

The Gospel Witness

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

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A Laboratory Test for the Oxford Group

We have been much perplexed in trying to arrive at a scriptural appraisal of the message and methods of the Oxford Group. There is much about this movement which is attractive. Surely no saved man or woman can fail to be in sympathy with any message or movement designed to bring men and women nearer to God, and to effect a transformation of character.

We have read some reports in the newspapers of certain ministers who seem either to have been converted or brought into a new sense of fellowship with God which have lead us, to praise God. We long for a genuine Heaven-sent revival of Evangelical Christianity which will restore the Bible to its proper place in the thought of men as the word of God, and will effect the regeneration of individuals by the power of the Holy Ghost through faith in the crucified and risen Redeemer. If the Oxford Group movement should prove to be God's instrument to this end we shall thank the Lord and take courage.

Our misgivings have arisen from several considerations: from the fact that their message seems to lay but little emphasis upon the supreme authority of the Bible as the word of God; and that so far as we have been able to see, they say little or nothing of the guilt of sin, and almost nothing at all of the cleansing blood. If we are right in this, and we do not positively assert that we are, we should have no hesitation in saying that the movement is not of God. If we are wrong, then the Oxford Group ought to speak so plainly on these matters as to leave no possibility of doubt as to where they stand, and what they teach.

While there is an element of scriptural wisdom in their doctrine of "sharing"—that is, in so far as it means confession made to persons who have been wronged—we cannot find scriptural warrant for such public "sharing" as is practised by the Group. However, perfection will never be found in men or movements. The Reformation was undoubtedly of divine inspiration, yet because its instrumentalities were human it was full of defects. It would be unwise therefore to condemn a movement in its entirety because of some manifest errors associated with it. While we are far from being satisfied with the

Movement at the moment, we are hoping for the best.

Nothing has cast greater suspicion upon the movement in our mind than the whole-hearted approval given to it by Dr. Salem Bland and Mr. R. E. Knowles. If either of these gentlemen ever approved of anything that had even a semblance of Evangelical Christianity about it, their approval has escaped our notice. The movement has been approved equally by *The Observer* in *The Toronto Star*. We have been informed that *The Observer* and Dr. Bland are one and the same, but for the accuracy of this we cannot vouch. It was either *The Observer* or Dr. Bland who some time ago spoke on Russian Sovietism as the most perfect exemplification of Social Christianity the world had yet seen.

On the other hand, the press reports that the Editor of *The New Outlook*, the official organ of the United Church of Canada, unreservedly condemns the Oxford Group movement. While we are inclined to agree with the Editor in his strictures upon a certain meeting for ministers held a week ago last Monday, his wholesale condemnation of the Oxford Group is a high compliment to the Group; for we have never heard of the Editor of *The New Outlook* being anything but anti-evangelical.

In view of these perplexities we have wished there were some laboratory somewhere in which the principles of the Oxford Group could be thoroughly tested, and at last that laboratory has been found. The press informs us that the Group have gone to Hamilton by the invitation of Chancellor Whidden of McMaster University. The Group are expert reformationists, restorationists, and restitutionists; and we are still hoping they are regenerationists. That being so, we can think of no place in the world where their principles may be more certainly submitted to the proverbial acid test than in McMaster University. If, as a result of their work in Hamilton, McMaster University should begin to restore, and to make restitution, and if its Faculty and Governors could be really "changed," we should be half inclined to believe that the millennium was almost upon us. The whole McMaster estate of more than a million dollars has, in

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

WHAT IS IT TO BE JUSTIFIED?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, December 18th, 1932.

(Stenographically Reported—Broadcast over CFRB, 690 k.c.)

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."—Romans 5:1.

Prayer by Rev. W. S. Whitcombe.

Great art Thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised. Honour and majesty are before Thee; strength and beauty are in Thy sanctuary. Thou needest not that we should add the faint voice of our praise unto that of the heavenly host whose praises unto Thee is unceasing, saying, Holy, holy, holy, art Thou; the whole earth is full of Thy glory. And yet in Thy grace Thou hast condescended to hear our praise. Yea, Thou dost seek those who will worship Thee in spirit and in truth. So we, as Thy redeemed people, would add our voices to those of the heavenly host, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

Thou art a God of grace. Thou has loved us. Thou didst commend Thy love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly. We would be constrained by that love to-night, and enter into a fuller realization of the magnitude of it. We joy and rejoice in all Thy blessing toward us. As we bow in Thy presence we pray that every thought may be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. Enlighten our minds that we may see the truth written in Thy Book. Cause our hearts to burn within us, even as Thou didst cause the hearts of Thy disciples of old to burn within them as Thou didst walk and talk with them in the way.

Be here to-night in Thy saving power. Enlighten our minds that we may understand. Drive the dark night of sin away. Visit this house with Thy Salvation. Let Thy word run and have free course.

We thank Thee for the simplicity of the gospel, that Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Make us all as little children to-night, in order that we may enter the kingdom of God. Bring us down before Thee that Thou mayest raise us up in Thy grace.

We thank Thee that Thou dost never tire of hearing us repeat the same prayers, bringing before Thee the same petitions. Thou knowest all our needs, and Thou art able to meet them all; yea, Thou art able and willing to do more than we can ask or think. So bless us to-night, not according to our asking, nor even according to our need, but more than that, in accordance with the abundance of Thy grace to us through Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant that this may be a time when men shall be brought down before Thee in conviction of sin, when Thy cross shall be lifted up so that men may be drawn to Thee. These petitions we ask through Jesus Christ our Saviour, Amen.

There are few more familiar verses in the New Testament than the one I have announced as a text. It is an enunciation of one of the great fundamentals of evangelical faith. We live in a day when the natural tendency of men and women to be carried about by every wind of doctrine seems to have become accentuated. People change their religion oftener than they change their coats. It costs something to change your coat: it costs nothing, according to some estimates, to change your religion. Whatever becomes fashionable for the moment carries away a great company of people.

The Lord's garden is subject to every kind of blight. It is altogether unpopular, and supposed to be quite impolitic, not to say unpolitic, to endeavour to protect the plants which our Heavenly Father hath planted. If you go down to the seed shops in the springtime you will find

that almost an equal amount of space to that occupied by the seeds and plants displayed for sale, is occupied by various instruments and preparations which are designed to destroy the various blights that are the menace of every garden's health. A man would be very foolish were he to exercise himself in planting a garden, if after he had done so, he did not exercise every care to protect it from destruction, or even from deterioration.

It is now unpopular even to put a fence about the garden of the Lord—"You go to your church, and I'll go to my church, and we'll both walk along together." In politics, as in every department of life, people recognize that principles differ in quality, that there is a real distinction between the bad and the worse, and between the good, the better and the best; but, according to superficial thinkers, all things bearing the name of religion must be equally good. They seem to know not that the devil himself is the most religious of all persons, and, sometimes, transforms himself into an angel of light.

The worst crimes of history have been perpetrated in the name of religion. I venture the affirmation that the most dangerous of all devils is a religious devil. When the devil becomes pious, and attends prayer meeting, and begins preaching, you may depend upon it he has some fell purpose in view.

It appears that the majority of people to-day seem not to know anything about the content of the Bible. It is amazing to me to listen to the speech of some men who have been ordained to the Christian ministry, who have passed through theological colleges. Whatever theology they may have studied, whatever books they may have read, I am impressed with the fact—and I know I shall be called censorious, but I simply state the bald facts of the case when I say, that it seems as though many of these have scarcely read the Bible; or, reading it, have failed to understand even the elemental principles of Evangelical Christianity.

One of the great principles of the gospel is set out in this text, that we are justified before God. We are not merely pardoned, not merely saved from the consequences of sin, but we are given standing before God. We are justified, and have peace with God.

I have before referred to it, but I know of no outstanding historical incident which so admirably illustrates the great principle of the necessity of justification as the famous Dreyfus case in France. Some of you remember it. Something over twenty-five years ago, when a captain in the French army, Dreyfus, was accused of having sold military secrets to a foreign power. For the honour of the army he was prosecuted. He was found guilty, and was sent to Devil's Island, the French penal colony. After he had been there five years, the novelist Zola, Clemenceau and others took up his case. It was believed by these men that an injustice had been done. So Dreyfus was

brought back from Devil's Island to France, and was once again put on trial. Every scrap of evidence was cabled around the world. I read it with avidity every morning as it appeared in the morning paper, including the cross-examination by the counsel for prosecution and defense.

It was evident to everyone that Dreyfus was an absolutely innocent man; but he was a Jew, and because of his Semitic race he was hated; and was made the scapegoat to bear the iniquity of somebody else. When Dreyfus had been found guilty his regiment was paraded, and in the presence of his comrades he was stripped of all marks of rank, his sword was broken, and thrown at his feet, and he was declared to be a traitor. At the second trial, "for the honour of the army", he was again found guilty, all the evidence to the contrary notwithstanding!

Ten days after, the President Loubet "pardoned" Dreyfus, but he threw the pardon back at his feet. He said in effect: Pardon is for the guilty, and not for the innocent: I am a loyal Frenchman, Jew though I be; and I refuse to be branded as a traitor. I am innocent of the crime with which I am charged, and I will not accept pardon at the Executive's hands. Seven years later the Cour de Cassation ordered a further investigation, and decided that his conviction had been based on a forgery, and that Dreyfus was innocent. He was then restored to his rank in the army and promoted major.

God has not provided a way whereby we may be brought to heaven as ticket-of-leave men. The gospel means far more than the pardon of our sin: it means that God has found a way whereby the stain, the stigma, the guilt may be cleansed away; and whereby we may stand unabashed in His holy presence, justified, declared righteous, as though we had never sinned. This text tells us how that is brought about.

I.

What then is THE GROUND OF JUSTIFICATION? "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God." To what is reference here made? How and why are guilty sinners justified? Let me remark that *it is not merely by the confession of sin*. It now seems to be assumed in some quarters that it is enough for a man to confess his sin for him to be forgiven. Every culprit, when the facts are brought home to him, and when it becomes manifest to him that there is no escape, when he is asked to plead "guilty" or "not guilty", because he sees there is no possibility of defense, usually is advised by his counsel to plead "guilty", and to throw himself upon the mercy of the court—if mercy there be.

Only yesterday I read of a man's being taken to Kingston Penitentiary to spend the rest of his life behind prison bars. He had been found guilty of a certain offence, and then had pleaded guilty to five other charges of armed robbery. He confessed his sin. He "shared" his sin with the court. He made no excuse for it. He said, "I am guilty". But was he thus and therefore forgiven? By no means. He was sent to prison for the remainder of his life.

I wonder how many thoughtful men would acquiesce if such a loose principle were applied in our courts of justice as is applied religiously? If a man were to say, "I am guilty; I killed the man; I broke in and robbed the safe; I plead guilty, and have come to share the knowledge of my guilt with you"—if on that ground he were set at liberty, would not the public conscience protest against any such procedure?

What sort of God sits upon the throne of the universe? Who is responsible for the order of the universe, that men assume He can thus be played with? Your sin and mine disturb the moral balance of things, and we cannot be forgiven by merely acknowledging our transgressions. If there be nothing else than that, then there is nothing but judgment before any one of us.

The very term, "justification", *implies some standard of righteousness, some righteous law, by which a man's conduct and his standing at last are to be measured.* Is there any standard by which your conduct and mine may be measured? Is there a righteous law by which we can be judged and justified or condemned? What law has been broken? When an indictment is drawn, charging a man with guilt, he is indicted under a certain statute; a law is cited, some principle of the criminal code that has been violated; and on the authority of that law he is brought into court to give an account of himself.

What law have we violated, any of us? Merely the law of respectability? The law of common decency? What do you know about righteousness? Who can tell us what righteousness is? One may say, "I see no harm in this"—naming a certain thing. Another sees no evil in something else. There are as many conceptions of righteousness as there are people. If every man is to be law unto himself as to what is right and what is wrong, where shall we be? Is a man necessarily a good man because he has kept out of the hands of the police? Of what sort of justification does this text speak?

Not justification before men. There are many men justified by their fellows, against whom no charge is laid, upon whose characters and reputations no aspersions are cast. The man is eminently respectable. He does certain things in business of which the business world approves, of course. He does certain things in other walks of life which are not looked upon as being particularly evil by the average mind. But because he conforms to such standards as these, is he therefore to be justified? To what law is he amenable? To what authority is he subject? By what norm are his character and conduct to be measured? Is it not written, "That which is highly esteemed among men, is abominable in the sight of God"?

If one is to be justified before God, he must be in accord with the divine standard of things. Where will you find it? Will you find it written in any of our statute books? Will you find it exemplified in the life of the worthiest man on earth, whoever he may chance to be? Our Lord Jesus taught us that this world had departed so far from God, had so completely lost all consciousness of God, and all knowledge of the character of God, that a prodigal—shall I so say?—that a prodigal world had been so long in the utmost reaches of the far country that it had become utterly ignorant of the standards of the Father's house.

Only the Holy Ghost Himself can tell you or tell me what sin is, only the Holy Ghost can convict men of sin: "Of sin, because they believe not on me", said Jesus, "of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more"; because there is no rule or standard by which any man can be judged. A man may appear as a moral giant among his fellows, and yet be but a brazen criminal in the sight of God. In this matter of our relationship to God we must consider the laws of God, the standards of divine holiness as represented and revealed in God's holy Word.

According to His law there must be legal ground for our justification. The law of God cannot be played with. It is not enough to say, "I have sinned." The law knows no mercy. Sinai can show no pity for any man. The righteous law of God is absolutely inexorable. Surely our Oxford friends and others, with all their alleged culture and intellectuality, must recognize that the law of the moral realm is just as inexorable as any physical law, and that it cannot be violated with impunity.

How are we justified? Is it said of Jesus Christ that He is our Teacher? our Master? our Lord? our Chum? our Pal? our Companion? He *is* Master and Lord. But He is our Fellow, Who was "made under the law", Who was "*delivered for our offences*," Who died instead of us. "The Lord hath made to meet upon him the iniquity of us all." He paid the penalty of the violated law. He magnified the law, and made it honourable. He went down into death for us. His soul was "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death". "He tasted death"—whatever that may mean—"for every man." He is "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world". He was "*delivered for our offences*". The utmost exactions of the law of God were met, stripe for stripe, life for life. He gave His life "a ransom for many".

That is the foundation of our justification. "Therefore", because of that, we are justified. It had been impossible for a holy God to forgive sinful men if His holy law had not been satisfied by the infinite sacrifice which Jesus Christ provided. I tell you, my friends, who hear me within these walls and over the radio, there is no forgiveness of sin for any man apart from the blood of Christ: "Without shedding of blood is no remission." There is no way out but through the blood. He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification". He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead".

His resurrection proved the adequacy of His atonement, proved His capacity to suffer in our room and stead, proved the value of His sacrifice, appraised it as being of incalculable worth, declared Him to be the High Priest, "made a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek . . . not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an indissoluble life". He was raised again for our justification, bearing the marks of His wounds. He carried our human nature with Him, and through the rent veil of His own flesh He entered, in behalf of a sinful world into the holiest of all, not with "the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood", there to appear in the presence of God for us. That is the ground of justification,—nor is there any other ground.

II.

What is THE MEANS OF JUSTIFICATION? "Therefore being justified by *faith*." I go all the way with anyone who will preach the doctrine of absolute surrender to Jesus Christ. That is involved in faith. If any man believe in the Lord Jesus for what He really is, the Son of God, and God the Son, the crucified, risen, and ascended, Redeemer, seated at the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting until His enemies be made His footstool, what then? If He is the Heir of all things, and the Judge of all the earth, in the name of reason, what is any man to do who would come into happy relation to Him but believe in Him in such a fashion that it will lead him to

commit himself body, soul, and spirit, to Him, to be His for ever?

A mere intellectual faith, a mere mental assent to a credal statement is not evangelical faith. It is well that the intelligence should be enlisted, that reason should be exercised, that the judgment should be informed, that the mind should be enlightened, the affections engaged, and the will enfranchised, not only that we should believe but that we should know why we believe. True faith involves the committal of the entire man for time and for eternity to the Saviourhood and the sovereign Lordship of Jesus Christ.

It is by faith all that Christ has done in our behalf is appropriated. I wonder are we to be persuaded at this late day that the Reformation was a mistake? We hear a great deal about General Booth, John Wesley, Martin Luther, John Knox—all the great leaders of religious movements of times past. But there is not one of them who did not preach salvation through the blood. Nobody every heard Moody preach in such a way as to leave anybody in doubt as to whether he believed in the blood of Christ. Nobody could read John Wesley's sermons and have any doubt on that point. Nor could anyone follow the career of General Booth through "blood and fire" without being convinced that the primary condition of salvation with him was the erection of the altar, and the sacrifice of blood.

Are we to be told that up to this hour the world has been in darkness, and that all the history of the Christian church, from Pentecost until now, has been a huge mistake; and that the world can be saved without sacrifice? There is nothing the devil hates like the cross of Christ. There is nothing the devil so endeavours to camouflage, to dress up with flowers, as the cross of Christ? I am not speaking of the cross of wood: I am speaking of the great atoning reality of which the cross was but an exemplification, and symbol. There were three crosses. Two of them had no value to anybody. It was only the Central Cross that brought blessing to the world; and that has been the means of blessing because the One Who died thereon was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

I say, *faith in Christ means surely the acceptance of Christ's own estimate of Himself*. You ask me to accept Christ. I want to know what Christ, I want to know where you get your conception of Christ. What Christ do you want me to accept? You challenge me to surrender to Christ. Do you want me to surrender to somebody I do not know? Is He an Oxford Christ? a New York Christ? a Toronto Christ? a McMaster Christ? a Harvard Christ? a Yale Christ? a Cambridge Christ? Who knows anything about Christ? Have you seen Him with the natural eye?

The only Christ I know is the Christ revealed in the holy Bible. It is the record which God has given to us of His Son. In that record Jesus Christ insists that He came forth from the Father. He is the eternal Son of the Father, the eternal Logos, the Word that was made flesh, and dwelt among us. I affirm that no man accepts Christ, or surrenders to Christ, who denies that fact. Some man asks me my name, and I tell him. He enquires where I live, and I tell him. He asks where I was born, and I tell him; what my business is, and I tell him; what I came to this city for, and I tell him—and he immediately calls me by another name, tells me I live in another city, that I was born in another place, and that I had an entirely

different motive in coming to the city. "But I am glad to meet you", he insists, "and with the exceptions I have named, I believe in you." Would that be possible? Certainly not.

We must accept Jesus Christ at His own estimate. If we do, we shall accept Him as the Son of God, and God the Son. He Himself said, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom instead of many." That is why He came. Again He said, "No man taketh it (my life) from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father"; "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep"; "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him"; "I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected"; "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."

He came to die. He says He did. He says the essential thing, the cardinal thing, the fundamental thing, the thing for which He came into this world, was to die for us. "I delivered unto you", said the Apostle Paul, "first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." There is no gospel without that, I care not who preaches it.

What, then, is faith? *Simply the acceptance of the record which God has given to us of His Son, and the committal of ourselves without reserve to Him, the One Who was with the Father before the world was, of Whom it is written that "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."* Faith means to accept Him at the cross, to believe that the cross was no accident, but was foreordained from all eternity. It means to rejoice that the grave is empty, that the Crucified is risen and ascended, and is coming again.

Do not let anyone persuade you that insisting upon these things is standing for theological niceties. I know a man can be saved without knowing all the scripture. I knew a little girl of about twelve years of age who had accepted Christ through the teaching of a godly woman. This woman came to me and said, "I want you to have a talk with Dorothy; she wants to be baptized." This little girl told me in her childish way of how she had been convinced she was a sinner, that she had confessed her sins, and that the Lord had saved her; she quoted one or two simple promises. But her mother said she must have a talk with her grandfather before she could be baptized. Her grandfather was supposed to be a bit of a theologian: Perhaps he was, but may the Lord in His mercy save me from that kind of theology. It was intellectual enough, but it was so cold that he did not require any mechanical refrigeration in order to ensure its preservation. It was as cold as Labrador.

After an interview with the child he told me that "the root of the matter" was not in her. "How do you know?" I enquired. "Because I talked with her. I said, 'My dear, the Bible says he that hath the Son, hath life. Have

you the Son?' And she said, 'I do not know, grandpa.'" I do not wonder she made that answer. It would be difficult for any of us to explain what it means to have the Son. Had he asked her, "Do you believe on the Lord Jesus as your Saviour? Do you believe His promise that He will forgive and receive you?" I believe he would have received a ready answer.

It is possible to strive about words to no profit, and I have no sympathy with contentiousness of that sort. But surely for men and women of intelligence to profess to find a new religion, something that the world has but recently learned about, they ought to be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them. And I affirm that this new thing at some points is in direct opposition to the things written in the Book. We must believe that Jesus Christ died, that He was buried, that He is risen again, and that, praise His name, He is coming again some day to receive us unto Himself. As we thus believe in Him and in His meritorious work, all His perfect keeping of the law is imputed to us.

We hear some talk about "absolute honesty". It has never been exemplified in all the world's history but in One Man, in Him Who said, "I am the truth." Talk about "unselfishness" in the "absolute". The world has never seen it anywhere apart from Jesus Christ. It is in Him. "Absolute purity"! In its broadest sense the world has never seen it save in Him Who was and is Himself God. "Absolute love" is also found in Him, and in Him alone. That perfect standard of God's requirements of men who shall stand in His presence is found in Christ; and all that Christ has done, and all that He is, is imputed to us; we are "complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power", when we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

III.

WHAT IS THE RESULT OF IT? "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God". *It is a good thing to have peace with men.* It is a good thing to be on good terms with your brother. It is well if you have wronged anybody that you make haste to pay your debt, to make restitution. If you have wronged a particular person, go and tell him, if it is only one. If your offense has been public, then let your penitence and confession be public. But please do not ask anybody to walk through the sewer with you. If that is where you have been living, do not parade those sins of which, if you are a Christian, you will be for ever ashamed. Forget them as God forgets them. Glory in His grace, triumph in His redemption, praise the Lord for deliverance; but do not compete with the theatres, with suggestive novels, and with every other form of filthy literature by dragging the same thing into public meetings in the name of religion. It is a shame to speak of some things.

But I say, it is well to be at peace with our fellows. "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Do not tell all the world about it. Let your repentance and acknowledgment be as public as your offence, and remember that all sin, sin against your neighbour, sin of any character whatever, is, in the last analysis, sin against God; and that when a man is really convicted of his sin, he will cry out like David, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight."

It is comparatively easy to be at peace with your fellows on the principle of "sharing". Go and tell a man that

you are a downright scoundrel, and he will probably tell you, "We are twins. I am as bad as you are, so there is no reason why we should quarrel about that." There is no warrant for that sort of thing in the New Testament; it is indeed contrary to Scripture. It is possible to establish peace with each other. Pilate and Herod had a quarrel—I do not know what it was about—but they became friends. Yet there was no peace with God.

The great matter is that we bring sin into the light of God's Word, to see ourselves as sinners in the light of His dreadful holiness, and to know that nothing but the blood that flowed from the five bleeding wounds of Jesus Christ could possibly wash our sins away. When that is done, all ground of controversy between the soul and God is removed. When you and I accept God's estimate of His Son, when we come into agreement with God in His estimate of His Son, we have peace. When we hear the Spirit of God saying in the Scripture, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life", our hearts respond and say, "I will accept such a Saviour as that. I know why He came into the world. It was because Thou didst love me. I know that He died that I might not perish. I know that in Him I have everlasting life." When thus we come into agreement with God in respect to Jesus Christ and His work, the peace of God enters the soul, and we know that all the sins of our lives are buried in the grave of the Lord Jesus Christ, never to know a resurrection. They are forgotten. We may praise His name together, that He has redeemed us, not "with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from our vain conversation received by tradition from our fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot".

May those of us who are His, with a new fervour, commit our souls to Him Who is in heaven pleading for us. As for you who are not Christians, who have no peace with God, I beg of you to come to Christ; believe in Him; trust Him with all you are and have for time and eternity. Being thus justified, you will be declared before God to be righteous. And when by and by we get to heaven, we shall be there, not as ex-convicts, not as those who deserve to be in hell: we shall be without fault before the throne of God. The very memory of sin will be blotted out. We shall be princes of the blood, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. We shall be glorified with Him, sharing His glory through all the eternity that is yet to be.

Abide by the gospel of His grace, I conjure you. Let nobody seduce you from your faith in the gospel of the grace of God. May the Lord help us. And you who hear over the radio, I beg of you to come to Christ to-night. I should be glad to hear of many who have been converted in their own homes. Christ is with us here; He will be with you there. Plead this promise, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." As we bow together this evening, if there are any in this congregation, any in our larger audience invisible to us, who have not yet peace with God, call upon Him as we pray together, and the peace of God shall be yours to-night and forever.

Let us pray:

O Lord our God, we plead the promises of Thy Word just now. Whosoever calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. May Thy Holy Spirit incline hundreds, yea, thousands, to lift their hearts to Thee and seek the

salvation that is in Christ. Bless, we pray Thee this evening, some of our friends who mourn. Bless our friends yonder in Reading, Pennsylvania. May the comfort of the divine Spirit be theirs, and the presence of the Comforter consciously be felt. Help us all to rejoice this night in God our Saviour, Amen.

DEBORAH THE PROPHETESS AND JUDGE.

A Lecture by Dr. T. T. Shields.

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Thursday Evening, December 15th, 1932.

Seventh in a Series of Thursday Evening Lectures on Biblical Theology (the fourth on the Book of Judges) which is included in the Curriculum of Toronto Baptist Seminary.

(Stenographically Reported)

Lesson Text: Judges, chapters 4 and 5.

This day has been such a crowded day that my address this evening must be almost wholly impromptu. It may be a good thing, however, occasionally to think out loud together.

We reached the conclusion of the third chapter last week and therefore begin this evening with the fourth chapter. I believe I directed your attention some time ago, last week or earlier, to this principle, that the historical portions of Scripture are manifestly designed to be much more than a chronological record of historical events. The events recorded in the book of Judges are not arranged in strictly chronological order. But in these historical portions certain reasons are set out for the occurrences recorded; it is really a philosophy of history, taking us back to the springs of human action, and unveiling to our view the operations of divine providence as God, in the exercise of His sovereign right and power, directs the affairs of men.

In this day when the evolutionary hypothesis is accepted in its entirety by some; when it is assumed for want of something better by others; and is merely taken for granted by the thoughtless because that mechanistic idea of the universe, that it is a kind of machine operated by forces resident within itself, and gradually evolving in the life of the individual, and in the life of nations is so generally taught or assumed—it is most emphatically necessary that we should intelligently hold and teach the principles of the Word of God. The evangelical conception of the Bible is that while God made this world, He has not forsaken it; and that while the laws which He set in operation are still working, He is not an idle spectator, but a sovereign Ruler, a personal God, a God Who is transcendent; that is, a God Who is above the works of His hand.

The book of Judges shows us about as clearly as any in the Bible that God does operate in the lives of individuals, and in the lives of nations; that He does govern; that His human creatures are subject to moral regulations; and that just as we are compelled, as physical beings, to respect physical laws, the laws of our own nature, the law of gravitation, the law that makes fire burn, that gives salt its saltiness, that makes gold, gold, and not iron, and iron, iron, and not gold—that just as truly as these laws in the physical realm determine and govern the nature of things, so there is a moral realm in which moral laws are operative; and that in that moral realm those laws are as inexorable, and as certainly exact their penalty as the

physical laws exact penalties of those who violate them.

If we accept the principle of inspiration, and recognize that we have here a record of human events written from the point of view of One Who is not merely a spectator, but a discerning and understanding Observer of all these events—if we accept that, we have an X-ray representation of certain portions of history, showing not only what has come to pass, but showing why these things are so. We need to be reinforced in our conviction of that great truth that God is not afar off, that He is not remote from His universe, that He is something vastly more than a Cosmic Force, than the Great Unknown, but an infinite Intelligence, possessed of moral qualities, of a sovereign will—in other words, that He is God. That is what the Bible is written for, to tell us that Jehovah is God.

Let us look at this chapter: "And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord, when Ehud was dead." Are you disposed to glorify, to exalt, human nature? to believe that there is "a bit of God" in every one of us by nature? If there is, I am sure that no scientist has yet been able to produce a microscope sufficiently powerful to discover it! What a lot of weaklings we are! What a lot of midgets! We are mere pygmies, children that can hardly be permitted to get out of sight of our nurse. Here and there is a strong man whom God uses. But he dies, and it is the same old story over again—and all "in the sight of the Lord when Ehud was dead."

"And the Lord sold them." It is true that there are laws in the physical realm which operate automatically. If someone were to put poison in this glass of water of sufficient strength to result fatally, and I were to drink it, you would need no judge, no jury, and no executioner: that glass would do the work. The law would operate automatically because there would be something in there which, in its essence and nature, is poison. Drink it, and it would destroy you.

There is a sense in which moral laws operate automatically: "The wages of sin is death"; "For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." That is true. I call your attention to this fact, that in the moral realm the book of Judges represents a sovereign God dealing with His people; "The Lord sold them" because they did certain things.

The Lord always has an instrument at hand to do His work: "The Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles." I wonder if you have noticed how many people there were in these biblical times who obtained—I do not know whether I should say notoriety or fame, but whose names at least were clothed with immorality, who are remembered, not because of any qualities worth remembering in themselves, but only because of their contact with the people of God. We never should have heard of Jabin king of Canaan were it not for this fact. He was not big enough for anybody to notice, nor worthy that his memory should be perpetuated, if he had not been used as an instrument for the chastisement of God's people.

I am not offended by the nasty things people say about Jarvis Street, or about any Christian. Why should we be? That is their only title to mention! I went into a certain place the other day—I wonder will you let me

say this, for it was amusing to me—where a minister lives who bears my name, a minister of the United Church, in a little Ontario village. He began his ministry by a public announcement that he wanted that community to understand he was no relative of Dr. T. T. Shields, of Jarvis Street Church, Toronto! The amusing part of it is that I had never even heard of the existence of the distinguished gentleman!

If, by your fidelity to God, you attract attention to yourself, and become the butt of somebody's ridicule or opposition, do not worry about it. You will survive—and perhaps you may be the cause of the perpetuation of the memory of some people who might otherwise have been forgotten. In this case, unfortunately it was because of Israel's sin that this king was used for their chastisement.

And once again "the children of Israel cried unto the Lord". We have a new definition of prayer: prayer now is interpreted as consisting chiefly in listening to God rather than talking to God. There is an element of truth in that. At the same time, God's people have ever and anon found occasion for really crying unto God.

We have a most interesting story here, that of Deborah, "a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time." The only thing, so far as I know, that we learn about this man Lapidoth is that he had sense enough to marry Deborah! My good friend, Dr. Norris of Texas, has been greatly criticized, and one of the great sayings of his enemies is that it is not Norris who has done what has been accomplished in Fort Worth, but his extraordinary wife. To which Dr. Norris replies, "I am indisposed to quarrel with anybody on that score. I admit it. But I think it must be allowed that at least I had sense enough to find that out long before my enemies knew it. That is why I married her"! That was not a bad answer in the circumstances.

I do not know what there was about this man. I rather think there was not enough about him for anybody to write down! On the other hand, he may have been quite an extraordinary man who was overshadowed by a still more extraordinary woman. Deborah was a prophetess. The story of Deborah is an exceedingly interesting and instructive one. I think a study of these historical books will show what a variety God has in the instruments He uses. He uses all sorts—that is why He has called you into the ministry, if He has so done. There are many better-looking men than you are, and there may be men who have greater ability in certain directions; but He has called you for what there is of you, because He wants all the idiosyncracies and peculiarities that belong to each individual for His disposal, that He may use us for His will.

God sometimes does the unusual thing. He used, as we saw last week, Shamgar with his ox goad. I am not aware that there is any other record in sacred history of His having used any other man in exactly the same way as He used Shamgar. David slew Goliath with a sling and stone. I do not know that he ever had a successor. Samson, as we shall later see, slew the Philistines "heaps upon heaps", with the jaw bone of an ass. That is a most uncommon instrument. But it would be folly to suppose because God has used these various instrumentalities, that we can do great things with an ox goad. I suppose most of us would scarcely know which end to use. David refused to be wrapped up in Saul's armour. He said, "I cannot go with these. I am not used to them. I must be myself. I must fight in my own way." He

went out by himself, with his sling and stone—and you know the story.

Because God used this one woman as a prophetess—and I think we shall see why presently, and as a judge in Israel—we are not to assume that that is the proper place for all women. Because Deborah's husband meekly subsided into obscurity, and left the leadership of his household and of the country to his wife, we are not to suppose that every Lapidoth should do the same thing—unless, of course, he is a bit of a cipher, as Lapidoth was, and has a very able woman for a wife.

Mark this principle: beware of attempting to establish a rule on the ground of the exception. If Billy Sunday is used of God notwithstanding his slang, do not take it for granted that if you become slangy you will therefore be used of God. Do not judge of the rule by the exception.

"She dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in mount Ephraim, and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment." I suppose it was a place where she liked to go. Trees, houses, and other things and places, have borrowed distinction from their relation to great people. Some little house that people have passed by as of no consequence becomes a place of pilgrimage to people of later generations when some child born there has earned distinction in the world of men and affairs. Deborah had a way of giving distinction to everything with which she associated, even her husband.

She called Barak and said, "Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun?" Evidently this woman had received instruction from God directly and definitely. The saints of the Old Testament did, as did the writers of the New. One of our Oxford Group friends asks the question, "Why should not God speak directly to people to-day, as He did in Bible times?" That would involve the assumption that the canon of Scripture is incomplete, that God has something more to say than that which is written in His Word.

But at this time Deborah received a definite commission. It was an instruction to the men of Naphtali and of Zebulun to go out in battle against Jabin. You will remember how I called your attention in the beginning to the fact that this is not a history of the people of Israel as a whole; that it deals at different places with the various tribes. Deborah said that she had an instruction from the Lord to call these tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun to go out against Jabin's army.

Barak who was to be captain evidently was a very brave man, and perhaps a very wise man, when he said to this extraordinary woman, "If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go." There are men of that variety still living! Some men are afraid to go anywhere without their wives! I say, I do not criticize them: I merely sympathize with them, and, generally speaking, commend them for their wisdom. It may be they are wise in their decision. I do not know what you young men are going to do if you are of that timber, for I fear some of you will not be of much use for a while!

She said, "I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman." God has a way of finding instruments for Himself, and if men are not to be found, He will lay His hand upon a woman, and use her in a work that properly belongs to a

man. We have all seen that. "The husband is the head of the wife", the Bible says. But of course if the husband has no head, or if the thing that is called a head has nothing in it, then I suppose Deborah must of necessity take command. I do not know any other way out of it.

It is very interesting to observe that this strange man Barak, who was so timid that he was afraid to go alone, was told that the victory which should be won would not be for his honour,—almost as though God said, "If you will not play the man, I will do without you; I will make you ashamed of yourself by using another woman to do the work of a man."

The principle is that God will not allow His work to stop for want of the natural instrument. He will find some other instrument. I believe that no denomination, in the history of this or any other country, ever had so great an opportunity as the Baptist Denomination of Canada had a few years ago, when Modernism was sweeping this country, when the Methodist Church, a large section of the Presbyterian Church, and the Congregational Churches, were merged in the colossal organization known as the United Church of Canada, from which evangelical religion, in the church as a whole, seems now almost to have been banished. Surely God wanted somebody in Canada to stand for Him, and to be true to His gospel; and if the Baptist Denomination at that time had only taken its stand uncompromisingly for the Word of God, I feel confident that countless thousands of evangelicals from all the churches would have flocked to them. We were under the necessity of protesting, and thereby a great controversy arose. Of course, great bitterness was engendered, and the public mind became fearfully prejudiced against the small body of people who have attempted to stand for the things that the whole Denomination ought to have stood for. But I believe still that though we be not great in number, if we can be but true in heart, it may please God to use us, even as He used Deborah, "for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few".

The tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun went out, then, to fight against Sisera, and Deborah was the inspiration of Barak; she gave him the orders as a prophetess, "Up; for this is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand: is not the Lord gone out before thee. So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him. And the Lord discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his host, with the edge of the sword before Barak; so that Sisera lighted down off his chariot, and fled away on his feet. But Barak pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto Harosheth of the Gentiles: and all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword, and there was not a man left."

Then we have another story. I must confess that it is very difficult to justify, as a matter of individual personal conduct, the deception of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite. But, I suppose if God did nothing until He could find perfect instruments, there would be little done. Jael enticed Sisera into her tent, and covered him with a mantle, and she brought him meat and drink, a bottle of milk, and then he bade her stay in the door and lie for him, saying, if anybody asked if a man went in there, "no".

They say all is fair in war. We have that word that has come to us from the French during the Great War, camouflage, a word that signifies deception. I remember during the war all the ships were camouflaged. The funnels of the ships were painted in such a way that,

looking at a ship through the glass, you would sometimes imagine the funnels were slanting the other way. The ship going east appeared to be going west. The sides of the ship were painted. It became a real science. Some of you who were soldiers know how they did in France. I have gone over the battle fields, and have seen the ammunition dumps covered with artificial green material, very much like that with which they try to make the graves of our loved ones look less terrible in the cemetery. The guns were hidden, camouflaged with the intent to deceive the enemy.

Jael was an adept at that matter, but God was pleased to use her in spite of that. She took a nail while the man was asleep in her tent—I suppose a peg of the tent—and took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died." That was not a particularly heroic thing to do, nor does it seem to us to be a particularly honourable thing. And yet the man invited that sort of treatment.

Again we are not to emulate her example, but when Barak the brave man came along, Jael came out to meet him, and in effect she said, "Looking for a big fish, are you? You are out to win a great victory, are you? Come into my tent, and I will show you something." She pointed to the body of his enemy and said in effect, "I caught him for you." I suppose when a woman sets out to do that, she is likely to succeed!

"So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel. And the hand of the children of Israel prospered, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan." You must read the song of Deborah to get the philosophy of it, the reason for it all. In that day God used two women to deliver Israel out of the hand of the oppressor, and to bring liberty to the people who had cried to Him.

I shall not attempt an analysis of this song. Read it for yourselves. Two or three things, however, I must point out. In the seventh verse, "The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel." The men of Israel were running before their enemies, were manifestly making no stand against the evils that were about them, for she said, "They chose new gods; then was war in the gates: was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel?"

This lesson ought to be full of encouragement to you young ladies. There is work for everyone. But where the natural guardians of the truth, the natural defenders of the faith, fail, then let some Deborah arise.

She pronounces a curse in the name of the angel upon Meroz because "they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." How many there are like that to-day! Modernism has become everywhere rampant, aggressive to the last degree in all denominations, and yet as you talk with men, with ministers, multitudes of them express profound regret that it is so, but shrug their shoulders and say, "What are you going to do about it? All the tides are against us; we cannot help it."

In our old Convention that condition obtains, and I have talked with men of other communions, and they all have the same story to tell. Scores of men in private conversation will express concern that Evangelical Christianity is being rejected in our universities, and officially in

our denominations; they will express their conviction that the Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God—and go up to Conventions and vote with the enemy!

"Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." You remember how the priest, and the Levite passed by, and left the man who had fallen among thieves, and who was ministered to by the good Samaritan. Oh, the number of people who stand face to face with some colossal evil, with some giant wrong—but because it will cost something to right it, because it will be unpopular to protest against it, decide to pass by on the other side. Deborah observed that.

"The stars in their courses fought against Sisera." There is a great principle there. The stars did not need to go out of their course to fight against Sisera. The man who is against God has every law of the universe against him. The stars can fight against Sisera without going out of their course. The man who opposes God is out of his orbit.

Study that song for yourselves. With this I must close for this evening.

A LABORATORY TEST FOR THE OXFORD GROUP.

(Continued from page 1)

violation of the Trust, been turned to a use for which it was never intended by the donor.

Certain it is that there is no influential member of the Faculty who is noted for his evangelical principles. If the Oxford Group can "change" Professor Harry MacNeill and the rest of the Faculty into evangelicals, or otherwise make them so "absolutely honest" as to exchange for other professors who are evangelicals; and if the message of the Oxford Group should work, by the blessing of God, such conviction in the souls of the Faculty and Governors and Senate of McMaster as to lead them to "share" their sins by openly confessing them, it will tend to prove that the Oxford Group have the power of God with them.

We have two telephones. Our office number is Elgin 3531, and our house number, Hillcrest 1576. We are leaving instruction in both places that if Chancellor Whidden, or Professor McCrimmon, or Dr. John MacNeill, or Dr. Frank Sanderson, or any other connected with McMaster University, should call us with the desire to "share" with us, we will drop all other occupation and hasten to meet them. Meanwhile we feel a quiet satisfaction that the Oxford Group is to operate in McMaster University. We shall report further on the fruits of their visit.

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Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 8

No. 1

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 2

January 8th, 1933

FIRST QUARTER

GOD DELIVERS ISRAEL THROUGH HIS PROPHETESS.

Lesson Text: Judges, chapters four and five.

Golden Text: "Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves. Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes; I, even I, will sing unto the Lord; I will sing praise to the Lord God of Israel."—Judges 5:2, 3.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Monday—Ex. 3:1-10.

Tuesday—2 Sam. 5:17-25.

Wednesday—Job 12:1-13.

Thursday—Job 12:14-25.

Friday—Ps. 83:1-18.

Saturday—John 6:59-71.

I. THE DELIVERANCE OF ISRAEL, (4:1-24).

In this lesson there is another record of backsliding, chastisement, repentance, and deliverance, with rejoicing and thanksgiving to God for His merciful interposition. The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, (v. 1). It may be, and undoubtedly was the case that their conduct was wrong in the sight of men, but this was not the standard of judgment. They were condemned because they were not right in God's sight. Man's standard is not the same as the divine standard, and it is by the latter that all shall be judged, and it is in accordance with the same that all should now live. It matters not what man may think of us, if God is pleased with us. We should aim to please him, (1 Thess. 4:1), and not men, (Gal. 1:10). The identity of the nation used to punish Israel is stated, (v. 2), and the cry of Israel unto the Lord is recorded, (v. 3). Their suffering constrained them to turn unto God for relief. This attitude is duplicated in many an experience. Prosperity only too often inclines men to forget God, but adversity with its almost hopeless outlook, and its accompanying suffering impels men to look to the One Who alone can help them. Note the nature and purpose of chastisement, (Heb. 12:11).

Though God punishes sin He listens to the cry of His repentant children, (Ps. 40:1), and in answer to this cry He gave instructions to Deborah the prophetess concerning the manner of Israel's deliverance. Her place of residence, and the nature of her office are stated, (vs. 4, 5), also the directions which she gave to Barak, (vs. 6, 7). According to these he was to draw toward Mount Tabor, near the plain of Esdraelon, with an army, and there meet the enemy, who would be delivered into his hand. He promised compliance therewith if Deborah would go with him, (v. 8), desiring her presence, possibly as a matter of encouragement for himself and his men. She would also

be a source of guidance to him as the one through whom God made known His will. She acceded to his request, but informed him that the expedition would not be for his honour, but that a woman would be given the place of prominence, (v. 9). The record is then given of the march of the army, (v. 10), the location of Heber's camp, (v. 11), and the gathering of the enemy forces, (vs. 12, 13).

In comparing the two armies it is seen that the Canaanites had a decided advantage over the Israelites in having as part of their forces the nine hundred chariots. These must have been difficult to contend with by foot soldiers, but God was with His people, and no material advantage on the side of enemies could prevent their defeat. Barak manifests his confidence in the ultimate outcome by having his place on the mountain, and meeting the forces of Sisera on the plain, (v. 14). He was confident of victory, but this was not to be gained in his own strength. God fought for him and discomfited the enemy until "there was not a man left", (vs. 15, 16). This meant overwhelming victory. Respecting this, note the co-operation of Barak and his army with God, a necessary condition to victory in any sphere, Barak's faith in God, his boldness, and aggressiveness in spirit and action arising from this and his obedience to God. There is too much timidity these days in the service of God, due in large measure to lack of devotion to, and trust in Him.

On the rout of his army, Sisera fled on foot from the field of battle, taking refuge in the tent of Jael the wife of Heber, (v. 17), where he met his death, (vs. 18-24). Several things are worthy of note respecting this. First the futility of trusting to man's devices for protection against God's judgment, as evident in the case of Sisera and the chariot which he left behind. Second, his mistake in taking shelter in the tent of a female. He thought probably no one would look for him in such a place, but he was doing that which was forbidden, and might bring down upon his head the vengeance of the men. Jael received him kindly, supplied his needs, then while he slept she slew him with a tent nail. This marked her as a friend of Israel, doing her part to aid the people of God. As to the nature of her deed, various opinions have been expressed. It should be kept in mind in judging the same, that those were days of war, and of the lack of a strong central government, and each man did that which was right in his own eyes. Further it should be noted that Jael was dealing with an enemy of the Lord who was seeking to escape from just retribution. We admire her courage and decision of character, while not condoning any deception practised by her.

II. THE SONG OF DELIVERANCE, (5:1-31).

After the victory comes the song, as in the case of Moses at the Red Sea, (Ex. 15:1-21), and David after deliverance from his enemies, (2 Sam. 22:1-51). There is first, praise to God for the manifestation of His power on Israel's behalf, "when the people willingly offered themselves", (v. 2). In this statement the glory is given to God for the victory. Sometimes we are content to enjoy the fruits of victory without acknowledging

the giver of the same. Note the duty and blessing of thanksgiving and praise, (1 Thess. 5:18; Ps. 60:23). The second clause of the verse is also worthy of consideration, wherein the willingness of the people is recorded. As formerly noted, this made victory possible from the human side. Emphasis may be placed upon each of the three words willingly, offered, themselves. They were volunteers in the service of God, giving, not simply that which they possessed, but themselves. Such giving should precede all other forms of the same, and is the duty of each person. (Rom. 12:1; 2 Cor. 8:4, 5).

Following the introductory words, there is a reference to the power of God manifested against His enemies, (vs. 4, 5), and the condition of Israel during the time of the Canaanitish dominion is briefly yet graphically described, (vs. 6-8). The Israelites lived in fear of their enemies, and they were in an unarmed condition. "The highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through byways". Oppression rested heavily upon the land. Even so are the consequences of sin heavy to bear. Oppression and depression both proceed therefrom. The governors are then praised for their willingness in offering themselves in the recent conflict, (v. 9), and reference is made to the rehearsal of the righteous acts of the Lord, (vs. 10, 11), referring to those who would gain the benefit of the recent victory. They would be able to go to the wells without fear or danger. In peace times these were places of social intercourse, but in war time they were places of danger. After the destruction of their enemy they would be able to meet at these places, and speak about the work of God. This should be the subject of the Christian's discourse, (Mal. 3:16).

After the reference to the effect of the victory, Deborah proceeds to comment on the way in which the various divisions of Israel acted during the war, (vs. 12-18). Their record was made by themselves, and has been made known to the world through the inspired pen. And the Christian's record is being made now by his own actions. The forces of God are in a conflict. Some are behaving valiantly, others are behaving badly, and some day the record of each one will be made known, and then will come joy and shame, (1 Cor. 3:13-15; Matt. 10:32, 33). Note the duty of each one to contend with the enemy. There were present in this Israel-Canaanitish conflict representatives from Ephraim, Benjamin, Manasseh, Zebulum, (v. 14), and Issachar, (v. 15). The Reubenites evidently intended to take part, but changed their minds, (vs. 15, 16). Gilead did not send help, neither did Dan or Asher, (v. 17). They carried on with their usual activities instead of coming to the help of the Lord. Zebulum and Naphtali receive special mention for their bravery on the field of battle, (v. 18), after which the manifestation of God's power through nature is stated, (vs. 19-21), and the result of the same, (v. 22). A curse is pronounced upon Meroz for not coming to the help of the Lord, (v. 23), and Jael is praised for her deed against Sisera, wherein is depicted the act and its effect upon his own household.

The Union Baptist Witness

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GOOD LETTERS FROM LIBERIA.

Letters from our missionaries in Liberia are always important and interesting and just as we go to press mail has arrived with news aplenty and so we pass it on.

A Hurricane at New Cess.

"Within the last ten days", writes Mr. Hancox on November 11th, "the most outstanding event has been the wreck of the girls' kitchen. A terrific storm hit us last Saturday afternoon, a driving wind of hurricane velocity coming after hours of steady rain. About 4.30 p.m. the kitchen gave way under the strain. The building is of the open type with a thatched roof set up on posts. This one was about thirty feet long and twenty-two feet wide. Mr. Davey had it built last February. The main corner posts were about nine or ten inches in diameter and of solid hardwood, yet before the wind two of these snapped off level with the ground, revealing that the bug-a-bugs have been active. The appearance of these posts was unchanged, but the inside of each of them had been eaten to a pulp.

"Three boys were in the kitchen at the time of the crash. They were preparing the school meal. Two jumped outside, while the other one fell flat on the ground to save himself. He received a knock on the head but was otherwise unhurt and for this we praise God. The rice had been set out in the pans on the table and many of the pans were scattered to the ground, while the roof came down and rested on the table. A little later, the girls would have been seated at the table in which case there would have been, without doubt, serious consequences. Our hearts are thankful to God for his safeguarding and goodness in this respect."

The Sun Shines Again.

Mr. Hancox's letter continues: "We had excellent weather last Sunday and the church was fairly well filled at the morning service. The monthly observance of the Lord's Supper was held first, after which I gave the people a message concerning the meaning of the ordinance, and the necessity of the Sacrifice for sin. The folk listened attentively, a few said, 'Thank you' and many of them remained to beg for something. If we would pay them for coming to church, by dashing them a lump of sugar, a tin cup, or a baby shirt, or anything at all, they would come in crowds, but we do not intend to make 'rice Christians' of them. They must come for the sake of the Gospel, and not for what they get out of us."

Christmas Greetings.

In the closing paragraph of the letter, Mr. Hancox expresses the hope that his letter will reach Canada in time to bring Christmas greetings and these he sends from Mrs. Hancox and himself, in the following words:—"We wish you a truly happy Christmas and a New Year made continually rich with the Divine favour. May the New Year be for all the churches

of our Union, a year of great spiritual power and blessed fruitfulness in the winning of precious souls."

A Descriptive Letter From Mrs. Hancox.

From Mrs. Hancox we have another description of the storm which worked such havoc. She tells us that they had been having heavy rains and electric storms, but that without warning the wind storm struck the Mission. Mrs. Hancox writes: "I had been looking anxiously for the boy to return from the Beach with our provisions and as I looked out of the kitchen window I saw him coming. He had just time to step into the doorway when everything flew. He was soaked through and through and was shivering miserably, having walked hours in the pelting rain. I ran, not knowing what was going to happen, to get him something dry to put on and when I came back to the kitchen we had to stand in pools of water, the rain had blown in so. Just then there was a hammering at the door and we found that it was the two cooks with the word that the kitchen had blown down. . . . Immediately I thought of their fires and we sent them down to extinguish them, else the whole thing would have been burned, along with the planks which were stored there. We cannot thank the Lord enough that there were no girls in there at the time. Two of the paw-paw trees were blown down."

After the Storm, Calm.

"After the storm there is calm. Today the sun is shining until one gets dizzy with its brightness. It is a fine day for church-goers, and this morning we had a nice congregation. At the communion service, we had a happy time together. This service takes place before the regular preaching services.

A Picture of the Congregation.

"Just look at the first row of boys, little fellows from four to five years of age with black shiny faces and legs all smeared with chinna to make them look nice for church. Their clothing consists of the little shirts the missionaries have given them in exchange for food for the school children, the shirts which have come from our friends at home. Here is one little lad with a leg covered with yaws. The ugly sores are also on his forehead and lips, a pitiable sight indeed.

"The next few rows are the mission boys, and they do look nice this morning in their clean shirts and some even sport long, white trousers. If you look close, you may also see a pair of socks and brown oxfords that were one time worn by Mr. Davey. Now they are proudly displayed in the aisle.

"The towns' men are arrayed in different modes of dress and then there is Jimmy, the leper, sitting in the back seat. Across the aisles the women are assembled. Some of their babies are beautiful and some are sad looking little things, covered with horrible yaws, or an angry rash that is so itchy that they scratch it until it bleeds. The Mission girls sit in the front rows and they too look nice in their Sunday dresses which

have been so generously sent by the folks at home. Those pretty strings of beads were from the parcel possibly prepared by your church."

In contrast to the Mission School girls, Mrs. Hancox shows us three 'teen age girls with brown mud smeared over them. They are candidates for the gri-gri bush and go in at Christmas. "They are to be pitied", says Mrs. Hancox, "but they have attended Sunday School all the time we have been here and I guess all the time the Mission has been here, for they live close by."

A Visit from the Chief.

"The Clan Chief came to church this morning, along with a Town Master, but while listening to God's Word on our piazza, the Town Master took ill." Mrs. Hancox tells us that he suffered some kind of dizzy spell and that the weather being so close did not help matters.

More to Follow.

These letters from our missionaries are so filled with interesting news that we find it hard to resist going on with them to the exclusion of other news which is just as important, but does not come to us, as do the missionary letters, from a land far away. At the earliest opportunity we shall publish the other letters. In the meantime, remember the many problems of our missionaries in prayer. By this time they will have entered into the dry season and while it will be easier to reach the villages with the gospel message, the heat will be trying.

HOMELAND NEWS.

Briscoe St. Baptist Church, London.

The beautiful little church which will soon open its doors in South London will be known as the Briscoe Street Baptist Church. The opening service is planned for Sunday, January 1st, 1933, and with joy the occasion is anticipated.

Pastor Robert Guthrie writes that they have recently held two baptismal services in Central Church. At the first service he baptized six believers, five from Central and one from the South London Church, and at the second service five were baptized, four from Central and one from his own church. Mr. Guthrie tells that others from South London are ready for baptism but wish to wait until the Briscoe St. Church is open.

Central Church, London.

Of the Central Church's Thursday evening meetings, Mr. Guthrie writes: "We have had some of the most wonderful times at Central on Thursday evenings. We count it a privilege indeed to be able to help in this way during dear Brother McGinlay's illness, but we are all longing for the day when the Lord will give him back to us. His people are loyal and true. They are men and women with faith in God. It is a marvel to me to see the way they take hold of things at this time."

Niagara Falls.

The Trinity Baptist Church, Niagara Falls, is now located on Temperance Street, having taken over the building formerly known as the Gospel Tabernacle. It is gratifying indeed to read the announcement as published in pamphlet form, as follows:

"The Trinity Regular Baptist Church has at last obtained a commodious home. During the past eight months the church has met for worship in the I.O.O.F. Hall, Main Street, but while there we felt our progress retarded somewhat as we could only use the Hall on Sunday. This meant that for our mid-week services we were obliged to meet in the various homes of our people. Although the odds were against us, yet we rejoice that the work has gone on favourably. Since Pastor Fraser accepted the call to this pastorate on May 1st, souls have been saved and the Christians helped to the extent that the membership has increased almost 100 per cent. The increase in the Sunday School is about the same. In the month of July the Pastor organized a Young Men's Bible Class made up of six members, but to-day the register shows an increase of more than 600 per cent. Mr. Fraser is keenly interested in young men. From this class has been formed a 'Harmonica Band'; they will be contributing two numbers on Sunday afternoon during the special Children's and Parent's Session."

Long Branch Church.

The Long Branch Regular Baptist Church recently had a visit from the Waverley Road Church choir, accompanied by the Pastor of the Church, Rev. David Alexander.

The church was well filled for the occasion and the varied programme presented by the choir was very much enjoyed. The anthems rendered, reflected great credit upon their conductor and upon the members themselves. A male quartette brought several selections, all of which were thoroughly appreciated, as were the piano duets, the piece by the mixed quartette, the duet, and the other contributions. The presence of the genial Pastor of the Church added greatly to the pleasure of the evening and the Long Branch Church feels greatly indebted to the Waverley Road Church for their visit.

When the programme was finished the ladies of the Long Branch Church provided refreshments and a time of social fellowship was spent.

Rev. A. Penman, Pastor of the Long Branch Church writes—"We feel that gatherings such as these would contribute greatly to the development of spiritual unity and harmony in our churches."

The work at Long Branch is going steadily forward, and on December 4th, two young men publicly confessed their Saviour in the water of baptism.

"THE MISSIONARY BULLETIN."

We are pleased to have new names added to "The Missionary Bulletin" mailing list each month and are happy to know that this messenger is so well received. We are sorry to hear that some who have constantly prayed with us for the work at home and in Liberia have missed several issues owing to their neglect of writing in at the time of the revision of the Mailing List.

St. Amedee Field.

Those who heard Pastor W. Lorne Hisey tell of his work on the St. Amedee field and have reviewed the growth of that work through reports, etc., know that finances are the only drawback, and that it is only Mr. Hisey's willingness to sacrifice much for the work's sake that makes it possible for the churches to have a year-round pastor, but on December 18th, Rev. H. L. Davey visited the field and brought to the people the story of the Liberian work. Pastor Hisey writes us that Mr. Davey brought two rousing messages, and the people of the St. Amedee Church and of The Gore Church, contributed \$12.00 for the Liberian work. Just what such an offering means may not be appreciated by those who do not know the situation there. It is, however, truly a liberal offering given gladly as a token of a people's love for the work of the Master and their desire to support those who have gone forward in His Name.

LIST OF LESSONS IN WHOLE BIBLE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COURSE JANUARY TO JUNE, 1933.

As Arranged by Rev. O. W. Van Osdel, D.D., LL.D., Grand Rapids, Mich.

Date	Lesson	Golden Text
Jan.		
1	Israel — Disobedient, Weak and Task Unfinished	Judges 1, 2, 3 I Sam. 15:22-23
8	God Delivers Israel Through His Prophetess	Judges 4, 5 Judges 5:2-3
15	God Delivers Israel Through Gideon	Judges 6, 7 Judges 6:14
22	Rulers Should be Ordained of God	Judges 8, 9 Judges 8:22
29	Jephthae and His Vow	Judges 10, 11, 12 Deut. 23:21
Feb.		
5	Samson	Judges 13-16 Gal. 6:7
12	Civil and Religious Confusion Resulting from Departure from God	Judges 17-21 Matt. 4:10
19	Choosing the People of God	Ruth 1, 2 Ruth 1:16-17
26	Joining the Divine Procession	Ruth 3, 4 Ruth 3:13
Mar.		
5	Consecration and Dedication	I Sam. 1 I Sam. 1:22
12	Hannah's Prophetic Prayer	I Sam. 2 I Sam. 2:1
19	Samuel Called of God	I Sam. 3 I Sam. 3:10
26	Some Things About the Ark of God	I Sam. 4, 5 I Sam. 4:21
April		
2	Samuel, Prophet, Priest and Judge	I Sam. 6, 7 I Sam. 7:8
9	Demanding a King	I Sam. 8-10 I Sam. 8:7

Date	Lesson	Golden Text
April		
16	Saul Made King	I Sam. 11-12 I Sam. 11:15
23	Saul's Perverseness	I Sam. 13 I Sam. 13:13-14
30	Victory When God Appoints	I Sam. 14 I Sam. 14:6
May		
1	Improving Upon God's Commands	I Sam. 15 I Sam. 15:22-23
8	David Chosen as King	I Sam. 16 I Sam. 16:7
15	David and Goliath	I Sam. 17 I Sam. 17:26
22	Jonathan and David	I Sam. 18-20 I Sam. 18:1
29	David and His Men	I Sam. 21-24 I Sam. 22:2
June		
5	David in the Wilderness	I Sam. 25-26 I Sam. 25:32
12	David Among Israel's Enemies	I Sam. 27-28 I Sam. 27:1
19	David Saved from Fighting Israel	I Sam. 29-31 I Sam. 29:6-7
26	David Made King of Judah	II Sam. 1-2 II Sam. 2:4

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