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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

WHEN THE "OLD MAN" IS IN THE ASCENDANCY.

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, March 6th, 1932.

(Stenographically Reported)

"Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not." Hosea 7:9.

Prayer by Rev. W. Gordon Brown.

O God of our salvation Whose throne is in heaven, and from Whose footstool we now cry unto Thee, because Thou art there and we are here our words are few. Thou knowest our needs, and we come to bring them to Thee again, and to offer our tribute of worship toward Thy Holy Hill.

We bless Thee for our natural blessings, for the gifts of nature that Thou hast bestowed upon us, for food and drink, for clothes and houses, for friends and loved ones, all the gifts of Thy hands, the fulness of the earth is Thy glory.

But we bless Thee more for our supernatural blessings, for those gifts of Thine which lift us above this mundane sphere, and bring us into fellowship with Thyself.

We confess our sins to Thee our Saviour. We have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Day by day are our temptations too strong for us—sins of body and of mind, of passion, envy, pride, evil-speaking, bitterness. Forgive us them all, O Lord, and cleanse us afresh by that which alone can cleanse sin, the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And so we come asking for Thy grace toward each of us. Bless the children. May they early trust in Jesus, and may they find in Him the Guide of youth, and of all life. Bless the fathers and mothers with their difficulties and perplexities. May they find in Thee an answer to their problems and a Resolver of their difficulties. Bless the young people. Help the aged, help them to grow old sweetly. Increase their joy in Thee, and crown them with the glory of Thy rich blessing. Bless us all with the blessing that maketh rich and adds no sorrow thereto. Remember the work of Thy kingdom. Hold back the forces that are against us, and uphold all true ministrations of Thy word, and hasten the appearance of Thy coming, for we ask these things in the glorious name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

"Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not."

Although the Bible is one of the profoundest of books—no, let me say the profoundest of all books, it is at the same time the most easily understood. It speaks a language with which we are all familiar. The people of God, the kingdom of Israel, the people called Ephraim, have

mixed themselves among the people instead of maintaining a separate walk, and shutting themselves up to God. They have mixed themselves with others, with the result that strangers have devoured Ephraim's strength. He is likened here to a man who, while boasting of his youth, is really growing old. The signs of age and decay are apparent to everyone but to the man himself: "Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not."

The Christian has a dual nature. He is of the seed of Adam after the flesh. The motions of the flesh, the mind of the flesh; are in him. The "old man" of whom Paul speaks, is ever present. But "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever", he has also a new nature, so that there is in him not only an "old man," but a "new man," and "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." There is a perpetual warfare going on in the soul of every spiritually healthy, growing Christian.

You recall it is written, "There was long war between the house of Saul, and the house of David; but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker." And there is a perpetual conflict going on in every believer's life. But the David that is in us ought to be becoming stronger and stronger; while the house of Saul ought to be waxing weaker and weaker. We are admonished to "put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the Spirit of your mind; and that we put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness". We should always be saying, "No!" to the old man. The doctrine

of the right of self-expression is very popular nowadays. Any kind of repression or discipline, in some quarters, is held to be disadvantageous to the growing and developing boy or girl, or man or woman. But the Bible teaches us that we should deny ourselves; we should mortify the flesh; that the old man should be crucified with its affections and lusts; that we should bring under our body, and bring it into subjection. The old man should be made and kept subject to the new, and although the tendency and disposition of the old nature is ever with us, and will be with us until we put off this tabernacle, yet it is our privilege to keep the old man under, and to be always victorious through our Lord Jesus Christ.

But there are periods sometimes in the believer's life, or in the life of some believers, which are too common, when the new man seems to cease to grow, and the old nature gains the ascendancy; and when instead of the old man being under, the new man is under. Then the old man, and the characteristics of the old man, become apparent in the life of one who has professed faith in Christ. When that condition of life obtains it is ever true "gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not."

I suppose just now when there seems to be somewhat of an epidemic of colds or "Flu," or whatever it may be called, mothers of families are particularly watchful of the health of their children. And if they discern any symptom that looks as though the boy or girl were taking cold, care is immediately taken to ward off a severer attack, if possible.

I think a pastor ought, in relation to his people, to be very much like a mother in relation to her children,—always careful of their spiritual health, always concerned lest they should be led astray, and become incapacitated for the service of the Lord.

And so I take this text this morning in order that we may look into the mirror, and see whether we can find any gray hairs.

I do not suppose there are any people here who have so completely subdued the old nature as to profess that they have no old man left! I have known a few such, who boast of the eradication of the old nature. My observation leads me to believe that their boast is really based upon a case of mistaken identity: it is not the old nature that is eradicated. And I am bound to confess that among the meanest and crookedest people I think I have ever met in my life have been people who professed perfection. Perhaps they needed to profess something in order to make themselves tolerable in decent society. But ordinary people admit that we have not reached perfection here, although it is our privilege by grace to be victorious over the old nature.

I heard of a company of ministers discussing their experiences on one occasion, and the question of the use of tobacco came up. One man boasted that from the day he was converted his desire to smoke had been completely eradicated; but an old minister present said, "I have been a disciple of the Lord now for many years"—I forget the length of time, forty years or more. "Before I was converted I was a great smoker. As soon as I received the Lord I gave up the use of the weed; but I have to confess that I need even now to be on my guard, that I am not even yet immune to the attraction of the smell of a good cigar." In some cases particular habits are overcome, and the desire may be removed. In other cases they remain, but grace is given to overcome.

I.

Now let us look at this picture. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE OLD MAN? Mr. Brown read to you from Ecclesiastics an inspired picture of declining strength, the coming on of old age; and I shall have that in mind this morning as I try to expound the principle of this text.

One of the evidences of increasing age, not infrequently, is *dullness of hearing*.

I think it was on the occasion of his last visit here, my late friend, Dr. A. C. Dixon, now in the glory, said to me, "I should like you to take me to the best aurist you have in the city. I find that I am becoming somewhat dull of hearing, and I should like to see what can be done for it." I took him to a specialist; and sat in the car awaiting his return. After a little while he came out, bright and happy as usual. I said, "Well, what did the doctor say?" "Oh, he said it is just *Anno Domini*—nothing the matter with me except that I have had too many birthdays."

You are growing a little older, and your hearing is not as acute as it used to be. When the old man is in the ascendancy in the believer's life his spiritual hearing becomes somewhat dull. He is not as responsive as once he was to the whisper of the still, small voice. The Spirit has been grieved; he has become used to the sound of the alarm clock, and it does not wake him up as once it did. Conscience is less acute in making its accusations. The word of God does not stir him as once it did. There was a time when it was almost impossible for him to open his Bible without feeling some rebuke from its holy pages which led him to desire a closer walk with God; and he saw some particulars in which he ought to put off the old man with his deeds. But now, if indeed he turns to the Book at all, it does not speak to him with the same accusing voice. It speaks, but he does not hear it: he pays little attention to it. There was a time when if he went to church any faithful exposition of the word of God would be sure to smite him, and make him feel that God was speaking, and he would become conscious of something in his life that needed some measure of correction, and he would then and there, by God's grace, resolve that the principle of that admonition should be applied. But now when he listens to a sermon, no matter how faithfully the gospel is preached, it does not get beneath the surface with him; he does not hear its voice of admonition, exhortation, or exhortation.

You remember the sweet story of the child Samuel in the temple. When Eli was fast asleep the child heard a voice, and he went to the seer and judge, and said, "Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again." And he went and lay down. And the Lord called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again." "And the Lord called Samuel again the third time." And it was not until the third time that Eli perceived that the Lord was calling him. The old man did not hear the call, but the child did.

Is your hearing dull? Is it a fact that the Bible does not speak to you as once it did? Perhaps the example of some saintly Christian does not admonish you as it did formerly. The sermon and the song do not stir you as they used to do. Is it a fact that you are becoming dull of hearing, spiritually? I cannot say. We must each determine

that for ourselves. But if it be so you had better be on your guard.

Do not blame the preacher for your inability to hear. Dr. Thomas, my predecessor, once told me an interesting story. He said there was a man who was a member of Jarvis Street, who lived somewhere in the western part of the City. He attended a Bible class in another church Sunday afternoon because it was nearer his home. The teacher of the Bible Class one Sunday said, "I should like the members of the class to offer some suggestion as to how we may make this class more interesting." To which this Jarvis Streets member, now growing old, replied, "Well, you might speak a little louder. It would make it more interesting for me. My own Pastor does not speak as distinctly as once he did." It was the preacher's fault? No! It was *Anno Domini* with the hearer!

It may be, dear friends, that there are some evidences of increasing age with you, and that gray hairs are here and there upon you, and you know it not. Ask that question of yourself.

Another invariable accompaniment of the passage of time is a *dimness of sight*. As people become older their power of vision wanes somewhat, and after a certain age they need glasses to assist them. Some people, of course, with weaker vision need them earlier than others. But as we grow older we find that our sight changes. We cannot see afar off as once we could, nor can we see things that are near as closely as we could.

As the man grows older he says, "I think I shall have to get a Bible with a little larger print, because I can not read as easily as once I did." You all know about that. Many of us are quite old enough to be able to understand that experience.

So, too, when the old man gains the upper hand in the believer's life, invariably he loses the keenness of vision which once characterized him. "He that lacketh these things"—that is, the man who has failed to "add to his faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge" and so on, "for if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ"—"but he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off."

When Christ really reigns through righteousness and the new man is in the ascendancy, a man views life with a spiritual perspective, he sees the things of time in relation to the things of eternity; and thus accurately appraises the vanity of all earthly things. He discovers that they have not the value he once supposed they had, because he has learned to look for a city which hath foundations whose Builder and Maker is God. And so, while he looks not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen, while he recognizes that the things that are seen are temporal, and that the things that are unseen are eternal, the light afflictions of life work out for him "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory". That verse to which I have just referred is very often quoted apart from its context. People glibly say, "Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." As a fact, however, such weight of glory is worked out for us only "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen."

I have known people who have been sorely afflicted and bereaved, or who have suffered some pecuniary loss, who have become bitter. Their light affliction did not work out for them an exceeding weight of glory. They were re-

bellious. Many professing Christians do not face the contrary winds willingly. Afflictions have the reverse effect upon them: they do not sweeten them in the least. There is, perhaps, no surer test of the genuineness of our spirituality than the effect which reverses and sorrows have upon us. If we are really the Lord's, they mellow, soften, sweeten, and brighten us. The afflicted soul is a diamond upon the lapidary's wheel, being polished so that it will reflect the glories of the sun. The verse I have quoted is conditional: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; *while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.*"

It depends upon the relation of the diamond to the wheel of the lapidary. It depends upon how we meet our sorrows and afflictions as to whether they have a sanctifying effect upon us or not. And our view of these things will largely depend upon the keenness of our vision. But when the old man is uppermost, the man loses the true perspective of life, and being shut up to his present distress, he can see no good in it at all. Hence he becomes bitter and unlovely in character.

I love to see a sweet old age, do you not?—an old man or an old woman who has become sweet and amiable in old age. An ugly, crotchety, bad-tempered, person is not attractive even in youth, but of all the ugly things in the world, is there anything to equal old age out of tune with God? Oh, how ugly it can be!

Have you not stood sometimes in utter amazement as you have seen what professing Christians can do? I have been a minister now for some years, and I give this as my testimony: I have never observed such conduct in publicans and sinners—people who make no profession of religion—as I have seen characterize professing Christians in whom "the old man" was so prominent that no one could see any new man there. Is that not true? And that comes about from dimness of vision; or rather it is itself a symptom of spiritual decline. All life is out of joint because the man cannot see clearly.

Another sign of old age is *failure of appetite*. You know what Barzillai said when David invited him to go to Jerusalem: "I am this day fourscore years old: and can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink. I am so old that everything tastes alike to me. I have no appetite left."

Do you not love to see healthy children eat? I do. I suppose they need some regulation, and sometimes need to be told what they ought not to eat. But I have a picture of a Christmas supper we had for one of the departments of the school in the B. D. Thomas Hall—I do not know whether the Juniors or the Intermediates—but that night I remember they served sandwiches with other things. I can see the teachers and others going about like a company of ants—or uncles, whichever you like—bearing those plates. And I remember one man's coming back with two empty plates, and he put them down, and said, "I give up. I cannot fill them up!" It seemed as though there was no limit to their capacity.

Oh, what a blessing it is to see people hungering and thirsting after righteousness, growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ!

I have sat at the table sometimes with a family, with the father at the head of the table, a big man. One would think it would take a good deal to sustain so large a frame.

But around the table there were boys and girls, just in their teens. And how the plates came back again and again!

I recall being in a home years ago where there were two children, a boy and a girl. The girl was older than the boy, and she had a wonderfully good appetite, far better than the boy. The little girl was called Dorothy, and the little boy called her "Dorse". Full of mischief, he would watch his sister's plate, and when it was empty he would say, "Back up your wagon, Dorse". And Dorothy would find in that an invitation for sending her plate back for another helping. How delightful it is to see growing children satisfying a hearty appetite! You know how growing children need to be fed, don't you? More food is required for a growing child sometimes than for a man who has really attained his full stature.

Is it not a delightful thing to see Christian people growing? children of God, about the Father's table, ravenously hungry?—hungering and thirsting after righteousness, with the certainty of being filled. I remember reading in one of Spurgeon's sermons a remark to this effect: When a man has a very dainty appetite, and is not very hungry, when he sits down at the table he is likely to be very picky. If there is a little bit of gristle in the meat he cuts it out and puts it on one side. Or if there is anything that is not just to his taste that is put on one side also. But the healthy man draws his knife through it, puts the meat on his fork, and away it goes, gristle and all!

Sometimes people who come to church are so nice that nothing can satisfy them. They do not like "long" sermons, nor do they like long chapters in the Bible either. They are very delicate, and they seem to think that that is an evidence of superiority. I have sometimes felt like the late Dr. Fulton, one of the great preachers of America. When he was delivering an address, a great address it was too, one night before a large audience, there were some people who were soon satisfied. And after a while they got up with a superior air to go out. The preacher noticed them and said, "That is right. If you are only a pint measure, go home as soon as you are full."

I wonder are any of you losing your appetite? If so, why? Just hold up the mirror of God's Word before your soul, and enquire, "Are the gray hairs here and there upon me? Are there discernible some signs of the old man in me?"

A friend of mine told me he once heard Archibald Brown preach. I do not know the connection in which he used this illustration, but Mr. Brown said, "We have in our garden a certain weed that we call 'the old man'." Do you English people know what that is? It was never suggested that anyone should make a bottle of perfume of that, was it? And did you ever work in your garden and lay hold of a bit of that weed? Oh, the odor of it! And you can scarcely wash it off. How it clings about you! Mr. Brown described that disagreeable weed, the "old man". Then he imagined the children coming in when mother was not in a very good humour. And one of them said, "A bit of 'the old man' about mother!" At another time father was short-tempered, and upsetting the household generally. And mother remarked, "A bit of 'the old man' about father to-day." Oh yes, there is too much of "the old man" about all of us.

The loss of memory is another sign of increasing age. You have heard someone say, "I used to have a good

memory." Why have you not now? "I suppose," he replies, "it is because I am getting older." Yes; that is one of the signs of increasing age—failing memory.

I was in a place one day when an old man of ninety came in to visit the man whom I was visiting. This man's name was Mr. Jack. (I think perhaps Dr. Montgomery would remember the family). My friend said, "How many children have you, Mr. Jack?" "Well," he said, "let me see." And he counted twelve or thirteen, I forget just how many. "Oh," he said, "a big family!" "Ah yes, a big family." After a while he went out. I remained. But in a short while he came back and said, "I forgot; there is another one"! He had forgotten one of his own children—he was so old!

Is your memory failing? You remember how the Psalmist exhorted his soul: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." Do not forget how good God is to you. When you find your spiritual memory failing you may be sure there is too much of the old man about you.

Are you in a grumbling and complaining mood this morning? Are you out of sorts with life generally? Did you get out of the wrong side of the bed this morning? What is the matter with you? Has not God been good to you? Can you complain against God? Oh, no—no—no! Then what are you grumbling about? or, as the soldiers used to say, "grousing" about? I will tell you. You have forgotten some of His benefits.

"Count your blessings, name them one by one

And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done."

Cultivate the memory.

There is a little girl who comes to prayer meeting who gave us last night the third instalment of the eleventh chapter of John. She recites many verses at a time. I recommend you boys and girls to commit the word of God to memory while you are young, for you will find it easier to remember while you are children than when you grow older, far easier.

Oh that God would help us to "put on the new man"! Then we should be able to remember His benefits,—and His Word too.

How many things I might say!

What do you do after dinner? I have a friend who said to me one day, "I always take a nap." "Did you always do it?" "No; no! When I was younger I did not need it." I know a certain minister with whom I have been associated for a number of years. I have been with him on committees many times. Often the committee have met in my room in a hotel. Sometimes we would meet immediately after lunch, between a morning and afternoon session of a convention. And this man would say, "Now, brethren, go on with your committee; it will not disturb me. I am going to appropriate this bed." And he would throw himself down and be fast asleep for about ten minutes, then wake up as fresh as in the morning.

I suppose it is a good thing. I have never formed the habit yet—I want to keep young! But there are some people who do that after a meal on the word of God: they read it and after they have had some spiritual food, instead of going out to work, they promptly go to sleep, and do nothing at all. They take an after-dinner nap, and as a rule it is more than ten minutes; they sleep on.

The old man also is "afraid of that which is high". There are some boys who live not very far from where I live, and I have seen them, nearly a dozen at a time,

walking along the fence at the back. Now can you tell me why boys want to walk on the top of a fence when there is a good sidewalk to walk on? Why should a crowd of boys want to get up on a fence and walk along a scantling four inches wide, when there is plenty of room on the ground? Did you ever see a boy who did not want to get to the top of a very high tree, if there was a way of getting there? It is characteristic of youth. It is always aspiring. It wants not only to climb, but, if possible, to fly, like an eagle into the clouds. But when a man grows old he says, "Oh yes, my boy, I used to do that myself; but now I keep on the ground." And oh, how he does keep to the ground! He is afraid of that which is high.

How many Christian people there are who are afraid of that which is high. There was a time when they were like a certain old man—who was young—of whom I spoke to you a little while ago, who on his eighty-fifth birthday said, "I am as strong this day as I was on the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day. I am not afraid of the high things. I will climb the mountain yet. I will show you that I am still young even if I am eighty-five years of age."

Ah yes, when the new man is regnant within us, there is no mountain that we do not desire to climb; and not content with that, we must mount up with wings as eagles, and run and not be weary, and walk and not faint.

Are you afraid of the high places? Do you not reflect that all spiritual blessings await our appropriation in high or heavenly places? It is extraordinary how prudent some people become in the Lord's work! Oh yes, the man says, "Of course, I did that myself, when I was young, but now—now—now—be careful!" He calls it "prudence" or "caution". Really "the old man" is becoming "afraid of that which is high". And "the old man" sometimes prevails in the counsels of the church instead of the new man. Do not be afraid of that which is high.

Once more, in life's eventide, "*fears are in the way*". Have you seen a boy face the darkness? He just runs out. He cannot see where he is going, but apparently it does not much matter. If he falls he will get up again. He gallops along heedlessly.

How many of you drive motor cars? Nearly everyone! What fills you with more fear than anything else when you are driving a car? I will tell you what bothers me more than anything else. A boy on a bicycle. He does not know what fear is. He dodges in and out. There are no fears in the way for him. I sometimes wish there were. He would be a little more careful. But it is characteristic of youth that it is not afraid of pitfalls. It goes on its way fearlessly. But when a man grows older how careful he becomes of his footing! Perhaps he carries a stick, and partly feels his way like a blind man.

Are you old? Is it about time for somebody to "cane" you? Do you want somebody to present you with a stick? I carry a stick myself, when I am not driving. But I have carried one since I was in my 'teens—I find it company. I do not really need one, and I hope you will not either. But religiously, the man of faith will not be a man of fear: he will be fearless, and go on in the Lord's work.

And then did you notice that other word, as Mr. Brown read? "And the grasshopper shall be a burden." A young man likes to carry a load. Have you not seen a little boy take hold of something: "See what I can lift!" How proud he is! And the young fellow likes to have a big load on his back. "Now be careful!" one of his elders says, but he replies, "Oh, pile it on. I can carry more than that; more than that!" He is not afraid. But when the man grows old, he does not want to carry any load. And the time comes when even a grasshopper is a burden to him.

Did you ever see a young man grow old quickly? Perhaps he taught a Sunday School class. It was easy for him to get up in the morning; easy for him to go visiting; easy for him to do a hundred things in the Lord's service. But after a while he said, "I find it is too much for me." Suddenly he becomes very anxious about his health, and he gives up this task and the other duty, and after a while he is put on the shelf in the church as everybody says, "Sh! do not touch him; do not put anything on him, it will hurt him." And if one hears a grasshopper leaping about he is almost afraid it will crush the poor fellow if it should light on him. Physically he is strong enough. What is the matter? The old man is in the ascendancy, that is all.

And you cannot wake him up because *desire shall fail*. He sleeps half his time now; he does not want to do anything. He gets his breakfast, and sleeps again till noon; has a bit of something to eat at noon, and then another nap; and maybe he will wake up in time for dinner, and then go to bed. Desire has failed, ambition is dead.

Many professing Christian people are like that. One would really think that eating and sleeping, the things of this life, were all there are to engage the attention of a redeemed soul. Why is it? Because the old man is uppermost. "Gray hairs are here and there upon him, and he knoweth not."

II.

Well, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH AN OLD MAN? If somebody could only find the fountain of youth! If only someone could discover the long-desired elixir of perpetual youth! If an expert scientist should discover that by the grafting of a particular gland somewhere a man's youth could be renewed, and the man of forty or fifty could become again like a man of twenty-one! Do you suppose that man would have to advertise his discovery? I do not think so. There are multitudes of men who would like to be young again. There may be a few women too! I am inclined to think that if science could discover some means of renewing our youth by putting off the old man and putting on the new, there would be no difficulty in getting people to turn their steps toward the place where such rejuvenating power could be obtained. But, blessed be God, we may renew our youth. Some of the youngest men I have known have been the oldest. I have known some men who were octogenarians, who would put boys in their 'teens to shame by their spiritual activity. There is no reason why we should grow old, dear friends. The new man ought never to grow old. We ought to grow up into Christ and go on—and on—and on with Him forever.

Let us have done with the old man.

Will it help to pull out the gray hairs? You have done it already, some of you, have you not? Now "fess up!"

But now there are too many of them. Or, if you have not done that, you have done something to colour or to cover them up, but no one is really deceived by such practices. What we need is something within us to prevent the hair becoming gray, we need to be linked to a fountain of perpetual youth.

We read in the Song of Solomon where the spouse sings of her beloved, that "his locks are bushy and black as a raven"—not a gray hair there. Forever young, though the Ancient of days. And we can draw upon Him, and live in perpetual youth.

May the Lord help us who are Christians to keep close to Him. And as for the rest of you, receive Jesus Christ, and be made a new creature in Christ, and old things, and old age, will pass away forever, and we shall be everlastingly young in Him.

May He bless our meditation for His name's sake.

Let us pray: We thank Thee, Lord, that Thou dost never admonish us, nor rebuke us in any way for our sin without encouraging us to repent and return to Thee. Thou dost promise us a renewal of strength, and of spiritual vitality. Oh make us all as young men and women before Thee, vigorous in our spiritual life, exuberant in our spiritual health, because we abide in Him Who is the Fountain of life, and the Fountain of health. We ask it in Jesus' name, Amen.

THE TRUMPETS OF SILVER.

A Lecture by Dr. T. T. Shields.

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Thursday Evening, March 17th, 1932.

Eighteenth in a Series of Thursday Evening Lectures on Biblical Theology, which are Included in the Curriculum of Toronto Baptist Seminary.

(Stenographically Reported)

Lesson Text: Numbers, Chapters ten to twelve.

The tenth chapter opens with certain directions for the calling of public assemblies. Moses was instructed to make two trumpets of silver. The purposes to which these trumpets were to be devoted are here defined. I called your attention, I think, on a former occasion to the New Testament use of the figure: "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

Included in the feasts of the Lord, was the feast of trumpets. Though one may wisely be cautious in assigning an exact typical significance to the feast of trumpets, or to the two silver trumpets Moses is here commanded to make, both may serve at least as an illustration. The Lord provided means whereby His people might be called together. We are admonished in the New Testament not to forsake "the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is".

Due announcement was to be made of these various gatherings. The work of the Lord is not to be done in a corner. The Great Commission is really a commission to advertise the gospel, to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. We are to blow the trumpet in Zion. The prophets were admonished to lift up their voices like a trumpet, to show Israel their transgressions, and to tell God's people of their sins. Gospel preachers are to be gospel trumpeters. Jesus "opened his mouth, and taught them". I hope you will be preachers and not mumblers, or droners—or even crooners. Lift up your

voice like a trumpet, and make the truth of the gospel known.

The trumpets were made of a material that was appropriate to their use. We should advertise the gospel, but we should advertise it appropriately. There are some things which are unseemly in association with so sublime a mission as that of making Christ known. I have no objection to what people call, "sensationalism:" the charge I should lay against the modern church is that it creates no sensation at all. We need not be frightened into silence by the criticism of the world. At the same time, we are to remember that we are ambassadors of Christ, and while preaching the gospel attractively, challengingly, even sensationally, if you like, we are to do it becomingly, and in such a way as will be in keeping with the solemn work in which we are engaged.

I believe in advertising, but I do not believe in advertising a service in the house of God in precisely the same way as a circus is advertised. Let us make our trumpets of silver, and not of brass. Let us see to it that we behave ourselves as the children of the King. There ought to be reverence and decorum, proper order, in the services of the Lord's house.

The trumpet was to be used for three purposes. First of all, to call the people together on their occasions of gladness and for their solemn feasts. It is a good thing for the Lord's people to come together simply to be happy together: "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together."

Some years ago an Irish preacher spent a few months in Toronto. He attended this church quite frequently when he was not preaching. Sometimes he would say of the service, "It was a good service. Oh yes; oh yes; I was blessed to-day." Sometimes we are disposed to count the conversions, or, at least, to count those who make profession of faith in Christ—and it is a good thing to see people converted. But we ought to come together very often just for the joy of it, just to get a blessing. When the people of God do thus come together and have a good meal, and get a real blessing, you cannot write it down in the church report. But the angels know all about it.

Some years ago a man telephoned me. I answered and he asked if Mr. Shields was speaking. "Yes, sir", I replied. "You believe in prayer?" he enquired. "I certainly do." "I wish you would come over and pray with my wife; she is very ill." I went to the apartment where they were living, over in the Beverley Street district. I went up the narrow stairs, and there I found a poor woman sitting in a chair, evidently dying of dropsy. Her husband, a man of perhaps sixty-five years of age, was with her. They had one other chair in the entire apartment, and not even a table. These two had started from Australia under the idea that the Lord was leading them to Jerusalem. They got as far as Toronto, and the wife was taken ill. They did not believe in doctors or medicine, and for between a month and six weeks that poor man had been nursing his sick wife, and living out of a can. He was half starved.

I immediately sent for a doctor, and, on his arrival, we called an ambulance, and carrying the woman down the stairs in a chair, sent her to a hospital. Within a day or so she died.

After the funeral I said to the poor man, "Come home with me." He was very religious. He supposed he had risen entirely above the flesh, and all its requirements, and could not understand why his wife had died. There

must have been a break in the chain somewhere, he said; he had the promise, and she had no right to die. He was quite out of sorts. I said, Let us talk about these things later. You come home with me. My wife had prepared a good dinner, and this man sat down and ate it—and he did eat. There was no doubt about it: he was still in the flesh. When he had had a good dinner he pushed his chair back and smiled—actually smiled the day of the funeral—and said, “Well, Mrs. Shields, I fear I shall have to admit after all, that a good dinner does put a different complexion on things.” And it does! Yes, it does. No matter how spiritual you may be, you are still in the flesh.

I will tell you another thing: a good solid spiritual meal puts a different complexion on things too. It is a great thing to hear the silver trumpet blow, and come together—I had almost said, to have a jolly good feast, just to be happy in the Lord, to be blessed. To no less than that the silver trumpet calls.

In the days when you students become pastors, and you have to be like a housewife, and content yourselves with simply feeding souls, sometimes they will be in such a hurry they will hardly say, “Thank you”, for it. You may wonder what you have accomplished, but remember that you are feeding the flock of God. If you are giving them spiritual food, sustaining their spiritual health, you are doing something for the Lord.

The trumpet was blown for the observance of ordinances and solemn feasts. Let proper emphasis be laid upon these things. I believe that principle typified in the gathering of the congregation for the worship of God, for the observance of the ordinances He has enjoined, is one that requires special emphasis in our day. In this day when people are driven about by every wind of doctrine, let us have a religious home; let us have a place where the dinner-gong can be sounded, the silver trumpet blown, and all the people can come together for the sole purpose of worshipping God.

The children of Israel were presently to set forth toward the promised land, they were to begin their journey. The time ought to come with all of us when we leave first principles and go on to perfection. We shall see presently that they did set forth because the Lord had said, “You have been long enough in this mountain; now move.” There are some people who like to stay a long time in one place. They do not make much progress in the Christian life. They do not grow spiritually.

The silver trumpet was to be blown when the camp was to set forth toward the land of promise. So it is our business to lead our people on progressively in the Christian life. Do not be content to be kindergarten teachers all the time. Be as simple and clear in your teaching as you can, but remember you need to be journeying on. The people need to be learning more and more.

The exalted Head of the church gave to the church “pastors and teachers”. I do not believe they are two separate offices. I believe that a real pastor will be a teacher, that you feed your people in the measure in which you teach them, not only the superficial things, but the “deep things of God”.

Then furthermore the silver trumpet was to sound an alarm, and to lead the people forth to battle. It was to give them the pitch to sing,—

“Onward, Christian Soldiers,
Marching as to war.”

I know there are some people who do not like that, but this army was a fighting army. That is what they were for, and the silver trumpets were designed to call the people to action, to form rank, and march against the enemy.

Do not be afraid to be known as belonging to the church militant. I hope you will be a fighting preacher. “Fight the good fight of faith”; “Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” Call your people to stand against all manner of evil, and to march forth against the enemy.

When thus the trumpets were made they were immediately pressed into service: “It came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony.” The trumpet was sounded, and the people started their march toward the land of promise. You will remember how we observed before that the camp was divided into five—really there were four parties, and the tabernacle party, if I may so say, in charge of the three families of the house of Levi, the Gershonites, the Merarites, and the Kohathites. When the cloud lifted, and the trumpet was sounded, they all formed in rank, and Judah led the way. Then the tabernacle was carried forward after the second party by the Gershonites and the Merarites; then came the Kohathites bearing the sanctuary. Thus it is said, “And the Kohathites set forward, bearing the sanctuary: and the other did set up the tabernacle against they came.” Gershon and Merari went in advance, and they set up the tabernacle, and by the time the Kohathites—whose lot was to bear the burden upon their shoulders—arrived, the tabernacle was ready to receive the ark, and the other implements of the sanctuary. So must we learn in an orderly fashion to set forth the work of the Lord. We have an account here of the various standards, and how they went.

“And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses’ father-in-law, We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.” We ought not to go to the promised land alone. It is well that we should not go to church alone. Take somebody with you. That is a good text for you preachers, “Come thou with us, and we will do thee good. We are going somewhere. We are journeying to the land of promise.”

You will generally find that your invitation will be declined. But Moses was very persistent, importunate, and begged him not to leave them, even suggesting that he might be useful to them, that he might be eyes for them in the wilderness, and that if he would come he would share the blessing. No answer is made, but it may be assumed that Hobab went with them because later this family appear on the scene.

We may pause to remark, if Moses had to invite a man twice, it will not hurt you to call twice in the same place. If they did not respond to Moses’ first appeal, you need not be discouraged. Keep at it, and Hobab will come to Sunday School or to church service.

“And they departed from the mount of the Lord three days’ journey: and the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them in the three days’ journey, to search out a resting place for them.” When the ark set forth Moses said, “Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered: and let them that hate thee flee before thee.”

The ark was the symbol of the Divine Presence. When the ark moved, the people moved with it.

The eleventh chapter is a very human chapter. We may not understand the other so well, but I think we can all understand this: "When the people complained"! Did you ever hear it? "When the people complained, it displeased the Lord: and the Lord heard it." Oh, yes; the Lord can hear our grumbling as well as our praises. Our complaints reach heaven as well as our thanksgiving. "The Lord heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp."

Who of us has not lived sometime in a complaining mood? Who of us is wholly innocent of this sin? Paul said, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." That is a great attainment, when anyone can say that,—not merely to be resigned to the will of God, but to delight in it, to be able to say,—

"I worship Thee, sweet Will of God,
And all Thy ways adore;
And every day I live, I long
To love Thee more and more."

"Great peace have they that *do* thy law"? No! Did you ever see a boy do what his father told him when he had not much peace, when he went about his task simply because he had been commanded to do so, and a will stronger than his own compelled him to do a thing he did not want to do? He did his work with a reluctant spirit, and anything but an attractive countenance, when he wanted to be out at baseball? That is the way most of us serve, I fear, reluctantly.

"Great peace have they who *love* thy law." We shall not be happy in our Christian life until we love the will of God. And we shall be happy just in the measure in which we love it. Do not let anybody say, "I have arrived." None of us have. We have all complained. Do not let anybody suppose that the man who gets drunk, or who steals, is the only sinner. The grumbler is perhaps as great a sinner as he. Complaining and grumbling, growling and grouching, making everybody around us miserable, is as much a sin as some other things. There are some people to whom I am afraid to say, "How are you?" I have their answer in advance! There are some people one feels like going around two or three blocks to avoid meeting. Who was the poor "lorn critter" in one of Dickens' books? Oh yes, Mrs. Gummage. That is genius to invent a name like that: one can almost see her. When she complained of the east wind, and it was objected that other folks felt it too, she drew her shawl about her spare shoulders, and insisted that it did not affect other people as it affected her.

The people of Israel complained—so have we all.

"The people cried unto Moses." Be sure that Moses will have his share of it before they get through! "And when Moses prayed unto the Lord, the fire was quenched. And he called the name of the place Taberah: because the fire of the Lord burnt among them. And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting; and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?"

You young men are in training to be Baptist ministers or missionaries, you young women for missionary service of some sort. I hope you will be men of conviction. I hope, when you leave the Seminary, you will believe

something, and believe it profoundly, and teach it with all your might—and stand for what you believe. When you become pastors of churches, do not be too keen for numbers. Be careful not to encourage the mixed multitude to join your church, for they will give you trouble. Moses had nearly all his trouble from the mixed multitude. The real Israelites are bad enough—you will get enough trouble from them; you will have enough to discipline you without the mixed multitude—but they came out of Egypt with the children of Israel, and gave him a great deal of trouble. They always do.

"Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick"—I do not wonder they remembered things like that! I should think they would! I should think their neighbours would remember them, too! What a strange taste they had!—"But now our soul is dried away; there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes. And the manna was as coriander seed, and the colour thereof as the colour of bdellium. . . And the people went about, and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil. And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it. Then Moses heard the people weep throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent."

Did you ever hear children complain of their meals? It is a very bad habit. I have heard of some men who scarcely ever sat down at the table without grumbling at something. Did you ever meet a representative of that variety? Did you ever meet a specimen like that? I remember once being in a hotel in Scotland with a certain minister, sitting at the same table. When the waiter delivered the order, the minister shouted, "Take that back. Don't you know how to cook?" He growled like a bear. I was ashamed to be in his company. I liked him in many ways, but when he sat at the table for his food, instead of being a gentleman, he seemed to act like an animal. It reminded me of feeding the lions at the zoo when he ate his dinner.

It is possible for the Lord's children to be like that, and when He sends us manna from the skies, to receive it with grumbling and say, "There is nothing for us but this manna. I am tired of it." They remembered the food of Egypt. "The people went about, and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it; and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil . . . and Moses heard the people weep"—and was at his wit's end to know what to do.

Did you ever see a mother when the baby was—oh, not very well; grumbling, growling, cross, all day long?—just like you were sometimes when you were a baby! When the end of the day comes, mother is worn out.

I was in a home once where there was a little girl of three or four years of age, just able to talk nicely. She and I got to be great friends. I asked her mother how much she would take for her, and she replied, "Well, you could not have her to-day for a million dollars. There are days, however, when you could have her for a cent." (Laughter.)

I am trying to fortify you young men against the time when you become preachers. There will be days when you would not give up your church for a million dollars—

and there will be other days when you will feel that you would be but poorly compensated to keep it for a million! There will be times when people will be full of joy and thanksgiving, and you will be happy in the Lord, when they will delight in the manna that God sends by you: there will be other days when you will feel like Moses did. I talked to you last week about resignations. Here is more of it.

When you feel like that, the proper thing to do is to tell the Lord about it. Let me warn you of one thing: do not have any member of your church as a special confidant whom you invite to your house that you may pour out your complaints before him. When you feel like that, you had better get as far as possible from your church members. You can grumble as much as you like to the Lord: He will understand you. If you have any grumbling to do, pour your complaints into His ear, and He will get you straightened out.

See what he says? "Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldst say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers?—You have given me a lot of babies to nurse. I must carry them around as though they were infants." Did you ever see people like that? I have seen many churches that reminded me of nurseries. They do not need books or instruction: they need a rattle to keep them amused. And I will tell you when that condition exists. I spoke to you the other day about the "old man", of the time when the "old man" is in the ascendancy in the believer's life. Sometimes the "old man" gets so old that he gets into his second childhood. When you have a company of people in whom the "old man" is on top—and he is so old that he becomes a babe—you will say, "I thought I was going to be a preacher. I attended the Seminary to train for the ministry, but here I am pushing a baby carriage." That is what many a modern preacher is, just a glorified nurse-maid.

Then some day you will be like Moses and say, "I cannot stand it any longer. I am not able to bear all these people alone." Moses was the meekest of all men, and when he talked like that he was burdened, you may be sure. Blessed be God, the great Head of the church knows all about this. He will have compassion on us when we have got to the end of the tether, and can stand no more. Moses was pretty much like Elijah when he said, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life."

Did you ever pray like that? Perhaps you have not had experience enough. I am ashamed to say it, but I may as well tell you that I have often been profoundly interested in the undertaker for my own sake. I have felt like Elijah many times. "It is enough; let me die. I do not want to preach any more. I am sick and tired of the whole business." You may read me a lecture and say, "That is very naughty." I know it is. But I have much company. My big brother Moses said it, and so did Elijah. Is it not wonderful that God condescends to use such weak mortals as we are? The people complained to Moses, and he to God. How infinitely compassionate is He that He can use us!

The Lord said, "Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with

thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone." Let me suggest that to you. Try to divide your labour. You will have quite enough to do yourself if you get everybody else to do all they can do. Moses was divinely instructed to find seventy men who should share his responsibility.

What are men in the church for? Why should I lead all the meetings when I have a man like Brother Greenway around? Have you not observed it to be this Pastor's settled principle never to do a single thing that he can get anybody else to do! It keeps him quite busy enough getting jobs for other folks to do.

If we carry our burdens to the Lord, the Lord will help us even in a matter of organization. When you get to a place in your church life where you do not know which way to turn, go and tell God, and He will find a solution for your problem.

You know the story. The Lord said, "They have asked for flesh: I will let them have it. I will fill their order." Moses said, "The people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month." Even Moses was staggered by the divine promise, so great was it. But the Lord is never at an end of His resources, and so the wind came and brought quail. The Lord said unto Moses, "Is the Lord's hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not."—"And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease. But there remained two of the men in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the spirit rested upon them; and they were of them that were written, but went not out unto the tabernacle; and they prophesied in the camp. And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp.—They actually want to preach. They are usurping your position."

There is always someone ready to help people find fault; to spread discontent. But Moses said, "Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them! Do you think I want to be the only prophet in this camp?"

I hope you will be such preachers that your ministry will produce preachers. Will you mark that? After you have preached for a little while, if you do not see some young men in your congregation wanting to prophesy after they hear you prophesy, go to God and ask Him what is wrong with your ministry. A real preacher ought to produce preachers. Seventy men were made partakers of Moses' spirit, and they began to prophesy.

I am sure that those of us who teach in the Seminary will watch with the greatest interest the career of every student, and nobody in all the world will be so happy to hear of success and spiritual fruitage following your ministry as those who have had a little part in assisting you to prepare. May we all have the spirit of Moses, desiring that everybody who knows the Lord may have the spirit of prophesy, that they may witness for Christ! I think we ought to be like parents waiting for the children to learn to talk. When Daddy comes home from

(Continued on page 12)

Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

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REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR.

Lesson 16

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SECOND QUARTER

ISRAEL IS MUSTERED BY MOSES

Lesson Text: Numbers 1, 2.

Golden Text: "For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ." Col. 2:5.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Monday: Ex. 30:11-16.

Tuesday: Deut. 10:8-22.

Wednesday: Ex. 12:37-42.

Thursday: Eph. 6:10-20.

Friday: Eph. 4:7-16.

I. THE CENSUS OF THE MEN OF WAR, (1:1-54).

Having received the law at Sinai the Israelites were ready to resume their march to the promised land, and, in preparation for the same, a census was made of the men of war, and directions were given relative to the order of the tribe in the camp and on the march. Respecting the former several things are brought to our attention. First, in relation to the time at which the census took place. This occurred on the "first day of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt", (v. 1). This was one month after the rearing of the tabernacle, (Ex. 40:17). Second, the persons numbered there were the males from "twenty years old and upward", all who were "able to go forth to war in Israel", (vs. 2, 3). The Israelites were not pacifists; they had enemies to fight, and prepared for eventualities. During their wilderness journeys and after entering the promised land they were beset with enemies. They were strong enough at times to overcome them, and it was God's intention that they should always overcome them, but they suffered defeat frequently on account of sin. It is equally true these days that the children of God are face to face with enemies. We wrestle with the great enemy of souls, and his minions, (Eph. 6:12), and we recognize the world and the flesh also as enemies, the latter being the old nature which strives against the Spirit, (Gal. 5:17). Being confronted by these enemies we dare not be pacifists. Pacifism in the spiritual realm is both cowardly and sinful. God's faithful servants are valiant warriors, fighting the forces of sin. Note the men of the Old Testament, as Elijah, (I Kings 18:40); Amos, (Amos 7:10-17), and Daniel, (Dan. 6:10-13), to mention but a few, and the men of the New Testament, as Peter, John, and Paul, (Acts 4:19, 20; 13:9-11), also the men of church history since those early days, as Wycliffe, Tyndale, Luther and Knox. Emphasis may be placed on the necessity for a militant type of Christianity, boldly witnessing to Jesus Christ, and attacking the citadels of sin.

In the third place directions are given relative to the manner of taking the census. In the work attached thereto a prince of each tribe was present and participated therein, (v. 4). The names of

these men are stated, (vs. 5-16). It is also clear that the census was taken according to tribes and families. This would ensure proper genealogical records. There is always a purpose in God's commands. The fourth thing of note is the number of the fighting men in each tribe, (vs. 17-43). In this list Judah has the largest number, (v. 27), and Manasseh the least, (v. 35). The total number is given as "six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty", (vs. 44-46). Estimating from the usual ratio of men of this age to the total population, the number of persons in the nation would be considerably over two million. This is in great contrast to the small company which entered Egypt with Jacob, (Ex. 1:1-5), and is in fulfillment of God's promise to the father of the nation, (Gen. 12:2; 17:16), repeated to Isaac, (Gen. 26:4), and to Jacob, (Gen. 28:14). Note may be made of the faithfulness of God's word, also of His wisdom and power in looking after such a great multitude in the wilderness. They never wanted a meal, and their clothes did not grow old, (Deut. 29:5, 6). The great task of Moses may also be referred to. As the human leader it was his duty to make known to the people the commands of God, to see that they observed those commands, and to attend to their complaints and troubles. More prayers should be offered on behalf of leaders, and less unkind criticism given them. The Levites being exempt from war service owing to their duties in the sanctuary were not numbered with the others, (vs. 47-54). Their census was taken later, (3:15). Note the wilderness position of the Christian and the necessity for mustering round the banner of Christ.

II. THE ORDER IN THE CAMP AND ON THE MARCH, (2:1-34).

In all companies of people living or working together, order is necessary for the smooth and efficient performance of duties, but especially is this so in such a large body of people as Israel. Confusion in their case would mean not only inefficiency, but disaster. Each tribe, including each family, therefore, was assigned its place in the camp and on the march. Each man was instructed to pitch "by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house, far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch", (v. 2). The Levites pitched near to the tabernacle, (v. 53). The camping place of each one was arranged in reference to the tabernacle, which was in the midst. On the march the same principle governed the position of each tribe, the Levites with the tabernacle in the midst, Judah the strongest tribe in the van, and Dan the second strongest in the rear, (vs. 9, 17, 31). Such order was excellent, manifesting splendid strategy, and implying thorough preparation for eventualities.

Several things are worthy of note respecting this lesson. First, the fact of order. This is observed in all the works of God, in the heavens and on the earth, and wherever men have submitted unto Him it is manifest in their midst. Sin, which in its essence is lawlessness, has disturbed order in the human family, but through Christ men are again brought into the purpose of God, and in the church and in every sphere in which they move,

they seek to walk in accordance with this order if they are obedient unto Him. God is not the Author of confusion, but of peace, (I Cor. 14:33), and this fact requires emphasis in these days of lawlessness, when under the guise of personal liberty, many became a law unto themselves, even in the churches. The fact that there is such a thing as scriptural order in the local church should be made clear.

The nature of the order manifest in the lesson and taught concerning the church is simple, yet effective. First, it should be noted that the plan emanated from a Divine source. It was God's plan. If any dispute should arise concerning it, the disputant was not disagreeing with man but with God, the same being true in reference to church order. In the plan God was in the midst of His people in the tabernacle, the outward symbol of His presence being the pillar of cloud, (9:15-23), each tribe or division of the people being assigned its place in relation thereto. In the church the same principle prevails. God is in the midst and each particular member is assigned a place by Him, and in relation to Him, and as in Israel there was a place for each one, so is it in the church, (I Cor. 12:12-20). Trouble has been caused in the church by persons acting out of place. Each tribe, each family, and each member of Israel worked together as one for the benefit of the whole, so in the church all departments should work as one to the same end. When organizations pursue a separate existence and live and work only unto themselves, friction and confusion are bound to ensue, resulting in spiritual loss and decline. It may be well to note church order as made known in scripture, in which we find the pastor is the overseer and ruler, (Acts 20:17, 29; Eph. 4:11), the deacons are his helpers, (Acts 6:1-6; I Tim. 3:8-13) and the members cooperate in the carrying on of the work, all being under the divine direction, labouring in accordance with the word of God, (Acts 13:2; Titus 1:9). There are no separate organizations mentioned in scripture in connection with the church. It is the church as such which does the work, persons being appointed to perform the various duties, (Acts 6:3). It would be better were the church to return to the divine plan. Note duties toward the pastor as follows; count him worthy of honour, (I Tim. 5:17), be careful respecting accusations against him, (I Tim. 5:19), remember him, (Heb. 13:7), submit to him as the God-given leader, (Heb. 13:17, 24), and support him financially, (I Cor. 9:14; Luke 10:7; I Tim. 3:18). It may further be noted that church members should be separated unto God, (2 Cor. 6:13; 7:1), bear witness to Christ, (Acts 1:8; 8:4), attend church services regularly, (Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:25), and give financial support to the work, (I Cor. 16:1; 2 Cor. 9:6, 7).

Certain beneficial results ensue from following the divine plan. These are, the elimination of confusion, each person knowing his place and his work, the stimulation of loyalty, each one working for the whole, the encouragement of respect for God, in obeying His command, and upholding the purity of His institution, the better preparation of the whole to meet the enemies of God, in the fact that union is strength, and the certainty of increased and orderly progress.

The Union Baptist Witness

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HAPPY IS HE.

The search for happiness takes people into peculiar places and induces them to try strange ways. It is the ever beckoning finger which lures young man and maiden, children and aged folk, to grasp at the hope that some material thing will eventually bring them happiness, and what is happiness—"the state of being happy", but who can define what that means? Is it but the passing moments when for a brief season an individual forgets in gaiety his responsibilities and cares? Is it a time of rest after labour; relief after pain; the lifting of a burden; the thrill of accomplishment; riches, fame, health, pleasure, friendship, can any of these be called the basis of happiness?

We are told that if we seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; that all things necessary will be added unto us and we, therefore, know that material blessings take but secondary place and cannot give one happiness.

"Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he". Is it true? Have we proven it? Would wealth, or health, or any offering from the world compensate for the blessed assurance of sins forgiven, or purchase from a Christian his hope, or his confidence? Surely not, for "Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he". In view of this, how can Christians spend their time in complaining, instead of praising? This is the time for testifying, a time for demonstrating happiness, in the face of perplexity, for WE KNOW that the Lord Omnipotent reigneth and that ALL THINGS are working together for good to those that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.

He Careth For You.

We believe that God so over-rules our lives that there is not one circumstance, be it most insignificant from our viewpoint, which is not permitted because of His plan for us and with joy we relate the experience of some Christian friends which led to a time of sweet fellowship, a profitable time for those bound together by the love of Christ.

A trip was contemplated to England. On the eve of departure, it so happened, as we are wont to say, that the wish was expressed that the travellers would be in the neighbourhood of friends whom having not seen we loved for the work's sake. The name and the address were given and eventually the visit was made—not a call as had been planned, but a visit of several days. One can enter into the pleasure of it from a letter received by the friends who sought out the English friends after their visit and from their report that some of the brightest days of their whole sojourn in England were spent with the new friends.

"My dear Brother ————:

Am feeling constrained to write a few words of appreciation and thanks to you both for your very kind letters received a few days ago and am pleased to hear of

the good times that you have been having."

"Can you possibly imagine just what it meant to us, your coming to see us here? We do not have the same blessed privilege of spiritual fellowship as we enjoyed when with you here and our being thereby reminded of the time spent with the dear friends of like precious faith at the Jarvis Street Church (which will never be forgotten by me) and especially so at the Throne of Grace when I thank God for the remembrance of you all there and also for the blessed encouragement and uplift which your presence here has given us."

"Am regretting my failure to make better use of the short time we were together. In the very exuberance of joy at the realization of our oneness in Christ, forgetting at the time of parting that we may not meet or see each other again in this world, but rejoice in the hope of meeting 'never to part again' in the presence of our blessed Saviour and Lord when we will together praise Him who is the hope of our confidence and our God. Well indeed may we commend each other to Him, and to the Word of His Grace which is able to build us up and to give us an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. To Him be the glory."

"Thanks for sending the two copies of the GOSPEL WITNESS. We are hoping to hear from you again soon."

"We trust that we shall be often meeting together in spirit at the throne of Heavenly Grace and assuring you that you will be often and much in our thought. We hope that you will have a safe and pleasant voyage home. Kindly remember us to all there, as you have opportunity. With kindest regards,
Yours in Christian fellowship, "

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THE PHOTOGRAPHS.

Our first supply of the 8 x 10 picture which is a lovely arrangement for our Foreign Missionaries' photographs and which is suitable for framing, has been exhausted. A new order is being given and all those wishing to have one of the pictures should order promptly. The 8 x 10 picture may be had for 50c.

The enlargement which should have a prominent place in every Bible School auditorium and Church can be supplied at \$2.00. We have already mailed copies to several of the churches and we would urge others to order promptly.

* * * *

THE MISSIONARY BULLETIN.

With each month's issue, the field covered by the Missionary Bulletin is enlarged and it is with thanksgiving that we hear that it has proven a blessing to some who have received it. Comment and suggestions with regard to improving the Bulletin will be gratefully received. Definite word of blessing received, or of how the Bulletin is used, will be deeply appreciated. We are gratified that the

March issue was clearer than previous issues and in future, we believe, there will be no difficulty with regard to the impressions which have from time to time been blurred owing to using two sides of the paper.

Please remember that the Missionary Bulletin is mailed each month to those requesting it. There is no charge and the names of those who would be interested will be gladly received.

TRENTON AND BELLEVILLE.

Rev. W. E. Atkinson supplied the churches on Sunday last and during the week, Rev. W. J. Thomson has been conducting special services.

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MOUNT PLEASANT, TORONTO.

The services held at the Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church were of a special character on Easter Sunday and attracted large congregations. The Sunday School recorded the highest attendance in the past three years and its open session gave every class a part in the program. Perfect recitation of the Books of the Bible by a five-year-old laddie and others demonstrated in other ways the work of the school as it endeavours to train the young in the knowledge of the Word.

The church services were shared in by the members of the Bible School and the three choirs assisted in a splendid way—the Church Choir, the Junior Choir and the Primary Choir all contributing. The choirs under the leadership of Mr. M. J. Coghill of the Jarvis Street Church are growing and rapidly improving.

The evening service was a heart-searching one, as the Pastor dealt with the subject of so much interest to-day, "Divine Healing, Physical and Spiritual" and in the light of what God has said, pointed out the errors of Christian Science. At the evening service two believers were buried in the waters of baptism.

Mount Pleasant Church has recently had the assistance of friends from other churches in the fellowship and is deeply appreciative of their help. The work is progressing and there is much reason for encouragement as the interest and increased attendance is noticed in many departments.

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WAVERLEY ROAD, TORONTO.

The very fact that it seems to be a growing habit on the part of the churches in the old Convention to save baptism until Easter time and report as many as possible on Easter Sunday, makes it difficult for us to report the blessings of that happy day among our churches, lest it be misunderstood.

Baptisms in Regular Baptist churches are not saved up for the Easter and Christmas seasons. There are no special Lenten, or Communicants' Classes, but believers are at all times urged to "be baptized" even as the Lord commanded. There were, therefore, baptisms in many of the churches last Lord's day.

There have been several conversions at the Waverley Road Church recently and in as much as we have not had a report from Waverley Road for some time, it was expected to have a full report at this time, this has not been forthcoming as at the time of going to press and we are taking the liberty of telling of the manner of some of the conversions.

During a canvass made by the Bible School, one of the young men had the joy of leading a soul to Christ and during a social time after one of the church meetings, the Pastor's wife grasped the opportunity to lead a woman to the place of safety in Christ Jesus. On Sunday evening six were baptized and the ordinance was witnessed by a large congregation.

* * * *

HILLCREST BIBLE SCHOOL.

There was a large gathering of the Bible School on Easter Sunday, March

27th, when the school was addressed by Mr. F. G. Pim.

The speaker, who was formerly superintendent of the Bible School, gave a very inspiring and instructive address on "Jesus Christ as the only Saviour of mankind".

A word of welcome to the friends was given by the Pastor, Mr. James Forrester, and special musical items were rendered by members of the school.

A memorable meeting was closed after two had come forward and accepted Christ.

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BIBLE SCHOOL WORK.

Department Conducted by

Rev. W. N. Charlton.

One of our Bible Schools is seeking to build up its Adult Class. Suggestions are asked for. The most successful plan we know of is the persistent visitation of prospective members. To begin with, an

effort should be made to enroll every member of the Church. Every church member should be in some department of the School studying the Word. There is little definite Bible Study outside of the Bible School,—not enough to take into consideration.

As a further suggestion, we pass on a plan tried out with success by another of our Bible Schools. They observed Parents' Day. This was an open session of the School and all parents were invited to attend with their children, to sit with them during the class hour, and become acquainted with the teachers and officers of the school. The children were urged to bring their parents and, in addition, each teacher visited the homes of his or her scholars to give a personal invitation. As a result this school had the largest attendance in its history, and many of the parents who were thus introduced to the school became regular attendants.

THE TRUMPETS OF SILVER.

(Continued from page 9)

work that first day when his majesty the baby has learned to say one word, the newspaper has no interest. The greatest possession in the world for that man has actually learned to talk.

When I hear a new-born babe get up on his feet and say a halting word for the Lord Jesus, I feel like saying, "Hallelujah! He really has a voice for the Lord." Would God the spirit of prophecy might fall upon all His children!

Then came the flesh until they had more than enough. The Lord said, "Therefore the Lord will give you flesh, and ye shall eat. Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days; but even a whole month, until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because that ye have despised the Lord which is among you, and have wept before him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt." It is to this incident reference is made by the Psalmist, "He gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul." We had better learn to be content with manna. We had better let God have His way.

This word and I have done. "Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married." I do not suppose it would have made much difference if he had married somebody else. They said, "Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses?" I wonder what that had to do with Moses' marriage? Any stick will do to beat a dog with. If you set out to criticize somebody, it will not make much difference what the ground is, you will be sure to find some cause of complaint. Mr. Roosevelt made a speech in Chicago, and the opposition papers were full of criticism. Somebody sagely remarked, "By that speech Mr. Roosevelt made thousands of people angry who would have been equally angry no matter what he had said!"

When Miriam and Aaron are in the complaining mood, they will find room to complain. It is foolish to complain at anybody's marriage. It is their business. If two people are happy on such an occasion, nothing more should be demanded. Besides, if Miriam and Aaron had

waited long enough perhaps the objection would have been unanimous!

The point is, dear friends, each one of us must live his own life. Some people will complain no matter what you do. Do the best you can, and leave the rest with the Lord.

"Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." Because of their complaints against Moses, Miriam and Aaron were summoned before the Lord, and Miriam became leprous white as snow. Then Moses prayed for her, and she was separated for a week, and then the Lord healed her. You must rise above petty criticisms, pay no attention to them. You will not be worth your salt if you cannot do so.

I say to you young men, if you are not prepared to endure every kind of criticism and complaint, you had better give up all thought of the ministry. I have not much to find fault with. I do not think any pastor has a more loyal people. We have had a few who said some strange things about us, but even they get over it after a while. I have no personal complaint. Do not complain about it—smile. Do not pay too much attention to it: go on about your work. And by and by the grumblers will become your friends; and they will help you, and pray with you, as the congregation turned to Moses in due time.

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