

The Gospel Witness

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

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"The Walls of the Pantry Were Thin"

At the prayer-meeting in Jarvis Street last Saturday evening an elderly lady, one of our Jarvis Street saints, said she had been much impressed recently by an exhortation to recall occasionally the experience of conversion, and to give God thanks for that great deliverance. This had led her to go back in thought over the years to the time when God first met her, and the burden of sin was lifted from her conscience.

She told of the inexpressible joy which, at that time, flooded her soul as she experienced a sense of the divine favour; that she was, in fact, so full of joy that she had to sing to give her soul expression. She told us that she was singing one morning in her pantry, and a neighbour heard her, "For," said she, "the walls of the pantry were thin." And that immediately suggested to us a line of meditation which we felt might be profitable.

The walls between any and every Christian and his neighbour are very thin. They are not sound-proof; they are not influence-proof. Whatever our station in life, whatever our occupation, between us and another soul for whom Christ died, the walls are very thin, for "no man liveth unto himself".

We have heard of the erection of rows of houses the construction of which was so flimsy that one piano would do for the row, because the separating walls were thin. A Christian surely ought to make himself or herself felt next door, and the next door to that—indeed, one Christian in a block ought to put upon all the other residents a responsibility for the day of judgment. The separating walls are very thin.

How do we employ the hours in the place where we live? where we work? where we play? where we suffer? where we aspire?

Suppose we view first of all the domestic realm. Does anybody suppose he can separate his private life from his public witness? Does anyone imagine that he can be used of the Holy Ghost in the salvation of men and the glory of God outside his house, if he does not live as a Christian ought to live in his own house, and before his own family? It really does not make much difference whether one lives in a detached or a semi-detached house. Let it be remembered, the walls are always thin;

and what a man is in himself before God will determine what he does in the public eye.

Or, think of the walls that enclose the place where a man works. It does not make much difference what his occupation may be,—a mechanic, a salesman, a clerk, a teacher, a preacher, or whatnot, the temper he shows, the conscience he puts into his work, the quality of his labour, the real serviceableness of his life, will somehow manifest themselves outside the walls of the workshop, the store, the office, the school, or the church—the walls are always thin.

The same may be said of the place where a person plays. Everybody must have a little play, a little relaxation and recreation, an avocation as well as a vocation; and our religion is of a very poor quality if it does not go with us to the play-ground.

Years ago we participated in a cricket match, and on the field that day there was a man who was prominent as the head of an educational institution. We watched him play, and the game revealed his character. He was bowled at last "LBW". Cricketers will understand. That means "leg before wicket". A man may be out accidentally, LBW; but it is not considered a high honour thus to retire from the field. We knew little of this man until that afternoon, but his whole action that day was a fine illustration of the English proverb, "It isn't cricket". He did not know how to play the game. We saw him in many relations after that, and he was always a LBW man. He never played fairly: he did not know the meaning of fair play.

Well, let us put it thus: the fences around the play ground are never very high. Somebody is always watching. Someone is always listening. And we show what we really are in the hours when we are in negligee and off guard.

It may be that the play of some is not of an athletic sort. It may be the books they read, the diversions they enjoy, the quality of story they tell. Be it remembered, gentlemen, the walls are very thin, and you will be overheard. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth." "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt".

Sometimes even a Christian will find himself in some sort of prison. He may be imprisoned by untoward circumstances. He may be subject to many injustices. He may be made to smart under pecuniary losses. He may be called upon to suffer bitter persecutions. He may have to endure serious bodily afflictions. He may be betrayed by trusted friends—one, or all of these contingencies, may shut him up to a narrow place; and he may feel himself to be enclosed with walls of heavy masonry, shut in by iron doors. Make no mistake, friend, on that point: the walls of your prison-house are thin. Your behaviour under these circumstances will prove what you really are. Anyone can shout, Hallelujah, on a June morning, when walking among the flowers to the hum of bees and the song of birds, beneath a cloudless sky. A religion that is like a summer dress, and can be worn only in fair weather, is not of much value in the climate of this world. There are other than June mornings. There are the chill days of December, and later winter when frost and snow abound. Are we migratory Christians, who, like the birds, fly south from the frost of winter, and again north from the heat of summer, seeking our own comfort, and always flying before the wind?

We have read of some who were "thrust into the inner prison" where the jailor "made their feet fast in the stocks". Surely in a prison-house like that, the prisoners can live to themselves? No! Apparently the walls of the prison, like the pantry, were thin, for we read, "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them." Somebody always hears, whether we praise or pray, whether we are grateful or grumbling, cheerful or sad. The walls of the Christian's dwelling are thin.

A few years ago the world was startled by the discovery of what has since been known as the Roentgen Rays, now more familiarly known as X-rays, when it was learned that these rays could penetrate almost any substance, revealing the bones or any foreign substance within the human body, or treasures hidden in oaken chests. But we have lived to observe still greater wonders than that. In a modern Babylon like New York, with its millions of voices, and many more millions of noises, away in a train in the subway, the radio wave has carried the sound of instrument and of song. And even the submarine beneath the sea has proved not to be isolated or insulated from the ubiquitous radio wave.

What did our Lord mean when He said, "But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Does it mean that the influence of our lives, the words we speak, the acts we commit, and perhaps even the thoughts we think, are divinely registered? May it not be true that between our present dwelling-place and the seat of judgment the walls are very thin, and that all we are and all we do find a record in the place of ultimate reckoning? When Mary broke her alabaster box of ointment, and poured its contents upon the Master's head, either the walls between the various rooms of the house were very thin, or the doors were wide, for the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.

No Christian made to bloom as a flower in the garden of the Lord, and arrayed with the lily's glory, surpassing that of Solomon, shall ever be permitted to waste his or her sweetness on the desert air. There is no waste in the divine economy. Be it a prayer, a petition for help,

a song of praise, an unspoken aspiration of the soul, the walls between the redeemed and heaven, God's dwelling-place, are very thin and they will find an answer there. The truth is, life is one: our yesterdays, our to-days, and our to-morrows, are all related. Time and eternity are but terms permitted us for the accommodation of our finite understandings. If we have been redeemed by blood, and regenerated by the Holy Spirit, if the evil of the past has been blotted out, and our records purged from every sin and stain, we may be sure that we shall discover a glorious unity in life, and that "all things work together for good to them that love God". So the life we live on earth will prove a preparation for the life in heaven. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, must have a direct relation to the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

The hymns of thanksgiving and praise we sing in the pantry will not want an audience. The neighbours will hear them and catch them up, and they will echo them to other hearts and lives; and the angels will catch up the refrain, and we shall find that by God's abounding grace we have been brought into harmony with the universal music which finds its origin in the heart of the Eternal.

RELIGIOUS HITCH-HIKERS.

A hitch-hiker, we understand, is a pedestrian who usually rides! He starts out on foot without any car, and begs a ride en route, and reaches his destination without having paid for tires, or gas, or oil.

It occurred to us the other day, that in our day there are to be found multitudes of religious hitch-hikers. They do not own a car; they have nothing to do with the upkeep of one of Zion's chariots; they do not belong to any church; they do not build one; they do not accept responsibility. They are not static. They stay nowhere long. They are always on the move, ready to wave their hand to any religious chariot passing their way.

When they have been taken aboard they usually remark upon the car. They know all cars—for they have ridden in all of them. They belong to no denomination! Certainly not! But they know all about all denominations, for they have travelled with all of them. They have been Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, United Church, Salvation Army, Brethren, Baptist, Pentecostalist, Tabernaculist, Everythingist and Nothingist! They know the make of every religious chariot. They use them all, they ride in them all—but they pay for none of them.

We read the other day of some generous motorist who picked up a hitch-hiker on the road. He happened to have a minor accident, and the man he had picked up was slightly injured. The hitch-hiker showed his gratitude to the motorist by suing him for damages—and the motorist had to pay.

Beware of religious hitch-hikers. When they get into the car they may knock you over the head, or so worry the driver as to turn the car into the ditch. It will not hurt them. It will ruin the car, and render the driver liable to damages.

Sometimes, of course, there are *boni-fide* hitch-hikers. They have a definite object. They are making a journey, and will be grateful for a lift on the way. But how are we to know them, or to distinguish them from the other variety? Hitch-hikers ought to carry their credentials with them. But that is a problem. We have no solution: we merely suggest, Be careful how you open the door of one of Zion's chariots to religious hitch-hikers.

"The Time of the Sun Going Down"

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, February 8th, 1931.

(Stenographically reported.)

"And the battle increased that day: howbeit the king of Israel stayed himself up in his chariot against the Syrians until the even: and, about the time of the sun going down he died."

—II Chronicles 18:34.

The King of Israel referred to here was Ahab, of whom it is said, "There was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up". Ahab's whole career was one of open and flagrant rebellion against God. And there came a time when Jehoshaphat paid him a visit. And Ahab said unto his servants, "Know ye that Ramoth in Gilead is ours, and we be still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria? And he said unto Jehoshaphat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses." However, he counselled that inquiry should be made of the word of the Lord concerning this enterprise which Ahab had in prospect. Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, "Shall I go up against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king." But Jehoshaphat was not satisfied; and he asked, "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we may enquire of him?" To which Ahab replied, "There is yet one man, Micaiah, the son of Imla, by whom we may enquire of the Lord: but I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil." But Jehoshaphat's counsel prevailed, and Micaiah was sent for. The messenger who carried the king's request informed him that already four hundred prophets had promised the king prosperity, and advised that his word should be like the word of one of them. But Micaiah said, "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak." And when at last he came to Ahab, and Ahab propounded to him the same question, he gave him the same answer: "Go, and prosper: for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king. And the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou say nothing but that which is true in the name of the Lord?" Yet he heard exactly the same message from Micaiah as he heard from the four hundred prophets. He did not question the four hundred prophets or the reliability of their testimony; but when Micaiah preached after the same fashion, he began to think there must be something wrong with Micaiah. Some preachers can tell men that human nature does not need redemption, but only development; and they are applauded; but if some other preachers were to say the same thing, people would say, "What has changed his testimony?" Why did Ahab not receive the same word, in the same unquestioning fashion, from Micaiah? Then, as now, it was the prophet's record which gave weight to his testimony. The faithful prophet, thus adjured, opened his mouth and delivered the word which the Lord had given to him. He told how in a vision he had seen

"the host of heaven" in the presence of the Lord; and the Lord had asked, "Who shall persuade Ahab that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth and do so;" for after all, it was for this Ahab had been asking. If men will not have the truth, but a lie, God will let them have what they want at last. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." Ahab had shut his heart all his life against the truth; and at last God permitted him to have just what he had asked for—a lying spirit.

Remember, my hearers, you can shut your heart against the gospel too long: you can refuse to hear the truth until it shall be impossible for you to believe anything but a lie. Thus, at last, Micaiah said, "I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the Lord said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace." And Ahab turned to Jehoshaphat and said, "Did I not tell thee that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil? I knew the kind of sermon we should hear if we went to hear that man preach. I knew that he would run counter to all my plans for to-morrow, and make it very difficult for me to go back to business, and do the thing I planned to do. I told you he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil."

"And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah and carry him back . . . and say, Thus saith the king, put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I come in peace." And as they were leading Micaiah away, he called after the king his last message. He said, "If thou return at all in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me." When Ahab had thus disposed of the preacher, he said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself, and enter the battle; but put thou on thy robes. And the king of Israel disguised himself, and went into the battle." But Jehoshaphat soon discovered that he was the centre of interest on the field of battle. The king of Syria had commanded his captains that they "fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel." Therefore seeing Jehoshaphat in royal apparel, they assumed he was the king; but when Jehoshaphat cried out, they forsook him; but they did not find the king. Albeit, "A certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded. And the battle increased that day:

howbeit the king of Israel stayed himself up in his chariot against the Syrians until the even: and about the time of the sun going down he died."

That is a long story for an introduction; but I wanted you to have the historical setting of the text. Let me now speak to you of the Warrior, of the Battle, and of the Sunset.

I.

First of all, I want you to ANALYZE THE CHARACTER OF THIS MAN AHAB, WHO WAS SET UPON HAVING WAR WITH GOD.

And I begin by saying that *the trouble with Ahab was that his heart was wrong*. The whole bias of his life was against the will of God. It was as natural for Ahab to do wrong, as it was for water to run down hill. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." All his ambitions, all his aspirations, all the plans he made—the whole bent of his life was in opposition to the will of God. Hence, whenever the word of God came to him, it came with threatening, with condemnation; and he was reluctant to hear it.

And that is true of every one of us! We are enemies in our minds by wicked works. You have only to study the life and character of the youngest child; and you will, if you are perfectly frank, become a theologian of the old school: at least, you will subscribe to the doctrine of natural depravity. There is a disposition in every one of us to go wrong. If you have been happy enough to discover a man, or woman, or boy, or girl, who is free from that tendency, whose life does not illustrate that great truth, you are an exception to the universal rule. The truth is, it is natural for us every one to do wrong.

And yet Ahab seems to have been *the victim of a besetting sin*. He was weaker in one part of his nature than he was in some other parts. The evil that was within expressed itself more clearly and more strongly in one direction than it did in some others. If you study his character you will find that *he was a covetous man*; he was always grasping after that which belonged to somebody else. He wanted Naboth's vineyard; and he resolved to have it even if he had to commit murder to get it. And now he determines to possess himself of Ramoth-gilead. He was a successful man. He had made up his mind to get things, and hitherto he had succeeded in the realization of his ambitions. He added land to land, field to field, territory to territory. Ahab was resolved to push back the boundaries of his kingdom, and to possess more and more of this world.

I do not know what your besetting sin may be. Sin expresses itself in one direction in one man, and in another, in another. But every man and woman here this evening knows that at one point his or her character is weaker than at any other point; and that at that very point sin is stronger than at any other. He knows that what is a temptation to other people is no temptation to him; and the things which seem to have no power over many others, threaten to destroy him. We are all different. Because you never get drunk, do not speak too harshly of the man who does: because you have a very mild tongue, do not commit the folly of supposing that you are so far superior to another man who sometimes offends with his lips. I do not know what it is, my friend; but there is a point in your life,

if you are not a Christian, where sin is entrenched. Dr. Stockley read to you the list of these horrible things that have their dwelling-place in the human heart. "The works of the flesh are manifest", and I need not again enumerate them; but every man of woman born is more peculiarly tempted in one direction than another, and is likely to fall a victim unless the grace of God shall intervene. So beware of that one direction in which your natural corruption expresses itself. It will lead you to the field of Ramoth-gilead,—but more about that in a moment.

There is a point where the powers of hell have established themselves; and that is the point where God is going to fight His last battle with you: that is the point where destiny is to be determined: just at that particular place, God is going to decide at last who shall be lord of your life. At that point you will surrender or be destroyed.

Ahab was a man who was very easily influenced. He was a weak character in some respects. He "sold himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up". Poor fellow! He is to be pitied! Some men say, "Perhaps Ahab would not be half so bad if it were not for Jezebel". It is too bad, is it not, that some men have such wives! And equally regrettable is it, that some wives have such husbands! But is it really true that Jezebel found it easy to influence Ahab? Read his story. Jezebel was like most other wives—she was wonderfully shrewd. She first of all discovered what Ahab wanted to do; and then she told him to do it! But you will search the record in vain to discover one single instance where Jezebel influenced him against his own will. The truth is, it is easy to roll a stone down hill; it is easy to influence a man in the direction of his own desires; it is easy to accelerate the processes of degeneration, and hasten a man's journey to the pit. He is going there anyhow—that is the direction in which he is moving; and that was the direction in which Jezebel influenced him.

It may be that there is somebody here who thinks to justify his or her course in steadfastly rejecting the offers of the gospel on that ground. "Sir, I wish I had a little more individuality; I wish I had a little more firmness of will; I wish I were not so easily influenced, for I go to church and find myself possessed of new desires; and I would like to go the upward path: then I go to business, or I go on the train, or I meet somebody in the hotel, and I find I am just carried away with the tide." Yes, because that is the way you are going, my friend; and that is the direction of your natural inclination. It will not do to try to lay the responsibility upon others. Observe: *Ahab was never easily influenced, against his own desires*. Of all the characters whose history we have recorded in this Book, is there one more massive, more splendidly proportioned; or is there one who evidenced a stronger will, and a more forceful personality than Elijah the Tishbite? And yet Ahab could stand against Elijah like a rock: he could stand against Micaiah, the son of Imla, and be utterly unmoved: he could search all the dens and caves of the earth to find the prophets of the Lord, to destroy them. Ahab spent his whole life seeking to silence every voice that dared to tell him the truth. If Ahab had had his way he would

have cut off the head of every prophet of Jehovah. Ahab set his heart upon living in a world where truth would never dare to speak. He loved a lie; he resolved to live a lie; and shut every avenue of his nature against the voice of God. His carnal mind was enmity against God.

What the Bible calls "sin" is a terrible thing. A man calls up the doctor, and he says, "I wish you would come over to see my wife. She is not very well." "Anything serious?" the doctor asks. "O no, I do not think so. She is just a little indisposed." And he comes. The family think there is nothing seriously wrong. But when the doctor examines the patient, he knows; he is filled with alarm. And if he were to tell what he knows, he would say, "I have discovered something that has baffled medical science through all the ages: I have discovered the advance agent of death; and all the wealth of the world, and all that human skill can do, cannot indefinitely postpone the coming of the last great conqueror. I hear his foot-step. And this woman is set toward the grave!" He tells the husband that it is serious; but he dismisses the doctor for telling him the truth. He insists that the doctor does not know anything; and he calls another.

Thus, people may play with this moral distemper and regard it as only a little human infirmity. I tell you that sin is a thing that has all the power of hell behind it. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Behold it working in Ahab, strengthening him against all the appeals of God Himself, until he resolves upon spiritual suicide.

Ahab was a *very religious man*. He really was. Ahab had no less than four hundred preachers all his own! He paid their salaries! And when a man needs four hundred preachers to keep him straight, you may be sure he is naturally pretty crooked!

But these preachers were chosen with a view to sanctioning what Ahab wanted to do. Ahab was religious, but his religion was of the sort that never interfered with his own desires, or ran counter to his own will. It required no repentance on his part, no turning back from the path which his native appetites and tastes and desires would have him take. He was able to be a perfectly natural man and to be religious at the same time.

That is the kind of religion people want. Most men seek religious sanction for what they do. They do not want to be irreligious, but they want a religion that will allow them to have their own way, and to cling to their own lusts, and take possession of Ramoth in Gilead.

II.

NOW A WORD OR TWO ABOUT THE BATTLE! What was the battle about? What was the cause of the war? Ahab said, "Ramoth-gilead is ours. I will have it." And God said, "You shall not have it, Ahab." "I will," said Ahab. And God said, "Thou shalt not." "Jehoshaphat, will you help me assemble the hosts? We will fight this thing out." "What are you going to do, Ahab?" "I am going to cut a path through the Syrian host to the gate of Ramoth, and enter as a conqueror." What Micaiah really said—his message being interpreted—was this: "Ahab, you may cut your way through the Syrian host; but when you arrive at the gates of

Ramoth you will find Another with a drawn sword in His hand Whom no man ever conquered; and you will fall before Him. Now be wise, do not attempt the impossible." "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker. Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth: Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?"

Well, my friend, God is inseparable from His law; and *if you and I transgress His law, we fight against God Himself*. It may be in some great transaction—it may be in a matter of business involving millions, that some man will fight God; while others will fight out the battle over a five-cent piece, perhaps. It makes no difference where it is; for wherever a man puts himself in opposition to the sovereign will of Omnipotence, he enters upon a course which will destroy him in the end. It may be that there is some man here this evening who is contemplating a certain course of action; and he sees only the Syrians. It may be a matter of competition in business; he thinks if he can gain an advantage over somebody—the king of Syria, he has all his plans laid—if he gets that, he will get his Ramoth. You will do nothing of the kind, my friend, if God is in opposition to you: do not make any mistake about that. You may out-general, or out-fight the Syrians; but in the end of the day you will have to fight it out with God.

Do you not see the principle? Law is universal: God is one: there is no province of His illimitable dominions in which His law is not operative; and should any man lift his puny finger against the law of God, sooner or later God will deal with him. God brings us into judgment. Ahab was willing to concede, I dare say, many things if only he could have Ramoth-gilead. This covetous desire for the possession of that which belonged to somebody else was luring him on all the time; and it was on that very point that the last great conflict was fought.

The truth is, therefore, that we have not surrendered to God until we have surrendered altogether. It is of no use to surrender in one hundred particulars, and to reserve one special province of the kingdom of man over which we resolve to reign ourselves, and from which God is to be excluded. The battle will increase: "The battle increased that day." It will increase, it must increase! O no; God will never give up: there will be no surrender on His part: He never has surrendered—He never will! The battle will end only with the capitulation of the rebel.

III.

AND WHAT ABOUT THE SUNSET? O how different was the evening hour from the promise of the morning! When Ahab had assembled his splendid fighting men, with all their implements of war; and when to that he added the chariots and horses of Jehoshaphat; and when he had reviewed his army, he said, "I think there is every prospect of success. The king of Syria can not match my men." Therefore he resolved, "We will dispose of the preacher. We will get him out of the way. We will silence the voice that would discourage us. We will put him in prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I return in peace." He resolved to take every precaution. And to his ally, Jehoshaphat, he said,

"Put on thy robes; and I will disguise myself. This prophet said that I should not come again in peace: I will show him"; therefore he disguised himself as though he were an ordinary captain of the host; and he entered into the battle.

There was not one of all the Syrian captains, nor of all the soldiers under them, who was able to identify Ahab. But remember! God had spoken; He had said, "Ahab, if you go, you shall never return. I will show you the end of the day in the beginning: I saw all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and the Lord said, These have no master; let them return therefore every man to his house in peace. You are forewarned. But if you go there can be but one result. Your blood be upon your own head." But said Ahab, "I do not believe it. I will disguise myself, and will go to battle." And he did; and in the thick of the fight "a certain man drew a bow at a venture." And as he did so, an unseen Hand was laid upon the bow-string, and it was unerringly guided; and the bow-man let it fly. And the king who was disguised said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host; for I am wounded." God had found him out! There is no disguise that can effectually hide a sinner from God. There is no way by which a man may lose himself in the battle against righteousness. "Be sure your sin will find you out."

It may be that some here are doing the very thing that Ahab did—*hiding behind a servant of God who had got into bad company*; for Jehoshaphat made the mistake of his life when he "joined affinity with Ahab"; and he had to suffer for it. Jehoshaphat was a servant of the Lord; but he had no business to be fighting in the same battle. And sometimes it is true that professing Christians go into the battle side by side with Ahab, with all their robes on; and Ahab—brave man that he is—loves to hide behind the Jehoshaphats!

Had Jehoshaphat stayed at home, however, Ahab would have had nobody behind whom to hide. How many people there are who hide behind the inconsistencies of those of us who profess Christ! My dear friends, whether you are listening in this building or over the air, when you take the field with Ahab you are providing a shield for him so far as the darts of the Syrians are concerned, unless God intervene. Keep out of such company. Let Ahab fight his own battle. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Keep away from Ahab—for see what happened.

Somebody hears me over the air who says, "I am going to fight this thing through. I am going to win. I know it is a tricky business. I know it will not stand the light of day, but I know that men will praise me when I do well for myself, and in spite of the Syrians and all the hard times, you will see me walking down the streets of Ramoth possessing the things upon which my heart is set." No, you will not. It is not Syria you are dealing with—but God. You may reject my testimony, but there is One Who sees us as we are, and somewhere He has a servant—even though he be himself an enemy of God—who will draw a bow at a venture, and the hand of God will guide the arrow so that it will find your heart.

A man says, "O well, I may be a bit of a sinner; but I am no bigger sinner than lots of your church mem-

bers; for they are doing the same things that I am doing. I have one in partnership with me; and he knows the business we are doing." Yes, alas! alas! Jehoshaphat and Ahab are fighting in the same battle; and they resolved upon the possession of the same prize! "Why talk to me? Why do you not talk to Jehoshaphat?" That did not save Ahab. God will reckon with Jehoshaphat; and God will reckon with every man who is "unequally yoked together with unbelievers." They must answer for themselves. He will deal with Jehoshaphat for putting on his robes, and entering into the battle. But meantime we are talking about Ahab. Let me remind you no one can be justified by another's sins, but only by Another's righteousness. The bow drawn at a venture will find the joint in the armour of every soul fighting against God irrespective of his companionships. Make no mistake about that!

And then Ahab said, "Turn thine hand that thou mayest carry me out of the host." Esau "found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Ahab began to repent; and yet he "stayed himself up in his chariot against the Syrians." He said, "I will see this thing through. I said I would have Ramoth-gilead, and Ramoth-gilead I will have." And so he propped himself up, while the blood was streaming from his gaping wounds, until the evening.

I saw a man do that once. He was a miser. I do not know that he had very much money—perhaps a few thousand dollars—but he had lived the life of a miser. He had been cruel to his wife; and even more cruel to his children. His wife, when I knew him, was dead; and his children, all but one faithful daughter, had been driven from him. He lived in a house upon whose floors there were no carpets; there was no comfort within at all. It was just a place to keep off the rain. And he was also making money—just like Ahab. He was a shrewd man, and was piling up money. At last he was taken ill; and this faithful daughter, a Christian girl, who in spite of all his unkindness had remained at her father's side, asked me to go to see him; and I went to see him in that cheerless home: a prison-cell might be more comfortable than the room in which he lay. He was very ill; and he thought he was going to die. He did die,—in fact, it was his death-bed. He believed it to be so. I talked to him about Christ; and he was full of anxiety for the future, deeply concerned. He wanted to know the way of life, for he was terrified at the prospect of death.

I visited him again and again; and the daughter sent a telegram to one of her brothers who was not so very far away. He came home: a fine young fellow he was—a man who seemed almost to despise his father's property. He did not want any of it, I am sure of that. Just at the head of the bed where I sat talking to the father, who was hard of hearing, there was a door opening into another room. The son opened the door, and said to me in a whisper, "Make sure, Mr. Shields, that he is sincere. Ask him what he would do with his property if God should spare his life." So presently I turned to him, and said, "Mr. So-and-so, the doctor says you are going to die; and it looks as though you were. But sometimes, you know, people do not die when they are expected to. And it is barely possible that God may spare your life—and what if He does?" A moment before he had been speaking as though he was deeply

contrite, and profoundly penitent. I said to him, "What if God should restore you? What about the past, Mr. So-and-so? What about the property you have accumulated? You have bound it to yourself; and you have shared it with no other, not even with your wife and children. Would you continue in that course if God should spare you?" With his remaining strength he propped himself up and began to swear; fire flashed from his eye; he cursed his daughter—the faithful girl who had sacrificed the best years of her life for him; he cursed the son; he cursed everybody; and seemed as though he were possessed with a legion of devils. And in a paroxysm of anger, at last he fell back on his pillow. I could do nothing with him; and even then I remember I thought of this story. "The king of Israel stayed himself up in his chariot against the Syrians until the even,"—propping himself up that he might breathe his last breath in defiance against God! Sin drives men mad! It blinds them so that they drive right on over the precipice to destruction.

"And about the time of the sun going down he died." And they took his chariot down to the pool of Samaria; and they washed the royal blood from the floor of the chariot. And as they did so "dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armour, according unto the word of the Lord which he spake."

Thus when the sun went down God had His way! He always has His way! God was victorious; His Word was fulfilled. Ahab had gone down to defeat in a battle against Omnipotence. Every man does—every woman does; and the only wisdom is to turn away from it all and surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

I remind you before I close that Ahab was terribly deluded. When he fought against God, Whom he ought to have loved, he rebelled against One Whom it ought to have been his joy to serve. And if you would know what God is, what God is like—you must see Him in the face of Jesus Christ. The little children came to Him, and He gathered them up in His arms and blessed them; the sick people came, and He gently laid His gracious hand upon them and made them whole; the troubled came, and gracious words proceeded out of His mouth. He ever "went about doing good." And at last, because there was no other way, because He saw what our sin was doing, He Himself took our place, and went to the cross, and bore our sins in His own body on the tree. He died our death for us that we through simple faith in Him might have everlasting life.

O that the spirit of God may make us wise, this evening, unto salvation; to choose life rather than death; Christ rather than Barabbas; heaven rather than hell! "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already."

A French officer came on board Nelson's flag-ship on one occasion after a battle, to surrender. He came with all the marks of rank upon him, and with his sword by his side. With all a Frenchman's politeness he extended his hand and offered to greet him fraternally, but Nelson did not smile. He said, "Your sword first, if you please." The officer unbuckled his sword

and laid it down at his conqueror's feet. "Now", said the British Admiral, "you may give me your hand."

"There is no peace, said my God, to the wicked. Your sword first, if you please." Repent, and believe the gospel. Surrender to Jesus Christ, and then He will take you with His wounded hand and give unto you eternal life, and you shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck you out of God's hand.

GOD'S MOUNTAINS—GOD'S WAY.

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

In Isaiah, chapter forty-nine, verse nine, we read, "They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places"; and in verse eleven we have these words, "And I will make all my mountains a way." These words are part of a great message of the prophet concerning the return of the captives from Babylon to their loved Jerusalem; and He uses the figure of a flock under the gracious leading of a shepherd. In England can sometimes be seen a flock of sheep being driven along the country road from one field to another. And it could be observed that sometimes the sheep, when they have the opportunity, snatch a mouthful of grass from the roadside. They have been able, however, to get very little until they have reached the new pasture. But the flock referred to in this passage in Isaiah will find food along the way as they go, whether the path be a level one or a high mountain road. They have been able to feed in the ways even upon the bare heights, and their needs shall be supplied all the journey through. This is a great and wonderful promise, because it was a serious matter to feed the many thousands of travellers who took their journey from Babylon right away to their loved Jerusalem. The needs arising day by day would be very great. So the promise that these needs should be met was a large and gracious promise.

But there is another flock being led by the Good and Great Shepherd to-day,—the flock referred to in John, chapter ten, which is journeying toward the New Jerusalem. These have the presence of the Shepherd, and therefore, the promise of being fed too. So we may take the words of our text as applying to them, "They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. . . And I will make all my mountains a way" for this flock under the hand of the Good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ.

First of all, we will notice THE WAYS OF GOD ARE OFTEN MOUNTAIN WAYS: "I will make all my mountains a way". *God has His mountains.* The ways of God are not a dead level for any of us. In the physical world in which He has placed us, He has strewn majestic mountains in some countries with lavish hand. These mountains are a wonderful help to us in many ways. After a great stretch of monotonous travelling along a level region, how inspiring it is to approach a mountain range! For instance, travelling through Western Canada you travel hundreds of miles along a level plain until you are wearied with the monotony. And you look eagerly from the platform of the car toward the distant Rockies, seen dimly in the West. So in our life as Christians there is great variety. God says, "I will make all my mountains a way". The path where He leads His flock to-day has its mountains. There are steep places in the way; and the mountains are His: He has placed them there. He calls them "*M*y mountains".

Mountains are often emblems of things that are difficult and trying. There are many hills which are artificial. If you travel in mining districts in England and other countries, you may see mounds of slag and refuse placed there by man; and a terrible eyesore they are to anyone who has any delight in the beautiful! Many of us are prone to make a great many of these artificial hills, to strew our pathway with imaginary difficulties, or trials of our own manufacture: and extremely ugly they are. But God's mountains are grand! All the difficulties which He puts in our path are noble and inspiring. And they are not hastily made, either. They are the outcome of His deep thought, and wisdom, and care, His deep concern for our training and development. Science used to say that mountains were largely the result of volcanic action, and they were thrown up almost in an instant. Now we are told that mountains are greatly the outcome of long and complicated processes and operations. So God's mountains in our way are not hastily thrown up, but are planned in infinite wisdom, and are wonderfully varied in form and height.

There is an interesting fact recorded concerning the mountains in the moon. It is said that there are mountains both in the north and south poles of the moon which never know night. They are so strangely situated that the sun never sets on them, and they may be called "mountains of eternal light." I am not sure whether God's mountains in our pathway may not also be mountains of eternal light. From our point of view, perhaps, through our unbelief, they may seem to be dark mountains. But if we have His presence with us Who is Light, then we shall often find that God's mountains are mountains of light. At any rate, we thank God for His mountains. He has placed them in the way.

GOD'S WAY LIES OVER GOD'S MOUNTAINS. The old Romans when making roads used to make them straight. When they came to a hill they did not curve round it, but went right over it—their road must be straight. So God would not have us turn aside when we find the mountain difficult in our way. John Bunyan caught that idea in his "Pilgrim's Progress". Christian very soon on his journey came to "Hill Difficulty". What struck him was that the way to the Celestial City ran right up the centre of the hill. There were paths round the foot of the hill, one called "Danger", and the other, "Destruction". Formalist and Hypocrisy took these paths around the foot of Hill Difficulty, and they lost themselves, one in the wood, and the other on "the dark mountains". But the way to the Celestial City is right up the centre of the Hill Difficulty. John Bunyan tells us that Christian on reaching the hill started to run, but soon he had to walk, and then to climb on his hands and knees: it was so difficult. But he pressed on up the centre of the hill. But Bunyan beautifully suggests that at the foot of the hill there is a spring. For all God's mountains there is a spring,—refreshment for us before we face the difficulty; something to cheer and inspire us, to enable us to face the steep. Bunyan also says, "Half way up the Lord of the hill had provided an arbour into which pilgrims might turn if weary, and refresh themselves before pursuing their way". Thus "He giveth power to the faint", and "As thy days so shall thy strength be." God's way lies right over God's mountain. It is good for us that it does. The air is more pure up there than in the valleys. The mosquitoes and the malaria,—the small stinging and weakening trifles of life,—do not rise up to mountain heights, they keep to the low levels. God's mountains are bracing, and to face them is to strengthen

the soul. A great sorrow, a great difficulty, a great trial—these are things which call out our noblest powers, and make men of us. Difficulty is the handmaid of excellence. Thank God for difficulties, for His mountains! God's ways are over the mountains, but if you want to tread God's path, do not try to shirk the difficulties, but face them in the strength of Him who travels with you.

THEN GOD FINDS A WAY OVER HIS MOUNTAINS. This is a different thought from the one we have just dwelt upon. Mountains look impossible sometimes in the distance. If you travel out toward the Rockies in this country, it seems for a while as if the train intended to dash itself against the perpendicular mountain heights. Presently, however, you come to the "Gap", and the "Gap" is the entrance to the path over the mountains. God has His way over the mountains. We do not see it in the distance, but only when we are close to it. So our path must be a path of faith, and not of sight. We walk by faith, and, blessed be His name, there is no *cul de sac* in God's paths. He never leads us into places where there is no way out, and we have to retrace our steps. But for every temptation, however hard and trying, there is a way of escape which He makes for His own. It may be like a path through heather which you can see only when you reach it. So God's path over the steep place is only seen when you come close to the difficulty. He makes a path over every mountain, so that we never need despair, as though there were no way over the difficulty which we see before us.

There is another striking figure of Scripture: He "maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters". Yes; God can find a way where it appears to be an absolute impossibility. Scientists tell us that they have discovered means by which they are able to find paths of light through solids. So in what seems to us to be an absolute block the Lord can make a way if we follow Him. Thus walking in company with our Divine Shepherd, we shall always find a way over all God's mountains.

There is another thought in these words, "I will make all my mountains a way"; that is, **GOD'S MOUNTAINS ARE GOD'S WAY**: they form His way. He not only leads us over them, and makes a path for them, but the mountains themselves are the way. So God does not remove the mountains, but makes them a way for larger blessing. We may sometimes cry to Him, "Lord, take this difficulty out of the way. I do wish Thou wouldst move this hard thing from me, it is so trying, so difficult. Life would seem so beautiful if Thou wouldst take this thing out of the way." But He makes the mountain a way,—or the way to victory. So do not ask Him to remove the difficulty, but rather say, "Give us grace to accept the difficulty as the very way to larger blessing."

I was visiting a sick woman some time since; and she said, "I have always wanted to have strong faith." I replied, "Well, you know how to secure it. A man does not gain a powerful muscle by lounging in a drawing-room all day. Strenuous effort is needed to grow strong muscle. And it needs strenuous business to get strong faith." There must be mountain-climbing for great faith. Or if we desire to gain strength, we must not cry to God to take the difficulty out of the way. The mountain is the way. Yes: all God's mountains are God's ways. Notice also that God says, "I will make all my mountains a way", that is to say, "In due time when you breast the mountain it shall become a way." Thus we have seen that God's ways are often mountainous ways.

(To be continued next week.)

Still More About the Women's Missionary Society

"THAT THIS COMPANY OF MINISTERS, AND LAY MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, EXPRESS THE OPINION THAT THE CONSTITUTION OF THE WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF REGULAR BAPTISTS OF CANADA, AND THE AUXILIARIES THERETO, IS CONTRARY TO THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF NEW TESTAMENT AND BAPTIST CHURCH POLITY; THEREFORE THE SAID SOCIETY AND ITS AUXILIARIES OUGHT TO BE DISSOLVED, OR RECONSTITUTED IN HARMONY WITH NEW TESTAMENT PRINCIPLES."

The above expression of the collective opinion of a meeting of the ministers of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec was agreed upon at the Friday afternoon session of a two days' conference of the ministers of the Union, held in Jarvis Street Church, Thursday and Friday, February 5th and 6th.

The relation of the Women's Society to the churches and to the Union was discussed from every angle during the forenoon and afternoon of Thursday, and again on Friday. The above expression therefore was not hastily arrived at, but represents the carefully considered judgment of this group of ministers. There were only fourteen Pastors of the Union absent from the conference. When the vote was taken there were actually fifty-six in attendance, including two laymen, members of the Executive Board of the Union. The vote for the opinion was fifty-three, while three did not vote. If any of the absent ministers care to write us saying whether they approve of the above, or otherwise, we shall be very glad to make a statement to that effect next week, without giving the names of the ministers concerned, merely that it may be known what proportion of the ministers of the Union are in agreement with the position involved in the above expression of opinion.

Rev. James McGinlay was the speaker at the Thursday evening meeting, and the Editor of *The Gospel Witness* Friday evening.

Word is reaching *The Gospel Witness* every week of the dissolution or reconstitution of the Auxiliary Societies in the various churches of the Union. We should like to make it clear that so far as the Editor of this paper is concerned he has never opposed a women's missionary society because it was composed of women. In the old days Jarvis Street Church had two Mission Circles, a Women's Mission Circle, and a Young Women's Mission Circle, and in other churches of which the Editor was Pastor before coming to Toronto similar Societies existed. We never had the slightest difficulty with any one of them. But these Circles raised money for precisely the same objects to which the churches were committed, and the Women's Board, elected by representatives of the Circles, was organically related to the General Board, and co-operated with it, so that churches and Circles, the Women's Board and the General Board, in their missionary enterprises were all working toward the same end.

Our chief objection to the Auxiliaries is that they were not integral parts of the churches' life, but, by the very fact that they admitted to their membership people who were not members of the particular church in which they functioned, proved them to be extra church organizations.

We objected to them also because, by their Constitution, they were given absolutely no liberty to disburse their own funds, but were constitutionally required to send every dollar to the central Women's treasury. This objection, however, was aggravated by the fact that the Women's Missionary Society absolutely refused any general co-operation with the Board of the Union, and selected entirely different fields of endeavour.

The Society and its Auxiliaries therefore constitute an utterly intolerable duplication of forces; and, further, constitute a danger as great as would two steering-wheels and two drivers in the same motor car.

Auxiliaries Dissolved.

The following list of Auxiliaries have either altogether dissolved, or have disbanded and reorganized, but they are each a part of the life of the church to which they belong, and in their missionary giving are supporting the same objects to which the churches stand committed. Central Church, London, and Jarvis Street, Toronto, differ from the others in that they now have no Women's Missionary Society at all. What Jarvis Street Church may have in the future, we cannot now say; but it was deemed inexpedient at this juncture to form any Women's Missionary Society to take the place of the Society dissolved. With the exception of these two churches, the women's local societies have merely changed their form of constitution, and are now co-operating with the church and with the Union in our general missionary programme.

Our readers will understand that in some of the churches there were two Auxiliaries, known as the Women's Auxiliary and the Young Women's Auxiliary. For the purpose of the following list we shall substitute the terms, Senior and Junior. Following therefore we give a list of the Auxiliaries dissolved, or disbanded and reconstituted: Central Church, London, Senior and Junior; Chatham, Ontario, Senior; Jarvis Street, Toronto, Senior and Junior; Stanley Avenue, Hamilton, Senior and Junior; Shenstone Memorial, Brantford, Senior and Junior; Ambassador Church, Windsor, Senior; Courtland, Ontario, Senior; Essex, Ontario, Senior; Orangeville, Ontario, Junior; Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto, Senior and Junior; Orillia, Senior; Lindsay, Ontario, Senior; Verdun, Quebec, Senior; Wortley Road, London, Senior; Melrose Park, Toronto, Senior; Shedden, Ontario, Senior; Fingal, Ontario, Senior; Calvary Church, Ottawa, Senior; Oakwood Church, Toronto, Senior and Junior—twenty-five auxiliaries in all.

According to the official organ of the Women's Missionary Society there were sixty-four Senior Auxiliaries and sixteen Junior Societies. It will thus be seen that the eighteen dissolutions among the Senior Auxiliaries make about twenty-eight per cent of the total number, and the seven Junior, nearly fifty per cent of the Junior Societies.

One objection we have had to the Women's Society is that it has professed to be wholly a faith movement. It professes to exist to give testimony to the faithfulness of God in answering prayer. It professes also to make no appeals for money. But the fact is, the card issued officially by the Society which members are to sign when joining the local Auxiliary, on one side has a money pledge form, which the members are asked to fill in when they join the Society. It is idle to say they are not asked or urged to do so: the printed card is in itself an invitation, in the one case, to join the Auxiliary, and in the other case, to pledge to its funds.

To this, we offer no objection whatever. But we do insist that the Society and its Auxiliaries ought to be either one thing or the other, and not profess one thing and practise the other; for to our certain knowledge in one Society at least when members were behind with their pledge they were reminded of their arrearages. We are unable to see any difference between this method of procedure and the one pursued by the ordinary church, and particularly by the churches of the Union and the Executive Board of the Union.

We know all the churches pray. We are sure the Executive of the Union prays. But we have objected to the Women's Society professing to operate its work wholly on faith, when its official organ is really full of indirect appeals. What else can be said of all the discussions about tithing and giving, and still more specifically when the women joining either Senior or Junior Auxiliaries are asked to pledge to their funds?

An Apology to Rev. Henry W. Uffelin

AND AN EXPLANATION

In *The Gospel Witness* of February 27th, 1930, a letter was published over the name of Dr. T. I. Stockley, dealing with Rev. Henry W. Uffelin's relation to the Jamaica Baptist Mission. That letter seriously reflected upon the honour of Mr. Uffelin as a Christian minister. *The Gospel Witness*, sincerely, heartily, and without any reserve, apologizes to Mr. Uffelin, for reasons hereinafter stated, for having published the following statement:

"It is well that all Fundamentalist churches in the United States should know that Mr. Uffelin has no official connection whatever with the above Mission.

"Some months since letters came from the Committee of the Mission to the writer containing these statements: 'We have cut off connection with Mr. Uffelin, and do not wish him either to appear to represent us, or to make any appeal on our behalf. This information is being sent to Mr. Uffelin and to his Committee in New York. Further, the presence of Mr. Uffelin in Jamaica again will not be welcome.' . . .

"It was certainly disappointing enough that of all the money collected by Mr. Uffelin from American churches for the Jamaica Baptist Mission, not one cent has ever reached the workers on that needy field."

Learning that Mr. Uffelin was to be in Toronto for the week beginning February 8th, a conference was arranged in the Editor's office. There were present, Rev. John Muntz, of Forestville, N.Y.; Rev. H. C. Fulton, First Baptist Church, Buffalo; Dr. T. I. Stockley, Mr. Uffelin, and the Editor. An examination of documents produced revealed the following facts: That with Dr. Stockley's full approval a circular letter was issued in the summer of 1927, proposing the raising of \$600.00 or \$700.00 to cover the expense of a Bible-teaching tour by Mr. Uffelin to the Jamaica Baptist Churches to last about six months. This circular letter brought in approximately \$300.00.

During the late summer a Committee of seven or eight members resident in New York was formed, of which Mr. Frank V. Gates, of Central Baptist Church, was Chairman, and Mr. E. C. Miller, then of Central Baptist Church, was Executive Secretary.

Mr. Uffelin went to Jamaica in May, 1928, for a Bible-teaching tour among the churches, returning to the United States for deputation work in August. Mr. Uffelin went again to Jamaica, February, 1929, returning to the United States in September for deputation work. He went back again to Jamaica, sailing from New York, February 19th, 1930, remaining until December 12th, 1930. During these visits Mr. Uffelin ministered in about one hundred and twenty of the Baptist Churches:

During 1928 the New York Committee received \$1,405.08, of which amount \$1,054.70 went to Mr. Uffelin for his support and that of his family, and \$340.38 for travelling and field expenses. In 1929 the Committee received \$2,062.65, of which \$578.65 was spent on travelling and field expenses, and \$1,484.00 for the support of Mr. Uffelin and his family. In 1930 the Committee received a total of \$1,275.00, \$281.00 of which was spent for travelling and field expense, and \$994.00 for Mr. Uffelin's support.

It will thus be seen that Dr. Stockley's letter was correct in this, that the amount received by Mr. Uffelin's Committee was sufficient only to cover his expenses, and to make a very meagre allowance to him for the support of himself and his family. This means, of course, there was no surplus to send to the work of the Baptist Mission in Jamaica. Dr. Stockley's letter therefore was correct in stating that "of all the money collected by Mr. Uffelin from American churches for the Jamaica Baptist Missions, not one cent has ever reached the workers on that needy field."

Our examination of the documents produced at the Conference referred to showed that the Committee of the Baptist Union in Jamaica wrote Dr. Stockley to this effect:

"We have cut off connection with Mr. Uffelin, and do not wish him either to appear to represent us, or to make any appeal on our behalf. This information is being sent

to Mr. Uffelin and to his Committee in New York. Further, the presence of Mr. Uffelin in Jamaica again will not be welcome."

Dr. Stockley naturally assumed that the Committee in Jamaica had done as they had said—advised Mr. Uffelin and his Committee in New York of their action. We find, however, that no word was sent either to Mr. Uffelin or to his Committee until February, 1930, when letters were addressed to both under date of February 18th. These letters were written on the official stationery of the Jamaica Baptist Union, were unsigned, but were presumably written by the Secretary, Rev. T. Gordon Somers.

Mr. Uffelin sailed from New York for Jamaica, February 19th, 1930, one day after the letters from Jamaica were written. The Jamaica letter came to New York, and followed Mr. Uffelin back to Jamaica, and was not received by him until near the end of March. Mr. Uffelin arrived in Kingston, Jamaica, at the Annual Meeting of the Jamaica Baptist Union on February 24th, and it was not until his arrival there that he learned his connection with the work of the Mission had been terminated.

We desire to make it plain, therefore, that while Mr. Uffelin was continuing to represent the Jamaica Mission in the United States he was acting in good faith. We are bound to say that the action of the Committee in Jamaica in reaching a decision in October, and permitting Mr. Uffelin to continue his work in ignorance of their action until the following February, is responsible for this whole misunderstanding.

When Dr. Stockley wrote his letter for *The Gospel Witness*, he supposed Mr. Uffelin had been advised. On the other hand, Mr. Uffelin, while continuing to represent Jamaica, was in entire ignorance of the Jamaica Committee's action. Our investigation leads us to the conclusion that Mr. Uffelin has acted in good faith throughout in this matter, and that there is nothing in this transaction that would justify anyone in withholding or withdrawing from Mr. Uffelin the confidence to which a Christian minister of untarnished reputation is entitled. "The Gospel Witness" therefore sincerely apologizes to Mr. Uffelin for the publication of the misinformation contained in Dr. Stockley's letter. On the other hand, it should be clearly understood that Dr. Stockley was acting in good faith, and wrote on the basis of what had already been communicated to him, believing that the same word had been sent to Mr. Uffelin.

The responsibility for this whole misunderstanding, therefore, rests with the Committee in Jamaica.

In respect to the question of the prevalence of Modernism in the Jamaica Baptist Union, *The Gospel Witness*, at present can make no pronouncement. The brethren participating in the conference are an absolute unit on this point, that no one of them will either support or condone Modernism anywhere. *The Gospel Witness* is communicating with the officials of the Jamaica Baptist Union on this subject, and when full information has been obtained the result of our enquiries will be published in *The Gospel Witness*.

(Signed) THOMAS T. SHIELDS.

The undersigned conferees have read the above statement by the Editor of *The Gospel Witness*, and are in entire agreement therewith.

(Signed) H. C. FULTON. HENRY W. UFFELIN.
T. I. STOCKLEY. JOHN MUNTZ.

REMEMBER

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Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

Vol. 6

No. 1

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR.

Lesson 9

March 1st,

First Quarter.

JOSEPH IN PRISON.

Lesson text: Genesis, chapter 40.

Golden Text: "And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you."—Gen. 40: 8.

I. IMPRISONMENT OF PHARAOH'S BUTLER AND BAKER, (vs. 1-4).

In previous lessons we have noted the fact of the bestowment of God's favour upon Joseph. In this lesson the usefulness arising therefrom is manifested. Because he was in touch with God Joseph was a blessing unto others. Suffering unjustly, and under trying circumstances, he could yet interest himself in others, and help them. His example is an encouragement to us to do likewise. Sometimes, under trial, we become discouraged, and lose contact with God, and take no interest in the welfare of others, becoming wellnigh useless to God and man. But this need not be, for if we are in the line of His will, all things work together for our good, (Rom. 8:28) and we can be useful in helping others.

"And Pharaoh was wroth against two of his officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers. And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound", (vs. 2, 3). These officers were probably persons of high rank, having considerable responsibility attached to their offices. The butler was not only the cupbearer of the king, but the overseer of the royal vineyards and wine-cellar, probably having some hundreds of persons under him. The baker, or cook, was the superintendent of all that related to the provision of meals for the royal table. Concerning their offence, nothing is said. It is simply stated that they "had offended their lord, the king of Egypt," (v. 1). Under such an autocratic monarch it was not a difficult matter to give offence, and the punishment was not always meted out in accordance with the guilt.

The prison in which the officers were placed was situated in an outer part of the house of Potiphar, the captain of the guard. It was here that Joseph was confined. "And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them, and they continued a season in ward", (v. 4). In the previous chapter it was the keeper of the prison who committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners, (39:22); here it is the captain of the guard. It would seem as if the latter had come to believe in Joseph's innocence in relation to his supposed offence, and he must have esteemed him worthy to have given into his charge two such notable prisoners. There may have been reasons for his detention of Joseph in prison after discovering his innocence, possibly the chief reason relating to his family's shame. But underlying all was the purpose of God; it was His will that

his liberation should come later. The duration of the imprisonment of the officers is not stated, but inasmuch as their cases were decided on Pharaoh's birthday, it is thought they had been detained since the previous anniversary. In reference to Joseph, note that godly character will manifest itself under all circumstances, and the evidence of it will be clear to those who come in contact with it. Explanation may be made of the secret of Joseph's influence, in his right relationship with God; and the need and blessedness of living in this manner these days. Joseph's influence was good, great, godly, encouraging, overcoming, and effective.

II. THE BUTLER'S DREAM. (vs. 5-15).

"And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which were bound in the prison", (v. 5). The subject of dreams we have noted in previous lessons. God chose this means at times of making known the future. And in this case He revealed to these men the fate awaiting them. The effect of the dream upon the men was to make them sad; and when Joseph came in unto them in the morning he noticed their sad countenances. "And he asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day?" In this enquiry is seen Joseph's interest in his fellow prisoners, and his kindness of heart toward them. It is not likely that at any time they would be particularly cheerful—their fate was too certain for that; but on this occasion they were more sorrowful than usual. The countenance betrays the condition of the heart, and the Lord's people ought to be observant of others in order to help them in their distresses. It will help us in our troubles if we take an interest in others in their trials. This is our privilege and duty. Emphasis may be laid upon this, and the example of our Lord pointed out. He was interested in others unto the very last, and when He was hanging on the cross He spoke unto the thief beside him, (Luke 23:43), and to His mother, and favourite disciple, (John 19:25-27). We should, therefore, in this, as in all things, follow in His steps, (I Peter 2:21). It may further be shown that if we are not interested in others we are not obedient unto our Divine Master, and we are lacking in His Spirit. He had compassion upon the people, (Matt. 9:36), and wept over Jerusalem, (Luke 19:41). How much weeping have we done?

The answer given to Joseph's enquiry is, "We have dreamed a dream and there is no interpretation of it", (v. 8). They knew that their dreams were significant, but they were not aware of the meaning of them. They were therefore in a condition of suspense. And such is a trying condition. "And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you." These men knew not the secret of Divine revelation, but Joseph understood it, because he knew God. It is the person who lives in closest touch with the Lord who is of the most use to others. Interpretations belong to God, and He makes them known through His servants. Many things going on in the present day are

not understood by the world, but the child of God knows their significance, because he is enlightened by the Holy Spirit, (I Cor. 2:14).

"And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph", (v. 9). The nature of the dream was simple, and pertained to the occupation of the man, (vs. 9-11). As in parables, so in dreams God uses the ordinary affairs of life wherein to make known His will. Joseph was enabled to give an immediate interpretation wherein he predicted the release of the prisoner within three days, and his restoration to the favour of his master, (vs. 12, 13). Such an interpretation was God-given, favourable, encouraging and true. After stating the interpretation Joseph makes a request that he be remembered by the butler after his release, "But think of me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house", (v. 14). Joseph longs for freedom, although patiently and faithfully serving God in captivity. He is also conscious of his innocence in all his trials: "And here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon", (v. 15). The injustice of his position might have caused bitterness of spirit in Joseph, but God kept him calm and sweet. In this he is a type of our Lord, Who cared so much for those who opposed Him that He prayed for them, (Luke 23:34), and this we are also enjoined to do, (Luke 6:28). Let us view all our experiences from the Godward aspect and in the light of eternity, and we shall be the better able to bear our burdens and sustain our trials.

III. THE BAKER'S DREAM, (vs. 16-19).

The favourable interpretation given to the butler's dream encouraged the baker to make known his dream, which, of a similar simple nature, received an entirely different kind of interpretation, "Yet within three days" Joseph informed him, "shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh", (v. 19). In this is described one form of Egyptian capital punishment where the person is decapitated, and his headless body is left hanging on a tree to be devoured by ravenous birds. It must have been hard for Joseph to make known such a fate to this hopeless creature, but he had to tell him the truth. The interpretation was true, sad, and God-given. Note may also be made of the privileged position of Joseph as the mouthpiece of God.

IV. THE FULFILMENT OF THE DREAMS, (vs. 20-23).

The fulfilment of the dreams occurred just in the manner described by Joseph. On the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, the butler was restored to his position, and the baker was hanged. The birthday of Pharaoh was observed with much magnificence, and many prisoners received pardon. "Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him", (v. 23). Overjoyed at his restoration, and engaged again with his daily duties, he forgot the man who had helped. God was in the matter, however, and according to His purpose remembrance was to come later, when it was to be most useful.

The Union Baptist Witness

This page, 12, is the official organ of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec. Send all news items and announcements to the Office Secretary, 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto, Canada.

FULL SPEED AHEAD!

Following the Pastors' Conference held in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, February 5th and 6th, when every phase of the work in the Union was discussed and the relationship and status of the Auxiliaries of the Women's Missionary Society to the Church was fully considered, many matters of importance were dealt with and sails were set for full speed ahead.

All sessions of the Conference were well attended and Pastors from as far east as Sawyerville, Quebec, and as far west as Kenora, Ontario, were registered. The evening public meetings attracted about three thousand people and the addresses given, Thursday evening, by Rev. James McGinlay of London, and Friday evening by Dr. T. T. Shields, Toronto, were masterpieces dealing with the subject in hand. The following statement was passed at the Friday afternoon meeting:

"That this company of ministers, and lay members of the Executive Board, express the opinion that the Constitution of the Women's Missionary Society of Regular Baptists of Canada, and the Auxiliaries thereto, is contrary to the fundamental principles of New Testament and Baptist Church polity; therefore the said Society and its Auxiliaries ought to be dissolved, or reconstituted in harmony with New Testament principles."

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FULL SPEED AHEAD IN OUR HOME MISSION WORK

Twenty-four causes are supported regularly and it is well to remember that during the past three years three hundred and fourteen baptisms were reported on Home Mission fields and there were one hundred and ninety-seven other additions.

The following are reports, recently received, from some Home Mission causes:

Fort William

In this far westerly city we have a testimony which has been as a light upon a hill for many who have found Christ. The Church building is small and at the present time because of the closing down of many plants, the unemployment situation is serious. Pastoral support has been given to this Church at the rate of \$25 monthly with a special grant of \$250 within the past year. Pray for Fort William. A recent letter advises that under the leadership of Rev. G. F. Watts steady progress is being made. The members have consecrated themselves for service and three have recently accepted Christ as Saviour.

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Miner's Bay

On this scattered field the missionary finds a great deal to do. He ministers to several causes each week and is a shepherd of the hills in a very true sense.

Rev. Oscar Boomer took up the work laid down by Mr. Mellish and he reports that at Head Lake the school house is filled beyond its seating capacity and extra benches must be secured. At Moore's Falls and at Buller's the services are also encouraging but at Dongola and at Uphill the work is particularly difficult. At Uphill it has been intimated that the school house will no longer be available for services. The need is great. Pray very definitely for this field. A special meeting for the members of the Miner's Bay Baptist Church was held in the Church building on February 8th. This is the only Baptist Church building on the field. Its members are scattered over a large area and it is only possible for them to come together occasionally to partake of the Lord's Supper.

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Walsh

This pastorless field is maintaining two prayer meetings weekly and reports, in spite of road conditions, that services are well attended. Students J. Dempster, J. Armstrong, L. Hisey and P. Abriel have recently supplied.

MARCH 1st

HUGHSON STREET SUNDAY
All Churches of the Union are
Observing a
SPECIAL OFFERING DAY
To assist in taking care of the
Hughson Street Trial Costs.
Further Announcement Next Week.

East Flamboro

The members of the Flamboro East Regular Baptist Church held their annual business meeting on January 8th. The Church has prospered during the past year under the pastorate of Rev. R. K. Gonder. Six have been baptised and these have been received into the Church. Four others have joined by experience. All departments of the Church work showed progress and the offerings from all sources were splendidly maintained.

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Fingal and Shedden

It is reported that the Women's Missionary Auxiliaries of the Shedden and Fingal Churches have recently dissolved to be reorganized as Auxiliaries to the Church.

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French Work

Rev. Arthur St. James presented the claims of French evangelization to London friends on Sunday last.

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Oakwood, Toronto

On Thursday, February 5th, the Women's Missionary Auxiliary of the Oak-

wood Ave. Baptist Church, Toronto, dissolved and reorganized as an auxiliary of the Church. On Sunday evening, Feb. 8th, the Young Women's Auxiliary also took this course.

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Chatham

The Lord has been saving souls in Chatham Regular Baptist Church and Rev. W. N. Charlton is rejoicing that in the last few weeks he has seen several come out boldly for Christ. A recent letter asked that definite prayer be made for a young woman who was under deep conviction but who was unwilling to surrender. Before this request, however, could be made public, word was received that she had accepted the provision Christ had made for her.

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Annette St., Toronto

The Annual Meeting of Annette St. Baptist Church, Toronto, was held on January 22nd and encouraging reports were received from all departments. The general receipts totalled \$10,764.35, of which \$5,042.59 was allocated to Missions. Forty-one were received into the church fellowship during the year. The membership now numbers three hundred and seventy-eight and souls are being saved under the faithful ministry of Rev. W. J. H. Brown. The church has recently had the opportunity of hearing Rev. John Hall and Rev. Arthur Lee of Africa and last Lord's day, Rev. A. J. Lewis supplied the pulpit while Pastor Brown ministered to the Nenton St. Church, Kitchener. Mr. Lewis is always at home in Annette Street and it was a day of rejoicing in the Lord.

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Runnymede Road Baptist

Rev. P. B. Loney, who is commencing his ninth year as pastor, presided at the annual meeting of the Runnymede Road Baptist Church last night. The reports showed an increase in membership and in the congregational activities. Receipts from all sources amounted to \$7,200 including more than \$5,000 in the current account, \$1,652 for missions, \$1,087 building fund, \$651 Sunday School. The school reported a roll of 160 members. A vote of appreciation and approval of the pastor and a pledge of loyalty and co-operation in the future was unanimously passed.

A series of two weeks special meetings will commence on Sunday, Feb. 15th, when the Pastor will preach.

Monday, Feb. 16th—Rev. W. E. Atkinson.

Tuesday, Feb. 17th—Rev. W. N. Charlton, of Chatham.

Wednesday, Feb. 18th—Friday, Feb. 20th—Rev. John Hall of Africa.

Sunday, Feb. 22nd to Thursday, Feb. 26th—Rev. C. J. Loney of Hamilton.

Friday, Feb. 27th—Rev. James McGinley of London.