

The Gospel Witness

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

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The Gainsaying of Core

A Lecture by Dr. T. T. Shields.

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Thursday Evening, April 7th, 1932.

Twentieth 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 fifteen to seventeen.

Certain regulations are set out in the fifteenth chapter respecting the meat offerings which are to accompany the various sacrifices to be offered when the Lord shall have given them the land. You will find in Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers not a little repetition. The Bible was written to teach us certain things, and the same thing is set forth in various places again and again.

I.

I offer this suggestion to you teachers, preachers, and students: When you preach, ask yourselves the question as to whether you are trying to make a reputation for yourself for originality, for cleverness, or whether you are really endeavouring to be God's messenger to the people. Teachers must, of necessity, say the same thing more than once, for the reason that very few people can remember what is said the first time. You must not be above preaching on the same subject, approaching it from different angles, giving to the people line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, until they really remember the things that you teach. It is of little value for people to hear you preach if they remember nothing of what you say.

Some years ago I attended an Association meeting down on the shores of Lake Erie, in a very prosperous country place. There was a certain man who delivered an address who was a very fluent speaker. He never paused for a word. His address was a veritable Niagara of words, accompanied by a good deal of gesticulation. After the afternoon meeting I went with a certain member of the church, a deacon, an old man, to his house to tea. As we were walking up the road toward the house, he said, "You was a great talker we heard this afternoon." I said, "Yes, he spoke very fluently." "My, but

he used a lot of words." "Yes," I said, "he seemed never to be at a loss to know what to say." "He certainly is a great talker, but, tell me, what did he say?" I said, "I fear I shall have to confess that I have not the remotest idea what he said." Nor had I.

It is necessary sometimes to say the same thing over and over again, but be sure to say something worth remembering, and therefore, worth repeating. Mr. Spurgeon when turning to some very familiar subject—I do not know what it was, faith, or grace, or something of that sort, in effect, said, "I shall turn once again to this great theme. I have spoken to you about it scores of times, but I will speak of it again. I was in the country the other day, and I saw a man in his garden dibbling beans. He would dig a hole in the ground, drop in three beans, cover them with earth, and go on his way. As he did so he sang to himself,—

'One for the worm, and one for the crow,
And let us hope the other will grow.'

You must learn to sow liberally in the hope that a little of what you say will escape the worm and the crow, and bear fruit in the lives of your hearers. You may learn that lesson from the Bible itself, for it does not content itself with saying a good thing once. It says it over and over again.

As for example, in the gospels; there are points of difference, but there are certain events that are repeated in all the gospels, notably the story of the crucifixion, and of the resurrection. You cannot speak of those truths too often, nor emphasize them too strongly.

Furthermore, we have here *that quiet assumption of universal sovereignty that is characteristic of the voice of the Bible*. I think it desirable that I should frequently bring that to your attention, because it directly contradicts that which is so generally asserted to-day, that the

God of the Old Testament is not a universal God. The Lord here speaks of giving a land to His people. Notwithstanding all the difficulties that were involved, notwithstanding they had rebelled against Him, and He had ordained that they should wander in the wilderness forty years, until that generation had died out, yet, in effect, He said, "In my own time, and in my own way, I will bring you into the land; and when you come into the land you shall do so-and-so."

No lesser conception of God than that will do. The One Who is the only Representative of God, in Whom we see the Father, being Himself "the express image of His person", declared, "All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Ours is a sovereign Saviour. Our God is *the* God, the only God: "Look unto me; and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else."

Analyze the regulations here, given respecting these offerings. They mean in the first place that God demands of His people when they shall come into the land that *they shall recognize Him always in the maintenance of the institution of public worship*, in the regular presentation of sacrifices to be accompanied by certain meat offerings for the tabernacle, which was to be representative of the divine residence; therefore the table of the Lord must always be spread bountifully. "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare." Through the instrumentality of His people, God will see that His table is well provisioned.

There is a regulation too respecting *two classes of sins*: the sins of ignorance, and the sins of presumption. It is well to keep those principles always in mind. Do not be too harsh with people who say they are perfect. They are chiefly guilty of sins of ignorance. They do not know how imperfect they are. We all of us violate the principles of the Divine Holiness continually. How is it possible for sinful men such as we are to abide in the Divine Presence, and to be in perfect harmony therewith? If some semi-savage were to force his way into your home, and violate every principle of decorum, and shock the refined sensibilities of all the members of the family, you would have to treat him as a savage; his behaviour would be due to the fact that he did not know any better. But his conduct would be none the less objectionable because his faults were due to ignorance. Notwithstanding, the distance between the most cultured man who ever lived, and the worst savage, is as nothing compared with the moral difference between the holiest man and the absolute holiness of God; and only by the abounding grace of God can that difference be so adjusted as to bring man into complete harmony with Himself.

But as sins of ignorance come to our knowledge we are to confess them, and put them away. We are to offer sacrifices in the sense that we appropriate the cleansing of the blood that we may be acceptable to God.

Sins of presumption involve deliberate transgression against principles that are known to be right, involving the doing of that which is known to be wrong. As you study this chapter, recall to your minds that scripture where the Psalmist prays: "Cleanse thou me from secret faults." Secret faults are the sins of ignorance, the faults that are not only hidden from other people, but that are beneath our own consciousness. Presumptuous sins are the sins committed in the face of full knowledge, and from these we may pray to be "kept back."

Following upon that, there is a provision here (verses 37-41) whereby the people were to be reminded of their weakness, of their disposition to sin, and of the holy character of the divine law: "Bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generation, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue: that ye may look upon it and remember." Thus it was intended that they should appropriate to themselves, not *pardon*ing grace only, but *prevent*ing grace. Read the thirty-second Psalm in that connection, and you will find that in that inspired prayer, all these principles find expression. When the Psalmist had broken his silence, when he had sought forgiveness, and obtained it, he said, "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him." Then he says, "Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Having saved me from the sins committed, Thou wilt in future prevent their repetition." If we all prayed more for preventing grace, we should have less frequently to pray for pardoning grace. If some "ribband of blue" could help us to "remember" we should find fewer occasions to repent.

II.

The heart of these three chapters, however, is found in the sixteenth chapter, which records the sin of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Korah was of the tribe of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram were of the tribe of Reuben.

We are to remember that Moses was chosen of the Lord, and then through Moses, Aaron was selected and set apart as God's high priest. No one might minister in the priesthood who was not of the family of Aaron. Aaron did not appoint himself; as the epistle to the Hebrews points out: "And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Aaron was made an high priest by divine decree; he was the anointed one, he was the type and pattern of the one great High Priest Who was to come.

These three men, representative of others, for they were accompanied by two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown, rebelled against Moses and Aaron, and especially against Aaron in his capacity as high priest. They said, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?"

That sounds strangely like much teaching of this modern day: "All the congregation are holy." As I pointed out on Sunday evening last, a certain gentleman says, "Christ is in every man." If you condense the philosophy of Modernism to-day, and get the quintessence of it, what does it mean? I shall not recommend you to waste your time on the books of Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, but sometime later, when you have become sufficiently saturated with scripture truth and have become properly inoculated, so as to be thoroughly immune, then perhaps it may do you no harm to read such works as Fosdick's. When you do, you will find that Dr. Fosdick knows nothing of the necessity of any priest: "All the congregation are holy." Modernism is a repudiation of the priesthood of Christ, of His supremacy, of His pre-eminence, of His Deity. It is the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, over again. It is not new: it is as

old as human sin. It is the sin of Cain repeated. Abel found acceptance through his offering which was acceptable to God, while Cain resolved that he would prescribe his own method of approach to God; and was ready to kill everybody who differed from him.

That is Modernism, and it began in Eden. You will find it manifesting itself again and again all down through the history of the Christian church, a human objection to coming to God in God's way; it may be differently expressed, as in the two extremes, the pretended intellectualism of Modernism on the one hand, and the sacerdotalism of Rome on the other; but both involve the same principle, namely, the substitution of the human for the divine; and all to avoid coming to God on His terms through faith in the blood and the intercessory ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. These chapters illustrate the principles you are studying in your course in Modern Cults. The best book that ever was printed on Modern Cults is the Bible itself, for there is not a heresy that men have foisted upon the minds of their fellows that is not anticipated in the Bible, and its principles exposed and condemned. Here is that cardinal, central, thing, the rejection of the divinely ordained priesthood.

What is unbelief? What is the damning sin? I could recite a catalogue of evils—but what is the sin that sums up all others? It is the rejection of Christ. That is the philosophy of those great, yet simple, scriptures, "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him"; "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." We must come to God in God's way, or we shall never get to God at all.

III.

Observe what our attitude ought to be in respect to such an error as is here exposed. I have not time to go into the details of it, but Moses renewed his protests, and strongly contended against those who would usurp the office of the priesthood. Contention, for the sake of contention, is always to be deplored. A contentious man—or a contentious woman,—I do not know which is worse—one who really loves contention for the sake of being at odds with everybody, is a most objectionable member of any community. "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

But there are some things with which we cannot agree without a betrayal of the truth itself, without disloyalty to our deepest convictions; and surely of all things this is the primary one, the work and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though a man should speak like an archangel, if he denies that there is but one way to God, and that that way is through Christ, we should never give him the hand of fellowship as a Christian teacher. It makes no difference who he is, anyone who, at any time, offers any substitute for the atoning work and the high priestly ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, so far as the realm of Christian truth is concerned, must be regarded as being without the pale. That does not mean that we cannot say, "Good morning", to him; that does not mean that we should treat such as bitter personal enemies. But it does mean that we must refuse a recognition of, or an acquiescence in, any system which would deny the efficacy, the indispensability, of the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the

Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."

It is never difficult to identify the true essence of Christianity. We may differ from people on many things. One man said, "I will go as far with a man as he is going, but if he will not go all the way, I shall go on." That is well enough. But with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, the enlightened believer cannot, under any circumstances, hold fellowship, for they are travelling in the wrong direction.

Now what shall be done with them? Invite them into your pulpit! Hold a conference so that you may hope to convince them of the error of their way! Not so did Moses. He entirely separated the people and himself from these rebels.

I believe there is no other way. I am sure that in the old Convention of Ontario and Quebec there are many ministers who, in their own hearts, are true to the Bible. They believe it. They have no sympathy with the teaching of Modernism. But still they fraternize with Modernists; still they keep company with them; still they support agencies which are part and parcel of the system against which they, in their own hearts, protest. By such continued association they impair, if they do not actually nullify their testimony.

That principle of separation runs all through the Book. It applied to the leper; it applied to Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Get out of their company. Withdraw yourselves from them. Give a testimony against their rebellion. Have nothing to do with them. That is, in effect, what God said to His people.

You young men will often find difficulty in that direction. The ladies like to put on their new spring hats—not because they are any nicer than the ones of last year. They may not be half so nice. Not because they are worn out, but because everybody else is doing it. It is a fact: women put on the ugliest creations that ever emanated from a milliner's shop, to be up-to-date. And if there is anyone more addicted to that sort of thing than a woman, it is a man! The men are just as concerned about being in fashion as the women.

That does not apply merely to the matter of dress. It applies to everything. By that principle Modernism has made its way. It has become fashionable. It has been adopted by a multitude of people who simply want to be up-to-date. I have said many times that the only difference between some preachers in the pulpit and their feminine hearers is that the women follow the fashions in what they put *on* their heads, and the preachers in what they put *in* their heads. Shall we develop in this Seminary men and women who will be strong enough to be willing to be out of fashion? Do you think you will be able to withstand the contempt of a fashion-loving generation?

Years ago a friend, a member of this church, took me for a ride in his motor-car. It was in the days when a motor of any kind was a luxury. I do not know whether there were closed cars in those days or not, but this was an open car, a luxurious sort of chariot I thought it was. But he apologized for it, calling it an old wagon or bus—I don't think he called it a bus; that term for a motor car was a later invention. I said, "Shall I tell you what is the matter with your car? Your neighbour has bought a new one." "How did you know?" he enquired. "I did not; I only assumed it." "That is the truth," he

said, "I have been out of love with this thing since seeing his."

What a lot of little children we are! We are all like sheep, going astray. There are thousands of men who would be living fruitful lives if they had the courage to stand for the things they know to be right, though all the world should go the other way.

I spoke to you last week about minorities: I emphasize it again. The men who have accomplished things in the world—religiously, politically, and in every other way—almost without exception, have been men who have been willing to espouse unpopular causes, and stand for what they believed to be right, even against the majority. You will have to take your stand, and separate yourselves often from men who preach theories that are very plausible, and, because plausible, popular with the crowd. As you decline the invitation to go to Dr. Korah's receptions, or to the clubs at which Professor Dathan and Professor Abiram are to speak, and say, "I will have nothing to do with these men or their theories,"—men of the world will shrug their shoulders and say, "The Baptist preacher up there may be a good man, but he is so narrow, so bigoted, so out-of-date, so behind the times altogether, that we cannot have anything to do with him."

Can you endure such an attitude? Sometimes I think it would be well for us to subject ourselves to discipline, and wear an old coat or hat that would excite remark, to see if we really could endure being laughed at. Try it. Develop some individuality. Not for the sake of being singular, or odd, but to develop enough moral stamina to be able to stand when other people laugh at you.

When the congregation had withdrawn from Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, Moses addressed the congregation and said, "If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the Lord hath not sent me. But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord." Will you bear in mind, please, that these men did what they did in the name of religion? Will you bear in mind that they did it with their golden censers in their hands? And the greatest opposition to the gospel, to the priesthood, to the atoning work, to the claims of Jesus Christ to-day, as in other days, is offered in the name of religion. Always! The bitterest opponents of the gospel of God's grace to-day are not the publicans and sinners, they are not the irreligious crowd: they are religious people with censers in their hands.

That is where you will meet your chief opposition. The devil's favorite sphere is the religious sphere. The most dangerous devil is a religious devil. When the devil transforms himself into an angel of light he does a thousandfold more damage to the souls of men than all the breweries and distilleries of earth. False religion has always been the devil's chosen instrument to accomplish men's destruction.

"And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation. And all Israel that were

round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also. And there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense."

That ought to teach us, whatever else, how terrible the sin of rebellion against Christ. When He shall come with flaming fire He will come "taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ". When He shall come, He will "judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel", said Paul. That will be the rule of judgment. The gospel will be the book by which men will be judged and measured at that time.

Is it not a type and prophecy of the fearful doom that awaits all those who ultimately reject the saving work of our Lord Jesus Christ?—the bottomless pit, the fire from before the Lord? Until that time, dear friends, while we protest against them, we may leave such rebels to the judgment of God.

I would call your attention to one thing here, that the Lord commanded Moses "to take up the censers out of the burning," and He used a special phrase to describe these men; it is very significant: "The censers of these sinners against their own souls." There is a text for you: "These sinners against their own souls." The man who rejects Jesus Christ, who substitutes something else for God's plan of salvation, sins against his own soul. Ponder that well.

IV.

The verses from the forty-first on are very strange. One might have supposed that a revival would follow such a judgment as that. One might have supposed that all the congregation of Israel would now be obedient. Instead of that, scarcely has the earth swallowed up these rebels until all the congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron.

There is a very personal application of that principle to you who are going to be preachers. They charged Moses with bringing them out of Egypt for his own profit, and fashioning the whole congregation into a nation in order that he might be a prince over them. The autocrat! The pope! Do any piece of work for the Lord—really do it—accepting your commission from Him, and executing it faithfully, and you will be sure to get that kind of treatment. The Lord will, because we are weak, raise us up a few friends who will be appreciative and help us to keep going, but you must not depend even upon them. In the Lord's work you must expect no reward whatever in this life. I mean that! Moses got none. He got nothing but complaints all his life, and at last he was called into the presence of God without even going into the land of promise.

It was not until after Moses was dead, long, long, after Moses was dead, that people knew what he had been. If your contemporaries can understand you, can properly measure you and accurately define your influence, you must be rather a small man. Only little men can be measured by their contemporaries. But the man who really does anything, who stands for something, who sets in operation, by God's grace, movements that will go on long after he is dead, is always denounced by his contemporaries, always murmured against. I hope you will be great men. Of course, it will not necessarily mean that you are a great man because no one can live with you! I do not plead for ugliness or awkwardness, but

(Continued on page 12)

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE LORD'S RETURN.

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

(Second in a Series on What the Bible Teaches About the Second Coming of Christ)

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, April 10th, 1932.

(Stenographically Reported)

"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."—Acts 1:11.

This text, as the text of last Sunday evening, is selected, not with a view to exact exposition, but merely as a foundation for the subject which I am to discuss with you again this evening, the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I think I shall venture this evening to offer a few words of explanation for having determined very carefully to discuss this subject in a series of Sunday evening addresses. Speaking from this pulpit, I fear I frequently lose sight of the fact that in so doing, and when so doing, I address a far larger number of people outside of the church than I do within. When the sermon is put in print and scattered over the earth, in due course I receive letters, sometimes months after the sermon's appearing, from different parts of the world. Sometimes a paper is sent me—not infrequently indeed—with an extract taken from a sermon; sometimes the paper contains a sermon entire. Occasionally requests reach me for permission to reprint certain sections in pamphlet form.

When one touches upon a subject like that of the Lord's return, about which so much controversy has gathered, almost certainly he will challenge the thought of some, run counter perhaps to the opinions of others, and possibly in some instances incur the displeasure of those who assume they have arrived at finality. I want therefore to explain my position in respect to this great subject.

Only last week I received a letter from the editor of a certain periodical published in London, England. Some time ago Dr. Gray, Editor of *The Moody Monthly*, replied to a correspondent discussing this subject in relation to a certain sermon appearing in THE GOSPEL WITNESS in an editorial of something over a page in length. There is always a possibility of one's being misunderstood when these fragmentary statements are issued. Hence the necessity for a clear and full statement.

I began to preach when I was very young—I will not tell you how long ago that was, but it was before I had reached my majority. There came into my hands a little book written by Dr. Blackstone, entitled, "Jesus is Coming". I read it, and became intensely interested in the subject of the Lord's return, and, rather unwisely, I announced a series of sermons on the subject. I departed from my regular practice in that series. Assuming in my innocence that no man would write a book on a subject of such importance without being absolutely sure of his ground, I accepted Dr. Blackstone's point of view. But before I had completed the series of sermons, whatever they did for my audience, they had the effect of completely converting me. I saw, as I thought then and still think, that certain positions taken in that book, are not

scriptural. I never repeated that error. I am very glad now that the sermons of that series were not printed.

There is a certain gentleman known by name to many of you—you have read his books I dare say—who was converted when rather a mature man. He immediately began to write books. It is a great mistake for a man to write books too soon after his conversion. I remember delivering an address on one occasion when some enthusiastic person at a Convention moved that it be printed. The motion was seconded, carried unanimously, and the resolution forwarded to me. I was but a youth, and I suppose I was somewhat complimented by the desire of that congregation to have my address in printed form.

I submitted the request to someone of experience, one whom I have often quoted here, and I was somewhat humbled, and a little disappointed, when he said, "I would not publish it if I were you." I said, "Is there anything wrong with it?" "No," he said, "it is very good for a young man in his early twenties, but if you commit it to print, you may see it when you are fifty—and you will not be half so proud of it then as you are now. If I were you I would receive with reserve these complimentary resolutions. Thank them for their kindness; but if I were you I would not print anything until some years have passed. Then you will not have to correct your immature opinions."

This gentleman of whom I speak wrote books almost immediately after his conversion, and now for some years he has been writing other books correcting the views expressed in his early publications.

When I began that series of sermons I was quite sure of my ground. A man is likely to be more sure at twenty-one, to be nearer infallibility at that age, than he ever will be afterwards. He is likely to be wiser at twenty-one than he ever will be this side of heaven.

I have not made the second coming of Christ a matter of controversy. To me there are vastly more important matters before us in our day than the details of the millennial programme. The great question before very long will be whether Christ ever came at all, if the professing church should continue its downgrade movement as it is doing to-day. From the time of that first series I said very little publicly about those matters concerning which some good people are so certain, and, at the same time, so touchy.

Some years later a gentleman from the Coast, Dr. Robert Cameron, who was the Editor of *Watchword and Truth*, a magazine begun, I believe, by the late Dr. A. J. Gordon, of Boston, and later taken over by Dr. Cameron

and transferred from Boston to the Pacific Coast, called upon me. I had never met him before.

After a delightful conversation he said he had called to ask if I would write a series of articles on the Second Coming, for *Watchword and Truth*. I said, "Dr. Cameron, I fear if I did you would not publish them." He said, "Why not? Do you not believe in the second coming of Christ?" I said, "With all my heart." "Do you not believe in the premillennial coming of Christ?" I said, "Most certainly I do, so far as I understand the millennium; although I am not so thoroughly instructed at that point as some of my brethren profess to be." Then he said, "Wherein is your objection?" I said, "I do not believe in what is called the 'imminence of the Lord's return'." He was an old man, but he jumped from his chair, and ran across the room, and grasped me by both hands and said, "Hallelujah." I said, "You do not believe that?" He said, "I have given my whole life to an attempt to correct what I believe to be a serious error at that point." He called it "the any-moment theory".

I did not write the series of articles because I had not time when he required them, but I found myself in singular agreement with his position; and to my amazement I discovered that there was a great number of people who believed similarly. I began to receive some publications dealing with the subject, for Dr. Cameron had evidently reported the interview.

I have related these matters merely to show you that I have not recently arrived at my present position, nor indeed changed my position since those early years, although I trust I have become more established in the truth of the gospel in general.

I want you then to think with me these Sunday evenings on this subject. Of course, I know it is not the orthodox thing to ask a Sunday evening congregation to think: Sunday evening congregations do not go to church to think, at least as a rule. In fact, not many congregations assemble at any time to think. But I want you to think, and if you will do me the honour I wish you would get the printed sermons and examine the positions taken after the sermon is committed to print, because comparatively few people are able to carry any address in their minds in its entirety. Last Sunday evening's sermon is at the door; take a copy. Incidentally, you may remember the GOSPEL WITNESS FUND; but take a copy anyway. Let us give ourselves to a careful examination of the teaching of the Word of God respecting this subject.

Last Sunday evening I directed your thought particularly to the principle that we must come with open minds to the Word of God itself, and weigh this subject as it is there spread out for our understanding, and not view it through the minds of other people. Above all things, do not view it through my mind. That is too great a responsibility to assume.

I used to have a friend when I was in London, a very loyal man he was, who always greeted me cordially at the close of a service, saying, "We had a glorious service this morning. I say, Amen, to everything you say." I replied, "That is a heavy responsibility to put upon me. I suppose that is why you sleep all the time I preach"—for he invariably slept all through the service!

This evening I speak to you with a view to awakening an interest in the study of the subject itself, to show you how vitally important the doctrine of the Lord's return is to the whole content of the Christian revelation.

Because there are varying opinions, because it has been made in too many cases the ground of bitter controversy, because brethren who ought to love each other would sharply divide—as did the Brethren themselves, so-called, years ago—do not turn aside from the subject.

The subject of the second coming of the Lord is of vital importance, as I propose to show you. I speak with a view to persuading you not to allow all these extraneous and speculative matters to turn you aside from a diligent study, and an intelligent grasp, of that truth which is properly called "the blessed hope"; for it is a blessed hope that Jesus is coming again. It is because I am jealous for that great truth that I am anxious it may be viewed in proper proportion, and in relation to the whole scheme of divine revelation.

I.

I say, then, this subject is of vast importance TO THE BELIEVER HIMSELF. There are matters which one cannot afford to ignore. I receive a great deal of mail, advertising material, printed circulars, and a very large part of it I never read, for the simple reason I have not time. But there are some letters which, when they come, I recognize immediately as being communications of great importance. There is no chaff in this granary. It is all wheat, and the "finest of the wheat". But there are some truths that are vital to our comfort, and to our establishment in the faith of Christ; and this is one of them.

I hold that the truth that the Lord will personally return to this earth is a fundamental of evangelical faith; therefore of importance to the individual believer.

First, *it has a very large place in the Scripture*. It is very frequently mentioned. I am a little nervous about the conclusions of mere arithmetical expositors, men who take a concordance and say, "This subject is mentioned a hundred times, and some other subject two hundred times; and therefore the thing that is mentioned two hundred times must be twice as important as the thing mentioned only one hundred times." That is folly. It is quite enough for God to speak once on any subject, and nothing that is worth God's revealing can wisely be regarded as being unimportant. But when you find something that is woven into Scripture, to which reference is made—I had almost said upon every page—you may rightly conclude that it is a subject of very wide relations, and therefore a subject of great importance to an intelligent study of the Word of God.

The truth of His coming back again had a large place in the teaching of our Lord. I think if you look back through His ministry, and interpret His teaching in the light of His later discourses, you will find allusions at least to this truth even in the early teachings of our Lord. But when at last He began to show His disciples clearly that He was going to the cross, that He was going to leave them, He invariably accompanied that revelation with some reference, direct or indirect, explicit or implicit, to His returning to them again. The twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew is occupied almost wholly with a discussion of this great truth. Many of His parables undoubtedly related to the same thing: the man going into a far country, and by and by returning; the parable of the bridegroom and the virgins; the parable of the talents, and of the pounds; of the sheep and the goats; of the wheat and the tares—all those parables set out in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew as well as those of the twenty-fifth,

have either a direct or an indirect allusion to this great truth.

Then, of course, you will find it occupying a large place in apostolic preaching. It begins with the first chapter of Acts. Read the discourses of the early preachers. You will find it implied in Peter's discourse at Pentecost. Later he refers to our Lord as One Whom "the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began". He has gone to heaven, but He is coming back again. Thus throughout the apostolic ministry you will find in the reported discourses of the apostolic preachers allusions at least, and in many cases explicit teaching, respecting the second coming of our Lord.

Then in the epistles, there is not one of them that in some way does not refer to the Lord's coming: "We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." That is true of all Paul's epistles as well as of John's. Then of course the final book of the Bible is occupied almost entirely with a representation of the events which are related to that great, far-off, divine event to which the whole creation moves. In the very first chapter of the Apocalypse the seer exclaims, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him."

I say, a subject that is so imbedded in the whole body of Christian revelation must be of great importance, and therefore ought to be diligently examined, in order that we may learn its practical relation to every-day living on the part of the believer. It is my hope that we may come so to understand and appreciate and prize this great truth that we shall not use it merely as a sort of kaleidoscope, that we shall not examine these things in the same way as one goes through a museum to examine and admire something remote from our experience. I believe every word of God should have a practical bearing upon the present. We must so study this matter that it will have some bearing upon our present-day life.

This truth of the Lord's coming is *inseparably connected with the promise of the resurrection*. Recently we have given thought to the historic fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But His resurrection is but the pledge of the resurrection of all believers: "Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." We are to think of the resurrection of the body as being the complement of the whole work of redemption. It is true that the price of our redemption is paid, and yet we have only now the "earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession". We have not, as yet, entered into the possession of our inheritance as believers. We have only an earnest of the great fortune that is reserved for us. It is a blessed earnest, it is something that is worth more than all the millions of earth; but still it is only a little pin money to pay our way until we come into our majority, until we enter into possession of that which is ours by virtue of the fact that being children we are heirs, "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." We are going to be rich some day, and the salvation which Christ has wrought for us, as I said to you last Sunday evening, is not only for the spiritual nature: it is for the mind; and not only for the mind: it is for the body. Paul prayed, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and

body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The religion of Christ is for the body. Surely we need a religion for the body, do we not, you gray-haired folks? I have none yet—or if I have, you cannot see them. But the marks of decay are upon us. We move toward the grave, even from the cradle; but some day "this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Some day we shall have perfect bodies. "Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall"—what shall He do when He comes?—"who shall change our vile body (the body of our humiliation), that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself"; "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

I do not know what our resurrection bodies will be like. I suppose they will be the same in identity. I hope they will be better looking. I hope you will all be better looking—and I am sure you will respond that the hope is mutual. I am sure we shall all be better looking, even as to our bodies. Even though they may differ, and no two of us shall be alike, we shall be like Him; that is the great desideratum. I believe the whole man will partake of the glorious image of Jesus Christ. The world never saw but One such man. God made man in His image and likeness, but he was soon spoiled, and never again did the world look upon a perfect man until Jesus Christ came. You are but fragments, broken earthenware, ruined by sin, even the handsomest of you. But some day soul and body will be re-united, and we shall have perfect bodies, and minds of limitless capacity. I am sure of it. I only hope in this life God may be merciful enough to grant us matriculation into Heaven's university. I expect to be a student of Divinity in all the millennia that are yet to come, for "in the ages to come he will show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus". We shall have minds enlightened and sufficiently capacious to understand the Infinite when we come to see Jesus Christ face to face. That perfection of our humanity, when we shall stand at last without fault before the throne of God, is inseparably connected with the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He must come that the dead may rise: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Brother Syme sang about it last Sunday,—“Oh, what a change!” When he soared away like a lark, did you not wish you had wings to go and realize that change at once? It will be a glorious change when Jesus Christ comes.

Furthermore: we ought to give diligent attention to this subject because *the appearing of Christ must be delayed until His coming*. When people come to me to tell about the visions they have had, I am not interested. Do not come and tell your dreams to me: I have dreams enough of my own, and they are sufficiently absurd without my trying to untangle the absurdities of yours. A certain

lady came to me one time who had travelled far by train. She had had a vision in the night, in which the Lord had revealed to her the last mystery of the book of Revelation. I had to be polite, but as quickly as I could do so consistently with my desire to be a gentleman, I dismissed her, and left word that when she returned I should be too busy to see her. Do not bring your dreams to me. I do not believe it when anyone comes to me and says, "I saw Christ."—"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

I have not seen Him, but I love Him. I love Him, and I would love to see Him. Would you? What it will be to see Jesus at last! I heard of one happy marriage—I have heard of more!—but of one happy marriage that was effected by mail. I do not recommend the practice to you, but these people became engaged without ever seeing each other. The day of the wedding was set, and the unseen bridegroom was expected. Can you imagine the feelings of that bride? Oh, I suppose they had exchanged photographs, but photographs are very often photographic misrepresentations. They are not always true to life. But when they met at last each was surprised with the other, and, happy to relate, pleasantly surprised. So far as I was able to judge, they were about as happy as people who had seen each other!

Some day the Bridegroom will come. Some day the marriage of the Lamb will come. You have tried to imagine what Jesus Christ is like, have you? Have you tried to draw a picture of Him? I have no picture of Christ hanging in my house. I have never seen a picture of Christ that was not disappointing. I have looked at them and said, That is not Jesus. He is something more than that. No artist ever imagined what Jesus is like. But when He shall be manifest, we shall be manifested with Him in glory. Jesus Christ is to appear again. Job saw that when he said, "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth . . . whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." I believe we shall see Jesus, do you? Blessed be His name. We walk by faith now, and not by sight. It is a happy thing to be secure in His love, and to know that we have eternal life, to "rejoice with a joy unspeakable, and full of glory". But it is nothing to the joy that is reserved for those who shall see Him at His coming.

We shall never see our Lord in His perfection and glory on this earth, until He comes again. To depart and to be with Christ is "far better", but even they do not see Him in all His glory. Not until He takes to Himself His great power and reigns will He reveal Himself to His beloved as He really is.

I look forward to the coming of Christ as to *the hour of the vindication of our faith*. It is not easy to abide by the truth in these days—it never was easy. Are there to be found people on earth who still believe the Bible? Do you know of any? Is it true that there are still some people simple enough to believe that this Book is true, that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, that He lived exactly as the Bible says He did, that He died, and that He rose again? Are there any people to be found anywhere so old-fashioned as to believe that? You will never be offered the degree of Doctor of Philosophy for believing that. People who believe that are "uneducated"! I do not know how many times I have been told that by little two-by-fours—excuse the exaggeration!—but some little

fellow who walks on stilts looks down on everybody who believes the great verities of the faith, and calls us all "uneducated". It is rather hard not to tell him what you think of him—some of us break through occasionally.

The day of our Lord's manifestation will be a day when our faith shall be vindicated.

I read last week of a man's coming home after an absence of twelve years. His wife and family supposed him to be dead, and he had been declared by the courts legally dead. It was a very interesting story, beginning with the stranger knocking at the door where he had been told his family lived. A little boy opened it, and he said, "Does So-and-So live here?" He looked into the face of his own boy who was a baby when he went away. I do not wonder the daughters hastened home to see their father whom they supposed to be dead.

Suppose there had been documents concerning which an authoritative word could be spoken only by the absent father? No other witness could settle it? Suppose there had been some question of that sort, and then at last, as one coming back from the grave, he appeared to answer that question?

Some people will look rather small when Jesus Christ comes down the skies,—those who, writing about the "historic Jesus", have created a Jesus of their own imagination, and who have mocked at His atonement, who have denied His resurrection, and all the other essentials of the faith. There will come a day when "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel", said Paul. You may have all the honorary degrees that all the universities of the world may offer you for your unbelief if you want them: I am living for that great convocation when Jesus Christ Himself shall come "to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe"; when He "shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ". Yes, the vindication of faith will be complete at the coming of our Lord. Doubt will spread its wings and fly away: "Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." All doubt will be ended when we see Him face to face; and I am content to leave some questions until then.

But there is another thing I should like to say to you—and I return to the principle that the great truths of the Bible have present and practical value to every one of us. *The coming of the Lord will be a time of reunion with our loved and lost*. Next to the life that is lived in Christ Jesus we really live, if we live at all, in our affections. The loneliest man in the world is the one who has never had anyone to love, who has lived unloving and unloved. Once I stood at a graveside where there was not a solitary mourner, nobody to shed a single tear because the man was gone. Nobody cared: nobody had loved him—and I suppose he had loved nobody. That was desolation indeed.

But you know that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth". It does not consist in the material accompaniments of life—the house you live in, the clothes you wear, the food you eat—it consists in your affectional relationships. And oh, what a busy enemy Death is! Everybody was touched when they heard of the kidnapping of the baby of Colonel and Mrs. Lindbergh. Everybody wanted to go out and look for that baby, because of his prominence. But I will

tell you, my dear friends, there is another kidnapper who is always busy; nor does he confine himself to children. He does not need a ladder to reach the nursery window: he has a key to every door, he takes the baby from the cradle, the wife from the side of the husband, and the husband from the side of the wife, parents from children, and children from parents. And when he carries a loved one away he never brings him back again. It is of no use to employ the police. Death is a vicious kidnapper. He has kidnapped someone of yours. You laid the body in the grave because there was nothing else to do. You laid your heart away too, and life has never been the same since.

Years ago I spent two weeks in a parsonage with a pastor and his wife. He was an ideal minister, a country pastor who had been in the one church nearly twenty years. Everybody who had trouble ran to him and his wife. They sympathized with everybody; they wept with everybody; they were everybody's friends. When a case of sickness was reported, I have seen him come to his wife literally with tears on his cheeks, saying, "Wifie, they have sickness again in So-and-So's home." Then they would get down on their knees, and seek divine blessing upon that family. How lovely they were with each other! I think of those two weeks as among the most sacred in my life. They had no children, but all the congregation were their children; they loved them with a passionate devotion.

I met the husband years afterward, a prophet of the Lord still, trying to be faithful. I enquired how he was getting along, and he said, "I am just waiting. You know what Wifie was to me, for you were in the house." "Yes," I replied, "I cherish the memory of those two weeks yet." "When she left me", he continued, "this old world became terribly dark. I have not wanted to stay, but I must. I must await God's time. I am only waiting, just waiting. There are only two things for which I live: one is to see the Lord, the other to see Wifie again." He was a man past seventy then. He and his wife had grown gray and beautiful together. When Death breaks in upon a relationship like that, your modern theology has no balm for the wound, no comfort for that broken heart.

Will our loved and lost ever come back again? No! Shall we ever see them again? Yes; when Jesus comes, "for the dead in Christ shall rise first". They will be clothed upon with their house, which is from heaven—whatever that means—for them who sleep in Jesus, the spirits of just men made perfect, shall God bring with Him. It will be a happy reunion. We shall see again,—

"Those angel faces smile

Which we have loved long since, and lost awhile."

It is only for a while; we shall see them again. When Jesus comes there will be a reunion of all who believe. We shall take up life where it was broken off. We shall live life first of all in relation to Him, and it will be all the richer and more glorious because we shall be united to those who, like ourselves, have been washed in the blood, and made new creatures in Christ Jesus.

Our Lord's return is important, then, to the believer. I think I will let it rest there, although I had intended to speak on other matters. Next Sunday night I shall

try to tell you what the coming of Christ will mean to the church as a whole, in its collective ministry. To-night I have spoken to you of the importance of the coming of Christ to the believer individually; but next Sunday of the importance of His coming to the church as a whole, and of how, when we hold that truth in right perspective, we shall properly understand the character of our mission, and give ourselves to the divinely appointed task.

II.

I must speak another Sunday evening on what His coming means to the unconverted. But let me say this to-night—for I dare not close any service without this appeal—that as I read my Bible, when Jesus Christ comes, *the period of grace will be ended*. I do not believe what some of my brethren teach, that the multitude that no man can number, ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, are going to be saved after the Lord's return. I can not believe it, and I shall show you before I get through, if the Word of God has any value, that there is no scriptural foundation for it. There was a time when we looked upon the teaching of a second probation as being a real heresy. For myself, I do not believe there will be a chance for any man, Jew or Gentile, after Jesus Christ comes down the skies. When once the Master of the house has risen up, and has shut to the door, there will be an end of all possibility of salvation. In my judgment, it is the grossest error, and that is one aspect of the thing that I think needs to be combated,—it is the grossest error to teach that thousands will be converted after the church has been removed, and the Holy Spirit has departed. Men must argue, if that were true: "If it be true, that Jesus may come at any moment, and if after He comes, I shall still have a chance, I need not now be concerned." I do not believe there is scripture to support that theory. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation"—in this dispensation of grace is salvation offered; and in no other will men be afforded opportunity to repent and believe the gospel. That is our message.

Is there an unconverted man here to-night? The day of the Lord will be not light but darkness for you. The coming of the Lord will bring not blessedness, but only grief, to you. Terrible will it be when He shall come taking vengeance on them that believe not God, and obey not the gospel. That is what He is coming for—not to give people a second chance. I beg of you, trust in the precious blood. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." And believe now! I quote again: "Behold now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." It may be now or never with some. But as for you who are Christians, let us rejoice in this "blessed hope": Jesus is coming again.

"Yea, Amen! let all adore Thee,
High on Thine eternal Throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory,
Claim the kingdom for Thine own.
Oh, come quickly!
Hallelujah! Come, Lord, come!"

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REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR.

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SECOND QUARTER

ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS.

Lesson Text: Numbers 3, 4.

Golden Text: "Let all things be done decently and in order." I Cor. 14:40.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Monday—Ex. 13:1-16.

Tuesday—I Chron. 23:1-23.

Wednesday—I Chron. 23:24-32.

Thursday—Psalm 110:1-7.

Friday—Luke 2:21-40.

Saturday—Rom. 12:1-21.

I. THE SERVICE OF THE LEVITES, (3:1-13).

In God's service there is order and not confusion, and for each particular duty some one is definitely chosen. This is clearly manifest in relation to the tabernacle. Aaron and his sons were called into the priesthood, and the tribe of Levi was separated unto the work of the sanctuary. Such order was observed in the previous lesson in connection with the army, and the encampment of the host. It is also seen in relation to the church. This principle should be kept in mind by every child of God, so that in his private and public life all things shall be done decently and in order, (I Cor. 14:40).

In this section the sons of Aaron are named including the two who died in disobeying God, (vs. 1-4). The command is then recorded concerning the presentation of the tribe of Levi unto Aaron for the service of the tabernacle, (v. 6), and the nature of their charge is stated in general terms, "And they shall keep his charge and the charge of the whole congregation, to do the service of the tabernacle", (v. 7). This meant, as we are informed later, to look after the various instruments of the tabernacle, (v. 8; 4:15), carrying them on the march, and attending to the numerous duties incident to the tabernacle service, exclusive of those of the priesthood. The Levites were chosen for this service in the place of the firstborn of Israel. God had redeemed the firstborn in Egypt by blood, when He smote the Egyptians, (vs. 12, 13); they were therefore in a peculiar sense His, but in their place the Levites were to serve in the sanctuary.

It is not difficult to discover spiritual lessons in such teaching, when we remember the typical aspect of the same. Aaron is a type of our Lord in His high priesthood, (Heb. 5:4), the tabernacle, of the sphere of Christian service, and while the sons of Aaron in the priesthood speak of the children of God, the royal priesthood, (I Pet. 2:9), there is a sense in which the Levites remind us of present-day servants of God, for none but those definitely chosen for the service could perform the same, and we know that only saved people can serve God, (Rom. 8:7, 8). Keeping these

things in mind there are several particulars to note. First, the Levites were chosen of God for their service. They did not enter upon their duties of their own volition. They obeyed the voice of God. Saints are chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, (Eph. 1:4), and called into His service, (I Cor. 1:9; 7:22, 23), receiving the necessary gift to fit for the duty, (I Cor. 12:7), and conversion implies obedience to the call. Second, it may be noted that this choice was one of pure grace. Levi was not chosen because of being the best tribe, in fact such was not the case, if we are to be guided by the characterization applied to the head of the tribe, (Gen. 49:5-7). But God can make the best out of the worst when He is permitted liberty to do so. Note illustrations of this in Scripture, history, and observation. Our salvation is also due to grace, (Eph. 2:8). Saints have nothing to boast of, for but for the grace of God they are not better than unregenerate sinners. Explain and emphasize this Godward side of salvation.

It may be observed in the third place that the Levites were chosen for a definite, specific service. It was their duty to serve God in connection with the tabernacle. It is the Christian's duty to serve the living and true God, (I Thess. 1:9), in the spiritual sphere, (Gal. 5:16), and to live a holy life before Him, (Eph. 1:4). It may further be noted that the Levites took the place of redeemed ones, the first born of Israel, and that they were given unto Aaron the high priest. The children of God are the redeemed people, (I Pet. 1:18, 19), and they have been given to Christ the great High Priest, (John 17:11). We have been bought with a price, and we are enjoined to glorify the one Who bought us. The characteristics of the Levites' service are of interest as being applicable to the service of God in the present-day. Such service was holy, separated, of the heart, manual, constant, divine, faithful, necessary, privileged, and responsible. Emphasis may be placed upon the privilege of God's service now, and explanation made of its nature.

II. THE NUMBER AND CHARGE OF THE LEVITES, (vs. 14-51).

After informing Moses concerning the work of the Levites, the Lord gave him directions concerning the particular work to be assigned to each family. First, the males of the tribe were to be numbered, "every male from a month old and upward shalt thou number them", the total number amounting to twenty and two thousand, (v. 39), indicating that the tribe of Levi was the smallest tribe numerically. The privilege governing the numbering differs from that applied to the other tribes. In the previous case the males from twenty years old and upward were numbered, all that were able to go forth to war, (1:3). Here it is "every male from a month old and upward", (v. 15). The mustering of the Levites was in three divisions, in accordance with family groups, named after the sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, (v. 17). The families of these sons are referred to (vs. 18-20), then of the family of Gershon the number is stated, (vs. 21, 22), the position in camp is indicated, (v. 23), the chief of the house is mentioned, (v. 24), and the charge committed to the family is out-

lined, (vs. 25, 26). The same particulars are given in reference to the families of Kohath, (vs. 27-31), and Merari, (vs. 33-37). Eleazar was the chief over the Levites, having the oversight of them that kept the charge of the sanctuary, (v. 32), being next to the high priest in authority. The honour of camping at the most important place, the gate of the tabernacle, was reserved for Moses and Aaron and his sons, (v. 38). The tribe of Levi having been chosen in the place of the firstborn of Israel, Moses was directed to number the latter, (v. 40). Upon doing so the total was found to exceed the number of the Levites by two hundred and seventy-three, (v. 43). For these a redemptive price of five shekels apiece was paid into the treasury of the sanctuary, (vs. 47-51). In this transaction God's claim is made clear. By redemption in Egypt the firstborn was His, and the obligation arising therefrom must be recognized. His legitimate claim upon men should also be recognized in these days. He is both Creator and Redeemer unto all men.

III. DIRECTION CONCERNING REMOVING THE TABERNACLE, (4:1-49).

Specific instructions are found in this section concerning the charge committed to each family in relation to the removal of the tabernacle. First, direction was given concerning the numbering of those assigned to the work of the sanctuary, (v. 2), the ages of those men being "from thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old", (v. 3). This is followed by a statement of the charge committed to the sons of Kohath, (vs. 4-20), the sons of Gershon, (vs. 21-28), and the sons of Merari, (vs. 29-33). The number in each family of those who worked in the sanctuary is then given, (vs. 34-44), and the total number of all is stated, (vs. 45-49). Note the minute nature of the particulars given by God, the carefulness in preparing the articles of the tabernacle for the journey, and the duties of Aaron and his sons in relation to this work of preparation. The priests alone were permitted to touch the holy things, (v. 15). We learn here, as we have noted before, that God is particular in the carrying out of His laws.

It may not be amiss again to note the advantage of order in God's plan. The divine plan is always best. It resulted here in the elimination of all confusion, in the giving to each one of some particular task, in the speedy accomplishment of the duty, and in the harmonious co-operation of all concerned. The task of the Levites was God-given. They did not all do the same thing, but all did that which was necessary to the successful carrying on of the work. All children of God cannot have leading places in His work, but all are privileged to do something necessary to the success of the work, which means that all work in relation to the whole is of real importance, whether it be that of caretaking, ushering, singing or preaching. Let us be faithful therefore in the position where God has placed us.

The Union Baptist Witness

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FREE FROM THE LAW

In a day of compromise and easy tolerance, it is well at times to re-read our histories, and consider with what conviction our fathers fought for that which they considered right and what a price was paid by them that this generation might enjoy religious liberty.

When one reads of the low state of religion at the time of Martin Luther and learns that the passion of our Lord and Saviour was looked upon by the Roman church as a mere human tragedy, that "the righteousness which is by faith was ignored; the intercession of priest and saints and the Virgin Mary, were deemed essential to pacify divine wrath" and realizes that the Roman Church has not changed her tactics, or her belief, it is sickening to hear Protestants pleading its cause and speaking of its Priests as brothers.

It is about time that every believer in the simple gospel message and every one who has rejoicingly accepted the provision made by a righteous Judge through the atoning death of Jesus Christ, God's Son, should be alert to the peril and the subtleties of the Roman Catholic Church.

There are but few families who have not seen some promising son or daughter, or some beloved relative captured by the wiles of a system which is ever proselytizing through its various agencies which girdle the world like a huge spider's web. Let us remember that every Roman Catholic man and woman, girl and boy, young man and maiden, has been carefully trained in the craft that as a great detective agency, the church is able to put its fingers on the most intimate happenings of a home, trace the activities of many who do not belong as it were to its fold and is in a position to realize on much of its knowledge when opportunity occurs.

We are satisfied that most of the alliances between Roman Catholics and Protestant have long been carefully planned and that there is a reason why Rome will benefit through most of them. It is surely high time that the Protestant churches were on guard.

"The great controversy between Luther and Rome now waxed hotter and stronger, until at last he was enabled like the Apostles of old, to place the authority of scripture above the church, with her Popes and cardinals and monks, and publicly to condemn the Papal See." "Pressed by his opponent with the passage in Matthew 16, v. 18, 19, which Rome interprets as applying to every Pope as well as Peter, but which Luther regarded as only personal to the Apostle, he was led to a further study of the pretensions of his church, and finally declared the whole system of the Papal hierarchy to be a satanic invention, and the Pope the real anti-

Christ!" (quoted from The Church and the Commonwealth).

"I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:

And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. Revelation 17: 3, 4, 5.

"Free from the law, oh, happy condition Jesus hath bled, and there is remission!

Cursed by the law, and bruised by the fall,

Grace hath redeemed us once for all."

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.

Not of works, lest any man should boast.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

A SUNDAY EVENING MEETING

On the out-skirts of the city of Guelph services are held each Sunday in a house which was at one time used as an office for one of the city's industries. The accommodation is anything but adequate, but somehow one hundred and thirty-four were crowded into the Sunday School and seventy-five attended the evening service. Had we worshipped with them on Sunday evening, April 10th, we would have heard a simple message of the Saviour's yearning over the lost and of the joy in Heaven over the repentance of one sinner. The Holy Spirit's power was felt and conviction fell upon the assembled people and in response to the invitation one after another came confessing his sin and seeking salvation. In all, twenty-five came forward, fifteen young men and boys, ten women and girls. A mother, her three sons and a daughter found the Lord, several from the Pastor's Bible Class were among the converts and there was an earnestness pervading the whole service which was not detracted by boys peering through the windows in an endeavor to upset the meeting.

Pastor H. H. Chipchase has a heart overflowing in thankfulness to God for this visitation and the demonstration of the Old Time wonder-working power in their midst. On Sunday evening Mr. Hills, a member of the Runnymede Road Baptist Church, Toronto, and of the church's evangelistic band, brought the message.

During the past few weeks fifty-two new members have been added to the

Bible School Department of the York Road Mission.

Pray with the Guelph workers that shortly a more suitable meeting place may be erected on the lots which have been secured and that the ones who have so recently found Christ will be grounded in the Word and witness a good confession.

IMMANUEL, HAMILTON.

Easter Sunday was a good day at Immanuel. In the afternoon at an open session of the Bible School, Rev. Clifford J. Loney spoke to the children, and at the close of the session eight responded to the invitation. The evening service was well attended, and five rejoicing believers followed their Lord in baptism.

Immanuel Church covets the continued prayers of the Lord's people as they press forward with a determination to deliver the glorious gospel message to the needy and build up the saints in the faith.

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BOBCAYGEON.

Pastor M. B. Gillion reports good times at Bobcaygeon and in the places around about where regular services are held. At the present time special meetings are in progress, conducted by the Pastor, assisted by the members of the church, and prayer is requested that they will be a means of reaching many with the gospel and building up Christians in the faith.

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VICTORIA ST., WINGHAM.

We hear that the Children's Choir of the Victoria St. Church, Wingham, is being well received over the local radio station in their regular broadcasts and that the work among the children and their training are the means of interesting fathers and mothers. The Pastor writes, "By God's help, I want to have a singing people, a people who cannot help but sing, a people who will prove that 'He hath put a new song in their mouth!'" One woman who has offered her home for a prayer meeting, has not hitherto attended church for years. She is now attending the evening services at Victoria Street and is becoming anxious about her soul. Pray very definitely for her.

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STANLEY AVE., HAMILTON

With what rejoicing the good news of revival blessing is recorded from our various churches. At Stanley Ave. Regular Baptist Church, Hamilton, a determined effort is being made for souls, assisting Mr. Loney at the present time is the Rev. Anton Cedarholm and the preached Word is going forth in the power of the Holy Spirit.

On Sunday, April 10th, fourteen professed conversion in the services; ten believers applied for baptism and church membership; four others indicated their

desire to unite with the church by letter and since April 5th, eleven have confessed Christ in baptism.

Blessing at Stanley Avenue is not confined to the city of Hamilton as the organization of a Regular Baptist cause at Niagara Falls surely denotes. On Tuesday evening, April 12th, a delegation of twenty-two from Niagara Falls attended the Stanley Avenue service when seven were baptized.

Meetings at Stanley Avenue will continue until April 24th and any one able to attend will feel at home and rejoice in the ministry carried on at such a centre.

On Friday evening there is to be a great gathering for Young People when Mr. Cedarholm will deal with the problems of young people and will show conditions as he knows them in Hollywood. Such a revelation should make every thoughtless young person realize the dangers of worldly pleasures and parents

who are within reach of Hamilton should do all in their power to have the young people attend this service. Mr. Hilmor Cedarholm, of Chicago, an outstanding musician in much demand for radio broadcasts will assist in the Friday evening service and will be heard with his brother on Saturday evening over CKOC, the Voice of Hamilton. Radio listeners are urged to tune in for the Stanley Avenue Sunshine Hour broadcast from 9 o'clock to 9.30 p.m. Saturday. The program will be a splendid one indeed.

Sunday services at Stanley Avenue will be held at 11 a.m., 3 p.m. and 7 p.m., when Mr. Cedarholm will speak. On Sunday there will be several more believers buried in the waters of baptism.

The prayers of the Union fellowship are requested that these meetings at Stanley Avenue will grow in interest and that the Lord will visit His people in mighty power that indeed the blessing already experienced will be but an

earnest of what is in store for the church as it endeavours to see souls saved for the honor and glory of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of lost men.

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HESPELER.

We rejoice with the Hespeler Regular Baptist Church that great things have been accomplished there. It has ended the year with a balance on hand in every department of the work. During the year the church has been renovated and an up-to-date kitchen installed along with many other improvements. Most of the labour and equipment was given by members who were happy in rendering the service as unto the Lord. Rev. W. N. Charlton is seeing the Sunday School grow; the Friday evening meetings for boys and girls growing in attendance and interest, and the church going forward harmoniously, determined by God's grace to make His saving power known.

THE GAINSAING OF CORE.

(Continued from Page 4)

that we should learn in God's work so to live with Him, that we can go on with the Lord's work even though no one should say, Well done.

I believe we have the finest church in Canada, and one of the finest in the world. But what a church we should have here if every member of this church could be so crucified to the world, could so "put off the old man" and put on the new, that he would never withdraw his hand from any task simply because no one says, Well done; nor cease from his labour because somebody grumbled! If we could all obtain grace to live independently of human opinion, and live unto God every day we live, doing what the Lord commands us to do whether people understand us, or praise us, or blame us, we have enough people here in this congregation to-night to bring a revival that would shake Toronto from centre to circumference. You will have to learn that lesson in some measure if you are going to be of any real use to God. Of course, if you are determined to be "our beloved Pastor", and have your photograph in the paper, and be asked to say grace at all the banquets—if you are going to be a minister of that character, borrow your wife's hat and join the sex to which you belong! But if you are going to be a man, accept your duty and be true to it, if it costs you your life.

They murmured! I cannot help thinking that Moses and Aaron were severely tried. The Lord said, "Get out of the way, and I will consume these people—Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment." But Moses said, "No! They have continually found fault with me, but I love them still; and I pray for them." Aaron, against whom they had murmured, loved them still, and prayed for them.

As ministers, you will often have to pray for people. I do not say you will never have loyal friends. We are so weak that few of us could carry on if the Lord did not in mercy allow us to have someone to stand beside us and say, "I love you, Pastor." But always count anyone like that as a luxury, not a necessity. Thank God for the luxuries, but if they do not come, thank God still, and go on.

Do not forget the principle of the seventeenth chapter. The Lord is not indifferent to anything that concerns either His people or His specially chosen servants. He

said to Moses, "Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes according to the house or their fathers twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod. And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers. And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you." And the Lord said, "It shall come to pass, that the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom: and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you." It was done, and when they looked upon the rods, "behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds." Therefore "commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." If you do what the world wants you to do they will give you a gold-headed cane some day. I would rather have a budding rod than a gold-headed cane. Aaron's rod was put in the ark of the covenant, signifying God's acceptance of Aaron's priesthood, it was God's certification that Aaron was the man through whom all men must come unto Him. The rod of Jesse is a budding rod: "Christ the firstfruits." Christianity is a fruitful religion. The gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." It needs no argument. It will demonstrate its efficacy in the lives of those who receive it.

As for the rest, leave them to their own devices. Let us look to God for our justification in our work of faith and labour of love. Go on with your work, and God will see to it that your rod will bud in due time. Remember that when our Lord was reviled some said, "How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?" While the Lord said of Himself, "Believe me for the very works' sake." He depended for his vindication, even in the days of His flesh, upon God's making His rod to bud. Do you the same. Live to please God and you shall not want for vindication.

So of this church. We need not care what people say of us so long as the Lord is pleased. If He will but give us fruit, and show that He is in the midst of His people, we can afford to disregard the criticism and censure of the world.