms me when I read it, how that woman, like some mourners to whom I speak to-night, went to the grave and could not find her Lord there. When Peter and John said, "Let us go home," I fancy Mary said, "Go on, Peter. You may go, John; but I am going to stay a little longer yet." She stood there at the grave weeping until she became conscious of a Presence beside her, and saw One Whom she did not immediately recognize. Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said, "Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." He said, "Mary." That is all. He only called her by name, and she fell at His feet and said, "Rabboni," which is to say, Master.

He will call us by name, and we shall call each other by name by and by. I am sure we shall meet in the sweet by and by. I am sure we shall renew our fellowships, and shall take up the threads of affection that have been temporarily broken here; and the life that has been so segmentary, that has been so full of disappointments, shall be complete in Him!

"And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since, but lost awhile."

I shut you up to Christ, to His precious blood, to His death and resurrection, and I tell you in His name that He is the only hope for any man of woman born. Do you trust Him? Do you believe in God? Will you believe also in Him?

MEMORY HYMN.

"I once was a stranger to grace and to God;
I knew not my danger, and felt not my load;
Though friends spoke in rapture of Christ on the
tree,

'Jehovah Tsidkenu' was nothing to me.

"Like tears from the daughters of Zion that roll,
I wept when the waters went over His soul,
Yet thought not that my sins had nailed to the tree
'Jehovah Tsidkenu'—'twas nothing to me.

"When free grace awoke me, by light from on high,
Then legal fears shook me, I trembled to die;
No refuge, no safety, in self could I see;
'Jehovah Tsidkenu' my Saviour must be.

"My terrors all vanished before the sweet name;
My guilty fears banished, with boldness I came
To drink at the fountain, life-giving and free:
'Jehovah Tsidkenu' was all things to me.

"E'en treading the valley, the shadow of death,
This watchword shall rally my faltering breath;
For, when from life's fever my God sets me free,
'Jehovah Tsidkenu' my death-song shall be."

ON HARSH JUDGMENTS.

(Continued from page 8.)

Where it is a man's duty, by reason of his office, to pass judgment on the conduct of others, let him first, with all humility, condemn himself, that so he may be led to judge others in the fear of God. And further, let all bear in mind, for their greater abasement, that he whom God has preserved from committing sin owes him more than he to whom God has forgiven the sin he has committed; just as I owe more to one who saves me from a wound, than I do to him who cures the wound I have received. Accordingly, St. Augustine says, that God has pardoned me as many sins as He has prevented me from committing, which as man, I might otherwise have committed. Thus everyone may, with truth, regard himself as equally bad with the worst man he sees; for, as the same Father says, there is no sin which we can commit, which any man may not commit if God, who made man, does not keep him from it. Hence, when we see the sins of others, our part is to grieve for them, and to bless God for having kept us from them; for there is nothing in us to merit so great a mercy.

THE WEEK END IN JARVIS STREET.

(Continued from page 6.)

Following the open air service a young lady walked boldly up onto the platform, and, addressing Dr. Johnston, said, "Sir, I should like to be saved." They sat together there, and a little later Dr. Johnston brought her to us, and she communicated the great news that she had received Christ and had become His child. We were delighted with Dr. Johnston's visit, and hope that Jarvis Street will have the privilege of welcoming him some day to its pulpit.

There were fine congregations at both services, and now that the summer is over, we are hoping soon to see things at the flood-tide again.

Our readers, we feel sure, will be interested in a summary of our Bible School attendance for the first five months of the church year compared with the same period last year.

For the first three months of the five, April to June, in 1929, our average was 1,109; for the same period this year the average attendance was 1,396; or an average gain per Sunday for the three months of 287. July and August are the most difficult months of the year. Last year our average for those two months was 796; this year, 968; or only 37 short of an average of 1,000 per Sunday through the hot months of July and August. Taking the entire five months, our average last year was 990; this year, 1,219; or an average gain per Sunday for the full five months, of 229—a very fair-sized Sunday School in itself.

SERMONS BY THE LATE REV. ARCHIBALD BROWN WANTED.

Pamphlet sermons by the late Rev. Archibald Brown, of England, delivered in the years 1873 to 1893, would be greatly appreciated and paid for by Rev. Alexander Hoiries, 4248 Belden Ave., Chicago, Ill.

REMEMBER

THE RADIO FUND

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RADIO REPORTS.

At every Jarvis Street prayer meeting much prayer is offered for God's blessing upon the radio ministry, and every week we receive letters telling us of hearers who are joining us in prayer to the same end. We shall especially welcome therefore any news of conversions, or restorations, or of spiritual blessing received through the radio. If you have such news send it in and help a multitude to continue in prayer and thanksgiving.

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The Union Baptist Witness

This page is the official organ of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches in Ontario and Quebec.
337 Jarvis Street, Toronto, Canada.

W. GORDON BROWN, Editor.

KIRKLAND LAKE.

Pastor H. C. Slade of First Baptist Church, Timmins, served at Kirkland Lake on Sunday, August 31st. After the evening service an Open Air meeting was held and some two hundred men stood around and listened with intense interest. The attention was such that the meeting could not be closed and for nearly two hours the Gospel was preached. A recent convert, a young miner with a beautiful tenor voice, sang and gave his testimony and at the conclusion of the service a French Roman Catholic ran after the workers asking where the meetings were held. As he told of his conversion in the Open Air service, he could hardly find words to express himself and said in his broken English—"I pray, I pray, I go to confession." "I pay, I pay, no hope, no peace. Oh, I'm saved and its free, free, oh, the joy in here" (touching his heart). Until twelve o'clock Mr. Slade and other friends stayed with this new convert and great was their joy. This young man is well educated having studied for the priesthood and it is hoped that he will be an earnest worker and helper in Kirkland Lake.

* * * *

FAIRBANK, TORONTO.

The Gospel Truck of the Union, in charge of Mr. Bernard Jeffery of the Toronto Baptist Seminary, assisted by several young men from the Jarvis Street Baptist Church, has been doing splendid work this Summer. On Sunday evening they responded to an emergency call from the Fairbank Regular Baptist Church and took charge of the service there. Pastor Holliday, who was ill on Sunday, reports that "it was a good meeting and that the Lord blessed it to the salvation of four souls".

On Saturday evening last the Truck, with seventeen passengers, went to Lansing for an Open Air meeting. Many listened attentively to the messages given by the young men—just the simple Gospel story and testimonies to the saving and keeping power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

* * * *

MELROSE PARK, TORONTO.

The Melrose Park Regular Baptist Church, meeting in the John Wanless School for Sunday services, has recently secured a house for week night meetings. The house has been furnished and equipped by friends and is now ready for use. It is expected that a central meeting place will be a great advantage. Pastor Davison reports splendid services last Lord's Day.

ALTON REGULAR BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor J. Fullard tells us that during the past week there has been a nightly prayer-meeting held by the Alton Church and that these meetings will be continued for, at least, another week. Pastor Fullard asks an interest in the prayers of the wider fellowship that souls for which prayer is being made will ultimately yield to the Lord.

Rev. and Mrs. Hancox will be at Alton on Friday, September 5th.

* * * *

NORTH BAY.

Sunday, August 31st, was a day which will long be remembered by the Regular Baptist Mission, North Bay. On that day the Pastor who had so faithfully served the field for one year and was so greatly loved by the folk was farewelled and the Rev. James Gibson, who will take charge of the work, temporarily at least, was welcomed.

Mr. James Forrester was in charge of all services and Mr. Gibson preached most acceptably, instantly gaining the confidence and support of the people. Rev. W. J. H. Brown spoke a few words at each service and in the evening Mr. Douglas Brown, on behalf of the Mission, read a letter of appreciation of Mr. Forrester's ministry in their midst.

In addition to Messrs. Brown, Dr. Langton and Miss McIntyre, of Toronto, were attendants at the services and their presence was greatly appreciated.

The North Bay Mission has exercised a wide ministry. During Mr. Forrester's pastorate some twenty persons have professed conversion, some of these have been hardened sinners, but to the Glory of God are now witnessing to the power of God to transform lives. The Mission ministers to many transients and it is rather hard to keep in touch with converts. Many of these are, however, evangelizing in the place in which the Lord has placed them and are bringing joy to those who shared in their conversion. One young lady from a nearby town was gloriously saved in the Mission and going back to her home was used to the salvation of at least four souls. Her home was transformed and a serious situation averted.

Mr. Forrester shortly commences his studies in preparation for medical work. Continue to pray for him and the work at North Bay under Mr. Gibson.

* * * *

FUNDAMENTALIST, FT. WILLIAM.

On Sunday, August 24th, Pastor Roblin had the joy of seeing three respond to his invitation at the evening service.

Mr. Roblin is returning to take up further studies at the Toronto Baptist

Seminary this fall and the Church is praying that the Lord will send them a man to continue the splendid work of evangelism which it has been Mr. Roblin's privilege to carry on.

NEWS NOTES.

Our missionaries-elect, Rev. and Mrs. E. Hancox, spent Sunday at Annette Street, Toronto. Here and in other churches they are making many friends who will, we trust, "hold the ropes," as they go down into the darkness of Liberia to gather gems for His crown.

Expecting to return for further study at Toronto Baptist Seminary, Pastor Leander Roblin has resigned Tabernacle Baptist Church, Fort William. We are praying that this, with other pastorless fields, may be supplied with the men of God's choice.

Out at Immanuel Church, Mimico, Rev. W. J. Newby is doing a fine piece of work among the Christians of the community. A number who had left this church have returned, and believers from other churches are attending the services, so that the attendance at all meetings has greatly increased. Open-air services have been held after the regular Sunday evening gatherings and many have there been pointed toward Christ. A week ago Sunday, a boy of fourteen made a clear profession of faith in our blessed Lord. Faithful work must bring results.

REV. ALFRED J. LEWIS.

Mr. Lewis, who has been resting at his home in Rahway, N.J., for the month of August, is presenting the claims of Liberia to a group of churches in the vicinity of Port Norris, N.J., from September 6th to 10th. He is expected in Toronto for Mr. and Mrs. Hancox' Farewell in Jarvis Street Baptist Church on September 11th and will then serve at Emmanuel Regular Baptist Church, Verdun, Que., until Convention time. It is expected, beginning with the month of November, Mr. Lewis will be free to visit the churches of our Convention and picture to them the need of Liberia, giving first hand information.

LUCKNOW.

Rev. W. E. Atkinson will be assisting Rev. Edgar Ferns of Wingham, in special services at Lucknow, beginning about September 14th. Pray that the Lord will make these meetings a real blessing to the town and speak through His servants with power.

Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

Vol. 5.

No. 3.

REV. ALEX. THOMPSON, EDITOR.

Lesson 38. September 21st, 1930

Third Quarter.

ABRAM AND LOT.

Lesson Text: Genesis, chapter 13.

Golden Text: "And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was so great, so that they could not dwell together." Genesis 13:6.

I. THE RETURN TO BETHEL, (vs. 1-4)

We noticed in our last lesson that Abram was accompanied in his journey by Lot, his brother's son, and in this chapter we learn of some trouble which arose in consequence of that, although not directly attributable to Lot. Abram, rebuked in Egypt for his distrust, returns to Bethel; a strife arises between the herdmen of their flocks; and a separation takes place fruitful of momentous consequences for both.

The return to Bethel is the first matter mentioned, and the event is recorded in simple language, wherein we note the departure from Egypt, the wealth of Abram, and the arrival at Bethel. The return to this place is significant, its name implies "house of God", and it was the place of the altar. Bearing in mind the typical teaching attached to Egypt with its thought of the world, and the fact that nothing is said about an altar being raised by Abram in that land, we are reminded of the fact that no one can have fellowship with God in the world, and that if one backslides he must return to the place of the altar. He must return to the place, not necessarily physical, where he left off fellowship with God, and there call on the name of his Lord and Saviour. The return may not be easy, but it will be unobstructed by God, and He is gracious and will freely forgive the repentant sinner. Note the necessity for return on the part of the backslider; the way to return; and the consequences involved.

II. THE SEPARATION OF ABRAM AND LOT, (vs. 5-18)

The reason for the separation, (vs. 5-7). Separation of friends is always unpleasant to contemplate, and to experience, yet it is sometimes necessary in the interest of continued friendship. The separation here depicted was due to no fault in the principals concerned, but owing to the embarrassment of their

wealth, causing strife among their herdmen. The herds of Abram and Lot had become too large to dwell together; probably disputes had arisen concerning pasture lands, and watering places, etc., and such quarrelling would be most unseemly before the heathen who dwelt in the land, and would cause real sorrow to the patriarch and his nephew. The decision was therefore made to separate. Note among other things that quarrelling is a misery to both guilty and innocent, that among brethren it is a scandal, that the innocent are affected by it, that when engaged in by others it often separates friends, that it is grievous to the Holy Spirit, and that it is better to separate than to continue quarrelling. There may be justifiable reason for separation among brethren, although it is better, if possible, to remove the cause of contention that there might be peace. Two cannot walk together unless they be agreed, (Amos 3:3).

The nature of the separation, (vs. 8-13). The strife of the herdmen coming to the attention of Abram, he proposed to Lot a solution of the trouble in suggesting their separation, and he does so in a most kindly manner. He said unto Lot, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen, for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou wilt depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." This was a magnanimous offer on Abram's part,—he was the older of the two, and by right he could have claimed priority of choice; but this he refrained from doing, giving way out of the goodness of his heart to the younger man. The offer was frankly made, in the best interests of all, and led to a separation which wrought no hardship upon any in a material way, for there was plenty of room for all. The separation was complete, of a friendly nature, and in the interest of peace. The friends did not depart hating each other. The one who hates another is a very weak and unchristian person. Such hatred has no place in a Christian life, even if a person does one an injury; or, if we have to separate from brethren let us maintain always the spirit well pleasing to our Master. Who taught us to love our enemies, (Matt. 5:44). Abram's attitude toward quarrelling is also revealed in this incident. He abhorred it. And well would it be if the Lord's people would adopt the same attitude toward internal strife. Our common enemy is the devil; therefore let there be no strife in our midst, for such can only be a scandal and a heartbreak. This peaceful condition can be brought about and maintained by each one putting God first, accepting the word of God, as a guide, being under the control of the Holy Spirit, and obediently carrying out the divine will.

Lot hesitated not to agree to the suggestion of Abram, and in conformity with his offer he made his choice. We are informed he "lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of

Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other," (vs. 10-11). Such a choice on the surface seems to be a wise one, but there is a background which requires to be taken into consideration. Lot "pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly", (vs. 12-13). Evidently in the making of his choice Lot had not sufficiently, if at all, taken into consideration the presence of those wicked men. His choice was made purely from the standpoint of worldly advantage, and his after experience makes clear the folly of being governed by such a motive. The spiritual should always take precedence of the material. The choice, therefore, was at fault in its nature, its execution and its motive. It meant voluntarily going toward gross sin, with its consequent placing of himself and family in the way of temptation, and we are informed later how sadly sin wrecked their household, (19:30). We are not told that the guidance of God was sought in the matter. When men are led by their own wisdom exclusively, we cannot wonder that disaster meets their efforts. This choice was voluntary, worldly, of a lasting nature, and fraught with grave consequences. Explanation may be made of the power of choice; of the responsibilities and privileges attached thereto; and of the necessity for careful consideration before making a choice. Illustration of choice-making may be found in various parts of Scripture, as well as in the realm of observation, etc., (Heb. 11:24-27; Josh. 24:14-18).

The consequences of the separation, (vs. 14-18). The consequences in respect to Lot are not recorded in this chapter, but we may anticipate in order to emphasize the nature of this choice. Put in a brief manner, the following may be said about Lot's career after separation from Abram, showing its downward trend: he began by pitching his tent toward Sodom, (v. 12); then he entered that wicked city, became allied with its people by marriage, (19:14), became one of its leaders, (19:1), lost his influence over the people through his compromising attitude, also his possessions, and most of his family, (19:30), was led by the hand out of Sodom, (19:16), and took refuge in a cave with his two daughters who then showed the evil influence of the place, and humiliated him.

In contrast to those of Lot, the consequences for Abram were blessed indeed. We are informed the Lord spoke unto him, and His voice to an obedient servant is pleasant and precious. The nature of the message pertained to the covenant in respect to the land and the seed. The land was to be Abraham's and his seed's forever, and his descendants were to be in number as the dust of the earth. Both promises have been fulfilled, and although the promised land is not now occupied, nationally, by Israel, this people will again possess it, nationally, at our Lord's return. The command is then given to arise and walk through the land; then Abram dwelt in the plain of Mamre, signifying manliness or strength, which is in Hebron, meaning society, or association.