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

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THE GLORY OF GOD

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

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"When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."—John 11:4.

We are all familiar with the picture of that Bethany home where Mary and Martha and their brother Lazarus lived. You know how the days of sunshine were succeeded by days of gloom and grief,—how sickness came in at the door, and then death, and with death, the darkness of a great sorrow that was almost akin to despair. And you know, too, in the early gladness, in its gradual eclipse by the shadow of death, and in the subsequent sudden outshining of the glory of Lazarus' new life, that Jesus was inseparably associated with it all. As the door shuts at last upon that Bethany home, and we leave the loved ones there feasting in the fullest enjoyment of the favour and fellowship of the Son of God, we are compelled to admit that each of the colours of the picture, some of which, when viewed in a single relation, seem dark and forbidding, plays its own part in the harmony of the whole: the shadow is as necessary as the light, the clouds as essential to its beauty as the sun. The distance of the Master from the death-bed of Lazarus, which appears at close view to be the chief defect in the picture, when viewed perspective, is seen to be its chief charm, and to furnish its supreme claim to immortality.

And our lives, even the most commonplace of them, are reproductions of this picture of Bethany, with all its mystery, with all its majesty of power and glory. We are all familiar with its pain and its parting, with its grave and its grief, and with its lonely path to the sepulchre watered with tears. Only we cannot view our own lives perspective as yet; and therefore, we cannot

understand why our Lord does not always come the moment we send for Him, why sometimes He tarries until we have dug a grave! I have thought, therefore, that if we can come to an understanding of these profound words of the Master, it will help us perhaps to understand Him better; and therefore also the better to understand ourselves.

I want to give you at the outset this evening an outline of my thought, in order that you may the more easily follow my argument.

First of all, this text suggests a *divine prerogative*: Jesus Christ lays down the principle that God has a moral right to glorify Himself, even at the expense of human pain. Secondly, He mentions a *human occasion for the exercise of that prerogative*: "This sickness", He declares, "is not unto death, but for the glory of God." He then teaches us that *God is supremely glorified through Jesus Christ, and through Him in His human relationship*: "that the Son of God might be glorified thereby".

I.

Here, then, the Lord Jesus names A DIVINE PREROGATIVE. He has been told that Lazarus is sick. He answers as an authoritative interpreter of the problems of human life. He dares to go to the very root of things, and to give the "why" of human experience. He writes the history of the individual as He would write the history of the world, by saying, "In the beginning God." It is a bold answer, an answer which some may find it

difficult to receive; for immediately the question will arise in our minds, whether God has a right to glorify Himself at the expense of human suffering. Our Lord Jesus boldly asserts that He has that right; that it is His own peculiar prerogative to glorify Himself. And we shall never understand God until we, in our thought, and in our conduct, accord Him that supreme place. We are disposed to change the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man. There is a humanizing tendency in the religious thought of to-day—a disposition to summon God to the bar of human judgment, to measure His character, and to try His every action by human standards of equity. It is assumed that God may be interpreted by our own standards of what is right. Whittier has said—and I think, though written years ago, it still expresses very clearly the thought of the day. It involves a recognition of God's transcendent greatness, that He is above us, that He cannot always be understood:—

"Not mine to look where cherubim
And seraphs may not see:
But nothing can be good in Him
Which evil is in me."

But that is not wholly true. There are things which may be, and are, good in Him, which would be evil in us; for the simple reason that He is God, and beside Him there is none else. Thus, for a man to work for his own glory can be only evil; while for God to make His own glory the end of all is pre-eminently right. Again, I say, for the simple and sufficient reason that He only is God.

This is a democratic age. The king must be surrounded by constitutional restrictions. We are proud of the parliament. We boast that we are our own masters. And this is well enough as a political principle. No man may safely be trusted with absolute power, just because he is a man. A human despot soon becomes a human devil. We recognize that, and glory in the constitutional principle. But the principle that "Jack is as good as his master", has invaded the religious realm; and the church barons are disposed to draw up a new Magna Charta, which they demand the King of kings shall sign. They would frame a constitution, and surround Him with a parliament. They would reverse the principle of election; for they prefer that the creature shall elect the Creator, rather than that the Creator should elect the creature. The only principle of election which they would favour would be one which would result in a responsible, representative government of things spiritual, in heaven. The only laws of God of which they would approve would be such as were enacted "by and with the consent of His counsellors". Thus they would strip the Absolute of His prerogatives, and reduce the Kingdom of God to a condition that would be little better than a state of anarchy. What would follow if this human desire, which is not new to this age by any means, could be realized.

I remember being entertained in the home of a certain gentleman some years ago. We were sitting talking on Saturday evening when our conversation turned upon the subject of divine sovereignty. He was a strong-minded, strong-willed man; and getting up from his chair, he walked up and down the floor of his library, and then pausing before me he said, "Look here, sir, if the Bible

left no alternative but to believe in the doctrine of election, I should be an infidel"! What a terrible thing that would be—for him! As there was little likelihood of our reaching an agreement, I changed the subject.

Presently he told me of a man who telephoned him one day, and said, "Can you find employment for a poor man who is at my door?" "Yes", he said, "I will telephone the factory, and tell the foreman to take him on." He was accustomed to go early to his office (he was an employer of labour) and about eight o'clock the next morning the foreman came into his office, and said, "I have trouble in the shop, sir." "Well, what is the matter?" "The men have taken off their aprons, and have put on their coats; and they are going to walk out." He said, "I will go down and see what is the matter." So they went to the factory, and he said, "Now, men, what is the matter? Are you not getting wages enough?" "No complaint as to our wages, sir." "Are the hours too long?" "No complaint on that score." "Are the conditions surrounding your labour not satisfactory?" "No complaint there," they said. "Well, what is the matter?" And they replied: "You sent this man into the factory to work; he does not belong to the Union, and we simply will not work with him." "Oh," he said, "is that what is the matter? Now listen! If you have any complaint to register against me as your employer: if I do not pay you wages enough, if I do not treat you fairly in every respect, remember, I am always ready to sit down with you and talk the matter over; but," he said, "I want you to understand that I own this factory; I built it; it is mine; and I will run it as I like. If you are not satisfied with that, there is the door—Walk! This place will stand here and rot if need be, but I will be master in my own house"! That was the man who but a few minutes before had insisted that he would not allow God to be sovereign. He would himself be master, and do as he liked with his own; but the creature must be permitted to dictate to God!

Do not all history, observation, and experience, prove that in the life of the individual, of the nation, and of the world, nothing but the sovereignly directed power of that God Who "in the beginning" brought order out of chaos, can prevent a return to that chaotic condition? Men would fain tell God how to do them good. But they can know no real good unless "all things work together for good". If there be but a single exception to that universal "all", that one thing may neutralize all others; and as Naaman's leprosy threatened to bring his honour into the dust of death, as the sickness of Lazarus temporarily did, that one thing may convert all life's delicately woven purple and fine linen into a shroud to wrap a reeking corpse. There can be no good for any one of us, unless all things, in all realms of life, in all ages, in all dispensations—unless "all things work together for good to them that love God". All things cannot work together for good to them that love God unless there be an intelligent, benevolent, directing Power, to Whom all things are subject,—unless it be true that is written, "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." If I may venture so to say, by a process of purely philosophical reasoning we come to precisely the same conclusion as that at which we must arrive if we accept the authoritative word of revelation. In other words, enlightened reason and revelation are in agreement that God must be supreme or there can be no good for anyone.

This then is the revelation of God in Christ Jesus. It is true that Jesus Christ said, "When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven." He is pleased to speak of God as our Heavenly Father, rather than as a King. But Christ's conception of fatherhood was far removed from the modern view. He came not to destroy the law, or the prophets, but to fulfil. And the teaching both of the law and of the prophets, as of the New Testament, is to the effect that the father should be supreme in his own household. I know that the modern family is a kind of republic in which everybody rules but father, in which the children and not the parents are the legislators, and in which no one is regarded as eligible for the presidency unless he has been born in the family! But the New Testament sums up the whole revelation of God in respect to this matter when it says, "Children obey your parents in the Lord,"—for I will give you a penny if you do; for you shall have some sort of a treat if you are obedient? No! "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." That is all—it is right! "When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven." And His children must obey Him, because it is right!

According to Christ's teaching, therefore, this world is subject to a benevolent, paternal, Despot, Who make His own glory the supreme end of every purpose, of every act; and because He can find in all the universe none greater nor worthier than Himself,—the motive which actuates the divine Ruler is a supreme, a sovereign determination to glorify Himself. If you say it is a selfish motive, my answer is, that the glory of God is the glory of a holy, everlasting love.

II.

Here is A HUMAN OCCASION FOR THE EXERCISE OF THAT PREROGATIVE. "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God."

And before we proceed further let me call your attention to the importance of keeping our place as children in the Father's household. We shall find some doors locked against us until we are older. We shall find there are some big words in our Father's speech which we must wait to understand. There are mysteries in the kingdom of God into which even the ancient and honoured servants of the household, the angels, are forbidden to look: We shall be wise, in the presence of the problems of life, and the mysteries of the divine government, to humble ourselves, and sometimes to say, "I do not know; I cannot understand; even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight." Our entrance into the kingdom was conditioned upon our becoming as little children: our enjoyment of the kingdom is dependent upon our remembering that the most mature Christian is never in God's sight a learned philosopher, but only a little child. We must therefore trust our Father's wisdom as well as His Love, though He make darkness His secret place, and His pavilion round about Him be dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.

We must be content to believe some things which we cannot explain, for certainly there are a thousand things about us in the material realm, which come to us in the course of our daily life, which no one can possibly understand, and which no one can explain. Look, for example, at the chaotic condition of society to-day, no matter where one goes, in any nation in the world. It is all a tangled skein which no one can unravel. No one can

understand it; no one can possibly find a solvent for these problems. We stand amazed at the conditions of life, but we have to live on whether we understand or not. The appropriate attitude of every child of God is to believe in the absolute sovereignty of God, that He is on the throne and all is well.

You see then that here *our Lord asserts God's right to glorify Himself at the expense of human pain.* What a tale of physical and mental suffering, of heart-agonies, of bitter tears, is told in these two words, "This sickness"! They paint a familiar picture. There is not one of us who does not understand it. Two sisters have sent an urgent message to Jesus Christ, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick." The loved frame is become a playground for the furies; "every nerve is a road for the hot feet of pain to travel on; and every vein a canal of grief". A ministry of human love has exhausted itself, and discovers its impotence in the presence of death. There are broken hearts whose sorrow issues in scalding tears. Two sisters mourn in a house that feels empty, in a world that is cold and dark. And Christ points to that scene, and says, "It is for the glory of God." We may see that picture in real life, and learn its moral every day. But I want you to "dwell deep" this evening, to look beyond the bounds of the physical to spiritual things.

I cannot help seeing in that Bethany where Jesus was wont to visit, and where death has now taken His place, a representation of another scene. Did not God walk in the garden in the cool of the day even as the God-man rested at Bethany? But a shadow falls across the path of the man that He has made in His own image and likeness; notwithstanding, He carries until this moral sickness issues at last in spiritual death. "So he drove out the man", even as the dead Lazarus was carried by loving hands away from that Bethany home and laid yonder in the sepulchre; and the garden is empty of its chief charm.

But is there any sense in which it may be said of the tragedy of Eden as of the empty chair at Bethany, "It is for the glory of God"? Is there any true analogy between physical and moral disease? Are the underlying principles in the two cases identical?

What was the cause of Lazarus' sickness? We do not know what his ailment was. Ignoring for the moment the moral or religious aspect of the question, it is indisputable that sickness results from transgression. Science will declare that some natural law has been broken; and, whether ignorantly or presumptuously, the result is the same: inexorable law exacts the penalty. The organism has failed in some way to adapt itself to its environment—and that is another name for natural law—and disease, and perhaps death, results.

The principle, therefore, underlying the text is this, *that even a broken law may be made to contribute to the glory of God;* and whether it be a physical or moral law, it is the same in principle, for law is universal, and God is one. I am not now dealing with the origin of evil: that must remain for the present a mystery. Nor do I attempt to designate the first cause of "this sickness" of the text: I observe only that both are the result of a broken law; and that as Bethany's grief has glorified God, if God is to be God, so Eden's sin and sorrow must!

I have read that science has discovered how to convert the sweepings of a city's streets into a distilled essence whose sweet odours perfume the apparel of fair

ladies in brilliant drawing-rooms. I have read that filthy rags and even broken reeds of straw may be made into immaculate paper, upon which letters of love may be written. I was told by an expert that the finest quality broadcloth has in it always an admixture of "shoddy". I said to him, "You do not put 'shoddy' in the best broadcloth?" He said, "We could not make it without." And when he said that, I said, "Who knows? Perhaps it is made from some poor prodigal's ragged coat." And so above the clouds of mystery which impenetrably enwrap the origin and ultimate of things, my faith would enthrone an infinitely more perfect wisdom, and more consummate skill, than can be found on earth. And if transforming grace can convert "the filth of the world and the off-scouring of all things" into golden vials full of incense; if these poor fallen natures can be made white by means of blood so that Love's name may be written thereon; and if with an admixture of the shoddy of human experience, sorrow of heart, and contrition of soul, if this may be interwoven with the infinite and absolutely perfect merit of Jesus, and cunningly wrought into a robe more durable than one of innocence, even a robe of righteousness, resplendent with the beauty of holiness; if sighs may be converted into songs, and tears may be crystallized into jewels, which sing the praises and reflect the glories of redeeming love, my heart shall cry, "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about him (but) righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." True faith, which is the soul's apprehension of God as God—of God as absolutely sovereign,—will lead us to rest in the assurance that even the world's great sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God.

III.

And now, in conclusion, we are to see HOW GOD IS GLORIFIED IN CHRIST THROUGH HIS HUMAN RELATIONSHIP—"That the Son of God may be glorified thereby." What a wonderful saying that is! That this sickness, this physical malady which reduces the loved frame to a reeking corpse, until love itself is afraid to look upon it—that this sickness, in the purpose of God, may be used to glorify Himself in the Person of His Son, Jesus Christ.

It is necessary that we should have some intelligent idea of *what is meant by the glory of God*. When you speak about a man's being glorified, you mean that he is had in reputation, that he has established himself in the good opinion of his fellows: his glory is his fame. But God's glory is not His reputation among His creatures: His glory is infinitely more than what men think Him to be. An opal's glory is not its reputation among connoisseurs, nor its golden setting which holds it on the finger of a queen: it is its own inherent beauty which children's eyes may see. The diamond's glory is not the fair figure it adorns: it is its own independent, inseparable, unquenchable, light. And the glory of God is not His reputation: it is His character, His nature. *God's glory is His own essential nature, what He only is*. The history of His dealings with the world is the history of His shining, of His making Himself known, of His self-revelation. In Jesus Christ, the Sun, which is the day-dawn of truth, bathed the dewy grass beneath the patriarchs' feet with beauty; whose later, higher, fuller ray, made the face of Moses radiant; and whose

ascending brilliance encircled the prophets' brows with light—in Jesus Christ, the Sun of Truth shines from its zenith, full-orbed: "And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Thus it is through the Word made flesh, by His human relationship, God makes Himself most fully known. In the measure in which He is known as He really is, by men or angels, God is glorified.

As you read this narrative are you not impressed with *the disciples' ignorance of the Master's person, of His purpose and power?* He might have said then as later, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Phillip?" "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of His death; but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead." And He adds, "And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe." What does He mean? He said to His disciples, "Let us go into Judæa again"; and they said, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." They did not know Him! They did not see His glory. And when the word came, "He whom thou lovest is sick", He said in effect, "I am going to take you into a set of circumstances, into a certain situation, which will enable Me to show you Who I am. I am going to draw the veil and let a little of the glory shine; for otherwise you cannot know Me." So, too, man did not, and could not, know God fully in Eden. The prodigal, after his wanderings, knew the largeness of his father's heart, and the luxury of his enduring love, as even the brother at home did not know. He who is forgiven most will love the most; and redeemed souls will know God better than the angels, and therefore will glorify Him more.

"When he heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was." But they said, "Death is coming: death is in hot haste after one whom we love." But He answers, "I shall be there in time." At the grave of Lazarus, and by His own empty sepulchre, *Jesus Christ reveals the glory of "the Living God, the King of eternity"*—"who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto." Quite leisurely the Lord Jesus makes His way back to Bethany; and they meet Him on the way, and they say, "Lord, Thou art too late. If Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?" "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection of the last day." But Martha did not know that He was "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last"; that He could anticipate the last day and by His almighty fiat banish death. Therefore He comes into the place of storm and tempest, where men and women are convulsed with grief, and His voice of power rises loud and clear above the tumult, "Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said unto them, Loose him, and let him go." And, behold, the flesh-walls of human limitations drop away, the barriers of human temporality are dissolved; and we see God at work in the amplitude, the leisure, of unnumbered years; and Jesus of Nazareth grows upon our vision as "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity." Hallelujah!

Did He not know that death was coming to Eden? Did the serpent move so quietly, and speak so softly in Eden, that God did not hear him? Did He not know that Death was on the track of the man He had made? Why did He not make haste? Why did He not prevent it? Had He not been so great in power and might, had He to measure His days by the rise and set of sun, He might have hastened in His walk to the garden; but He waited for centuries, for millenniums: "He abode two days still in the place where he was", until He was ready to "bring life and immortality to light in the gospel".

It was asked at Bethany, "Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?" Have you ever asked that question, Could He not have done otherwise? Why did He wait? Why was He so long in coming? Had they known it, *He was even then using this human clay which was called Lazarus to open the eyes of the blind.* "I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe. I am glad that I was away that I might give Lazarus time to die." Think of it! "To the intent ye may believe." In principle He says, "The most important thing in the universe is that you should believe. The essential thing is that there should be some fixed centre; that there should be Someone Who from everlasting to everlasting is the same. There can be no peace, there can be no rest, there can be no order, there can be no good, unless there be Someone Who can be believed. And I am dealing with you, if you only knew it, so that you can believe. I am leading you on step by step, from one experience to another, until I bring you to the place where you can believe Me for everything." And *when you come to the place where you can believe God absolutely, you are in heaven!*

I can partially understand that: can you? I have learned to be glad that He was not there. He promised Martha that if she would believe she should see the glory of God. But the sisters could not see His glory till their eyes were washed with tears. And since then tears have often proved lenses to bring God's stars, especially the Bright and Morning Star, nearer than the most powerful telescope could bring them. Had He prevented our tears He might have spared Himself the pain of weeping, but our eyes had never been opened then. We should never have seen the King in the beauty of His self-disclosure. Deep had never called unto deep. But for the depth of human folly and ignorance we had never known the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; and but for the depth of human guilt we had never known the depth of the riches of redeeming grace. Deep had never called unto deep, and we had missed the sublimest harmonies, had not His waves and billows gone over the world!

An artist, who had made a reputation for himself as a man of skill, and who had painted many pictures, conceived a picture which he designed should be his masterpiece—his last work which was to establish his fame in the world of art. He laboured on his picture for many months. He had done much; but he could not find a background properly to set off the picture; notwithstanding, he had tried, as he thought, every possible combination of colours. One morning, after some hours of labour, he laid aside his brushes and his palette, and walked, almost in despair, out of his studio, to rest his mind; for again his utmost effort had resulted in failure. His little boy, three or four years of age, got out

of the nursery, away from his nurse, toddled along the hallway, and seeing the door of his father's studio open, as proprietor of the place, walked in. He went up to the easel, and looked at the great picture, at the paints on the palette, and the brushes which he had seen his father use. He had seen his father put paint on the picture, and why should not he? So, dipping his brush into one colour after another, he mixed up the paint, and began putting it on. Presently his nurse missed him and looked all through the house, but could not find him. Seeing her master's studio door open, she came to the threshold, and, transfixed with horror at what she saw, cried, "Master, Master, baby's spoiled your picture!" The artist, hearing her, came running from another part of the house. When he came to the door he stood first of all in wonder; and then his look of amazement changed into one of pleasure and infinite satisfaction. He stood there with folded arms and let the boy go on painting. At last he said softly, "It is the thing I have long been looking for." Presently he stood beside the child, and putting the little fellow aside very tenderly, he took the brush from his hand, and with a few master strokes brought order out of confusion. Thus baby's blunder was used to establish the father's fame!

It is a poor illustration; but I am sure of this, that against the background of the world's sin and sorrow, the divine Artist is to display His supreme glory. And I am glad for your sakes, and mine, that He was not there. I am glad of any opportunity for Him to display His faithfulness, His covenant-keeping grace.

What does it mean? What is the meaning of the two empty graves—the empty grave of Lazarus, and that of which it is but a type and symbol, the empty grave of the God-man? Does it mean that the rocky, empty sepulchre from which the Saviour rose, is a surer foundation for the feet of faith than the flowered paths of Eden could possibly have been? If it does, I say again, I am glad that He was not there. For even my little vision can see thus far, that there can be no heaven for anyone without faith in God. And if immortal faith could not bloom in Eden, it is well worth man's while to have taken a long and painful journey, if the unfading flower of a perfect trust may be gathered from the garden which stretches away from the open, empty sepulchre of Jesus Christ.

I have done when I have told you this. You have read how the great tyrant Napoleon, the murderer of nations, laid Europe waste; how he returned a conqueror from every field of blood. And you remember that our own Wellington was given command of the allied British, Portuguese, and Spanish, armies. You will recall, too, how many victories he won in the Peninsular War over the French armies, commanded by some of Napoleon's ablest marshals, for which he was accorded a high place of honour by the nations whom he served. Each victory served to establish Wellington in the confidence of the nations whose armies he commanded. But still they could not help asking, "What if he should meet Napoleon himself? Would he prove the equal of that great conqueror?"

But the meeting came at last. On the eve of Waterloo, as Napoleon stepped into his carriage to go to the battle, he said, "I am going to measure myself with this Wellington." And he did measure himself with our great English Captain,—with the result that his empire was destroyed, and he was driven into exile never to re-

turn. And when the victory of Waterloo was won, Wellington was reported to have exclaimed with great emotion, "Thank God, I have met him at last."

At Bethany and at Calvary, Death—the world's hitherto invincible conqueror—went to measure himself with our Jesus. He did it—and Jesus Christ won. The utmost power of evil was put forth, and when the Roman soldiers guarded the sealed sepulchre in Joseph's garden they were representative of unseen forces, principalities and powers; for all the hosts of hell were assembled about that sepulchre, under the command of the prince of darkness himself. And yet when His hour came the God-man stepped forth from that sepulchre, Conqueror, the Lord of life and glory. Death was driven into exile, his empire destroyed: "Death hath no more dominion over him". His power is broken and "the last enemy" shall one day be destroyed. Hell has done its utmost and has failed. Jesus Christ has triumphed over the maximum power of evil. And I am glad that He had His opportunity to the intent we might believe. Christ's grave, the saved sinners' grave, is empty. Go, my brother! go bury thy sins and thy doubts in the empty sepulchre! There is nothing left for us to do but to believe.

However deep in sin you are, however much trouble you have, however hell has conspired to ruin you, the Saviour I preach has triumphed over all the powers of darkness, and has proved Himself to be Sovereign over all, God, blessed for ever. I repeat, there is nothing for us to do now but to go and bury our sins, our doubts, our troubles, in the empty sepulchre of Jesus Christ. The tyrant Death has been robbed of its power. Meanwhile, by God's sovereign pleasure he is harnessed to His golden chariot, and made to drag His ransomed children up the shining pathway of the skies. Some of us have seen them go, and have heard them singing as they go:

"The earth recedes; it disappears,—
Heaven opens on mine eyes, mine ears
With sounds seraphic ring!
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave where is thy victory?
O Death where is thy sting?"

And above the clouds, from beyond the chambers of the sun, through open gates of pearl, we catch the echo of their music ringing down the skies—"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: unto him—unto Him—be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Mr. Brown will lead us in prayer:

Lord, we bless Thee. Our hearts before Thee have been laid open, and Thy glory has shone so brilliantly that we have not been able to comprehend it. Our sins have we seen, and our Saviour; and we rejoice that He lived that Death might die, that He died that we might live,—not of ourselves, but in Him.

Reveal Thyself to us, O Lord, this night. Come to the hearts that know Thee not. Redeem them in their own experience, as Thou hast redeemed them with Thy blood at Calvary. Come to us who have professed to love Thee, and show us how cold our love has been:

"Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove!
With all Thy quickening powers,
Kindle a flame of sacred love
In these cold hearts of ours.

"O Lord, and shall we ever live
At this poor dying rate?—
Our love so faint, so cold to Thee,
And Thine to us so great.

"Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove!
With all Thy quickening powers,
Come, shed abroad a Saviour's love,
And that shall kindle ours."

Give us that renewed faith in our conquering Christ which will lead us, in Him, from victory unto victory, until at last the kingdoms of this world shall surely have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. Amen.

THE JEALOUSY OF SAUL

A Lecture by Dr. T. T. Shields

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto,
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(Stenographically Reported)

Lesson Text: I Samuel, chapter 18.

Our lesson this evening will be found in the eighteenth chapter of First Samuel. The brief biographies contained in these historical portions of Scripture are put here for a purpose. They are an integral part of the history here recorded. I have repeatedly called your attention to the fact that this Book is the truest text-book on psychology to be found anywhere. The Spirit of God understands the minds of men, and He is able to show us how they work.

I.

This chapter introduces to us, in the opening verses, another character, the son of Saul, Jonathan by name. He is one of the few characters of Scripture of whom nothing is recorded to his discredit.

I shall keep in mind, as I speak, that I am speaking to young men and women who will themselves be teachers, and some of you, preachers. These lectures, furthermore, are read by many hundreds of ministers. It is my hope they may be suggestive to you who have to preach, and to others. The same truth that is useful to a preacher ought to be useful to laymen.

It may profit us to look into Scripture to see how frequently we may find representations—to use a big word, adumbrations—of the Christ that is to come, foregleams of the ultimate glory to be revealed in later times than the period to which a particular Scripture refers. You will always find it useful to *contrast* the most admirable characters of Scripture with our Lord Jesus, as well as to *compare* them with Him; for the most exalted type will always fall far short of the Antitype. The contrast will be to us suggestive, and will enable us the more sincerely and devotedly to love Him Who exceeds, Who excels, all others.

The chapter tells us that "Jonathan loved him (David) as his own soul". Jonathan was not without discernment. I am sure he knew what his affection for the son of Jesse would cost him. Very early in their acquaintance Saul reminded Jonathan that he had chosen the son of Jesse to his own confusion. He recognized in David a rival. He early saw that he

would become the hero of the nation, and that he would become Israel's next king. Notwithstanding that, Jonathan loved David.

But there were some things about David that made him very loveable, and therefore the love of Jonathan was the less surprising. It would appear that on their first acquaintance David had just returned in triumph from his conflict with Goliath of Gath. He had come back from the slaughter of the Philistine. Jonathan saw in him, at the outset, Israel's deliverer who had stepped into the breach in the time of crisis, and had saved Israel from a most humiliating and disastrous defeat. For that reason—there may have been other things forgotten for the moment—it may have been comparatively easy for Jonathan to love David; for he appears to have been a very attractive young man, ruddy and of a fair countenance.

What a contrast you have there to the love which God has manifested to us in Christ Jesus! "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet"—what? Not heroes; not men fighting God's battles; not worshippers of Him; not seeking to bring glory to His name, or to add anything to the extension of His kingdom; but, on the contrary, while we were fighting against the Father, not for Him,—“while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

We are told that Jonathan made a covenant with David. I hope, in your study of Systematic Theology, you will get clear views of what used to be known as “covenant theology”. As we proceed we shall see something of the fruits of this covenant. It bore fruit long after Jonathan has disappeared from the scene of action. David and Jonathan swore to be true to each other.

I think perhaps it may be well to remind ourselves, for a moment, of the purely natural affection here exemplified. “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” That ought to be the normal attitude of a Christian toward other Christians. We ought, like David and Jonathan, to love each other. I know that few of us are like David, at all loveable. It may require a good deal of grace to love some people—especially ourselves. Still, the grace of God ought to make that possible; and it ought to determine our attitude toward men and women about us. I know of no lovelier human story in the Bible than that of the constant affection of Jonathan for David. Jonathan's loyalty to his friend never wavered for a moment. He loved him in the beginning, and he loved him even to the end, and was true and faithful as a friend.

The Wise Man said, “Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.” I do not know whether any of you have been unfortunate enough to have a broken tooth. Happily, I have escaped it. But I can well imagine that it would be very uncomfortable and inconvenient. As for a foot out of joint, I do not think one needs a very vivid imagination to realize how an affliction of that sort can make everything look dark and gloomy. And yet, how few loyal people there are in the world! How many people are utterly unreliable. You cannot depend upon some people for a moment where there professions of friendship conflict with their interests. We do well to emulate the example of Jonathan in that respect. Be careful where you bestow your affections. Be careful of your choice of friends. Make sure they

are worthy. But, having assured yourself of that, learn to abhor anything that approaches disloyalty. Try to be true, straightforward, faithful. Such was Jonathan.

They made a covenant with each other. Some people are very reluctant to make promises. I never can understand why people should make a virtue of that. When the promise involves a duty that is binding upon us, it will not exempt us from the duty by merely refusing to make the promise. The duty will be just as binding as if we pledged ourselves to do it. We cannot very well get along in this life without covenants. If you rent a house, you have to make a covenant with the landlord. If you buy a house, you have to make a covenant. If you insure your life, the insurance company makes a covenant with you, and you with the company. If you have a little money, and you put it in the bank, implicitly there is a mutual covenant between you that the money will be cared for. You cannot even pass a dollar bill over the counter without calling upon the government to implement its covenant, its promise to pay. You cannot do any kind of business anywhere without a covenant. And I never can understand why the Lord's people should be so afraid to make a covenant in respect to religious duties, when they are so ready to make covenants in respect to everything else.

I know some people who will assume no obligation in the Lord's work, who, when asked to do so, hold up their hands in horror and say, “I never make a promise.” When I hear that, I am strongly inclined to believe they do not make a performance either. In five hundred and ninety-nine cases out of a thousand it is sheer excuse for shirking one's duty. You will have to go out of the world before you can get along with people without the covenant principle. I have heard married people say, “I never make a promise”. I wonder how they managed to get married without a promise!

These men made a covenant that they would be loyal to each other. David promised that he would not cut off his kindness from Jonathan's house for ever. Of course, if you are conscious of your own instability, if you know you are like Rueben, “unstable as water”, and cannot excel, if you know it is your habit to break all the promises you make, I would recommend you to make no more. But there surely can be no objection to the principle of a covenant between friends; nor even in casting ourselves upon God, and seeking His help to promise Him, and then to pay our vows in the presence of all His people.

At all events, it is suggestive of that great covenant made between the persons of the Godhead, involving and pledging the redemption of a lost race. Jesus Christ became the Mediator of that covenant, and He said of the sacramental cup, “This blood is the new covenant in my blood.” He has promised me, and the promises of our David are sure.

There is a beautiful story here of how Jonathan stripped himself in order to clothe David in royal apparel: “And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.” What a lovely picture that is! It is as though Jonathan said, “Here you are, David. Take my robe, my sword, my bow, and my girdle. Take them all; you will need them more than I.”

I wonder have you learned the joy of taking some things off? I am sometimes almost afraid to appeal for clothing for the poor, because the responses I have had have not been very gratifying. Few learn to give things they could use themselves. Have we learned to give to others things that were almost necessary to ourselves? Or do we give only the things that are ready to be thrown into the garbage heap? Not so did Jonathan give. It was his own robe, his garments, his sword, his spear. Thus did our Lord put aside His robes of glory, and made Himself of no reputation; in order to prove His everlasting friendship for us He sacrificed everything, even to His Father's favour.

II.

We come now to another aspect of things, David and Saul. Saul seems to have been very much enamoured of David; he took him to his home. You will meet many people like that in your churches, young men, in time to come. They will spoil you if you are spoilable. They will tell you that you are the best preacher they ever had. I hope you will have too much sense to believe that! They will tell you that you are altogether the most wonderful man they ever knew. And they will be like Saul, they will want to take you to their own home. You will be disposed to go where people say nice things to you. We all like to have nice things said to us, and of us. A woman said to me once, "Pastor, I believe you would rather have people say nasty things to you than nice things." "No", I replied, "I would not; I like to have nice things said to me—if I can persuade myself that the people believe the nice things they say!"

It is natural for us to respond when Saul goes into ecstasies over our achievements. "Come and see us", say the Sauls, "we are going to ask all our friends in to meet you." I used to have that here. I have been the guest of honour at many a reception, when many of the "important" people of the city were present: editors, bankers, educationists, leaders of religious bodies, and I know not who else, were especially invited to meet—who? "Our beloved Pastor"! And sometimes even more than that,—"our distinguished Pastor"!

I remember one man especially who used to go into raptures occasionally. One Sunday afternoon my telephone rang, and when I answered it I recognized the voice. "So-and-So speaking." "Yes; how are you today?" "I am not feeling very well. I was at church this morning, and having often paid you many compliments I want to tell you that I do not agree with anything you said this morning. I think it was quite out of place." I waited for a moment, and then said, "Have you finished?" "Yes! That is all I have to say." Then I said, "Will you listen to me a minute?" "Certainly." "Then may I say that I never allowed myself to be unduly elated by your praise, and I assure you that I shall not allow myself a moment's discomfiture because of your displeasure. If you do not agree with me, that is your privilege; but I shall not allow your strictures to depress me."

Do not be puffed up when Saul makes a fuss over you—he will be likely to make another kind of fuss before he gets through with you. Be careful of the effusive people who would overwhelm you with love. Their praises are likely to change to cries of "Crucify him" all too soon. In all these matters you will be wise to "rejoice with trembling".

I do not want you to be pessimists as young ministers, but I promise you more trouble to the hour in the ministry than you could find in any other occupation to which you could give your lives. Unless you are ready for the toughest job on earth you had better come to Mr. Brown or myself and say, "I have not the courage to go on; I am going to leave the Seminary." But if you want to climb the mountains, carry all the burdens, take all the kicks, and be the lightning-rod to draw all the electricity from the clouds—if you are ready to stand all that, and learn to enjoy it, then you may become a good minister. Otherwise you had better give yourselves to something else. There are plenty of joys in the ministry, but we shall talk to you about that side some other time.

Saul promoted David over the men of war. You will find that, too, in life. Some people will be ready to push you forward. "Our Pastor is a young man, but I tell you he is going to be a great preacher some day." A man came to me once, not many years ago, and said, "Have you heard my Pastor?" I said, "No; I have not had that pleasure." "He is a great preacher, and I wish you would invite him to preach for you in Jarvis Street. You can be sure that your people will have a great treat." I thanked him for the suggestion. I did invite him to preach. He did preach. And the people did have a great treat.

On a later day that same man came into my office perfectly furious. "Look here", said he, "you are advising my Pastor." To which I replied, "Your Pastor needs no one's advice. He has not asked my advice, and I do not offer advice unsolicited. You are not correct." "Will you—will you affirm that?" he asked. "Yes, sir," I replied. "I have affirmed it. I have had no communication with your Pastor. But let me say this: you came to me once and told me he was one of the finest preachers you had ever heard, that he was one of the finest men in the world; and you expressed the hope that I would ask him to preach for me, that I might get to know him better. I took your advice. I asked him to preach. I did get to know him better, and I shared the opinion you then entertained to the full—and I have found no occasion to change my mind." "Very well," he said, "I accept your statement. Good afternoon." That was Saul promoting David over the men of war, and then—?

Accept the promotion, and be ready for Saul's efforts in the direction—I dislike the word, but I will use it—in the direction of your demotion when he does not like you. You must be ready for changes of mind of that sort. Be like David under such circumstances.

David, by a sort of divine instinct, never felt quite sure of Saul. He behaved himself wisely. There are some people whose characters are perfectly transparent, there is nothing subtle about them, they are frank and straightforward. You may not always agree with them, but you are always safe where they are. But there are other people of whom you wonder what is behind the veil. Behave wisely!

Our educational institutions do not make so much of pastoral theology as ought to be made of it. In my little experience I have known scores of men who were fine preachers, good men, but who had no sense; and who destroyed, out of the pulpit, all they did in the pulpit. When you are in the presence of Saul, of those people who are so enthusiastic about you, behave yourself

wisely; for you never know when the best friend you have may become the opposite. You say, "That is very pessimistic." No, it is not. It is true, that is all. You had better keep your own counsel. Do not say anything that could be quoted against you when your friend becomes your enemy.

We come now to the heart of the matter. "When David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of musick. And the women answered one another as they played"—the women came out to meet the king. They were perfectly loyal—and quite inadvertently they paid Saul a great compliment. They supposed the king would share their enthusiasm for the man who had proved God's instrument to deliver the nation. They did not want to sing in praise of David only, so they joined Saul's name with that of David, and stated the truth: "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands."

Can you stand that? Can you endure to have somebody else praised more than you are praised? I know some people who cannot. I have known many people who could not endure to hear anybody speak well of others in their presence, or speak in a way that might imply someone else was more highly esteemed than they. You say, "These are such commonplaces!" I wish they were not such commonplaces. The spirit I am dealing with now is the thing that has wrought more havoc in the church of Christ than all the outrageous offences committed by church members put together. I think it was D. L. Moody who said, that the passion for the preeminence, love of the chief place, has done more damage in the church of Christ than all other offences put together. And so it has. "Saul hath slain his thousands: and David his ten thousands."

"And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day and forward." Were you ever "eyed"? Did you ever have anybody "eye" you? What sort of eye did Saul have for David? Just the green eye, the green-eyed monster looked through the window.

I think this subject is especially appropriate to ministers, for I am talking out of school. I could probably say it better in a class-room, but the thing is so patent, it may be as well to say it out loud. The champion ministerial vice, the thing that has slain more ministers, and robbed them of their power, than all other things put together, is this accursed thing called jealousy. Saul could not endure to see David enjoy a larger measure of appreciation than he.

Be big enough, you men, if God uses another minister, to thank God for his ministry. Do not be so small as to try to discredit everything he has done, especially when he is no longer there to speak for himself. I urge you to shun, as you would shun leprosy, that accursed spirit of jealousy that will not acknowledge that anybody can do better than yourself. It was Saul's undoing, and it will be the undoing of every man who seeks, by that means, to discredit others.

I do not know whether you will ever be popular, but if you ever find yourself generally approved, learn to pray much for grace that you may not lose your head.

Dr. Clifford once told me that he had breakfast with Mr. David Lloyd George—he knew him very intimately. He said to him, "While the people were throwing eggs of doubtful age, potatoes, and other things, I did not fear for you; but now that the whole world is ringing with your praise you are in a very dangerous position." "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you!" I do not suppose you will incur that woe, but there may be a sufficient number of people speak well of you to put you in a somewhat dangerous position.

Of course you must not pay too much attention to what the ladies say. They are all very excellent! "The women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." They praised David greatly, and made him more trouble than enough. When people begin to praise you you will be wise to offer them no encouragement. Thank God if they receive blessing through your ministry, but be careful, discipline yourself so as not to develop an inordinate taste for honey.

Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him, and was departed from Saul. That, after all, is the all-important consideration: above all things you need the Lord with you. You may have Saul against you, but he will be afraid of you when he sees that the Lord is with you. He may not love you, but he will have a very wholesome respect for you. Saul became David's implacable foe. A like experience comes to most public men. There is often but a little distance between lauding and loathing.

"But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them." I am not sure that I need to go into these particulars either to-night or any other time, but you will see when once that evil spirit which possessed Saul, possesses anyone, that man will stop at nothing to accomplish his end. Saul even married his own daughter to David, in order that she might become a snare to him, and that she might induce him to go and fight against the Philistines and fall in battle. One may expect that when the evil spirit which possessed Saul possesses any man he will sacrifice even his own children to his malice. The man who has such an enemy will need to behave himself wisely, for he will have a problem on his hands. Study that very carefully, and when examination time comes, perhaps we shall look at some of these portions that I have not time to deal with this evening.

Jealousy is as cruel as the grave. If you have a jealous hair in your head, pull it out, if you can identify it. If they are all jealous, pull them all out, even at the risk of becoming bald. I once had the joy of having my two predecessors on the platform with me, one on the right, and the other on the left. What I have just now said is not new, because one dear old lady in the church came to me and paid me this compliment, "I do not believe there is a jealous hair in your head, Pastor. I said, 'I hope there is not. If I thought there was, and I could find it, I would pull it out.'"

Incidentally, when you show that spirit, you pay a high compliment to somebody else, for you acknowledge, if not their superiority, at least the danger that they will be generally held to be superior to yourself. Shun that attitude and estimate. I would not have you think more highly of yourselves than you ought to think, but, on the other hand, I would not have you think too little of yourselves. "Let no man despise thy youth."

When you become envious and jealous of another, you

simply proclaim the fact that in your own estimation that man is a little stronger, a little abler than you.

Dr. Russell Conwell came to this city once to lecture, and he said, "I want to go to your house. I want to see where you live." I took him to my house, and we had a long talk. I told him of some things that were troubling me at the time, among them that I had heard from his university saying they wanted to throw a degree at me. Knowing how degrees were conferred by McMaster University, I feared that because he and I were friends it would be assumed that I had sought it. Anyhow, I attach little value to these outward, external things. But he would not discuss it.

Incidentally, as I told him of some of my experiences, he said, "That is the price you pay for a little bit of blessing. For the first ten years of my ministry in Philadelphia I could not attend the meetings of the Baptist Ministerial Association. The ministers met Monday mornings to explain away my crowds. I had to stay away." They had not the crowds he had, and of course it had to be explained. After a while he was so far removed from all the rest of them that they recognized his place, for to continue such an attitude would have been as reasonable as for the glow-worm to be jealous of the sun.

If the Lord blesses you with any measure of success, it will not be long before some Saul will be on your track. When you discover that, and you feel his eye upon you, burning you through, look up to God and ask Him for grace to go on with your work. Leave it all in His hands, as David did. He committed his cause to God, and left it there—and God looked after Saul. If you are doing God's work, obeying His will, endeavouring to be loyal to His Word, declaring the whole counsel of God, you need not worry about Saul. Leave the case with God, and He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your judgment as the noon-day.

THE EDITOR'S TRIP TO THE SOUTH

Having received a number of enquiries on this subject, and several expressions of desire that we should relate our experiences in the South, we venture to tell our readers a little about it. On this continent of great distances we think little of the journey involved in such a trip as we recently made. But we have many readers in England, and in other places, where such distances as we are accustomed to are not common.

Fort Worth, Texas

We left Toronto the morning of November 14th about eight-thirty, arriving in Chicago at eight-thirty that night, a thirteen-hour journey, for one leaves Toronto on Eastern Standard Time, and arrives in Chicago on Central Time, making the run thirteen hours. We reached there just in time to get the train for Kansas City, another twelve-hour ride, reaching there at nine o'clock Wednesday morning—a little over twenty-five hours from Toronto. Leaving Kansas City at eleven o'clock Wednesday morning, we reached Fort Worth, Texas, at six-fifteen Thursday morning, thus completing a journey of two days and two nights.

We were met at the station by Dr. J. Frank Norris and Rev. Lewis Entzminger. It is always a tonic for jaded spirits to come into the presence of Dr. Norris. He is always bubbling over like a mountain torrent, and radiates energy like the summer sun. We do not know much about the constitution of radium, but when it was discovered years ago by the Curries it was hailed as a new element. We understand, however, that one of the characteristics of radium is that it never diminishes, it never burns itself out. We have seen many human dynamos, many men of abounding energy, but almost invariably after a while their energy diminished, their pace slackened, they reached the crest of

the hill and descended; and by and by they passed from public memory.

Dr. Norris is, of course, still a young man. It would therefore scarcely be appropriate to quote what is said of Moses in relation to him, that "his natural force was not abated". We have a suspicion that, were it possible chemically to analyze Dr. Norris' constitution it would be found to contain a large proportion of radium. At all events, we found it most refreshing to meet him again. It was like getting into a new atmosphere, electrically charged.

Mr. Entzminger has not changed since we last saw him. He rendered a great service in connection with our Bible School ten years ago, and he seems to be as energetic as he ever was.

We were last in Fort Worth in 1926, when the old auditorium of the First Baptist Church was still standing. Dr. Norris and his people have seen strenuous times since then. Their building was destroyed by fire, and through failure of the insurance companies they received little or no insurance. For more than a year now they have been in their new auditorium. It has an enormous area. We shall not say what it will seat, although we know within fifty. The average estimate of a building's seating capacity is so far from being accurate that to give exact numbers would have the effect of misrepresenting things as they are to the popular mind. It is enough to say that from our count the First Baptist Church auditorium seats approximately the same as the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London. There is, however, this difference, Spurgeon's Tabernacle has two galleries, the Fort Worth auditorium has none; the people are seated on one ascending floor.

There was a great gathering of preachers and others, coming from a very large territory. Twenty-two states were represented, and many were there from as far as six hundred miles away. Dr. Norris spoke daily, with a number of others, and his hours were obviously the most popular hours of the day.

Mr. Entzminger's addresses on the books of the Pentateuch, as well as his practical discussions of Sunday School work, were of great profit, and were manifestly very popular. We think no one was disposed to question the judgment of one Pastor who, in a testimony meeting, said he had received more from Brother Entzminger than from any other teacher.

One of the special characteristics of the attendance at Fort Worth was the very large number of young ministers included. It was the writer's privilege to speak three times each day, and for several days four times. We found the people eager to hear, and generously appreciative of the effort of every one who endeavoured to expound the Word. We had a gathering of two or three hundred people on Saturday night for prayer. It was our privilege to speak three times on Sunday. The presence of the Lord was very manifest, and we believe it was a day of real gladness in the Southern Zion. We continued the programme day after day until Friday, November 24th.

We were glad to make the acquaintance of a good number of young preachers who declared their determination, at the earliest possible date, to come to Toronto to pursue a course in Toronto Baptist Seminary. They may be assured of a most hearty welcome.

When we got to the station a little before five o'clock Friday evening, the 24th, we found some hundreds of the good friends of the Conference, or School, assembled in the waiting-room, and they formed themselves into a procession and two or three hundred strong sang their way to the station platform. The last we saw of Fort Worth was this great company of people singing the songs of Zion with all their might, and waving their hands in affectionate farewell.

We have heard Dr. Norris many times, and in many places, under varying circumstances, but we were never more thrilled by his messages than we were when we heard him from his own platform in Fort Worth. Evidently he is a larger figure in Fort Worth than ever before. He enjoys a larger measure of public esteem, and is therefore more popular than ever before. In this, we greatly rejoice. There never was but one Dr. J. Frank Norris, and the passage of time serves only to endear him to the multitude, and more firmly to establish him in public confidence. May his bow long abide in strength. We have invited Dr. Norris to To-

ronto again and again. We do not know how to get him unless someone will volunteer to kidnap him for us.

Paducah, Kentucky

Leaving Fort Worth at five o'clock Friday, we reached Memphis, Tenn., about eight o'clock Saturday morning—just missing our connection for Paducah, Ky. There was nothing for it but to take a 'bus. We are of the opinion that this particular 'bus belonged to some purgatorial line. Its whole structure was designed, and its seats were arranged, to meet the requirements of pygmies. There was not a seat anywhere in the 'bus that was comfortable for a full-grown man—by which, of course, we mean, say six feet two or more. When will hotels and transportation companies wake up to the fact that there are really a few tall men in the world? We feel like starting a "Daddy Long Legs Club" of our own, so as to insist on our rights, to induce hotel-keepers to put their oblong mirrors in the bathroom the long way up so that it will serve both tall and short people. As it is, a man of reasonable stature, in many instances, has to become a hunchback even to shave. But to return to the 'bus, by sharing the back seat with a company of negroes for half the way, and the front seat with nobody the other half of the way, we reached Paducah at last still alive.

At Paducah we were the guest of the Tabernacle Baptist Church, and its great Pastor, Dr. D. B. Clapp. Yes, Dr. Clapp is really a great man. He is not very tall—only six feet four. But that was about the smallest compass within which so great a spirit could find comfortable tabernacle. Dr. Clapp has been in Paducah for about twelve years. He was formerly Pastor of the First Baptist Church, but after some years he discovered that the church was very far from being a New Testament church in practice. His faithful ministry of the Word disclosed that fact, and it brought about a good deal of what Dr. Clapp calls "turmoil". It always does.

A vote was taken by the church on the issues involved, and it resulted in a victory for the Pastor and his supporters, with a majority of more than two hundred. But the enemy went to court on the matter and notwithstanding that the overwhelming majority of the members were with the Pastor, this American court decided that in a Baptist church the deacons are the ruling power irrespective of membership majorities, and, accordingly, gave a verdict to the minority, and with it, the building. We used to think of the United States as the "land of the brave and the free": it is still the land of the brave, but surely not of the free. The judge in the case was handsomely rewarded for the verdict; rumour has it that he received about \$5,000. At all events, the minority were put in possession of the church.

But, undaunted, Dr. Clapp and his followers bought a property in another part of the city on which there was a large house. The house was moved to one side for a parsonage, and the first unit of a magnificent building was erected. It was occupied for the first time two years ago this last Thanksgiving. It is really the Sunday School building, or will be when the entire equipment is finished. It has a spacious auditorium and many class-rooms, and the new church manifests a fine spirit. They are a body of spiritual people, who stand uncompromisingly, not only for the infallibility of Scripture, but for its authority over life and conduct.

We spoke to large audiences on Sunday, the 26th, morning and evening. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, we spoke three times daily, and on Thursday (Thanksgiving Day), morning and evening. The time spent in Paducah was very happily employed, and on the personal side, nothing was more enjoyable than the generous and understanding hospitality of Dr. and Mrs. Clapp, and their daughter.

The experience of Paducah is no doubt parallel to that of many other churches and pastors. There are some churches which will never bear spiritual fruit until they are cleaned out, until they are thoroughly purged. A furnace, when lighted in the early Fall, with but a scant fire, often makes a house uncomfortably warm, because every coal in the new fire counts for something. But before Springtime comes, it is often difficult to force a draft through the furnace, or to get any heat therefrom, for the reason that it is full of clinkers. The furnace then becomes useless until the clinkers are taken out, either one by one, or "dumped" as a whole. Brother Clapp left the parasitical clinkers in the old First Church, and removed the live coals to what is now the Tabernacle Baptist Church.

We were happy to make the acquaintance there of many GOSPEL WITNESS readers, as well as a good number of radio

hearers. We were happy also to renew fellowship with Mr. Spencer, Dr. Clapp's leader of music, whom we met some years ago as a gospel singer in Macon, Georgia.

Only this word have we to add, that the spirit of our Southern friends was in consonance with the delightful weather with which we were favoured. Ontario had a sudden drop, breaking the record for November weather of ninety-three years. Meanwhile, in Fort Worth and Paducah, we enjoyed weather that was very much like a June day in Ontario.

The services in Paducah were attended by a large number of ministers, some coming from long distances and from other states. And in Paducah also we met with young men who expressed the hope that they might be able to come to Toronto Baptist Seminary.

We shall now look forward to a return visit to Toronto by Dr. Norris and Dr. Clapp.

RADIO ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Below we give a list of the places from which we have received acknowledgments of our radio services for November 19th and 26th: Montgomery, Alabama; Pine Bluff, Arkansas; Laton, California; Pueblo, Colorado; Crawfordsville, Greentown, Indiannapolis, Lafayette, South Bend, Indiana; Carlyle, Chicago, Joliet, Illinois; Frankfort, Louisville, Wilmore, Kentucky; Buffalo Center, Iowa; Minden, Louisiana; Boston, Fairhaven, Quincy, West Somerville, Worcester, Massachusetts; Baltimore, Cumberland, Mt. Ranier, Maryland; Charlevoix, Flint, Grand Haven, Hillsdale, Hudsonville, Ypsilanti, Michigan; Brainerd, Rochester, Minnesota; New Albany, Mississippi; Ash Grove, Harrisonville, Missouri; Binghamton, Deposit, Ellenbury Depot, Fonda, Kingston, Moravia, Schenectady, Troy, New York; Bridgeton, Seabright, Trenton, Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey; Dover, Keene, Plaistow, New Hampshire; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Lenoir, Statesville, North Carolina; Arthur, North Dakota; Crestline, New Concord, Toledo, Ohio; Allentown, Bryn Mawr, Carbondale, Germantown, Hanover, Harrisburg, Indiana, Millvale, North Braddock, North Wales, Shenandoch, Scranton, West Lawn, Wrightsville, Pennsylvania; Woonsocket, Rhode Island; Decherd, Tennessee; Vickery, Texas; Fairfax, Hampton Institute, Petersburg, Virginia; and Ridgeley and Pine Grove, West Virginia; Crystal City, White-mouth, Winnipeg, Manitoba; Saint John, New Brunswick; Halifax, Yarmouth, North Yarmouth, Nova Scotia; Baden, Brockville, Fort William, Ottawa, Port Arthur, Sault Ste. Marie, Toronto, Waterloo, Whitby, Ontario; Murray Harbor, Prince Edward Island; Rea la Garde, Verdun, Quebec.

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Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

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No. 4

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 52

December 24th, 1933

FOURTH QUARTER**ELISHA'S PROMISE AND THE FULFILMENT**

Lesson Text: II Kings, 6, 7.

Golden Text: "Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof." II Kings 7:2.

BIBLE SCHOOL READING—II Kings 7:1-20.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Monday—Ex. 15:20-27.

Tuesday—Ps. 34:1-10.

Wednesday—Is. 43:1-7.

Thursday—Amos 3:1-8.

Friday—Eph. 2:1-10.

Saturday—Rom. 8:31-39.

I. THE SWIMMING IRON, (6:1-7).

In this section there is recorded another of the experiences undergone by Elisha, and the sons of the prophets. There was evidently a close relationship existing between the teacher and the learners, amounting to a bond of affection. The servant of God was recognized as such, and loved for his work's sake, and undoubtedly also, for his own sake. It is beautiful to observe this, and to note its conformity with scriptural teaching respecting the proper attitude to be manifested toward leaders in the work of God, (I Thess. 5:12,13). An attitude of respect, and affection, provided the leader is a true servant of God, will aid him in the discharge of his duties, and bring benefit to all concerned. It is more helpful to labour in an atmosphere of love than in one of criticism.

Several things may be noted respecting this incident. First, the straitness of the place wherein Elisha, and the sons of the prophets dwelt; denoting possibly an increase of numbers, resulting in inconvenience to all. Second, the proposal to remove from thence, and build elsewhere a place wherein to dwell, or erect another seminary in which they could be taught, (v. 2). Observe the fact that the students, or sons of the prophets, were prepared to erect the place themselves. It would probably be of modest pretensions in size and architecture, but sufficient for the purpose. The sons of the prophets were, therefore, humble men, industrious, poor, zealous, and willing to

learn. They believed in self-help, like many of a similar class to-day, and manifested their appreciation of the teaching in a practical manner.

Elisha consented to their proposal to remove to another place; after which they requested that he go with them. With this request he complied, and they all removed to the Jordan River, (vs. 3,4). This gives evidence of their regard, and esteem, for their teacher. They were conscious of their need of help, and valued the channel through which it came. After their arrival at the new place an accident occurred which led to the performance of a miracle; the axe-head, which had fallen into the water, was retrieved through the casting of a stick into the water, (vs. 5-7). Concerning this, it is of interest to note the conscientious attitude of the one who lost the axe-head: he was greatly disturbed because it belonged to another. We should, if possible, take greater care of another's property than our own. Observe also the nature of the miracle. The iron was made to swim, not by the use of the stick, but by the power of God. The divine power was sufficient to raise this inanimate object to the top of the water, just as it is able to raise dead souls, embedded in the mud of sin, to life in the clear atmosphere of the spiritual realm, (Eph. 2:1). This miracle was an act of grace, as well as power, and of benefit to human beings.

II. THE HEAVENLY ARMY, (6:8-23).

The power of God is again manifest through His servant in the record of this section. Armed raids were evidently being made by the Syrians into Israelitish territory, which on each occasion were thwarted by the Israelites due to warning given by Elisha, (vs. 8-10). This led the king of Syria to enquire as to the cause, (v. 11), and being informed concerning the prophet, (v. 12), he sought to capture him, (vs. 13,14), but by the help of God he was defeated in his purpose, and his army sent home in humiliation, (vs. 15-23).

Several things are worthy of attention respecting this series of events. First, in general, we note the protecting care of God over His people. This was exercised through His servant, Elisha, in the giving of warning respecting the Syrians. Second, the inability of man to contend successfully with the power of God. The king of Syria was checkmated in his designs on every occasion. Third, the recognition by the enemies of God of the wondrous power resident in His servant. The world is aware when supernatural power is being manifested; it knows a real servant of God, although it may not approve of his mission. Fourth, the desire and design of the wicked to stop the work of the child of God. The world is opposed to God, and consequently is antagonistic to His servants, whom it seeks to injure, (John 15:20).

In relation to the experience of Elisha and his servant in Dothan, we may observe, their circumstances, their attitude, their security, and their deliverance. Concerning the first, we may note, they were surrounded by enemies, in danger

of capture and death, with no efficient human help at hand, but in the will of God. The children of God may expect troubles in this life, (John 16:33), which work together for their good, (Rom. 8:28), but care should be exercised at all times to help in the will of God. The attitude of the two men was diverse: the servant was worried, and knew not what to do; Elisha was calm and confident. It depends a great deal on how intimate we are with God, as to how we meet the trials of life. Live close to Him and we can remain undisturbed in the midst of turmoil; out of touch with Him, or with a meagre acquaintance with Him, we fail to realize or trust His power in an emergency. Note Elisha's encouraging message, (v.16), his prayer, and the vision given in response thereto, (v.17). The forces of heaven are greater than any that can be gathered on earth; therefore, the child of God is always on the winning side, (Rom. 8:31). Many seeing only the difficulties need their eyes open to see the forces of God. They are looking in the wrong direction; they require to look up. We see also in this a case of the strong helping the weak. Elisha didn't criticize his servant for his attitude; he helped him, both by exhortation and prayer. Observe further the need and blessing of spiritual discernment, and Elisha's compassionate manner of dealing with his enemies. God is not restricted in giving deliverance to His servants. Note Israel at the Red Sea, (Ex. 14:21) in contrast with Amalek, (Ex. 17:11,12), facing the Philistines (I Sam. 17:46), and on many other occasions. In the New Testament there is recorded the liberation of the apostles, (Acts 5:19), and of Paul and Silas, (Acts 16:26). God's power is sufficient for all things.

III. FAMINE AND PLENTY, (8:24—7:20).

The siege of Samaria exhibits again the power of God to deliver His people. The terrible condition of the inhabitants is described briefly, yet clearly, together with the foolish anger of the king against Elisha, (8:24-33). Sin was the cause of the trouble, yet the leader failed to realize that, and blamed another for it. The same cause underlies the present condition of the world, with its multiplied sorrow and distress. The wicked are prone to blame others for the evil consequences of their deeds. Elisha predicted deliverance for the city, although not intimating how it would be brought about, (7:1), and at the same time he prophesied punishment for the unbelieving lord, (v. 2), which came to pass in the hour of liberation, (vs. 19,20). Deliverance was effected by God who had stricken the Syrians with fear, leading to their flight, (vs. 6,7), which was made known to the Israelites by four lepers, (vs. 3-11). They were the messengers of salvation to their fellow citizens. Concerning them, we note, they were poor, helpless outcasts, with a deep sense of need. They realized their condition, refused to sit and die, went toward the means of salvation, partook of the same, made the glad tidings known, and were the means of reviving a multitude of people.