

# The Gospel Witness

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

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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

ANSWERING BY FIRE

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, November 5th, 1933.

(Stenographically reported)

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"And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?"

"And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim.

"Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table."

"And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

"Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou hast turned their heart back again.

"Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

"And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

—I Kings 18:17-19; 36-39.

The lesson text in our Bible School this morning was the eighteenth chapter of the first book of Kings, the story of the Carmel revival; and we shall turn to that chapter this evening. I suppose the majority of my hearers this evening, here and elsewhere, are familiar with the main outline of this story, yet it may be well briefly to summarize it so that we may have a clear view of the historical background of these verses, which we have read.

The time to which this chapter refers was a period of general apostasy in Israel. The seeds of idolatry which had been sown by Jeroboam the son of Nebat who did sin, and "who made Israel to sin", had taken root, and now they were bearing their bitter fruit. The whole nation had turned from God and had become worshippers of Baal. It was at this time Elijah appeared and announced, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." Having made the announcement, he seems to have retired from public view, and spent the three and a half years in seclusion. Part of

the time he was cared for by the ravens at the brook Cherith, and part of the time he was lodged in the house of the widow of Zarephath, whose meal and oil were miraculously multiplied in order that the cause of God, as represented by Elijah the prophet, might be maintained in the time of famine.

At the end of the three and a half years the word of the Lord came to Elijah, instructing him that God's hour had come, and thus the long patience of Elijah was rewarded. He found one Obadiah, and announced that he would show himself to Ahab. The story of Obadiah is not necessary to our understanding of the text, notwithstanding it may be well to refer to him for a moment, because there are many Obadiah's in our day. During these years Obadiah had lived in the house of Ahab, apparently a trusted servant of the idolatrous king; yet his heart had been with Elijah and the cause which Elijah represented. When Jezebel would have cut off the prophets of the Lord, Obadiah befriended them, and hid them in a cave. He feared now to carry the message to Ahab that Elijah desired to see him, lest

Elijah should be caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and Ahab should be disappointed, and vengeance should be visited upon the head of the messenger. Elijah reassured him, promising him that he would surely show himself to Ahab that day.

When word reached Ahab that Elijah had come from the unknown and desired to meet him, he went to meet the prophet of Jehovah, and on meeting him, asked, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" To which Elijah replied, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim." Elijah then proposed that the prophets of Baal, the representatives of the false religion, should be gathered together on Mount Carmel, and that the two religions, representing the service of Jehovah and that of Baal, should be submitted to a very practical test. Each should build an altar, each should lay upon it the sacrifice, and then they should in turn pray to the God Whom they served—and "the God that answereth by fire", said Elijah, "let him be God." "And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken." For, like people in other days, they had been deceived by their prophets, and believed that Baal could really hear them. Apparently, many of them were very sincere, although sincerely mistaken. A man may be very sincere, and be altogether wrong. His sincerity will not help him if he is deceived, and is led in the wrong direction.

When Baal made no answer Elijah mocked the prophets; he was very severe, very ironical. He laughed at their god, suggesting "either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them." They cried with a loud voice, "O Baal, hear us"—"But there was no voice, nor any that answered."

About the time of the evening sacrifice Elijah's turn came. "He repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down . . . he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time"—for Elijah was determined that there should be no question as to the genuineness of the miracle. When he had thus made preparation, he prayed in the words that I have read to you, "Thou God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word." Then the fire fell and consumed the sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones of the altar, and licked up the water that was in the trench. "And when the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

It is a well-worn passage, and yet a passage that has application, in principle, to conditions which obtain in our day.

#### I.

It relates to A DAY OF TROUBLE—and this is a day of trouble. There are few people anywhere who have managed to escape it. I suppose there was a time when some of us dreamed of where we should like to go for

a while to find relaxation and refreshment of spirit. We have dreamed of travelling. I called on a man some years ago who lived in a large house, and spread before him on the dining-room table were all sorts of travel books, steamship and railroad guides. He was studying them in order to make up his mind where he should go for a vacation. I remember feeling at the time that it must be a delightful occupation to be able to sit down and survey the whole world and say, "Where shall I go to have a good time?"

Suppose you had plenty of money to-day, and were to sit down in that man's place, where could you go to have a good time? To what country could you go with any assurance that you would get out of trouble? I think most of us would rather bear the ills we have than fly to others that we know not of. It is a world of trouble, as it was in Ahab's day.

There are some people who have no eye for the spiritual. The spiritual world is not a real world to them. Spiritual values are at a discount in their estimation. The world of reality consists in the material and temporal things, which they can touch and taste and handle. These are the things which constitute their world. I suppose there are few philosophical materialists to-day, but there are multitudes of practical materialists who live for the things they can see and touch; beyond that, there is to them no reality.

Sometimes God, in infinite mercy, condescends to speak to men in a language they can understand. Sometimes He speaks to them in the language of material interests. He did in Ahab's day, with the result that every spring dried up until there was no well from which they could draw water, no field produced a harvest, and every granary was empty—and the nation was reduced to the verge of ruin. Its material resources were exhausted, and even Ahab confessed that he was in trouble—and that Israel was troubled too.

This world has had a good deal of trouble, but of recent years almost everybody admits it. It is now universally acknowledged that by some means the evolutionary machine has slipped a cog. We do not see people progressing toward better things, but rather we find ourselves in the midst of a retrograde movement. We are suffering on every hand. People who would not listen to the Word of God, or to any spiritual appeal, are now like the people of Israel, and like Ahab in particular, ready to acknowledge that something is seriously wrong.

I admit that these are secondary matters, but they are not without importance. We must be fed and clothed. Unfortunately, we have not arrived at that stage where we can do without these things. They are among the necessities of life, and when they become difficult to procure, and there is a shortage everywhere, everybody recognizes that this world has come into troubled waters, that we are really distressed.

Ahab did not sit down and do nothing. I am glad to have the story of Obadiah, because it gives us some intimation of what Ahab was doing while Elijah was awaiting God's time. Ahab went in one direction, and Obadiah went in another, and they searched the land, if perhaps they might find unknown and undiscovered springs of water "to save the horses and mules alive". It really means that every expedient was resorted to in order to mitigate the difficulties of the hour. I am sure no man ever knocked for admittance at the palace door, during those years of distress, promising that he was able to

relieve the general distress, without gaining a respectful and interested hearing. But there was still no rain, no dew, not even a blade of grass appeared above the surface of the earth.

Is not that about what we are doing to-day? New political parties are formed. Look at last evening's newspaper, and see how many companies of people are assembling in Toronto, in various places, not under religious auspices, but to consider how, if by any means at all, the present distress may be relieved, and better times be brought back again. Even Andy hoped to become an alderman by travelling under the name, "Come-Back-Home-Prosperity." You laugh at that? It is but a sign of the times. Any quack, I care not who he is, who will promise better times, will gain a hearing to-day. I beg you to remember that the men who thus talk know not whereof they speak. Of what value are their economic remedies if the fundamental error be not corrected? All sorts of nostrums are being concocted, economic, political, and religious, for the alleviation of the world's ills. The Ahabs and Obadias are busy holding conferences in an endeavour to find means of saving the horses and mules alive. So much for the day of trouble.

## II.

Will you observe that AT SUCH TIMES MEN HAVE EARS FOR ALMOST EVERYTHING BUT THE TRUTH, and will listen to every prophet but a prophet who is commissioned to tell the truth. Men are easily deceived, and they are being deceived to-day, politically and religiously, by countless thousands. We are not getting out of the distress, nor getting any nearer to prosperity.

*Elijah was looked upon as the man who had caused all the trouble.* He was a prophet of evil reputation at this particular time, for the reason that he had predicted the conditions which now obtained. He had told the people in advance that this very thing would happen, and that by and by they would be brought to their knees before the Lord. Hence Ahab blamed him for all that has come to pass.

It is most interesting to read certain religious journals to-day. Scores of them come to my desk every week in exchange for our own paper, and they all confess it is a day of trouble. They all desire something better—but not one in a hundred goes to the root of the matter. Their diagnosis is wholly superficial, and in the majority of instances, I at least venture to believe, wholly inaccurate.

Ahab looked upon Elijah as the man who had caused all the trouble. We are none of us worthy to be counted in the prophetic succession, and yet it is true of every prophet of truth that, in some measure, he must share the experience of Elijah, and of a Greater than Elijah, Who said to His disciples, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." Every man in recent years who has endeavoured to call people back to the Bible, and to the things of God, has had a rough sea to sail denominationally and in his own particular church. In almost every instance the man who has insisted in merely standing his ground, on the basis of this divine revelation that we call the Bible, has met with the same thing that Elijah met: he is called a "troubler of Israel".

It is not often we speak of ourselves in this place, but I have the ear this evening—and I know it—of thousands

of people who would not darken the door of this church. You whisper some things to your friends, and sometimes a little bird flies my way and tells me some of the things you say. We know more than is generally supposed about some things. But the Pastor of Jarvis Street Church—and the church itself—has "troubled Israel"? Not at all! I heard from a man in Niagara Falls last week who said he was baptized in old Bond Street Church over sixty years ago, and he said, "You preach exactly the same things they preached in Bond Street when I was converted." Last Sunday evening sitting in the second pew to my right was an old man who told me he was eighty-three years old—and he wanted to know what difference there was between his age and mine! I suggested to him that perhaps we had better not discuss that question! Then he told me that he had been converted in Bond Street Church, that he was baptized by Dr. Castle, and had been a member of this church before it was Jarvis Street, when it was called Bond Street Church. He said, "The Lord bless you, brother; you are preaching the same old truths I used to love when I was young."

We *are* preaching exactly the same thing: We have not differed one whit. I have been here nearly twenty-four years, and I am no more a "troubler of Israel" now than I was when I came. I preach precisely the same gospel now as then. I remember seeing my photograph in one of the papers as one of the "leading" Pastors of Toronto. I was Pastor of the "cathedral" church of the Baptist Denomination. Readers of the paper were told how very many important people I had in my congregation. I suppose it was all true according to worldly standards. But the paper did not say that the Pastor had a very great Master Whom he was trying to serve. Though many of the important people have gone, the servant remains—and, bless God, his Master is with us still! We are preaching the same old gospel, and if it be a trouble to Israel to preach that the Bible is the word of God, then we shall go on troubling Israel. If it disturb the peace of any religious company to declare that Christ Jesus is one with the Father and the Holy Ghost, not only the Son of God but God the Son, then we intend to preach it as long as we live, whether people like it or not. If it be an offence to declare 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", and that He ascended into heaven, and some day is coming to judge the world—if that be an offence, then like David before the Lord, we are determined we will "yet be more vile than thus", and will declare this great truth that there is no way of salvation but through the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There is no hope for any of us but through the meritorious, redemptive, work accomplished by Him Who was Deity Incarnate. That is our message. We have nothing new to say. We have preached it here for nearly twenty-four years, and elsewhere before that—and we propose to continue. But for so doing we have been cursed, and our name has been cast out as evil. Jarvis Street Church is said to have become a home of fanatics. My radio friends, what you have heard these years over the air, is what has always been preached here; and for the sake of preaching that—and because we preached it, and would not consent to any diminution of that testimony, or allow the crown of infallibility to

be taken from Christ's brow—we have been expelled from the Convention to which we belonged, and called the "troubler of Israel".

I think we have troubled Israel. I think it has caused trouble—but nothing to the trouble that it will yet cause, if men do not repent and turn to God. That is the attitude of the world toward men—and toward institutions—who still stand for the "faith once for all delivered unto the saints". If you like to regard Jarvis Street Church as an asylum for the insane, you are welcome to the estimate of your ignorance. We are nothing but simple believers.

Elijah said to Ahab "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim." That is true generally to-day. You have read in the papers of the ravings of Hitler and his Lieutenants; of a Germanized, Hitlerized, religion in Germany. Some people hold up their hands in horror and say, "It is dreadful." It is not surprising. More than twenty-five years ago I predicted it. From this pulpit again and again I predicted, before the war, that Germany would prove the world's curse—and she has. Why? Because before ever she let loose her poisonous gas upon our soldiers, she had let loose her poisonous philosophies that polluted the springs of learning in all the universities of the world. We warned men that Germany was poisoning the wells of learning from which our young men drank. Men have been taught everywhere that the Bible is not the word of God, that Jesus Christ is not the Son of God. They have been taught a religion of naturalism that excludes God. But when men try to elbow God out of His world, He will show you that He has something to do with it.

Said Ahab and his prophets, "Baal is the god." Said Jehovah, "I will sweep every cloud from the sky. I will stop the rain and dew. I will dry up the springs. I will command the earth that it shall not bring forth fruit. I will reduce you to a state of famine and utter bankruptcy, and you shall see whether Jehovah is the Lord of nature or not."

If men repent not in this present economic condition, I am confident that the God of all the earth will yet demonstrate that He is not the "unknown cause", a mere "force" of some kind, to which nobody can pray. He will prove that He is the personal, transcendent, God Who is the Ruler of this world. If men repent not, and come to him, then the very forces of nature—mark what I say—will speak for Him, as they did in Ahab's day. "I have not troubled Israel", said Elijah, "but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim." What is the fear of nearly every government of earth to-day? What is the ground of justification for the severe measures being taken by nearly all the governments of earth to-day, in Germany and elsewhere? Why the curtailment of freedom of speech and of the press? What is the ground upon which governing bodies justify these severe measures? Always this: they are afraid of Communism, which, being interpreted, is anarchy. Where did men learn it? From Russia? No! They learned in the universities of this country, of the United States, of Great Britain, just as much as in Germany, that there is no objective authority, that there is no objective rule, no norm. We are all a law unto our-

selves. We may make our own standards, and live as we like.

And what have we? The unit of society, the family, is crumbling. There is no parental authority. The marital relation is mocked at on every hand. The home and the family are to be abolished. Every man is to be a law unto himself in the state. Because this fundamental principle, this supreme standard of authority, has been set aside. Gibbons said that the Wesley revival saved England from the throes of the French Revolution, and I believe nothing but a turning back to God can save this country, or any other country, or the world at large, from a chaos such as was never known before. God can do it—but nobody else can.

### III.

TRUTH IS ALWAYS WILLING TO BE SUBJECTED TO A PRACTICAL TEST. When Jesus Christ healed men of divers diseases He did not put them away in a monastery, or in some place of cloistered seclusion where nobody could examine them. When He Himself was raised from the dead He said to His disciples, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." When John summed up the gospel in the opening chapter of his first epistle he spoke of "that which was from the beginning, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life . . . that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." The religion of Christ is no vain or vague philosophy. It is not something that cannot stand the test of universal human trial and experience. It is a religion of light. It always speaks with the voice of Elijah, "The God that answereth by fire, let him be God."

I do not fear the overthrow of the Christian religion. I never did. I am not afraid the Bible will be destroyed. If it were, God could print another copy to-morrow, for there is a copy on fyle up yonder: "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." I am afraid of the consequences to those who try to destroy the Word of God, and who reject the sinners' Saviour; but as for the ultimate triumph of Jesus Christ, that was settled before the foundations of the world were laid.

Elijah said in effect, "Let us test this matter. It is not a subject for the study, for the laboratory, for the experts: it is a matter for the common people. Gather all the people together on Carmel—not a delegation; let them all come to the convention. I shall be alone, but never mind; bring the eight hundred and fifty prophets and all their followers, and we will test this thing out. Surely that is fair enough."

I hope you are not discouraged when you find yourself in the minority. Majorities are not always in the right. "Fear not, little flock." What if we are a little flock? There were more than Elijah knew. I do not blame him for thinking he was the only one, because most of the others hid themselves away. There were seven thousand, Elijah afterward learned, but he had never seen them these three and a half years! But although they were timorous souls, they were true at heart, and at last appeared. On this occasion, however, there were all the prophets of Baal—and Elijah. We are not as badly off as that. Thank God, there are thousands of people who believe in Elijah's God to-day.

Elijah prayed that it might not rain for three and a half years. Thousands of people, God's people, for years have been praying for revival. I have letters constantly from groups of people all over the world, and from individuals, who are praying for revival. Perhaps you say it is no nearer to-day than it was when they started to pray. That is because you are blind. I can see it. It is coming! Beyond all possibility of doubt, it is coming.

One might have said in Elijah's time, "There is not a cloud in the sky. There is not a blade of grass. There is no sign of revival." But he would have been wrong: *the three and a half years of unparalleled draught was God's answer to Elijah's prayer, and was the preparation for revival throughout Israel. Who knows but that this universal distress is God's answer to the cry of His people that somehow He will intervene and bring deliverance?*

I think, by common consent, it will be agreed that there is nothing the world needs so much to-day as a revival. Some people may not speak of revival with the same thought as we do, the word may have to them a different content. We think of revival as the coming of the power of the Holy Ghost, changing the lives of men—though some may not see as far as that, I think it is now almost universally recognized that we are ruined unless God somehow intervenes. Is that an exaggeration? The professors have failed. The politicians have failed. And now for the prophets of Baal! Come on!

I do not know how many I reach to-night. It may be a few thousands, it may be a few millions, I do not know; it depends on who tunes in. But among them are certain to be many men who have not preached the Bible, but some "other gospel". I wish all the modernistic preachers on earth were listening in to-night. I would dare to say to them, Now, my philosophical friends, let us have a great convention. Come together and pray to God as you know Him, the god of evolution, the god who never interferes with the world, the god who is so remote that nobody can make him hear. Ask the god you have been preaching to interpose and save this troubled world. Ask him! Accept the challenge, "The God that answereth by fire, let him be God." And we too will pray. If our God cannot speak for Himself, then He is no God. If the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ cannot vindicate the faith of His people, then the gospel is a lie, then we are all mistaken, and of all men are the most miserable.

I refuse to admit—or to believe—that God answered prayer in the days of the apostles, and that He does not now. To His honour and praise I say it, in these years, in this very house of prayer, I have seen Him rend the heavens and come down. I have seen Him do—and so have you—within these walls, what nobody but God Himself could do.

There are some who hear me to-night who felt so sure of their ground—give me your ear, my friend, if you have tuned in. You sent me a message thirteen years ago, begging me, for my own sake, to resign the pastorate of this church, to save myself the humiliation of dismissal; because you were absolutely certain there was no power on earth that could avert it. You were right. There was no power on earth—but *there was in heaven!* God's people prayed. And I am here still. You know what God did. You know that only God could have done

it. And He is doing it still. He is answering the prayer of His people. He is saving souls. He was with us in the morning hour, and for a good part of the afternoon as we waited upon Him in prayer—and He is with us still.

But I say to all the representatives of modernistic types of religion, all those who deny the supernatural, the thing that you deny is the only thing that can save this world. Your naturalistic religion is valueless to bring relief.

Very well, then. That brings to every Evangelical Christian a tremendous opportunity, and, at the same time, lays upon us a tremendous responsibility. I ask you, my brethren and sisters of Jarvis Street, every one of you, have you a God Who can answer by fire? Have you a God who unmistakably does answer prayer? Have you received such answers from His hand that you would be willing to submit the case to any jury on earth, with the assurance that there could be but one verdict, that God is faithful to His promises? Some of us know by our own salvation that God answers by fire. Poor miserable sinners we are, yet saved by the boundless grace of God. There is no accounting for the blessings we have enjoyed apart from that hypothesis—no, not hypothesis, apart from that experimental certitude that God is, and "that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him". We know it.

I appeal to believing people who hear me over the radio, no matter to what church you belong, accept the teaching of this Book and let us together—you in your church if you will; if you can find no comfort there, then come with us to pray, wherever you may belong—let us together issue Elijah's challenge and pray to the God that answers by fire. Look for revival. Look for a manifestation of the supernatural in your own experience, and in the experience of those about you.

#### IV.

Observe ELIJAH'S METHOD. How often have we heard compromisers say of every faithful prophet, "I believe as he believes, but I don't like his methods." They fear to dispute the scripturalness of his message, so they justify their cowardly failure to fight at his side by finding fault with his "methods". Doubtless in Elijah's day there were some who preferred the methods of Obadiah who hid the prophets by fifty in a cave and fed them with bread and water.

What did Elijah do? "*He repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down.*" The altar was representative of the very centre of Hebrew worship. It was there they acknowledged their sinfulness, it was there they offered their sacrifices, it was there they recognized God. In principle, the altar was representative of the sum of revealed religion. Christ is our Altar, He is our Sacrifice, He is our High Priest, He is our Temple, He is our Intercessor, He is our King, He is our All. Repair the altar. Yield yourselves to Christ. Give Him His proper place as God. Cease from your caviling. Accept the truth that He was begotten of the Holy Ghost, and born of a virgin. You preachers who have preached your churches empty, and have brought despair to your people, go back with one bound to your mother's Bible, and put Christ, the sinners' Saviour, in the centre of your message. Preach Him with all the power that God will give you—and see what will happen.

When Elijah had repaired the altar he put the wood and the sacrifice thereon, *representative of their surrender to God*. What does it mean? That having accepted the great truth, we yield ourselves unto God as those who are alive from the dead, and our members as instruments of righteousness unto Him; to give ourselves to Him, as a sacrifice, all there is of us. When we have done that, we can depend upon the enemy to bring the water! You do not need to do that. That is all some people are good for, to carry barrels of water. There are plenty of them in the churches. They will put out any fire except the Fire that comes from heaven. That is the only Fire that can overcome the influence of some people who would pour water over the sacrifice. I think the Lord makes use of such folk just as Elijah did. The very existence of a Christian church, of an evangelical testimony anywhere in the world, in the face of the opposition of men and devils, is itself the outstanding proof and crowning testimony that God lives.

When we have thus done, *we must pray and keep on praying*. I cannot introduce God to you: He must introduce Himself. If I had not a Master to stand beside me in this pulpit, if I had not a helper Who defies all the powers of earth and of hell, I would give up the ministry. I have had my trials and I have said to my opponents, "Come on, you enemies of the truth, and do your utmost. Destroy this church if you can." But they cannot. We never had greater blessing than we have now, and certainly no greater unity. We ought to have been destroyed. I ought to have been dead and buried long ago. But our God can plead His own cause. Shall we pray that He may? Shall we commit it to Him? Do not trust anybody, Pastor, Deacons, church, denomination. Let your trust be in God.

Elijah prayed, "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel." Let Him show that He is God. And He will! He will!

*He will vindicate the trust of His people.* "And that I am thy servant." I do not want to be one of the "leading" preachers in Toronto. I am glad you have not that sort of man for your Pastor. I do not care what people say. Long ago the Lord delivered us from that snare. The one ambition of my life is—and I confess it—I would like a poor sinful world, that needs the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, to know that I am His servant. That is all. That is all Elijah asked. That is all any of us may ask.

"And that I have done all these things at thy word." Have we not? Let us do it, then, if we have not. Let us abide by the teaching of His Word.

"And that thou hast turned their heart back again." That is what Elijah prayed for. So I call you, every one of you here, to pray for a divine visitation that will sweep hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands—millions—into the kingdom of God. It is possible. Our God lives, and He will vindicate the trust of His people. He will honour His word, and yet prove that this is the word of God that liveth and abideth for ever. Let us begin to-morrow, and continue week after week if need be, and year after year, in the spirit of Jacob who prevailed, saying, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." And the Lord will hear in heaven His dwelling place, and, hearing, He will forgive.

Is there an unsaved man or woman here this evening?

I call you to Christ. He is a great Saviour. I know it because He saved this great sinner, and has kept him now these many years. I have seen him save hundreds, and I know He can save you. Will you trust Him to-night?

Are there some professing Christians here who are not busy in the Lord's service? who have got out of communion with Him? who have been following after all kinds of fads and fancies. You have had the Bible for a text-book, but you have been reading all sorts of things instead. Get back to God. Receive His Spirit; and get on with His work. If there are such, will you come to Him to-night?

Are there some who have ceased to pray? Will you pray to Heaven and say, "I will continue to pray. I will read the chapter from which the text is taken, and make Elijah's prayer my own, that God will visit His people"? We should then have revival. I am confident that God will visit His people, that Elijah's God is living, and that He will, in His own way and time, answer by fire.

Let us pray:

O Lord, we are in Thy presence now. Accept the rededication of ourselves to Thy service. There are some who have never confessed Thee; help them do it to-night. There are some, O Lord, who have brought reproach upon Thy name, they have failed to honour Thee by much fruit-bearing; bring them back to Thyself. Turn us back, every one of us, to-night. Lord, it is not too much to ask that we may see Thy power even as we have seen it in the sanctuary. Let it be now that Thou wilt visit Thy people, and give us such a blessing that we shall not be able to contain it. For Christ's sake, Amen.

## THE GREATEST BATTLE OF HISTORY

A Lecture by Dr. T. T. Shields

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto,  
Thursday Evening, November 2nd, 1933

*Fourth in a Series of Thursday Evening Lectures on  
Biblical Theology, which is included in the  
Curriculum of Toronto Baptist Seminary*

(Stenographically Reported)

Lesson Text: I Samuel, chapter 17.

Once more we shall turn to the same chapter, the seventeenth of the First book of Samuel. My reason for spending three nights with this chapter is chiefly to suggest to you that every word of Scripture is an inexhaustible well of truth. "With joy" we are to draw water out of the wells of salvation. There are some people who assume they have reached finality in the interpretation of certain portions of God's Word. They have discovered a principle by which the word of the Infinite is brought within the complete comprehension and final understanding of finite minds. Any such attitude toward the Word of God, to say the least of it, is philosophically absurd. You could as soon exhaust a single word of Scripture by the exercise of all your mental powers, as you could exhaust the ocean with a child's toy bucket.

You have heard of the man who professed to disbelieve the Bible, who was asked, were he sentenced to solitary confinement for the rest of his life, and permitted access to only one book, "What book would you choose?" Instantly he said, "The Bible." To which his questioner replied, "But you do not believe the Bible?"

"No; I do not. But it is no end of a book." And it is "no end of a book". You can never get to the end of it.

That does not mean that we may not know the truth of the Bible for ourselves, experimentally, to be the truth. "We know whom we have believed"; "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens"; "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." There are some things we may know. But between identification and perfect knowledge of a thing or person there may be a wide difference in capacity or time, or both. One may recognize and identify truth by divine illumination and experience almost instantaneously; while such truth may require an eternity of acquaintance in order to a perfect knowledge thereof. Truth is infinite, and through all eternity we shall go on learning more and more of Him Who was Himself—and is still—the Truth Incarnate.

I speak for the moment especially to students who expect to give their lives to the work of preaching the gospel. I hope you will not seek after novelties. I hope you will not try to feed your people on that which is carnally sensational, that which will appeal chiefly to those who have a passion for the abnormal. There are many men who preach frequently upon the second coming of Christ, I greatly fear, not because they are passionately devoted to that precious truth, but because they think it is an attractive subject. I have heard many men say, "if you want to fill your church, preach on the second coming of Christ. If you want to fill your church with people, preach about the pyramids." As a carnal expedient, such sayings may involve wise counsel, and very probably the people will not know any more about these matters when you have finished than when you began. Neither will you—but the deluded people will not know it.

There are, however, many things you will have to preach over and over again. You ought never to preach without presenting some aspect of the atonement. It should be in every sermon, either expressed or implied. So of other doctrines: justification by faith, and so on. Your task will be, not to find some new thing to say, but to say the old things in a new and attractive way. The minister's task is largely that of making new clothes for the truth, finding new ways of expressing the old, old story of Jesus and His love.

With other classes I have used this as an illustration: I will repeat it to you. I saw in an American magazine that has an enormous circulation, some years ago, a full-page advertisement. It was simple. There was a representation of a box of shaving powder, or other toilet preparation, and underneath was written, "We couldn't improve the powder, so we improved the box." You cannot improve the powder, you cannot improve the gospel; that is final. But we can all improve on our method of preaching the gospel. That is why I call your attention again this evening to this chapter, to show you that certain portions of Scripture may legitimately be put to a thousand uses.

You will find yourselves, as years go on, preaching from the same text again and again. I have discovered that I have not only preached, but published, two or three sermons from one text; and found that I have approached that text each time from a different point of

view. It was the same text, but it was not the same sermon. You must study to have variety in your preaching, so that your people will not be quite sure what you are going to say when you announce a certain text. I used to have a dear brother here who was almost as deaf as the proverbial post, but one could make him hear by using a very loud and clear tone. In the later years of his life he used to sit on the corner of the platform when I preached. Several times I asked him at the close of the service, "Did you hear this morning?" "What?" "Did you hear this morning?" To which he would reply, "I heard the text, and when I get the text I have a pretty good idea of what you have said"! I hope that will not be true of you.

In my first pastorate I took the Secretary of Foreign Missions of the Old Convention out to a country appointment where he was to preach in the evening. We went in the afternoon, and had been directed to a certain farm house in which lived an old lady who had known a succession of Baptist ministers, whom she called "elders". She entertained us by relating her experiences with these preachers. I have often wished I had a stenographic report of that old lady's conversation; it would have been worth printing. She told of how each minister baptized, how he preached, whether or not he visited—all the peculiarities of each one. But I recall that she said of a certain man, "When Elder So-and-So was with us we used to have a new text every Sunday." On reflection, she continued, "We have that now; but when Elder So-and-So was here we used to have a new sermon as well as a new text. Our present elder is a great visitor. He visits all the time. He always talks religion in the home. He tells us all he knows, so that when we go to church he has nothing new to say. If he does not know any more than that, I sometimes wish he would not talk religion in the home, so that he would have something fresh to say when he gets into the pulpit."

I hope you will "talk religion in the home". but I hope you will find the Bible so full that you will be able to say something fresh every time you bear testimony to the Lord Jesus.

I should like you to look at this chapter as an illustration of what the Lord Jesus accomplished by His incarnation, death, and resurrection.

#### I.

There is a doctrine sometimes called "dualism". Dualism has various meanings, but the term is sometimes used to describe that philosophy which postulates that there have always been, from all eternity, and always will be to all eternity, two principles at work, fighting one with the other. That doctrine holds that evil, as well as good, is eternal, that it had no beginning, and will have no ending; but that good and evil have always been, and will continue through all eternity, to be in opposition and conflict one with the other. That cannot be supported, I believe, by the Word of God. But there is a dualism which distinguishes between spirit and matter, between the spiritual and the physical, and between good and evil, which is scripturally based. There are two lines and two principles running through all human history. You have it right from the beginning as represented by Cain and Abel, the evil and the good always contending one with the other.

If you read the Bible through you will find that it is a record of the wars of the Lord, of the battles con-

tinuously going on between these two opposing principles. Abraham had two sons, Isaac and Ishmael. Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau. All through history the Isaacs and the Ishmaels appear; and the Jacobs and the Esaus contend with each other—and ultimately part company from each other. I need not labour that truth because it is so self-evident. The Old Testament is full of it, as is the New. And we ourselves know it to be true from our own personal experience of these contending principles: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other", and there is no possibility of bringing them into agreement.

But what I would make clear to you this evening is that these physical manifestations of spiritual realities have behind them invisible spiritual intelligences; for just as surely as God is a Spirit, and as surely as God is, so evil is a spirit, and is subject to the direction and control of certain spiritual intelligences. We find some intimations of that in the Old Testament, as for example: "When the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them." Satan is referred to in many places in the Old Testament, and the teaching of our Lord was to the effect that there is a realm of demons, there is a place where principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world hold sway. The chief of these is parabolically described as "the strong man armed".

The Apostle Paul says that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood"—by which he did not mean that these evils never have a fleshly manifestation; for sometimes we do wrestle against flesh and blood; he meant that behind them are greater powers—"we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places", or, in the heavenly places. You have in the Old Testament the story—we have already covered it—of the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, their journey through the wilderness, and their ultimate possession of the promised land. When we were considering that, we saw from the epistle to the Hebrews that that promised land had a real typical significance. It did not represent heaven, but the heavenly places in Christ where we have to war a good warfare. It is because of that warfare in the heavenlies that we are admonished to take unto ourselves the "whole armour of God".

## II.

This picture of the Philistines and the Israelites arrayed one against the other, while historically accurate, and while having its counterpart, its repetition, in succeeding chapters of history all down through the history of the race, is an illustration of a condition which always obtains, and will obtain, until our Lord shall take to Himself His great power and reign. There are the spiritual Philistia and the spiritual Israel that are always battling one against the other.

The old theologians used to talk about what was called "federal theology"—the idea (we call it the truth) that Adam was the federal head of the race. That is what the Bible teaches, that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin". Read the fifth chapter of Romans, which is a treatise on federal theology. Adam is set forth as the federal head of one race, and the Second Adam as the Representative, the Federal Head, of the new race, an holy nation. This prin-

ciple is set out in Scripture. I name it now because I propose to show how that principle is illustrated in the chapter before us, that Adam was the representative and champion of a race, who did battle in their behalf, and who was beaten in the conflict; whereas Christ Jesus, the quickening Spirit, was manifested to become the Head of a new race who should find their victory in Him.

Look at the illustration. *The powers of evil have a giant for their champion.* The Bible always recognizes that principle, the super-human, the inestimable, might of our adversary. The Bible never makes light of evil, either in the Old Testament or in the New. Our Lord Himself likened the devil to a "strong man armed who keepeth his palace". We read, "Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." The teaching of Scripture is that the power of the devil, the power of evil as represented by Beelzebub, is such that even an archangel was afraid of him. When a champion of Gath struts forth before the assembled hosts of Israel, defying the armies of the living God, we may well be afraid.

That is ever the attitude of evil: it is something that is directed, not primarily against our race, but *against the honour, against the sovereignty of the King of kings and Lord of lords.* Evil is revolutionary, it is spiritual rebellion against the Kingship of the One Who only hath the right to reign.

*And that power always has a giant for its champion.* Nothing is said in this chapter, I grant you, of Goliath's former victories. What his military record was is not stated here, but Saul knew something about it, for he declared he had been a "man of war from his youth". He had probably challenged other armies before he challenged the armies of Israel—and challenged them with effect, for thus far no man had been found who was able to match his strength with the giant of Gath. Sure I am of this, that from Adam's day to this, there has never lived a mere human who has ever come into grips with the giant of Gath without being beaten in the conflict. Never a man has measured himself with the spiritual Goliath who has not been made to lick the dust before him. Read the record. Find me the story of an absolutely flawless character in this inspired record. I know that Joseph and Daniel came nearer to it than most, but I think a careful reading of the record of both will only verify the Scripture that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God".

*That is ever the challenge of evil,* "Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me." What is the history of all religions but a record of human effort to find a man who was a match for Goliath? But such an one was never found. It is no wonder the people of Israel tremble before Goliath. I have no doubt that there is a bit of unwritten history there, that they had heard of his exploits on other fields of battle; and the bravest spirit in the host feared to try conclusions with him.

Look at another side of the picture. *The forces of goodness find at last someone to champion their cause.* Read the record in the Old Testament, I say, and the record of profane history antedating the time when "Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa", and see if the whole history of the human race is not epitomized in the early verses of this chapter when men stand terror-stricken in the face of this challenge. Then there came



one, the beloved son of his father,—not bearing the aspect of a warrior, not coming with a shield or a sword or a spear: he came rather with a basket on his arm, and was sent to the camp of his brethren to see how they fared.

What a lovely picture it is of the coming of great David's greater Son! Follow Him through all His earthly pilgrimage. See how He spent the days of His flesh on earth. It is summarized in the Acts of the Apostles where it is said of Him that He "went about doing good". That is what He came to do. Himself the incarnation of goodness, He came to *do* good:

"He came unto his own", even as David came to his own, asking nothing from them, craving only their acquiescence in His programme, to give something to them. I do not think it is an exaggeration to find that analogy in this chapter.

Again let me speak particularly to you students. When you have covered the ground a hundred times, some Sunday morning or evening when you turn your people's thought to this matchless and perennially interesting and inspiring story of David, you will challenge their interest, as they mentally observe, "We shall get something fresh to-day." Thus you may hang the old story that you have preached a hundred times upon a new illustration of the prowess of our great Hero, the Son of God.

When David came to the camp *he found all his brethren, and the whole camp of Israel, in terror of the Philistines*. When a man has had a few twinges somewhere about his body that he cannot account for, that suggests to him the possibility of some serious malady within, he begins to feel a little like Job did when he said, "The thing which I greatly feared is come upon me." It may not incapacitate him for work. He goes to his daily task, but he feels there is something at work in his body. He says, "I must go to my doctor"—yet he is afraid to go. How many I have known like that, almost trembling lest the expert should confirm their worst fears! How often have I recommended people, of whose condition, even as a layman, I felt some suspicion; and have said, "Go to your doctor and find out what is wrong." Some time afterward I have enquired, "Have you been to your physician yet?" "No; but I must go." They did not tell me why they did not go—but I knew. They believed they knew what was wrong themselves, and were living in terror of it; they were afraid lest the doctor should give it a name.

There are people who go about their work who may seem to be without religious interest, who yet are just as much afraid of the evil within as the man who fears the presence of cancer. Such an one has fought it—and fought it—and fought it. He has won a partial victory, but never a complete one; he finds the giant comes back again and again. With every daybreak he sees him strut out and issue his challenge, "Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me." I wonder how long that great conflict can be postponed?

Look at the world at large to-day, aside from the individual. Look at men in business. A shadow, a giant shadow, falls athwart the field. The man is afraid to move for fear he will meet the man with a helmet of brass. Look at the world internationally to-day. You will find statesmen—everybody—saying, "Whose is this figure which terrorizes us?" In a recent issue of *The British Weekly* there is an article entitled, "Steady!"

It is an exhortation to calmness and steadiness of thought and action in view of the world situation.

What is this awful thing that challenges individuals, nations, and the whole world, in every aspect of human life, saying to everyone, "Choose you a man"? There is no man that is equal to the challenge. It is the story of Israel's camp. Men's hearts are filled with fear, looking for those things that should come upon the earth.

*There were many soldiers who were there to do the fighting, and when this messenger of a father's love appeared among them, they mocked him.* "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." His brethren believed not on Him. His brethren said He was beside Himself.

Eliab said, "Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle." What a picture is the attitude of Israel's armies toward the son of Jesse, of the attitude of the religious world toward great David's greater Son! What is religion for? To save men from evil. What are the ministers of religion for, any religion? To accept the giant's challenge, to go out and fight.

There they were in uniform, professing to be trained to fight, while the giant mocked them! The devil does laugh at all false religions. He has a merry time with the religious Eliabs, the D.D., LL.D., D.C.L., Professor This and Professor-the-Other-Thing, the Pope and all his cardinals. What a merry time Satan has! "Choose you a man. Come on!" *David came not with conventional armour.* Nor did Jesus Christ appear in the robes of an official religion. He was but a peasant of Nazareth, wearing his seamless robe. He did not speak in the language of the religion of His day. His speech had an idiom all its own. He came from a far country, and He spake "as never man yet spake". He had no sword, no spear. He one time enquired, "Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves, for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me." David did not look like a soldier. Nobody would ever have dreamed that he was the man for whose coming the camp of Israel had waited.

When *he began to ask questions*, his questions were reported to the king. How many questions the Man of Nazareth asked! And how many questions were asked about him! "Who is he?" Even John the Baptist asked, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Has the Champion arrived? Is this Someone to espouse our cause, to accept the challenge of hell, of Beelzebub and all his angels? Art thou he that should come?" To which our Lord replied in effect, "Go and tell John what I am carrying about in my basket: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. Go and ask John whether he is looking for Somebody to do that." These were His credentials.

And yet this *David had a record that was unparalleled, I venture to think, by anybody in Saul's army.* If someone had said, "What do you know about him?" The answer might have been, "Only this, that he has never been beaten yet. He kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock—and he was equal to them." So our David was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made

higher than the heavens". There was never anybody like Him. "Which of you", said He, "convinceth me of sin?" As yet He bore no wounds from the conflict. He came, like David, having many achievements already to His credit; and He came to effect His great masterpiece which should make Him, I will not say famous, but glorious for ever.

At last the battle is joined, for *Israel has found a champion*; and we see him "hasting" toward the Philistine, running to meet him. Read the record of those last days of our glorious Champion on earth. "Depart hence: for Herod will kill thee." Will he? Will he? No! "Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must walk to-day, and to-morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." The battlefield was selected, and on that last night in which He was betrayed, He said; "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer. I have longed for the coming of this hour. It is the point of time to which the eternities look, and upon which they converge, and for which, with a holy impatience, I have been longing. The battle will be set to-morrow."

A battle? You say, "It was only a trial before Annas, and Caiaphas, and Pilate; and then an ignominious execution on a cross of wood at the place called Calvary. There was nothing heroic in that, unless it be heroic to submit to the cross." Do you remember His saying, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Was the God-man more conscious—may I reverently ask—of the presence and power of Satan then, as the events which culminated in the cross gathered together, and hastened Him onward to the hour of crisis? When Pilate, the vainglorious Roman official, said, "Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee", said our Champion, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."

Hear another saying of His: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of the world be cast out." The "meek and lowly Jesus" indeed! "The prince of this world is judged," with all that he represents. That is what our Lord said.

Then turn to Colossians and read what the Apostle Paul says there. I think I will read it to you. When he has spoken of Christ as the Creator of all things he declares that He blotted "out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Next time you read your Gospels, see what efforts were made to turn Jesus Christ aside from the cross. But He came to the cross! He "hasted" to meet Goliath, and there,—

"He hell in hell laid low;  
Made sin, He sin o'erthrew;  
Bowed to the grave, destroyed it so,  
And Death, by dying, slew."

Newman in that hymn which I have often quoted to you sees the analogy when he sings:

"O loving wisdom of our God!  
When all was sin and shame,

A second Adam to the fight,  
And to the rescue came.

"O wisest love! that flesh and blood,  
Which did in Adam fail,  
Should strive afresh against the foe,  
Should strive and should prevail."

When you preach the gospel, remember you are proclaiming to men the truth respecting the mightiest, the greatest, the completest, manifestation of Almightyness the universe has ever known:

"God, in the gospel of His Son,  
Hath all His mightiest works outdone."

The cross and the empty grave were a glorious triumph. I delight to think of the soldiers. The Bible is full of humour. I often have a hearty laugh while reading the Bible. Do you? For instance: See those robed religious officials gathered together after they had put some poor preachers in prison the night before. Said they: "We do not want to be bothered with them tonight. We have an engagement. We will see them in the morning." When morning came, and they sat in state, the officers came back and said, "The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within." The great men began to ponder the matter and while they were wondering, "then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people." Wasn't that funny? "Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people."

When the enemies of Christ expressed their fear of the resurrection, or of a report of such, I think there was an element of irony in Pilate's reply—I can almost see the sneer on his face—"Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can." Was not that wonderful? "Make it as sure as ye can." And they did! They sealed the stone, and set a watch—but our David was not afraid. Again, the watch was only the visible, the fleshly, manifestation of something else; for all the hosts of hell encamped about that sepulchre to make it "as sure" as hell itself could make it. But He Who was our Champion rose triumphant from the grave, came out into liberty, returned from the conflict as David did; wounded in the heel, as David was not; but He had wounded the champion in the head.

I do not suppose Goliath was dead when the stone struck him. Stunned, he fell; wounded in the head. But the champion put his conquering heel upon him, and with Goliath's own sword severed his head. And our God will destroy Satan under our feet shortly. The victory will some day be absolutely complete.

Only this and I have done. It was a defeat, not for Goliath only, but potentially for all Philistia; for when Goliath licked the dust all the Philistines ran.

Do you know what the Bible says, notwithstanding the great power of Satan? Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

"Satan trembles when he sees  
The weakest saint upon his knees."

That is well said. I heard my father tell a story once. Going along a street, he saw a little crippled boy leaning against the garden wall. He had two crutches, but was tired; he had leaned them against the wall, and was lean-

ing against it himself. Some mischievous boys came along and snatched his crutches away, so that he could not move. When they had taken the crutches, they stood out in the road and threw little pebbles at him. He endured it as long as he could. But there was a garden on the other side of the wall, and a man working in it, not noticing what was going on in the street. When the little fellow could stand it no longer, he called, "Father". The crutches were thrown back to him, and the boys scampered off. The man was over that wall in a minute, and the little boy was rescued.

Satan does tremble when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees, for it is a crippled boy calling, "Father!" And He always comes, and Satan always flees.

David's defeat of Philistia was the potential victory of Israel. All Israel had to do was to take advantage of the victory their champion had won for them, and then chase the running enemy.

I do not think any of us have appropriated all there is in Christ for us. There is a larger victory than we have yet experienced. It is all in Him, and He has "blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

Certainly at last a victorious host shall sing when the battle is over, "Hallelujah; the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Meanwhile, the children of faith exclaim, "Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

## CHURCH NEWS

### THE WEEK-END IN JARVIS STREET

Sunday was a great day in Jarvis Street. The attendance at School was 1,214. The teaching of the lesson in the Pastor's class was omitted, and the entire time was spent in prayer. At the morning service the Pastor gave a brief exhortation of about five minutes on the text, "How long halt ye between two opinions", which was part of the Sunday School lesson; and then appealed to the Christians in the congregation to rededicate themselves to the Lord, and to pledge themselves to do as Elijah did, continue in prayer until God answered by fire and with showers of blessing. Some hundreds responded to the invitation in the morning.

A large company gathered again in the afternoon at 4.30 for prayer, continuing until the evening meeting at 7.00 o'clock. At that hour a great congregation assembled; two were baptized; and the Pastor preached the sermon appearing in this issue. An invitation similar to the morning was given, when hundreds responded, thronging the aisles, and the front part of the church—there were altogether too many to count. Following this there was a great attendance at the Communion Service, and the Pastor gave the hand of fellowship to thirteen new members.

A special offering was taken during the day. The first \$533.84 was to go to Foreign Missions, Jarvis Street's share of the cost of sending missionaries back to Liberia, and the balance for Toronto Baptist Seminary. The total amounted to slightly over \$1,000.00.

God is pouring upon the people in Jarvis Street the spirit of grace and of supplication, and people are gathering for prayer each afternoon and evening. Monday evening the lecture was omitted at the nine o'clock hour, and the great company of workers assembled spent the entire time in prayer.

## Radio Message Acknowledgments

From our radio map where we mark the acknowledgments of our radio service we learn that our service is heard in the following provinces in Canada: New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Prince Edward Island, Ontario, and Manitoba; in Newfoundland; and in the following states of the Union: Oklahoma, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Missouri, Kansas, Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New York, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and Maryland.

According to the 1930 United States census, these states have a total population of 96,441,713; and the Canadian provinces, with Newfoundland, a total population of 8,127,000; or a grand total of 104,568,713.

The letters printed below were all received within sixty-four hours of the conclusion of Sunday evening's service. They represent a territory between thirteen and fourteen hundred miles from east to west, and approximately the same distance from north to south, or a total area of 1,690,000 square miles. Rather a good sized church! But our readers must remember that these letters represent only the responses from the "Amen" corners of this great church. How many other interested but uncommunicative hearers there were between these corners we have no means of knowing. Nor is it possible to estimate the number of less interested hearers who may have been sitting in the outer seats of

this great church some hundreds of miles farther off in each direction.

But these letters, all received before going to press Wednesday evening, will give some idea of the enormous reach and possible value of our radio ministry. We congratulate our Fredericton, N.B., brother on the fine quality of his radio which enables him to hear a preacher "roar" over six hundred miles away!

### LETTERS RECEIVED TUESDAY, NOV. 7TH.

Philadelphia, Pa., Nov. 5, 1933.

This evening we just happened to tune in at 7 o'clock and got the Jarvis Baptist Church, Toronto, Canada. It was a wonderful two hours. Am writing for the sermon (Nov. 5, 1933). It warms our hearts to know that there are still ministers who preach the true gospel. We are looking forward to next Sabbath if it is God's will. Yours in Christ.

Scranton, Pa., Nov. 5, 1933.

We got part of your sermon to-night but not all and would appreciate a copy of it. What we heard was a help and we feel sure that you are right about the world's greatest need. God bless you in your work.

We too are Baptists here in the States. Hope we may hear you again.

Hurley, N.Y., Nov. 5, 1933.

May I have copy of your sermon of above date. It was the most forceful, convincing sermon I have ever heard. I admire you for telling the truth right from the shoulder as you believe it. Thanking you in advance. I am enclosing postage.

Barnesville, Pa., Nov. 5, 1933.

I heard part of your most interesting discourse Sunday evening, Nov. 5, over radio, and would appreciate greatly a copy of the same. Best wishes for your success.

Tannersville, N.Y., Nov. 6, 1933.

Kindly send me copy of THE GOSPEL WITNESS which contains your address last evening (Nov. 5). I enjoyed your discourse very much. The depression would not last long if all our ministers would preach as you do.

Pittsburgh, Pa., Nov. 5, 1933.

Thank you for your sermon to-night. Wish all would get back to the Christ and preach as you do. God bless you and your, I am sure, strong church. The announcer said your sermon would be printed and that one could have a copy. I would like to show it to a preacher, I am sure it would help some, and if you have a description of your church in printed form I thank you so much. The best sermons I have heard for some time and what the church has to get back to if we are to get the answer to the prayers of God's people.

Monaca, Pa.

For a number of Sunday nights we are listening to your evening broadcast. God bless you and your work. Your baptismal service is very clear. Please send me one copy of your sermon preached Nov. 5, 1933 (this Sunday), and which is published in the paper THE GOSPEL WITNESS.

Turtle Creek, Pa., Nov. 5, 1933.

Would you kindly forward to me a copy of THE GOSPEL WITNESS containing your radio address on I Kings 18:17, Elijah.

Clifton, N.J.

Kindly send me three copies of the sermon you preached Sunday evening, November 5, 1933.

Canartota, N.Y., Nov. 6, 1933.

If you will please send me a copy of your fine sermon last night will be glad to read it, and pass it on to others.

Brooklyn, N.Y., Nov. 5, 1933.

Your sermon on Sunday evening, Nov. 5, certainly did come over the air strong and clear, and how could such a message come otherwise especially from one who has fought the cause without fear or favour. When you spoke of the poisoned philosophy of Germany in our schools and colleges we knew just what you meant, for our son has been inoculated with this German poison which seems to have been strong enough to poison his belief in the virgin birth. He is now a professor in the New York University and feel that he would be the richer for this acceptance. And as you say Germany will be the curse of the world for the seeds of poison she has sown. The singing also was fine, sounded as though the church was in our house (including yourself). It is a pleasure to form a contact like this through the radio especially with such as yours, for it makes us feel at home, so much like my own Greenwood Baptist Church, Rev. Francis W. O'Brien which makes a very good team, O'Brien & Shields—fighters for the cause of Christ.

I will appreciate a copy of your sermon in THE GOSPEL WITNESS and enclose a coin for same. We cease to wonder at radio and yet way down here in New York in Brooklyn suburbs of Flatbush, we must wonder when it is one of God's gifts just found out by mere man. Two hours on the air makes a lot of church people here gasp, but to spend one-half day on a Sunday newspaper and at funny sheets—well poor things, give them our sympathy.

Many of our churches are modern refrigerators, and what else could they be when they have in the pulpit an icicle? And others use such swell fancy phrases like Fosdick that one would think that his words are wrapped in melted butter. What the world needs is more men of the Theodore Roosevelt (not Franklyn D.) to put punch and power into the preaching of the Word and it is coming from the Jarvis St. Baptist Church.

My letter might read a little familiar but as brothers in Christ we are one.

Wooster, Ohio.

We enjoy your messages very much. We would like to have the sermon sent to us, preached Sunday evening, Nov. 5, or any other, to give to a friend. Inclosed you'll find a dime. We are among the poor of these times. We do pray God's blessing upon your work. I rejoice to know that the Lord is with you and will strengthen you. The messages came in wonderfully good and clear. How glad we are of the good work; we rejoice with you. I hope to send more help later on. I am a Canadian.

Harriston, Ont., Nov. 6, 1933.

Will you kindly send me a copy of the sermon preached by the pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields, on Sunday, Nov. 5, in the evening.

Beaver, Pa.

Please send me the message that was broadcast from the Jarvis St. Church this Sunday evening, Nov. 5, 1933.

Loganville, Pa., Nov. 6, 1933.

I listened in last evening and heard you preach a wonderful sermon, comparing our troublous times with those in the days of Ahab and Elijah. I would be pleased to have a copy of THE GOSPEL WITNESS containing your sermon. Will send you a contribution on my next pay day.

May God bless and richly reward you for your labours in the Lord is my prayer. I agree with you in all you said, but I believe God will have to make distress heavier before all the modern sinners will be willing to listen to the truth, for in our section of the country people live about the same as in prosperous times—heedless, Godless, worldly. God bless you.

Tupper Lake, N.Y., Nov. 6, 1933.

I heard part of your sermon over the radio Sunday night the 5th and I would like a copy of the paper that prints it. May God bless you and your work. We need more pastors who are sound in the faith.

Waterloo, Iowa, Nov. 5, 1933.

We have just listened to your inspiring sermon of this evening, one that should be of practical interest to every believer, as well as those who fail to show any interest in our Saviour and his Kingdom.

We note that you will send a copy of the sermon to those who write, and if so, would appreciate a copy by mail, for which we thank you very much.

Phoenix, N.Y., Nov. 6, 1933.

We enclose a check for a dollar to help you in your work. We enjoyed your service last evening beyond what we can express in words; and send you this gift in appreciation of the help to us. I am an ordained minister out of employment, with no income, yet we felt we must help you, for as we listened in, we heard the old-fashioned hymns and an old fashioned gospel message, and we thank God that there are a few left who are not afraid to preach the truth. My wife's membership was with the Baptist Church, of —, N.Y., whilst my membership is with the — Church. In all probability we shall be listening in next Sunday evening.

Toronto 9, Nov. 4, 1933.

Enclosed find \$7.00 for the Radio Fund. Have been greatly blessed in the messages heard every Lord's Day. May God bless you and give many souls to the glory to God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Kingsville, Ont., Nov. 5, 1933.

After hearing the sermon of Dr. Shields this evening and your offer to those that requested the sermon, I am taking the advantage to obtain one. Thanking you in advance.

Bridgeport, Conn., Nov. 6, 1933.

Having listened to your sermon last evening, Nov. 5, and being very much impressed, I am very anxious to have a

copy of that sermon, so that I may read it and pass it along to some of my friends.

I would be especially pleased to have an extra copy so that I might give it to my own pastor.

Krugerdorf, Ont., Nov. 5, 1933.

I have just now turned off the radio after listening to your service from station CFRB.

My mother, wife and myself all listened and want you to know how much we enjoyed the sermon in particular.

We were fortunate in getting it all through good to-night, as sometimes we have a lot of trouble with WLW cutting us off, but to-night it was perfect and we did receive a blessing.

We always tune you in every Sunday night and it usually comes in good for the first hour until the sermon commences and then we get so much interference we have to give it up, much to our disappointment, as we have no other way of enjoying church service except by radio and there are so many on the air who will only poison you with modernistic rubbish that I'd rather not listen to them at all.

We sometimes get Donald K. Barnhouse and Paul Rader. I like them both but prefer Mr. Barnhouse. He always gives you some real spiritual food.

As you referred in your sermon to-night to the Convention in Toronto First Avenue Baptist Church some years ago, it all come back to my mind, as my wife and I were delegates to that Convention from Milberta Baptist Church, under the pastorate of Leander Roblin.

We have no church to fellowship with at all now. New Liskeard is the closest Baptist church to us and it is 40 miles to drive by car, and it has drifted with the times also.

I do wish we could get more power on our Canadian radio stations so we could get your services through regularly, for we feel ourselves growing cold for the need of regular spiritual food.

I bought the radio to get your service more than anything else, but must admit that we are a little disappointed.

Dr. Shields will you please send me a copy of THE GOSPEL WITNESS containing to-night's sermon? I want to drink it in again at my leisure. Will always listen when we can get you.

Troy, Penna., U.S.A., Nov. 6, 1933.

It is a cause of thankfulness to find there are those on the earth at this time who keep the faith as did Elijah in his generation.

I would appreciate for a brother whose radio isn't working, a report of last night's inspiring sermon, by one whose faith is still in working order after years of service.

Easthampton, Mass., Nov. 6, 1933.

By chance I "tuned in" to your broadcast two weeks ago last eve, and became so much interested that I determined not to miss any of your services if they came through the radio after that. I was surely thrilled by the "Elijah" sermon last night, and am anxious to receive one or more copies, so that I can pass them on to my minister and others.

I am an old lady 75 years of age, was brought up under the "old-time religion" by parents who honoured the Bible and accepted its teachings from cover to cover, and have always stood fast by my early training. It has grieved me sorely to note the "falling away" from the truth by the modernistic churches. The preachers are worried, and lacking in "drawing power," but do not yet seem to see why they have failed. It is to be hoped that they will "get back to the Bible" as you advised last eve.

I belong to the Congregational Church here, but would prefer the Baptist if there was one of that denomination in my town. All churches in Mass. are too much tinctured with Modernism and are consequently lacking in spirituality. There are some fine preachers yet, however. One that I have heard over the air is Dr. Conrad of Park St. Church, Boston. I am told that he is 77 years old, but preaches with great voice and vigor the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

I will enclose some stamps for postage. Wish they were so many dollars, but my income has been much reduced by financial losses so I can only add good wishes and a continued interest in your courageous work of bringing the Bible message to mankind.

#### LETTERS RECEIVED WEDNESDAY

Stryker, Ohio, Nov. 1, 1933.

I happened to listen-in on the radio last Lord's day evening and heard a part of your broadcast. Though I did not hear all of it, yet I think you believe in the precious Word of God and the wonderful truths it contains. I never heard you before but hope that your object in broadcasting is to honour and glorify our Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, the message that this poor world of lost sinners needs is the old, old story of God's love as revealed in such scriptures as John 3:16, etc.

I am a young Christian, just 21 years old, and distribute tracts (a few samples of which I've enclosed) in my spare time, mostly by mail.

I would greatly enjoy hearing from you sometime.

Did you ever read "Safety, Certainty and Enjoyment" by Geo. C.; "Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth" by Scofield; or the "Midnight Cry" by Ironside? If not I shall be glad to send them. I give away many copies and would like to send them to you too, if you would care to read them.

If you know any young men or women my age who are Christians, I would be glad for their addresses. There seem to be so very few young people who are interested in the Word of God, that it is indeed encouraging to hear of some yet.

My prayer is that our Lord will most richly bless you and your radio messages, to the salvation of many precious souls, and the upbuilding of those already saved.

Following is the name and address of this writer. Harold Vernier, Box 614, Stryker, Ohio.—Ed. E. W.

Orrville, Ont., Nov. 6th, 1933.

Enclosed you will find a cheque for \$2.00 which I would like you to use for the Radio Fund. I have never heard a sermon over the radio as we have not got one, but I have heard the joyful sound of the blessed gospel of Jesus Christ and want to help to spread the good news to others.

Benton Harbor, Mich., Nov. 6, 1933.

I would be so thankful for the sermon you preached Sunday evening, November 5th. We heard a part of it but a neighbour heard it all and said it was so good. I thank you very much.

Bridgeton, N.J., Nov. 6, 1933.

Would you please send us a copy of your Sunday evening sermon? We enjoyed it very much over the radio, but we had interference from another station and did not hear all of it. We heard your services a few times last winter and enjoyed them and also enjoy your wonderful organ.

Snow Hill, Md., Nov. 6, 1933.

Last evening I tuned in on the radio, and became much interested in a sermon to which I listened. I was impressed with the logic and forcefulness of the speaker, but had no idea who was preaching nor where. When sermon was ended I understood from the announcer that it was from the Baptist Church, Jarvis Street, Toronto, Canada. I failed to get the name of the pastor; but if that sermon was typical of the sermons you hear, I want to congratulate you upon having such a preacher. I would be pleased to receive printed copy of said sermon, as announcer said it would be sent to anyone requesting it.

St. Catharines, Ont., Nov. 6th, 1933.

I am not a Baptist, but like your good common sense sermons. God will bless you. The 12th inst. will be my 84th birthday, if spared. (\$5.00 was enclosed.)

Louisville, Ky., Nov. 6, 1933.

I have heard you preach over the radio the last two Sabbath evenings. I hope I am not taking too great a liberty when I say, May I have both sermons. I want to send last night's sermon to a young man whose lot is cast among the Modernists. He is trying very hard to do his Christian duty. Won't you pray for him that his faith may remain clear and pure and steadfast. I cannot express my enjoyment and appreciation of your preaching. I wish there were many more such "troublers of Israel."

Utica, N.Y., Nov. 6, 1933.

I was so glad to hear your inspired sermon last Sunday evening. May God bless you with health and spirit so you may keep on doing His good work over radio as well as in church. Since hearing that Baptists preach the Bible also, I am thinking of leaving the Seventh-day Adventist Church, who got me to unite with them 3 years ago, claiming they are the remnant church, and only ones who preach the Bible in these last days.

Will you please send me the sermon in GOSPEL WITNESS of last Sunday. Find a little remittance, wish it was more, but we are out of employment. Will be listening in every Sunday night.

Oxford, New York, Nov. 5, 1933.

We were fortunate to hear a part of your sermon to-night after our own evening service. Your message was an inspiration and blessing to us. I had never before been privileged to hear you speak but have read of your work.

We would be very glad to receive a copy of the sermon which you gave to-night.

May the Lord continue to bless you and make you a continued blessing until He comes.

Milford, Mass., Nov. 6, 1933.

I listened in on your Sunday evening service which was wonderful. I love to hear the old-time Gospel preached, it's so seldom we hear it now. Nothing is preached now but material things that are not worth the time they take to preach them.

My husband is ill this three years with tuberculosis and if it were not for the Bible and the faith I have in God Who answers all my prayers, I could not go on. He gives me new strength as the days come, to do my duty through much prayer. How I love to get alone with Him when my trials are great, and my burden heavy, and cast all my cares upon Him my Saviour.

So will you please be kind enough to send me one of your Sermons and I shall appreciate it very much.

We are Canadians in a strange land, have been in U.S.A. for last nine years, and it was wonderful to tune in my radio and get such good reception on a Canadian station. I shall look forward to hearing the good old Gospel of truth every Sunday evening as my husband will also. Thanking you kindly.

Bloomfield, N.J., Nov. 6, 1933.

Just a little note to let you know that God speaking through you, has sent a blessing to me and many others I am sure.

This is only the second note I have ever written to any radio program. The first note was to a church at Atlanta, Georgia, about four years ago.

I am only a young married man, not quite 30 years old, I surely love to hear that old-time religion preached. So many preachers have lost their grip on God, and their sermons are mechanical and uninteresting. I am a Baptist, but due to our two small children, my wife and I must take turns at going to church Sunday evenings. Keep up your good work for God is holding your reward. I really believe a great revival is on the way to take the whole world by storm, as that mighty rushing wind came from Heaven in olden times. Let's pray that it may come very soon, for the world is really depressed because of sin. A real revival is the only hope for the whole world. I'll be tuning in CFRB again, and may God richly bless your earnest efforts.

P.S.—Your whole service was very beautiful, full of life, the singing was clear as a bell and your sermon and baptism service was very easily understood. Tell your choir and assistants that we listeners appreciate their efforts. That is some Sunday School (1,214). I have a class of seven boys at Clinton Hill Baptist Church, Clinton Ave. and 14th St., Newark, and Rev. Koller preaches the old-time religion just like you. Thanks.

W. Concord, Mass., Nov. 6, 1933.

Listening to your sermon over the radio last night I was very much impressed by it and would greatly appreciate a copy of the sermon.

Hillsboro, N.C., U.S.A., Nov. 6, 1933.

I shall be pleased to receive copy of your Sunday Night's sermon, as broadcast.

Ithaca, N.Y., U.S.A., Nov. 7, 1933.

I am enclosing herewith twenty-five cents, for which please send to my address as above, five copies of the October 12th issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS, containing the sermon of Dr. Shields, preached Sunday evening, October 8th, 1933, entitled: "Once More—Why Did Christ Die?"

I consider it the best exposition of the subject I have ever seen, and I am circulating it among my friends, each of whom appreciates it apparently as much as I do.

Carlstadt, N.J., Nov. 5, 1933.

We have been listening to-night with much interest to the broadcast from your church and are heartily in accord with your message as sent forth by your work in the church.

Will you please send us a copy of your paper THE GOSPEL WITNESS containing this message of the evening.

Grotor, Connecticut, Nov. 6, 1933.

Will you please send me a copy of the radio sermon, Sunday evening, November 5th.

If you have any sample copies of your paper THE GOSPEL WITNESS I would also appreciate receiving one of these.

Brooklyn, N.Y., Nov. 6, 1933.

Thank you for your wonderful sermon of yesterday, Sunday the 5th inst. It was timely, forceful, and quite understandable. Would appreciate a copy of same.

Chestertown, Maryland, Nov. 6, 1933.

On November 5 I heard a part of your sermon by radio. The weather conditions here were unfavorable at times, so I am asking you to send me a copy as the announcer said you would do so.

I was so impressed by what I did hear, I am eager to hear it all. The singing was an inspiration.

Thanking you and wishing you every success in your work.

Mount Rainier, Maryland, Nov. 5, 1933.

My husband and I have just heard your wonderful sermon over the radio, we would like very much to have a copy. We had some interference just as the announcer gave your name, so very sorry we did not get it. How I wish we could have more sermons like this one.

If there is any cost to a copy of the sermon please tell me.

Fredericton, N.B., Nov. 6, 1933.

The writer was mighty glad to hear you roar out that positively great sermon last night, and am enclosing 24 cent stamps to pay postage on about 15 or 20 of them. Some of which I want to hand to preachers, to help them to wake up.

Where there is no vision the people perish.

Thank you, and may God greatly sustain and greatly bless you, is my prayer. Lovingly yours.

Benton Harbour, Mich., Nov. 6, 1933.

Please send me a few copies of the sermon you delivered Sunday evening Nov. 5, over station CFRB.

Enclosed please find 2 stamps for postage. With thanks, yours in Christ.

Duxbury, Mass., Nov. 5, 1933.

On the evening of October 29th my wife and I were listening at the radio, and wishing for more spiritual food I turned the dial until we heard some wonderful music: the songs of Zion. Then we heard a wonderful sermon. It was the good old-time religion.

Last night we tuned in again to the Toronto station and heard an even more wonderful sermon. It was what we have been looking for for years: the John the Baptist message; the call to repentance. It is the only message that will save the world from a fate similar to that of Sodom, of Greece, of Rome, and of other nations that went to destruction.

I was impressed with your remarks in reference to the human efforts being made by the different nations to extricate themselves from the awful condition they are in. All such

efforts will fail. Here in the U.S.A. the noble experiment has failed. You can't force people into abstinence. Now we are trying the N.R.A. which, I believe, embodies many of the principles of the Golden Rule. But you can't coerce people into living out that wonderful principle. Ezekial 36:25-27, given the only solution of this problem.

I wish your sermon on Elijah could be sounded from every pulpit in the land.

I know where I could use ten copies to good advantage if you have them to spare. God bless you brother, and give you more of the Spirit that rested upon Elijah and John the Baptist.

I am enclosing a portion of my tithe to help send for the message.

Warrenton, Va., Nov. 6, 1933.

It was a source of great pleasure to listen to that grand and glorious Gospel sermon you delivered last night. May the Lord greatly bless you. I would greatly appreciate it if you would send me a copy of the sermon you preached last night, Nov. 5. Thanking you in advance for your kindness.

Brooklyn, N.Y., Nov. 6, 1933.

We have for the past two hours been listening to your wonderful service over the radio with almost perfect reception.

Have especially enjoyed your beautiful Gospel message for which the whole world at present is so much in need.

We are Torontonians who have many times attended the services in Jarvis Street Church, and my mother and brother and sister are members there now. Perhaps you may recall that I have given Gospel Messages in song both in the church and at your open air services.

We hope to hear more of these uplifting services, and am enclosing one dollar to help carry on the good work so that thousands of others may hear the true Gospel. Would like to be a regular contributor. If you would, along with a copy of your sermon, send me whatever facility you have for mailing contributions, I shall count it a great privilege to help in this wonderful work.

Seagrave, Nov. 6, 1933.

You will find enclosed one dollar for radio fund. We do enjoy and receive much spiritual help from your sermons. Last evening was the finest yet, because we think it was the key, so to speak, of all our problems. I wish we could send more and hope to be able to in the future.

Would like very much to receive two copies of last evening's sermon, or of GOSPEL WITNESS containing this sermon, one for ourselves and one to send to a young minister in Saskatchewan, who we know needs guidance.

Yours with many prayers for this revival which I feel is surely coming.

## The Union Baptist Witness

Is the Official Publication of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec. Send all communications to the Office Secretary, 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto 2, Canada.

### ORILLIA

The new Bethel Baptist church on Colborne Street, is being completed this week, and the opening services will be held on Sunday, November 12, preceded by a prayer-meeting on Saturday evening. The church was designed by Deacon W. M. Mann, and has been erected, very largely, by volunteer labour of the members of the congregation. The building is made of stone, stucco and concrete, and is one storey in height with a well finished basement, which is to be used as a Sunday-school. The main auditorium has a seating capacity of about 300, and is very attractive in appearance.

The services on Sunday will be conducted by Pastor Byers and the Deacons, and in the evening Rev. C. J. Loney will open a special evangelistic campaign which will be continued each evening for ten days. On Monday evening Rev. W. E. Atkinson will be the speaker. On Sunday a number of candidates will be baptized at both morning and evening services.

We congratulate the Orillia church and the Pastor on this splendid achievement, and we believe that great things are in store for them in the future.

### GUELPH

We wish also to congratulate the York Road Baptist church, Guelph, on the completion of their new church. The opening services will be on Sunday, November 12, and Rev. W. E. Atkinson will be the special speaker.

We have followed with interest the efforts of Pastor Chipchase and his members in building their church for themselves. No one has worked harder than the Pastor himself, and now they have

a splendid little stone church to their credit. We feel sure that this is just the beginning of a great work in Guelph, and ask the friends of the Union to remember this in prayer.

### HESPELER

We rejoice in the recent news of blessing at Hespeler. A young man, for whom they have been long praying, responded to the invitation and was gloriously saved. A young lady who has not been in the church more than three or four times also took a definite stand for Christ.

### ST. PAUL'S, MONTREAL

News of blessing has come from St. Paul's Bilingual Church recently. Former members are coming back. New faces are seen at practically every service. Several are waiting for baptism.

Services are now being held under a newly formed French Evangelistic Mission at Taylor Presbyterian Church on Papineau Ave. Pastor St. James is the President, and is ably assisted by a converted R.C. Priest, and other French workers. All interested in this French Evangelism are expecting great things. WITNESS readers are asked to pray for this difficult task that God may guide and use His chosen ones to win precious souls from the superstition and ignorance of Roman Catholic teaching.

### ANNIVERSARY SERVICES

The Fenelon Falls church celebrated its Anniversary on Sunday, October 29th. They had a great day, with a full house morning and evening. The ministry of the Kinsman Quartette was enjoyed at both services.

### OUTGOING MISSIONARIES

Rev. and Mrs. H. L. Davey, and Mr. Percy E. Clubine, M.A., will sail, D.V., from Montreal at midnight on November 16th. Mr. and Mrs. Davey will be accompanied by their young son, Neill Hague Davey, and by Daniel Seypeyhen. We wonder if Danny will be glad to get home again! The missionaries expect to sail from Liverpool on December 2nd, for Grand Bassa, arriving there some time about the end of the month.

On Thursday evening, November 16th, there will be a Farewell gathering in St. Paul's church, Montreal, when Mr. and Mrs. Davey and Mr. Clubine will speak. We shall give accounts of the various meetings held by the Daveys and Mr. Clubine in next week's WITNESS.

### CONVENTION PLEDGES

We are grateful to the churches who have responded so well to the call made at the Convention for a special offering for Liberia, and we would remind the others that their money should be in just as soon as possible.

### CONVENTION REPORTS

We have a few of these on hand still, and shall be glad to forward them to any desiring more. The report of the Convention as given in the November 2nd issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS will also be mailed to those desiring it. Remember the nominal charge of 5c per copy for THE WITNESS.

### THE MISSIONARY BULLETIN

For the month of October, Convention news will have served the readers of the Missionary Bulletin. The November issue will be sent out in a few days.

**Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf**

Vol. 8

No. 4

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 47 November 16th, 1933

**FOURTH QUARTER****AHAB; SIN, DEFEAT AND DEATH**

Lesson Text: I Kings 20-22; II Chron. 18-20.

Golden Text: "And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine."—I Kings 21:19.

Bible School Reading: 22: 1-8; 13-29.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS:**

Monday—Judges 7:19-25.

Tuesday—Psalm 3:1-12.

Wednesday—I Samuel 13:8-14.

Thursday—Ezek. 14:1-11.

Friday—Luke 12:13-21.

Saturday—Mark 14:53-65.

**I. THE CONFLICT WITH THE SYRIANS, (20:1-43).**

Ahab's reign was a somewhat troublesome one, internally and externally. In our lesson he is found at war with the Syrians, his northern enemies, who had besieged him in his capital city of Samaria (v. 1). Benhadad, the king of Syria, evidently had the advantage, at first, due probably to his superiority in numbers, and he sought to reap the benefit therefrom in the shape of spoil, which he demanded from Ahab, (vs. 2-6). His demand being refused, he made increased efforts to take the city, (vs. 7-12), but was prevented from doing this by divine intervention. A prophet of God instructed Ahab concerning the means of deliverance, (vs. 13, 14), and these instructions being followed, a great victory was gained by the Israelites, (vs. 15-21). The prophet of God again appeared and warned Ahab to prepare for a future attack, (v. 22), which occurring as predicted, resulted in the Syrians again meeting with defeat, (vs. 23-30), but this time Ahab marred the event by disobedience in permitting Benhadad to escape with his life, (vs. 31-34), for which he suffered the judgment of God, (vs. 35-43).

Several things are worthy of note respecting this history. First, in relation to the Syrians, concerning whom we observe, the arrogance of their king, (vs. 2, 3, 10), his drunkenness, (v. 12), his defeat and humiliation, (vs. 20, 30), and his escape, (v. 34), also the heathen belief respecting the local nature of gods, (v. 23), and the new plan put into effect

for the overcoming of Israel, (v. 24). In the second place, in relation to the Israelites, observe, the submissive spirit of their king, (v. 4), followed by the firmer tone, (v. 9), and the wise retort given to Benhadad's boastfulness, (v. 11). There is a distinct lesson in this statement which may well be taken to heart; in that while boastfulness is always out of place, it is particularly so before the accomplishment of any intended action. It is never safe to take anything for granted. Counting chickens before they are hatched is a very foolish procedure. It is better to wait until after the accomplishment of a deed before exulting in the same. Calm trust in God should be our attitude under all circumstances, and not fleshly boasting, (Prov. 27:1; Eccles. 9:8). Observe, further that Israel's victories were due to following the divine plan, (v. 14). Ahab has sinned against God, but the Lord remembered him in mercy, and gave him deliverance from his enemies. Note the wisdom of following the divine directions in all the affairs of life. The vindication of God's presence and power should also be observed, (vs. 13, 28). God is not confined to any place, and is able to give victory in mountain or plain.

**II. NABOTH'S VINEYARD, (21:1-29).**

Among the recorded evil deeds of Ahab that recorded in this chapter is surely one of the most shameful. The king desirous of possessing a certain property near his palace, offers to buy the same, but this offer being refused, he returns to his home in a dull mood. His wife, discovering the reason for his state, formulates a plan to gain possession of the property, which being carried out, succeeds in its purpose, after which Ahab takes possession, but is denounced by Elijah for his sin.

The whole incident is of interest, culminating as it does, in a dramatic climax. First, we are informed of the owner, a location, of the vineyard, (v. 1). This is followed by the offer of Ahab to give an exchange for, or to purchase the desired property, (v. 2), which was declined by Naboth because he had no wish to part with an estate inherited from his fathers, (v. 3). In this he was but acting in accordance with the law, which forbade the permanent estrangement of such property. The king was grieved at the refusal, and went home pouting like a little child, (v. 4). Sometimes saints of God act in a similar manner when they cannot get their own way. The foolishness, and evil of such conduct should be pointed out. We ought to put away childish things when we reach the years of discretion.

It appears quite clear by this incident that while Ahab was wicked, Jezebel was the stronger of the two in wickedness. It was she who concocted the scheme for the possession of the coveted piece of property; a scheme characterized by subtlety, deception, and diabolical murderous design, and one which implicated others in the carrying out of its nefarious object, (vs. 8-10), resulting in the death of an innocent man, (vs. 11-13). After the carrying out of the plan she directed her husband to take possession

of the vineyard, which he obediently did, (vs. 14-16). The king sulked in his disappointment, but the queen put into effect a ruthless plan for the satisfaction of the royal will. She evidently believed that the king was quite justified in using the power of his position in the accomplishment of his purpose. Note how the same idea governs many these days who are in positions of influence. Then, as now, others are made to sin, and suffering is brought upon the innocent, in order to satisfy the unholy desires of certain individuals.

Amid the triumph of the wicked comes the intervention of God. The wicked may be successful in their plots, and men may be deceived respecting their real character, but God can never be deceived. Nor is He an idle spectator of all that is going on in the world. He is concerned with each event, and at some time He is certain to make known His presence and will in the matter. Evil may seem to triumph for a time, but the duration of such a period is limited, and while it lasts the enjoyment of the fruit of evil is never complete. Note how sin brings its own punishment, and spoils the triumph of the wicked. Observe, further, Ahab's attitude toward God's servant, (v. 20). Any person who considers a faithful servant of God his enemy, is in a bad condition indeed in the sight of God. Note may also be made of the judgment pronounced against the house of Ahab, (vs. 19-24), the wickedness of the king, with the special guilt of his wife, (v. 25), together with his humiliation, (v. 27), and the mitigation of the sentence respecting himself, (v. 29). It is clearly manifest there is no satisfaction in wickedness, and that sooner or later we reap what we sow, (Gal. 6:7).

**III. AHAB'S LYING PROPHETS, (22: 1-53).**

Another significant event is recorded in this chapter in the incident of Ahab, and his lying prophets. Concerning it several things are worthy of note. First, the unholy alliance between Jehoshaphat and Ahab, (vs. 2-4), implying a union of the godly with the ungodly, an alliance forbidden by the Lord (2 Chron. 19:20). Second, the request of Jehoshaphat, signifying his desire to know the mind of God before returning from the joint expedition, (v. 5). Such an attitude was quite proper, and would have been the means of guarding the king from mistake, if he had listened to the divine message, but this he failed to do, and thereby brought suffering upon himself and others. In the third place, note Ahab's prophets. They were evidently in the pay of the king, and expected to speak in accordance with his wishes. Such persons are not prophets of God, but merely poor miserable hirelings, (Num. 22:7). Jehoshaphat was not satisfied with the message of Ahab's prophets, but desired to receive direction through a prophet of God, (v. 7). Note Ahab's dislike of such a prophet (v. 8); the worldwide advice offered Micaiah by Ahab's messenger, (v. 13); the prophet's reply, (v. 14); his message to the king (vs. 15-23); characterized by truthfulness, fearlessness, revelation, and prediction.