

The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF EVANGELICAL PRINCIPLES
AND IN DEFENSE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.
\$2.00 Per Year, Postpaid, to any address. 5c. Per Single Copy.

Editor: T. T. SHIELDS

Associate Editor: ALEXANDER THOMSON

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

Address Correspondence: THE GOSPEL WITNESS, 130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2, Canada.
Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada.

Vol. 12, No. 39

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 8, 1934

Whole Number 612

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

A MESSAGE TO ALL WHO "LOVE HIS APPEARING"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, February 4th, 1934

(Stenographically Reported)

Broadcast over CFRB, 690 k.c., as is every Sunday evening service of Jarvis Street Church, from 7 to 8.30 o'clock,
Eastern Standard Time.

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—II. Timothy 4:8.

Prayer before the Sermon

We rejoice, O Lord, in Thy presence this evening because of the truth we have seen portrayed in this ordinance of baptism. We thank Thee that Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners, that He lived our lives for us. Made under the law, He wrought out a righteousness in our behalf. Then He died for us. Though He knew no sin, yet He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

We rejoice in the fact of His resurrection, with all it means to those who put their trust in Him; and in the truth that He has ascended into heaven, and that even as we pray, He takes our poor petitions and presents them to the Father. He is able to save forevermore all that come unto God by Him, for the reason that He ever liveth to make intercession for them.

We bless Thee for the prospect of His coming again. We thank Thee for the word of the angels, This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven. Help us that with a growing faith we may lay hold of this, that He came once, and will come again, as the heart of the Christian message, the whole gospel of the grace of God. Help us to revel in its truth this evening.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, graciously to come near to every member of this congregation, and to all who, by radio, share this service of worship with us. We come that we may worship Thee in spirit and in truth. Make us to feel that God is near. We have Thy promise, and we know that Thy promises are true. May the promise of Thy presence be verified in the experience of every one of us this evening.

We pray for any who are laid aside by sickness. There are many such who hear this service to-night. Be graciously near to them where they are. Relieve them of their pain. Where it is within Thy will and purpose for them, speedily restore them to health and strength, we beseech Thee.

We pray for those this evening who have for many years preached the gospel of the grace of God, but now have reached the eveningtide of life. Some of them have had to lay aside

the sword, and to relinquish the task to which their lives have been devoted. There are some such who worship with us now. May the gospel which they have preached be their comfort in the evening hour. May Christ crucified, the great fact that He died for sinners, be more precious to them than ever. Vouchsafe to them Thy presence this evening. Give them a peculiar sense of Thy favour. Help them to rejoice in the Lord their God.

So would we commend all our radio hearers, and all the members of this congregation to Thy gracious ministry, O Spirit of Truth. Put Thine arms about us all. Draw us to Thyself. Include us in Thine evening benediction, and glorify Thyself in every life, For Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

I have frequently said to you that there is probably no doctrine of the Scripture which has led people into such extravagances as the doctrine of the second coming of our Lord. One speaks sometimes almost—or is inclined so to do—with apology upon this subject. Not that we fear it, not that we do not believe it, but because it has, in so many quarters, been associated with the wildest vagaries, and has so often been the happy hunting ground of ignorant religious charlatans. We have known people who seemed to know almost nothing about anything else who were oracular in their pronouncements in respect to all the details of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. In our day we have had a troop of them. They know all about Mussolini, Stalin, Hitler, and I know not who else; and have imported into the doctrine of the Second Advent so many utterly preposterous predictions that the truth itself has been all but discredited in the minds of thoughtful, intelligent, people.

We must not, however, because of such follies as these allow ourselves to be deprived of the heritage of com-

fort and inspiration which is found in this precious truth of the Lord's personal return. Let me, therefore, lay that down very simply at the outset lest you should misunderstand me. We need, as believers, to offer the most cordial hospitality to this great truth, to receive it with all our hearts, and to rejoice in the prospect of the coming again of our Lord Jesus.

It were as easy to deny the first coming of Christ, as to deny His second coming. Only by a repudiation of the teaching of the whole New Testament, and indeed, I think, understood in the light of the New Testament, of the Old Testament as well, can we escape the conclusion and the conviction that Jesus Christ will come again.

Once I supposed that everybody believed in His coming, that all people who are Christians had no shadow of doubt about the personal return of the Lord Jesus. But we have lived to see a day when almost every doctrine of the Scripture, in the name of religion, is denied. Indeed, in some quarters we are quite *blandly* told that we must deliver Christianity from the bondage of the apocalyptic principle. The fact is, the Christian religion is wholly a revelation. It is not the result of man's discovery of the things of God: it is God's unveiling of Himself, and of His purposes concerning His people. From Genesis to Revelation it is all apocalyptic, it is a divine revelation. This Book is the divinely inspired and infallible record of that revelation.

Our Lord Himself said He would come again. At His departure the angels reassured the disciples with the promise of His return. It was the theme of the apostolic preachers, and, directly or indirectly, in every epistle of the New Testament, the promise of the Lord's coming is written.

By that I mean, His personal coming. He came many times during the period covered by the historical records of the Old Testament. He came through the prophets. He came by special providential visitation. Thus God came to His people, and touched them. But, ultimately "the Word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us." He came in a sense in which He had never come before when "Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea, in the days of Herod the king". Then, as never before, God was manifest in the flesh.

There is a sense in which He comes to His people now. He comes by His Spirit. He comes when He sends death as a messenger to bring His redeemed people into His immediate presence. He comes very often by visiting His people providentially. *But that is not what the New Testament means by the coming of Christ. It promises that He will come again in person, audibly, visibly, that "every eye shall see him".* There will be no doubt about it. He will come in like manner as He was seen to go.

The Apostle Paul was not among those who believed that Christ might come at any minute, for he was sure that Christ would not come in his day. Indeed, he said, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." There was no doubt about that, so far as he was concerned. Notwithstanding, though he knew that he would die, he classed himself with those who "love his appearing",—not His coming in some shadowy, invisible way. There is no such coming. There never will be. When He comes every eye shall see Him. He will not come in any other way but manifestly, in view of the whole world.

The Apostle Paul looked forward to that day as a day of rewards for him. It was to be a day when the Lord

would reward him for his service, and give to him a crown of righteousness, and "not to me only", said he, "but unto all them also that love his appearing".

For a few minutes this evening I shall try to suggest to you *some reasons why we should love the appearing of our Lord Jesus*, then, *how we may be sure that we are numbered among those who do, in their hearts, anticipate with joy and gladness the actual appearing of the Lord of glory.*

I.

WHY, THEN, SHOULD WE LOVE THE APPEARING OF CHRIST, His second glorious advent? Why should our thought be turned toward that with joy?

First, because *it is necessary to the completion of our redemption.* The second coming of Christ is just as indispensable to the outworking of the eternal plan of redemption as His first coming. Redemption, in its largest significance, will never be fully accomplished until Jesus Christ shall come. We have the earnest of our inheritance "until the redemption of the purchased possession". The possession that has been purchased is some day to be fully redeemed, claimed by the Lord of glory. That is in the future.

Jesus Christ, I affirm, was, and is, God. I shall not argue that this evening. He was "God manifest in the flesh". By a virgin birth? Yes. And He was essentially, not only the Son of God, but God the Son. We are not to think of His incarnation as a mere parenthesis in His eternal existence. He did exist from all eternity, and He did take upon Himself, "not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham". He became man, the God-man, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh. We believe not only in the essential Deity of Christ, but in His real humanity. In Him Job's longing was realized. You remember how he complained, "Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both." Job longed for someone who should lay hold of God, and lay hold of him at the same time. In the person of Jesus Christ that human longing is realized: with His Deity He lays hold of God, if I may so say, and with His humanity He lays hold of us. He has taken our human nature up into His own, and has clothed Deity with human flesh.

The Incarnation was something more than a parenthesis. Jesus was born at Bethlehem of Judaea. But at Bethlehem, if I may reverently say so, He began a new mode of existence. He joined Himself with us. When He went home to the Father, He carried our human nature with Him. He did not shed His body. It was the body in which He was crucified, changed in some way that we do not understand. He was raised again, the same in identity; and with that body He departed to be with the Father, carrying our human nature, redeemed, sinless, into the immediate presence of a holy God. He paid the price of our redemption in order that He might be free to do that; then ascended to the Father. And salvation consists in our perpetual union with Jesus Christ, not in an occasional contact with Him. So, I say, His coming again, His reappearance, His assertion of His rights as the Redeemer Who has paid the price, is necessary to the completion of our redemption.

His appearing synchronises with the resurrection of the body. The resurrection of the body is a distinctively Christian doctrine. The immortality of the soul

is not. You will find people believing in a future existence entirely apart from the Christian revelation; but you will find nowhere a suggestion of the resurrection of the body apart from this revelation. When the apostles preached, it is said they "preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead". The salvation of Christ is for the whole man; not for part of us, but for all there is of us, spirit, soul, and body. Some day we are to have perfect bodies. There are some who talk about divine healing, and of healing in the atonement, and of our right to demand of God a perfect body. They tell us that all aches and pains are indisputable evidences of sin. That is what I call "a damnable heresy". Some of the greatest saints I have ever known have been chosen in a furnace of affliction.

God does heal the body when it is His will, but we shall never be wholly and forever free from pain until we have a new body—and that will be at the resurrection. That is in the Atonement, and grows out of the Atonement; and when Jesus Christ shall come we shall receive our new bodies. I do not understand it. I do not pretend to explain it. I cannot possibly explain it—nor can anybody else. But I will tell you this: if you once postulate God, everything is possible. The Bible, in the very first verse, challenges us to believe God: "In the beginning God." If you can yield heart and intellect to that, you will have no difficulty with the supernatural revelation or authority of the Book. When you come to the resurrection of Christ, you will be able to believe that, and the promise of our resurrection.

I cannot believe it apart from God, but, believing God, I can. With God nothing is impossible. We look forward to the resurrection. We ought to "love his appearing" because it will be at His appearing—not at a secret coming—for that doctrine at least can find absolutely no scriptural support. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." Visible and audible shall His coming be. Neither when the Apostle Paul wrote that nor when he wrote my text was he contemplating a secret coming of Christ. He said, "Write me down among those who love his appearing. That is the thing I am living for."

The coming of Christ is identified with His manifestation, His revelation. They are but three aspects of one event. There are not two other comings: there is only one. He came once, and He will come again. He will come a second time, and not a third. He will not need to come a third time. He will appear, and the dead shall be raised.

We ought to "love His appearing" because *we shall not have our full liberty until He comes again*. What a groaning lot we are? "We that are in this tabernacle do groan." That is one passage of Scripture you can easily believe. You have never met a man—or woman either—who does not do a bit of groaning. We cannot help it. We are always groaning. We are in this tabernacle, and are subject to the bondage of corruption. These bodies are death-stricken. We begin to die almost as soon as we are born. There are people here this evening like Ephraim, "Grey hairs are here and there upon him"—only you know it, and he did not. And some of you would have gray hairs if you had any at all. All these are evidences of the fact that we are going downhill, while we are in these bodies. They are declining in

vigour. But we are to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God—and that will be when Jesus Christ comes. We shall have no rheumatism then, no tooth-ache, no neuritis, no head-ache. And no pain in our tempers either. That will be a good thing. We shall be delivered from all that, and made free as children of God. That day of our emancipation will be the day when Jesus Christ Himself shall appear. What a blessing it will be thus to be made free at His appearing!

We ought to "love His appearing" because *it will be the time of others' reappearing*. None of us here are without our loved and lost. You do not live in the things you possess. If you live at all, you live in your affections. No man lives anywhere else. We have all been torn, rent asunder, our lives maimed and marred; but we all look forward to a time of reunion, when our loved and lost shall reappear. We shall not see them again until He comes, but we shall see them then, for "the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain (if so be we are) shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." That is a happy prospect too. I can look out over this church and I can put hundreds of people in these pews that I have known and loved, who have gone to be with Christ; but I am absolutely certain of reunion with them some day. For that reason among others, we should "love his appearing".

Once more Paul loved His appearing, too, because *it will be the time when the whole creation will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God*". He not only tells us in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians about those in this tabernacle groaning, being burdened, but he says in Romans "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." When our body shall be brought up from the grave, and we shall be clothed with a spiritual body, then the whole creation, that has been tainted by our sin, and that has been made partaker of the curse that fell upon the earth because of us—the whole creation will share in that glorious deliverance.

I do not know much about that. If you want to gaze into the future, read what Peter has to say about the "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness". I am positive of this, that my glorious Lord will not be defeated on this earth. Somehow, in His own way, He will purge it of all iniquity. A new heaven and a new earth there shall be, wherein dwelleth righteousness; and the whole creation, without exception, shall share in the liberation of God's people from the bondage of corruption, into the liberty of the children of God. It is no wonder Paul loved His appearing.

Then he loved the appearing of Christ because *it is to be the time when the Lord will distribute His rewards*. Never do I speak of that principle without feeling it necessary to reassert the doctrine of salvation by grace. Let nobody suppose that anyone can ever be saved by works of righteousness which he has done, or can do. We are saved by grace, and by grace alone. There is not an infinitesimal element of human merit entering into it. It is by the sovereign grace of God

that we are made His children. But, being His children, His servants, He has promised to reward those who are faithful.

The Apostle Paul did not get very much of this world's good-will, or of this world's good things. Read the story of his privations: "In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." Unless your mind is illuminated by the Spirit of God you will be inclined to say, "Foolish man to make such sacrifices." But the Apostle Paul would have said, "Oh, no; not at all. I am ready to be offered. My day's work is done. The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day"—that day? The day of "his appearing". In effect he said, "I am looking forward to the day of His appearing as the day when He will put upon my brow that crown of righteousness, and say, 'Well done'." It will be worth while to have suffered a good deal in this life if, by and by, we shall be rewarded for our faithfulness. That is the distinctive characteristic of the Christian, that he does not live for time, but for eternity; not for the things that are seen, but for the things that are unseen; he does not live for the perishing rewards of earth, but for the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him.

It always seems to me an extremely sad, and almost a shameful thing, the way Great Britain has treated a certain great public servant—And I am a Britisher, born across the sea. I love the old flag, and much that belongs to it—but Britain's treatment of Mr. David Lloyd George, in my judgment, is one of the blackest chapters in her history. Beyond controversy, Mr. Lloyd George did more than any other single man to preserve the world's liberties. And what did he get for it? Little but abuse. He was thrown aside by men, some of whom would have surrendered to the enemy in the day of stress.

If you are living and working for an earthly crown, you are living for something that is scarcely worth winning. It will soon pass away. Men will cry, "Hosanna," one day, and crucify you the next. The world's "well done," is not worth striving for.

There are many in public life in Canada, in municipal life, in the Provinces and in the Dominion, who render conspicuous service. But if a man really serves the public, he gets no reward; if he serves himself, men will hail him as a very successful man. But if he is really a public servant, he will receive no crown in this life.

That is especially true of those who seek to serve the Lord. If you would be popular, if you would be acclaimed by the world, you must keep as far away from the principles and precepts of this Book as possible. If you are true to God, you will receive Paul's

treatment, stones and stripes; you will be in perils among false brethren; you will have all kinds of privations to suffer. Though you be always rejoicing, you will have to rejoice in the midst of your sorrow. But you can look forward to the time of His appearing. If you have written your record in the book up yonder, when the Lord Jesus shall come, you may be sure that He will reward His faithful servants. That is one reason why we should "love his appearing".

Do you not love pay-day? Is not that one of the best days of all the month? Pay-day! Somebody here says, "I used to, but I have not had one for so long, I almost forget what it feels like. But the mention of it has revived happy memories." But it was a happy day, was it not? when pay-day came, when you received the reward of your labour? Some day the Lord's pay-day will dawn. He will reward His faithful servants. Therefore, such as are faithful to Him may well love the prospect of His appearing.

Then, best of all, we should "love His appearing" for *His own sake*. "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Even though we have never seen Him, we love Him, and we rejoice in Him. We experience a joy in contemplation of Him, and of His love to us; it is a joy unspeakable and full of glory. If that be so, what will it be to see Him face to face? For a little while the disciples lost sight of Him after the crucifixion. When they gathered together in that upper room, and Jesus Christ appeared to them, the quaint old record says, "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." Of course they were. But their gladness was nothing to the gladness which will fill the hearts of His redeemed people when He shall come, not to visit us, but to claim us for His own; and when we shall be for ever with the Lord. What a prospect!

"Now redemption, long expected,
See in solemn pomp appear!
All His saints, by men rejected,
Now shall meet Him in the air,
Hallelujah!
See the day of God appear!

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

II.

HOW MAY WE BE SURE WE "LOVE HIS APPEARING"? We ought to love it, but how may we be sure we do really love His appearing? *I fear there are people who love the doctrine of the Lord's second coming more than they love His second coming.* I have known some people who can get about as angry on that subject as upon any subject I know. They clench their fists, and gnash their teeth, and call you many ugly names if you do not agree with their particular interpretation of the time and order of the Lord's coming. Such do not "love his appearing". Nobody who really loves the appearing of Jesus Christ can become angry over a discussion of it. If you cannot keep your temper when

you are discussing this precious doctrine, then be sure you are in love with the doctrine, rather than in love with the Lord.

A young man and woman are going to be married. They have not told anybody about it yet, but somebody finds it out, or guesses it, and begins to broadcast the news. If they are going to be married, are they angry about its being known? They would a little rather that nobody had said anything about it yet, but they are not angry. But try talking about the marriage of somebody who is not going to be married, and see what he has to say about it. Then there will be a fire. Make sure that you do really love the prospect of Christ's personal coming. Do not fall in love with the doctrine. You cannot know anything about His appearing without the doctrine, but a mere intellectual apprehension of a truth, divorced from Him Who is the heart and substance of the truth, will do you no good, nor anybody else.

Will He come soon? I do not know. "You do not know? But have you read So-and-So on the pyramids?" No. I have several books on the pyramids. I have not been able to understand Einstein's Theory of Relativity. Somebody sent me a book the other day which lauded the man who succeeded in deciphering the pyramids. I cannot dispute the book, because I do not know anything about it; neither do you. And of all those who discuss these matters there is not one in a thousand who has personal and exact knowledge of these things. They are simply parrots. Be done with that nonsense. The Word of God is our authority, not the pyramids. The Word of the living God is our sole authority.

Long ago, when I was first attracted to this doctrine, I read a sermon on the subject by the great C. H. Spurgeon in which he said, something to this effect: "If I were expecting a parcel at the post office, or some other place where parcels are received, and I went to look for it, if I were shown one marked, 'This is not for you', I should consider I had better leave that there."

The time of His coming nobody knows. His coming will be a surprise to everybody: "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." That does not necessarily mean He will come silently, or secretly, but unexpectedly, when few are ready for Him. We do not know the time of His coming, but *we know something of the conditions that will obtain when He comes.* I can find nothing in the Scripture to justify the assumption that evil will be gradually eliminated, and a reign of righteousness gradually inaugurated. Our Lord Himself said that when He comes conditions will obtain analogous to the days of Noah and the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. Evil will abound. There will be an element of judgment in His coming that will overwhelm the wicked. I read to you this evening the clear, unmistakable, teaching of the Word of God showing there will be a falling away first, and the man of sin will be revealed. Christ will not come until the man of sin is revealed. That, I believe, is the teaching of Scripture. He will not come before. When He comes He will destroy the Antichrist by the brightness, by the manifestation, of His coming. The two are linked together: the wicked one shall be "consumed with the spirit of His mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of His coming."

I am glad He is coming because this old earth needs cleaning up badly. As the Americans say, "I am for" the League of Nations. But I did not expect anything from it—nor did I wait until now to say so. I said it when it was formed. You will never have a millennium of righteousness—or any other period of time—by any principle of compulsion. If men are no better than they are compelled to be, that is not righteousness. I do not believe you can legislate the devil out of this world. Some of our political friends think they are going to introduce a Utopia into Canada. Do not believe it. However excellent their theories, when men get into power, whatever their politics, they prove that human nature is the same. It is not changed by law—nor can it be. You cannot legislate the devil out of human society.

Nor can you educate him out. I heard a man years ago say, speaking about the failure of education, "Your poor negro thief goes down to the railway car and steals a watermelon, and you put him in prison. But your educated thief will steal the whole railroad." Education does not make men better: it only makes them keener to do evil, if their hearts are wrong. I have nothing to say against education. Thank God for every light that shines. Nor have I anything to say against any effort toward moral reform, except to say that you will never bring about the millennium by that means.

Nor even by means of religion. The devil, as I told you last Sunday night, uses religion for his purposes. Only as the Spirit of God changes the hearts of men can there come a heavenly condition that will be general. The knowledge of the Lord shall not fill the earth as the waters cover the sea until Jesus Christ comes again. When He comes, there will be many people who will not love His appearing. Paul said he would not be like the others. He will be looking for Him. He will be wanting Him to come. He will eagerly anticipate the day when his glorious Lord shall take to Himself His great power and reign.

Not in this city, but in another where I was a Pastor some years ago, when I had more freedom to see the people of God in their own homes than I have now, I went down a certain street and knocked at a door, and the door was immediately opened. There stood a woman in the door with a dish in one hand, and a towel in the other. When she saw me she almost screamed, "O Pastor, is it you! I thought it was the rag-man." A minute before she had heard a man go down the street calling out, "Rags, bones, bottles." When she heard the knock at the door she assumed it was the rag-man, and immediately opened the door. "I am very glad you thought I was the rag-man," I said, "I know what you would have done." "What should I have done?" "You would have left me standing here while you got that apron off, rolled down your sleeves, and perhaps put on another dress." "I fear I should", she said. "Do not be afraid", I said, "I have seen dish-towels before this."

I found that woman at her work—as every woman ought to be at the time appointed. When the Lord shall come, when He shall appear, how will he find you? What will you be doing? Will you have your best gown on, all ready to receive Him? I knew very well that that woman could not afford to wear her best clothes all the time. You are a fine looking lot now,

but you do not wear those clothes all the time. It would be foolish to wear your best clothes all the time; you must dress appropriately. But would it not be a fine thing if somebody would invent a fabric that would be suitable for clothing, that could resist everything, that we could wear at all kinds of work, and not spoil our clothes—in the kitchen, in the shop, in the garage, changing tires—anything? And would it not be fine if that fabric were such that we would be appropriately dressed to meet the King when He comes?

That is what the Lord came from heaven to earth to do. He has woven for us a robe of righteousness, and I offer it to you in His name. You can wear it at your task, no matter what it may be, washing dishes, or working in the shop. What is it?—

“Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My glory are, my beauteous dress;
Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed
With joy shall I lift up my head.”

Hallelujah! Christ is coming! Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

THE KING IS DEAD—LONG LIVE THE KING!

A Lecture by Dr. T. T. Shields

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto,
Thursday Evening, February 1st, 1934

*Eleventh in the 1933-34 Series of Thursday Evening
Lectures on Biblical Theology, which is included in
the Curriculum of Toronto Baptist Seminary*

(Stenographically Reported)

Lesson Text: II. Samuel, chapters 1 and 2:1-7.

This evening we begin our study of the second book of Samuel. The first chapter opens with an account of a report which was brought to David from the battle of Gilboa, purporting to tell the story of Saul's death. There are many people who are fond of looking for contradictions in the Bible. I have long been of the opinion that the Bible might safely be used as a text-book on almost any subject. We have here two accounts—three accounts, if we include the First of Chronicles—of the death of Saul. The account in the last chapter of the First of Samuel and that in the tenth chapter of the First of Chronicles substantially agree. They are, indeed, at points, word for word the same. But the accounts in the First of Samuel and the First of Chronicles do not agree with the account given in the Second of Samuel.

I do not suppose that any thoughtful student, anyone trained even in a small degree in the matter of weighing evidence, would insist that there was necessarily a contradiction. In the First of Samuel and the First of Chronicles the account is given by the writer of the book. No one is quoted as having reported the event. On the contrary, it is plainly, unmistakably, and unequivocally, stated that such and such were the facts of the case.

When Saul saw that the battle was against him, and he was wounded by the archers, he lost heart, and he called for his armourbearer to thrust him through with his sword. This, the armourbearer refused to do. Then we are told that Saul fell upon his own sword. He com-

mitted suicide. He slew himself. When the armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he followed his example. “So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armourbearer, and all his men, that same day together.” That is the story in the First of Samuel and the First of Chronicles.

In the Second of Chronicles we are told of a certain stranger, an Amalekite, who came to David with news of the battle. Apparently this Amalekite knew something of the relations between Saul and David. He came to David thinking he brought him good news. He came out of the camp of Saul, “with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head”, as was appropriate for one bearing news of tragedy. I am inclined to think that, coming to David, he expected that David would be hospitable to the report he had to bring, and would rejoice in the news he had to communicate.

When David enquired how the battle had gone, this man told him that Saul and Jonathan his son were dead. He had some proof of having been at the scene of the conflict, for he brought with him the crown that had been upon Saul's head, and the bracelet that had been upon his arm. These were unmistakable evidences of his having been at the place where Saul fell; he had taken them from the body of the fallen king.

But he told a story of Saul's leaning upon his spear, threatening suicide, but, seeing him, according to the Amalekite's story, Saul called upon him to slay him. Saul was evidently sorely wounded, and he was sure, he said, that he could not live. The Amalekite said, “So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.”

It would be legitimate to assume, inasmuch as this man said he saw that Saul could not live, that Saul, leaning upon his spear, was, in addition to his arrow-wounds, thereby so sorely wounded that there was no chance of his recovery, and that this man, seeing it, responded to his request that he should cut short his misery by terminating his life. But the record in the last chapter of the First of Samuel says that he “took a sword, and fell upon it. And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him”.

I would call your attention to the fact that the inspired writer here records the tale that was told. There are many things written in the Bible which, in themselves, are not true. Do you understand what I mean? Many things are written in the Bible which are not good, but evil. You have the record of the lives of evil men, and when men told a lie it is recorded that they told the lie. And the fact that a lie is recorded in the Bible does not make it true—but the record is true. Do you see that? It is the record that is true.

In the difference between the First of Samuel and the First of Chronicles, and the Second of Samuel, obviously the writer in the two former cases was writing down the facts of the case, but now the further fact that the Amalekite came and claimed the credit for putting an end to Saul is recorded. Apparently he expected that David would rejoice in the news of his fallen enemy.

How many Amalekites there are in the world! How

they love to tell bad news! Have you noticed how some people seem to delight in communicating evil news? The newspapers do it; a story of any kind of tragedy is given large head-lines.

This man, however, was greatly mistaken. When David, having enquired, had heard his account of the matter he said, "How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the Lord's anointed? And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died. And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the Lord's anointed."

We may not do what David did. We are not called upon to face the same circumstances, but we may at least learn a lesson from David's spirit, from his attitude toward this retailer of bad news. Some people have a happy faculty of gathering scraps of bad news. Have you noticed that? I do not think we have any in Jarvis Street Church. If we have, I should like to say something that would make you ashamed of yourselves. The Amalekites will soon discover whether the tidings they have to bring will be welcome. This man found it out! Of course he had no opportunity to try it the second time. I do not mean to say that you should literally cut the head off every man who comes and tells you a story that ought not to be told, but there is a way of letting him know that that sort of thing ought not to be repeated.

When the Amalekites come with nasty news, let them know you do not welcome it. I drove down a street late one night in Toronto, a street on which were some very fine houses; it seemed to be quite a respectable neighbourhood. But it was a street that was unfortunate enough not to have a back lane, and right down the sidewalk, out in front of the houses, there was a row of ugly and odoriferous garbage-cans. They were not there every night, but only once or twice a week. Do you know why they were there? Because the garbage-cart was coming down that street in the morning. Convert yourself into a garbage-cart, and all the garbage-cans in the neighbourhood will be brought out when you pass by. You will hear all the nasty things people have to say.

I knew a church some years ago where they had difficulty over nothing. Most church difficulties are over nothing! But the church was divided in two—over nothing. The pastor left, and he was succeeded by a man who was not much of a preacher; in other respects he was a pastoral Solomon. Soon after his settlement he went around to visit all the members. When he called on Mrs. So-and-So, she began to talk about the former pastor. But he said, "Excuse me, but Dr. So-and-So was a very dear friend of mine, and you would not expect me to listen to anything that you might have to say in disparagement of him; we will change the subject if you please. I did not come to discuss other people's faults." Then he took out his Bible, read the Word, and prayed. By the time he had visited the membership of that church every evil tongue in the church had ceased to wag, and the owners had become ashamed of themselves. All because he would not listen to their criticisms. Remember that, young men, when you become pastors. Do not allow anybody to pour complaints of other people into your ears. Nobody ever tells me anything nasty about Jarvis

Street members. I would not listen to it. You know why, do you not? If ever you were to come to me with reports of fallen Sauls, I would not listen to you. Happily I know of no one disposed so to do.

Saul was David's worst enemy, yet David would hear no evil of him. He is a splendid example, it seems to me, of that love which rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth.

Then follows David's marvellous eulogium of Saul and Jonathan. I delight to read it over and over again for my own profit. It is one of the sublimest bits of writings to be found in any literature. "David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son. . . The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen."

I suppose there is a psychological reason for the fact that men find it easier to appreciate people when they are dead than while alive. Dead men get in nobody's way. It is easy to be generous to people who are no longer competitors in the race. Perhaps, when I am gone, there may be a few people who will speak kindly even about this terrible man! When a man is dead, when he is out of everybody's way, his fellows find it easier to be generous.

But David was generous while Saul was alive. He did not wait until he was dead. He paid him due respect as the Lord's anointed. And now he speaks of him in his representative character, for the glorious man he once was, that royal, kingly, personality that inspired all Israel to exclaim, "God save the king!"

Oh the pathos—and wisdom too—in this twentieth verse: "Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph." But alas! the news had already reached Gath, and they held a kind of thanksgiving service in the houses of their gods in Philistia because Saul and Jonathan were dead. Gath is always ready to rejoice at bad news from Jerusalem. There are always people outside the church who are willing—eager indeed—to get some unfavourable news from within. David would keep the news from the enemy lest they rejoice.

Then he apostrophizes the mountains of Gilboa: "Let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil." How many places there are remarkable and distinguished from others in the records of the past, as scenes of great tragedies, the culmination of somebody's ruin, places which marked the tragic end of an illustrious career. The name, Waterloo, has become proverbial. We speak of a man's "meeting his Waterloo". That was Napoleon's last battle; it was his Gilboa.

Take this eulogy and analyze it very carefully, and observe how David joined Saul and Jonathan together; and, apparently for Jonathan's sake, ascribes loveliness and pleasantness to Saul as well as to Jonathan. "They were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions." I wonder if, after all, that is not very largely the explanation of David's attitude toward Saul? He always viewed him through the medium of Jonathan's affection for and loyalty to himself.

I have known a man before now who was a born crank, ugly in disposition, anything but amiable to others;

and I have known some young man to warm up to him, and speak of him as though he were a paragon. The uninformed or undiscerning wondered at his eulogies of one whom others esteemed but lightly. Nobody else could see anything in him. But it was not because he was any Jonathan's father, but because he was the father of Jeanette! This young fellow had a new attitude toward certain people, and you could scarcely understand it. They had not changed. There was nothing attractive about them. But a certain member of the family had developed a certain attractiveness, and for her sake—or reverse it, if you like, for it works both ways—the prospective “in-laws” suddenly become tolerable.

There is a principle there. You remember how they stopped their ears and ran upon Stephen, and stoned him with stones. And you remember, too, how his face was suddenly illuminated with a light that never was on sea or land. They beheld his face as the face of an angel, and he looked up and said, “I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.” For His sake, because He loved them all, Stephen was enabled, by grace, to forgive them all, and pray, “Lord, lay not this sin unto their charge.” It is a great thing to be able to throw the loveliness of our Jonathans over the ugliness of our Sauls, and to say of them, “Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives.” I leave you with that thought; it is most suggestive. It is for Christ's sake we should forgive each other his trespasses.

I will give you a text. Some day when you are hard up for a sermon, when you are out on your field and do not know what to give your people on the Lord's day that is just ahead, take this great text, “I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.” Contrast and compare the mutual love of David and Jonathan with the love of the Saviour for the sinner. Wonderful as Jonathan's love was, involving the braving of his father's anger, the surrender of a kingdom, the loss of a crown, the giving up of everything for the sake of his friend—wonderful as it was, it was as nothing compared with the wonder of the love of Him Who, “though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich”. For “God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

How beautifully David closes the chapter of his relationship to Saul! He played, as we should say, the game to the last hour. Hunted as a deer is hunted by the hounds, treated with the grossest injustice, his life repeatedly threatened, the life of his enemy put into his hands again and again, yet he refused to put forth his hand against the Lord's anointed. Patiently he waited until God should act in his behalf. When at last the hour came, and Saul was no more, and his career was ended, David threw the mantle of his charity over the whole record of Saul's unworthiness, and for Jonathan's sake, covered the bier with flowers, and declared that Saul was never anything but lovely and pleasant. Can you do that? Talk about the Old Testament being worn out! One must be very nearly a saint—a saint, indeed, of the highest order—to rise to the heights to which David leads us in this matchless lamentation over friend and foe alike.

“The king is dead; long live the king.” David has known for many years that he was to be king. I do not mean to say that he dreamed of being a king, that he aspired to be a king; but rather that he knew he had been ordained of God to be a king, for the anointing oil had long ago been poured upon his head. It is one of the indications, to me, of the marvellous strength of this man's character, that, knowing his destiny, knowing the exalted position to which God had appointed him, he was yet able patiently and uncomplainingly, even gladly, to await the striking of God's hour.

I believe that most men who come to prominence, who are endowed with powers that fit them for great achievements, know early in life that God has some purpose in life for them. I doubt whether it ever breaks upon a man suddenly. I am not able to understand or to appraise the value of President Roosevelt's economic theories. I have no doubt that history will show that he made mistakes, like other people. We only hope that he is really succeeding. But one cannot withhold from him the measure of praise which is his due for his present achievement. Think of a man stricken down with infantile paralysis, with all prospect of large usefulness blotted out! How easy it would be simply to surrender and say, “The day is done for me.” And yet it does seem that there throbbled through his soul some consciousness of power, and that he resolutely set his will to do everything humanly possible to defeat that thing that had laid hold upon him. At last he rose above it, and came to the chief place in the nation. If he did nothing more, think what he has done now. We shall have to recognize surely that there dwells within that stricken tabernacle one of the greatest souls of earth.

If God has called any of us to do anything for Him, there are latent powers within us ordained for the task. We may not have discovered them as yet, but I believe usually the man knows that there is something in him. Disraeli, the great Lord Beaconsfield, Queen Victoria's favourite Prime Minister, perhaps more than any other single man who ever lived, father of the British Empire, who could see farther than any of his contemporaries, who took measures the fruits of which the Empire is reaping until this day—when Disraeli made his first speech in Parliament it was about as complete a failure as the House of Commons ever witnessed. He was greeted with ironical laughter everywhere, as though they would say, “And who is this who thinks he can speak?” Disraeli knew he had failed, but I have read that before he sat down, he clenched his fist and brought it down in determination upon the desk in front of him and said, “The time will come when you will hear me.” And it did!

I expect you will fail in more than one sermon, young men, and will succeed—as I still do—in giving your hearers a most comfortable sleep some Sunday morning. I once tried to get a doctor to come to church. I said, “I will offer you this inducement. Do you ever have patients who are troubled with insomnia?” “Yes; plenty of them.” “Do you give them drugs?” “Why not?” “Come over to church Sunday morning, and see how I do it!” One of the most appreciative hearers I ever had used to sleep through my sermon every Sunday morning. He said to me one Sunday morning—after he had nodded assent to everything I had said, “That was a great ser-

mon this morning, Pastor." "You did not hear much of it", I replied. "Perhaps I did not, but anyhow I say, Amen, to everything you say." I told him it was putting too great a responsibility upon me.

David knew that he was going to be king, but he waited a long time for his crown, and condescended to many a menial task before the day of coronation came. So, indeed, you may have to wait—and you may miss it altogether in this life—most likely you will, for if you serve the Lord with all your heart you are not likely to get a crown in this life, unless it be like your Master's, a crown of thorns.

Now the road is clear for David, there is a clear path to the throne. Notwithstanding "David enquired of the Lord". Still he took nothing for granted. He did not take a single step without divine authority. "Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the Lord said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto Hebron." There is a passage that is often quoted in prayer-meeting, the purport of which is not perhaps clearly apprehended: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." What is the difference between the lighted path and a lamp at the feet? In general, every Christian knows something of the road he must take. The pathway is lighted. David knew it. He had the word of God for it, that the path he was to take was a path that led right up to the throne. The path was lighted, but between the place where he stood and the throne there was a long distance, and he said, "I still need the lamp for my feet." Mark you, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord," not only the general direction of his life. It is one thing to seek the Lord's guidance respecting the path, the general direction and course of life: it is another thing to seek divine sanction respecting the little details of life, the next step—what shall it be? While in general, David knew he was to be king, he refused to take one step in the direction of the throne without divine sanction. So he went up to Hebron, and "the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah."

"And they told David, saying, That the men of Jabesh-gilead were they that buried Saul." I shall not have time this evening to pursue further the typical significance of this history, but we may return to it again; for while we look upon David as our example, his record as the record of a godly man, we are to remember that he is also a type. We have New Testament warrant for so regarding him. Our Lord Jesus will some day take to Himself His great power and reign. He is the Anointed One. The second Psalm reads, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed (his Christ, his Messiah), saying, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." Such is the attitude of men towards the Lord's Anointed. "But he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh"—the King shall come to the throne.

Consider now a very practical matter, and with that I shall close for to-night. I want you, as a bit of common sense, to observe David's conduct in this respect. They told David how the men of Jabesh-Gilead had buried Saul. The Philistines, "when they had stripped him, they took his head, and his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines roundabout, to carry tidings

unto their idols, and to the people. And they put his armour in the house of their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon. And when all Jabesh-gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul, they arose, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh, and fasted seven days."

When David came to the throne he learned what these men had done to Saul, that they had honoured his (David's) predecessor; and he sent for them and thanked them, saying, "Blessed be ye of the Lord, that ye have shewed this kindness unto your lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him. And now the Lord shew kindness and truth unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing. Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them."

There is sound psychology in that. David was shrewd enough to see that the men who had been loyal to his predecessor would be loyal to him also. By and by you will become ministers, and will become pastors of churches. You will preach as well as you can. The first Sunday perhaps somebody will come and shake hands with you, and tell you that was a great sermon. Do not believe it! Perhaps in two or three weeks there will be not a few people come to you and say, "How thankful I am that you have come. This church has been waiting for a preacher like you for years. We never have had anybody who could preach like that. Your predecessor was a good man, but he could not preach like you. That is what we want." The young preacher will be in danger with praise like that. Do not believe it because it may not be true. Furthermore, I advise you not to say anything to your flatterer beyond thanking him for his kindness. Go on and do not pay too much attention to him. By the time you have been there a couple of months you will discover that the people who have praised you so highly, praised every preacher in the beginning in the same way. The Methodists used to have a saying, "First year, idolized; second year, criticized; third year, scandalized."

I became pastor of a certain church some years ago, and I can see one brother coming up now, with shining face, a goody, goody fellow. He came up and held out one hand, and as I shook hands with him he put the other hand over mine and said, "I am so glad, as the oldest member of this church, to welcome you as my Pastor,—but I want to tell you I had to have a long battle on my knees before I could do it. I won the victory, and I welcome you." I said, "All right, brother", but I put down a little note—not in a note-book, for I carry my notes in my head, then I know where they are. I said to myself, "If that man is ever any use to me I will thank the Lord for it, but I do not expect it. I will watch him." I did watch him. He was a member of the finance committee. When it came time for nominations for office in the church, and the deacons asked me to make some suggestions I omitted his name. They said, "This is the same list as last year with one exception. Have you any good reason for omitting the name of Mr. So-and-So?" To which I replied, "Can any of you give me one good reason for putting him on?" "Only this, that he will make a row if you do not." "That", I said, "constitutes the finest reason in the world for leaving him off."

When I find a man with the kicking habit, I watch where his toe comes, and then put a good big block of granite there. He will be so busy for some time nursing his sore toe that he will not have leisure to make other mischief.

When you go to your church you will find Mr. and Mrs. Jabesh-gilead—no; that is the town where they live. They will not blow their own trumpet; somebody else will tell you, "Mr. and Mrs. So-and-So were always kind to their Pastor. They do not make much noise, but they are always at the prayer-meeting." After you have been in the pastorate a while you will find the people of Jabesh-gilead are your best friends. Warm up to them. They are the people who will help you, who will stand by you.

In one of Dr. Conwell's books he says that in the blank form issued by the Postal Department of the United States as a questionnaire, and sent to referees when a man makes application for a position in the Postal Department, and is required to give a certain number of names of persons to whom the Department may refer, there is this question, "Is he loyal to his church?" Why does the United States Government want to know whether a man is loyal to his church? Whoever framed that questionnaire was not concerned to know what church a man attends. But they know that a man who can be loyal to one thing will be loyal to another. The man who is not loyal to the church to which he belongs will not be loyal to anything, and the American Government does not want him in its service.

Loyalty is a choice quality in a man or woman, when one is able, under all circumstances, to be true. Learn from David. He knew there were storms ahead, and that he would need true friends. So will you—and you will find them among the people who have been true to your predecessor.

UNION BAPTIST NEWS

WESTBORO ORDAINS ITS PASTOR

Thursday, January 25th, was a great day at the Westboro Regular Baptist Church. A Council of churches from the Montreal and Ottawa Valley had convened by the invitation of the Church for the purpose of ordaining its pastor, Mr. Lorne Hisey.

Rev. M. Doherty of Buckingham, Quebec, was elected Moderator, and Rev. F. W. Dyson, of Dalesville, was appointed Secretary. After Deacon Cummings had read the Minutes calling the Council, Mr. Hisey proceeded to give an account of his conversion, call to the ministry, and statement as to his beliefs and doctrine.

In the account of his conversion, he spoke of being brought up in a Godly home, and of the influence of his mother in his decision to become a Christian at the age of five. As we listened to the able manner in which he presented his views of doctrine, we were profoundly impressed, it being one of the most complete statements we have ever heard.

Mr. Hisey being a graduate of the Toronto Baptist Seminary, we were made to feel that if he is a sample of what that institution turns out, there need be no concern as to the future of our Union. We speak for Mr. Hisey a great future, also the church he serves.

The Council unanimously voted to fellowship with the statement of Mr. Hisey, and proceeded to arrange for the ordination, after which the meeting adjourned for supper. One can always be sure of being royally entertained by the ladies of the Westboro Baptist Church, and on this occasion they excelled themselves.

Pastor Roy Hisey led the song service, and read the Scrip-

ture at the evening service to a well-filled church, and the following pastors took part in the ordination of the candidate. Rev. M. Doherty offered the ordination prayer. The charge to the church was ably given by the veteran Rev. St. James of Montreal. The charge to the candidate was given by Rev. James Hall of Ottawa, and the right hand of fellowship by the Rev. F. W. Dyson of Dalesville.

The ordination sermon was preached by Rev. W. W. Fleischer of Shenstone Memorial Church, Brantford, Ontario, a former pastor of Mr. Hisey's. We had heard good reports of him, and he lived up to all that had been said of him. It was worth going a long way to hear. Rev. Lorne Hisey pronounced the benediction, and the service ended with all having enjoyed a profitable time.

F. W. DYSON, Secretary.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

SUNDAY, MARCH FOURTH

Has been chosen as

Special Field Day

for

Home Missions

A glorious work is being done by the Home Mission Pastors of the Union. New opportunities are opening for establishing preaching stations, and funds are urgently needed to wage an aggressive warfare.

PLAN — PREPARE — PRAY

and

GIVE ON MARCH 4th, 1934

Envelopes will be supplied, and all our people, boys, girls, men and women, in Bible Schools and Churches of the Union are earnestly requested to make this a great day in the History of Baptist Home Missions for the Union.

WHOLE BIBLE COURSE LESSON LEAF

(Continued from page 11)

not a wise move, the men from the east could not be trusted, and this the king ought to have known and guarded against. The incident constituted a test of character, for "God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart", (2 Chron. 32:31). Note the condition of the heart, (Jer. 17:9), the tendency to pride in each one, the need for humility of spirit, and for constant trust in God.

The error of his action was brought forcibly to the attention of the king by Isaiah, who being informed of what had been done, (vs. 14, 15), set forth in prediction, by inspiration of God, the future conquest of Judah by Babylon, (vs. 16-18). The fulfilment of this came on a later day, but no doubt the messengers carried home to their master the story of the wealth in Jerusalem, which would tend to stimulate the cupidity of this heathen people. The prospect for Judah was not bright, but the people had themselves to blame for it. By their rebellious attitude they had brought upon themselves the judgment of God. They had acted very wickedly, and the action of Hezekiah in this instance manifests a lack of wisdom which evidently was all too common, due to lack of nearness to God. Enemies were not recognized in the guise of friend. May we learn to know our enemies, and be on guard at all times against them. When dressed in the garb of friendship they are the most dangerous. Let there be no compromise with the workers of evil, but aim to meet them, (Eph. 6:10-18). The submissive spirit of the king is worthy of attention, and of emulation. The information conveyed must have been sad to him, but he accepted the same as from the Lord, (v. 19). Whatever comes from God should be accepted willingly by each of us.

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 9

No. 1

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 8 FIRST QUARTER February 25th, 1934

ANSWERED PRAYER

Lesson Text: 2 Kings, chapter 20.

Golden Text: "Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord.

"And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake."—2 Kings 20:5, 6.

Bible School Reading: 2 Kings 20:1-11.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Monday—Is. 38:9-22. Tuesday—Ps. 39:1-13. Wednesday—Hab. 3:1-6. Thursday—Acts 14:8-18. Friday—Matt. 14:22-33. Saturday—I. Pet. 1:1-11.

I. PRAYER OF HEZEKIAH, (vs. 1-3).

Sickness is a reality notwithstanding the fact that some affirm that it is but a mortal belief. Scripture and experience both testify to its existence, and the evidence of the senses is not deceptive in this respect. King Hezekiah was sick. He did not merely think so, he was sure of it, and by command of the Lord, Isaiah informed him of the fatal termination of his malady, directing him in consequence of the same to set his house in order, (v. 1). Note the wisdom of following this direction. It possibly referred in this case not alone to domestic arrangements, but also to matters affecting the throne. It is the duty of all so to live that when death comes it will find us ready for it in all spheres of life. Application of this may be made to parents respecting duties to their children, and to the latter concerning their obligations; the solemnity and certainty of death being impressed upon all. The knowledge of his impending death brought sorrow to Hezekiah, and led him to pray to God for healing, (vs. 2, 3). Life is sweet to all, and we desire to live as long as possible; we can, therefore, understand the king's attitude. In his prayer he mentions the fact of his righteous walk. Preceding kings had sinned, and had been cut off in consequence, but he had done that which was right in the sight of the Lord, (18:3). He could not understand the reason, therefore, for his early death, and pleaded implicitly for an extension of life. The subject of prayer may again be dealt with, as in the preceding lesson, noting its nature, and the fact that all things may be brought before God in this manner. Observe the real sorrow of Hezekiah, the obvious sincerity, and earnestness of his attitude, and the definiteness of his approach to God.

II. ANSWERED PRAYER, (vs. 4-11).

God has promised to answer the prayer of His people, (Ps. 50:15), but not in every case does He do so immediately. We must await His time for the gracious response. On this occasion the answer was quickly forthcoming: before Isaiah had gone out into the middle of the court the word of the Lord came instructing him to inform Hezekiah that his prayer had been heard, his tears had been seen, he would be healed, he would go up to the house of the Lord on the third day, fifteen years would be added to his life, and he would be delivered from the hand of the Assyrians. This was a promise of a full answer to the request of the king. As such it gave assurance of the interest and attention of God. There are many who are under the impression that God is so high and mighty that He takes no interest in His creatures, but this is not in accordance with fact. He cares for them,

(I. Peter 5:7), pays heed to the details of each life, and knows the most intimate particulars respecting the same, (Matt. 10:30). This is encouraging information for all, and should stimulate trust in Him.

It may further be noted that the divine answer was of a generous nature. It promised more than might have been expected. This is always the Lord's way. Our needs are met in accordance with His riches, (Phil. 4:19), and His blessings are given in measure far exceeding our expectation, (Eph. 3:20). He is indeed lavish with His gifts. Examples of this may be observed in the natural realm, as well as in that of the spiritual. The answer was also certain in its fulfilment. God never promises anything He will not, or cannot, carry out. He desires to help men, and His power is unlimited. The encouraging nature of the answer may also be noted, together with the satisfaction gained, and the confidence engendered in the divine goodness. The Lord's relationship to Jerusalem is significant, (v. 6), and is worthy of consideration. This was, and is, particularly and peculiarly His city.

The subject of healing arises in connection with this incident. What we have here is a case of divine healing, not faith healing; not an example of the power of mind over matter, but a manifestation of the power of God. Yet instruction was given to use means. Isaiah directed that a lump of figs should be laid on the boil, and this done, Hezekiah recovered, (v. 7). It is well to note this, while we are in the midst of such erroneous teaching respecting the subject of healing. It should be clearly understood that God heals with means, and without the use of the same. The method must be left to the exercise of His will. Note the omnipotent power of God manifest in healing. Examples of healing may be cited from Old and New Testament periods, (5; Mark 2:21-45; Acts 3:1-10), and encouragement may be derived from the knowledge that God is the same these days as in the past, (Heb. 13:8). It is probably the case that such experience as we may have of His power is limited by no lack of faith. If we had more implicit trust in the Lord we would be the recipients of more of His blessing. Unbelief hinders the divine outflow, (Heb. 3:19; Matt. 13:58), faith is honoured, (Matt. 15:21-28). Receiving God's message through Isaiah, Hezekiah desired a sign certifying to its accomplishment, and was given the sign of the sun's shadow going back ten degrees on the dial of Ahaz, (vs. 8-11). In the ordinary course the shadow would go forward. In going in the other direction it implied the interposition of almighty power betokening a miracle. God who created the world was quite able to govern its various parts to effect this sign. The sign was symbolic of the change in the life of the king; no longer was he sinking into the valley of death: he was turning back from the tomb for another fifteen years of earthly existence. Many persons nearing life's end would like a similar turn of events, but to all this is not granted, nor would it be well in such cases. We cannot but remember that Manasseh was born during the fifteen-year period, (21:1), and he did evil in the sight of the Lord, (21:2). It is better to go when our time comes, having previously seen to it that we are prepared for the great change. We can then face the same without fear, (Heb. 2:14, 15), knowing that absent from the body means present with the Lord, (2 Cor. 5:6-8).

III. THE VISIT OF THE BABYLONIANS, (vs. 12-21).

The victory of Judah over Assyria, (19:35), had become widely known, and the Babylonians who had also asserted their independence of that power, had a friendly feeling for the Lord's people in consequence of it, and to such an extent that letters and presents were sent by the hands of messengers to Hezekiah on the occasion of his sickness, (v. 12). The king was elated by this flattering attention. It manifested a desire for closer acquaintance, which, in accordance with worldly wisdom might be taken advantage of, and Hezekiah sought to cultivate it by being friendly in return. He permitted them to gaze on all his treasures, and at this time he was quite wealthy, due possibly to his victory over Assyria, (v. 13). There may also have been more than a little pride in showing these visitors around. But it was

(Continued on page 10)

DID YOU READ THIS LAST WEEK? TO THE WHOLE GOSPEL WITNESS FAMILY

This number is the thirty-eighth issue of Volume Twelve of THE GOSPEL WITNESS. In fourteen weeks, (D.V.), the twelfth volume will be completed. This is the six hundred and eleventh issue. We had not a cent of capital to begin with—we have no more now. We have endeavoured to plead the merits of many worthy enterprises, but we have never yet received a cent for any advertisement.

Some of our issues have been very large; the highest number of any one issue was seventy-five thousand.

This paper has published a sermon from the Jarvis Street pulpit in all but the first two or three issues. For a number of years now it has also carried a Thursday evening Bible lecture. Were the sermons and lectures alone put into volume form, and printed, with the number of pages usually contained in such volumes, we should have at least sixty volumes. But in addition to that, when we were engaged in sharp controversy, some of our issues were three or four issues in one in size. One issue, Number 26 of Volume 5, November 4th, 1926, contained one hundred and seventy-six pages, or eleven times the ordinary size.

This has cost a great deal of money, but it has been supplied by the Lord's people who have received blessing from the paper, and who have recognized it as a missionary enterprise. The subscription price has never been sufficient to pay for the printing, but friends of THE WITNESS have generously contributed to its support, and by this means, with the blessing of the Lord, we have continued unto this day.

During the depression our subscription list, like that of all other periodicals, declined, but we are happy to be able to report that it is now steadily on the upgrade; our subscription list this year is larger than it was a year ago at this time.

Every year just before the close of the financial year, March 31st, we have sent out a letter to GOSPEL WITNESS subscribers, asking for a contribution to the GOSPEL WITNESS Fund. Here, for the benefit of new subscribers, we state once more that the Editor of the paper has never received a cent of remuneration for his work in these nearly twelve years, and only one office salary is paid out of the GOSPEL WITNESS Fund. All the rest goes to pay the printer's bills and postage. We are just now sending out our annual letter to our subscribers, but it has occurred to us that many of our regular and occasional readers might also be glad to have fellowship with us in the support of this paper. Copies of THE GOSPEL WITNESS in bulk go to many churches, and single copies are purchased from week to week from an agent appointed by the church. The names of those who buy them are unknown to us. The WITNESS is also sold by some news-stands in Toronto and London, and many of our subscribers mail their copy, when they have read it, to other people; so that our GOSPEL WITNESS family is really very much larger than our subscription list.

We are giving this whole page to THE GOSPEL WITNESS this week in the hope that it will be read with interest by many people whose names we do not know, but who will gladly send us a contribution for the GOSPEL WITNESS Fund. We print herewith the letter we are sending to all our subscribers. Its appeal will apply to all our readers whether subscribers or not.

We suggest to every reader of THE GOSPEL WITNESS, first, that you try to send us a contribution to the GOSPEL WITNESS Fund between now and March 31st to help us balance the books of THE WITNESS by that date.

Secondly, we would ask every reader of THE WITNESS who is not now a subscriber to subscribe directly to THE GOSPEL WITNESS by sending us your name and address, with an order for the paper for one year.

Thirdly, we appeal to every reader of THE GOSPEL WITNESS to help us obtain new subscribers. Recommend the paper to your friends, and suggest that they subscribe for it.

And, last of all, we appeal to the Pastors of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches to assist us in obtaining subscribers, each in his own church, and, if possible, between now and the 31st of March. Ask your church to make a contribution to THE GOSPEL WITNESS Fund. We do not believe there is a church in the Union that would not be willing to do this if the Pastor would lead in the matter, and afford

the congregation an opportunity. We offer this last suggestion with some boldness, on the ground that for years THE GOSPEL WITNESS has published one or two pages of news of the affairs of the Union at its own expense, and has never received from the Union funds one cent in return.

Following is the letter that is being sent to subscribers, and below that, a contribution form which will make it easy for those desiring to have a share in this work:

Dear GOSPEL WITNESS Reader:

It has been our practice for some years to write a letter about this time of the year to every member of our GOSPEL WITNESS family. Although the majority of them are personally unknown to the Editor, yet he feels a peculiar interest in every one, and finds it difficult sometimes to persuade himself that he has not met each one personally. In my annual letter of last year I said, "Within living memory there has never been a time when it was so difficult for religious enterprises to pay their way as it has been for the last two or three years." But the ten months of our financial year now ending have really been still more difficult. But I am sure I do not need to argue the case.

For the information of our new subscribers who have not before received our annual letter I may say that the subscription price of the paper does not pay for its printing. We carry no advertisements, and have been able to continue these twelve years only through the generosity of friends who have recognized in THE GOSPEL WITNESS a great missionary enterprise. The paper goes to hundreds of ministers of all denominations, many of whom find in it, according to their testimony, both food for their own souls and inspiration for their ministry.

This week I received a letter from a minister in Bulgaria, asking permission to translate certain sermons into the Bulgarian language, and print them in tract form for missionary work in that country. Some sermons, and parts of sermons, have been translated into Chinese and other languages. We have hundreds of missionaries included in our GOSPEL WITNESS family. From time to time we hear of conversions through the reading of the printed page.

I may confidentially confess to THE GOSPEL WITNESS family that this last year has been the hardest year of my ministry, what with a large church, THE GOSPEL WITNESS, Toronto Baptist Seminary and our great radio ministry, the problem of financing all these enterprises has been a tremendous one. As usual, THE GOSPEL WITNESS Fund is in desperate need. We need the support of our friends this year more than ever. Our financial year will end with the 31st of March, and we shall greatly appreciate any contribution you may be able to send to us. Make it as large as you possibly can, but if you cannot give a substantial sum, please remember nothing will be too small. We shall be grateful for whatever help our friends can give. A few, perhaps, can give no more than \$1.00, but others may be able to send \$2.00, \$5.00, \$10.00, \$25.00, \$50.00, or even \$100.00. Of course, if you can send more, rest assured not one cent will be wasted.

With deepest gratitude for your fellowship in the gospel in this matter, and hoping to hear from you at an early date, I am,

Very heartily yours,

THOMAS T. SHIELDS,

CONTRIBUTION FORM

Enclosed please find \$_____ which I send as a contribution to THE GOSPEL WITNESS Fund.

Name

Address