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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"DECLARED TO BE THE SON OF GOD WITH POWER"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, April 1st, 1934.

(Stenographically Reported)

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Eastern Standard Time

"Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness,
by the resurrection from the dead."—Romans 1:4.

In the context Paul describes himself as a "servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God"; and declares that that gospel was promised before by His prophets in the holy Scriptures. It was not an afterthought, but the outworking of God's eternal plan. He further says that the theme of the gospel is God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. He asserts that He was made of the seed of David, and thus recognizes the truth of the real humanity of Jesus Christ. He then says that Christ was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead".

I have but a few minutes to address you this evening on a subject that might well occupy us weekly for many a year. I shall attempt only to remind you of things you already know, to "stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance".

I.

The first great truth is this, that there is no gospel apart from the postulate, the assumption, that HE WHO IS THE THEME OF IT IS NONE OTHER THAN THE SON OF GOD. There is no evolution here. There is no room for the hypothesis that the Christian religion is but the acme of human thought, and represents man's best endeavour to find his way to God. That is not the gospel. The world does not appear just now to have succeeded very well, in any general way, in making progress Godward. But this is the gospel, that the Son of God is come, that Someone has visited us from another world than this, that Someone with a larger knowledge and a wider experience and an infinite capacity for the understanding of spiritual realities has come to earth. There is no gospel apart from that.

I affirm that if Jesus Christ were only a man, the gospel is the greatest delusion ever foisted upon the

human intellect. It is either *the* gospel "promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures" concerning one Person, and that one Person God manifest in the flesh—it is either that, or it is a fraud. Therefore we must insist upon the uniqueness of Christ, upon his entire separation from all other teachers, or reformers, or founders of religions, or would-be saviours, as I pointed out to you last Sunday evening. I give you the text again: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Jesus Christ is not only the Son of God, but He is God the Son.

II.

Here we are told that He is declared so to be "BY THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD". The truth of the Virgin Birth has in it, of course, this great principle, the union of Deity with humanity: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." But for the verification of that fact we are dependent upon the authority of holy Scripture. This holy Book is the only witness which can be called into court for the establishment of that truth. Nor do we need another.

We are shut up to the Bible for all our knowledge of Jesus Christ. I have never been able to understand the mental constitution of men who endeavour to discredit and discount the Bible, and who yet tell us that what we need is to get back to Christ. There is no "getting back to Christ", and no knowledge of Christ, apart from what is written in the Book. For those who accept the Bible, there will be no difficulty whatever in

the acceptance of the truth of the virgin birth of Christ, or the inevitable corollary of that, that He is both Son of man, and Son of God. But that is a great mystery for the understanding of which we are absolutely dependent upon divine revelation.

I read to you to-night the concluding verses of the twentieth chapter of John (the twenty-first chapter seems to have been a postscript to that Gospel) in which the writer says, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." That is what the Bible is for,—not to teach us science, or history, or philosophy; although it is never contrary to true science, or to fact or truth in any realm. But its purpose is not to teach these things: it is a divinely inspired record of the signs which Jesus Christ did, which were a mighty attestation of His Messiahship.

The winds and the waves obeyed Him, the blind received their sight, the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed, and the dead were raised up. These were the credentials which Jesus Christ Himself named to John when he sent asking, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" But we must bear in mind that "signs" accompanied the apostolic ministry, and that miracles were not confined to the personal ministry of Jesus Christ. Moses wrought supernaturally, as did also Elijah and Elisha. They were but men divinely appointed and empowered. Hence, while these evidences of the supernatural, these "signs", give at least strong probability to the truth of Christ's claims respecting Himself, yet they were not, in themselves, absolute proofs of His Deity—though they were proofs of His Messiahship, that the Power of God was upon Him.

Nicodemus spoke the truth when he said, "No man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." But even a man might do them if God were with him. But Jesus Christ said that He was more than man on that occasion: "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." He said He was from above.

What of the supernatural accompaniments of the death of Jesus Christ, when the very sun hid his face, and darkness covered the earth? All nature mourned in sympathy with Him. The very constellations formed in funeral procession. The sun exchanged at noon its wonted bridal vestments for the mourning robes of night—all nature shuddered in sympathy with its Creator when Jesus Christ died. Even the centurian, when he saw these things, said, "Truly this was the Son of God."

But the resurrection was the culmination, the climax, of all the "signs"; and it was different from all others; it was, as He said Himself, "the sign of the prophet Jonas". He raised others from the dead, but He made this claim for Himself: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." No one else did ever dare say

that. "As the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself."

His resurrection is here assumed to be ultimate proof of His Deity, the climax of everything; for by that fact He was "declared to be the Son of God". Why? He was spoken of in all the holy Scripture by all the prophets who had preceded Him, and He Himself predicted all that would happen to Himself. "Destroy this temple", and it will be raised up? No! That is not what He said. He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up", for He spoke of the temple of His body. What He really said was, "I defy all the powers of earth and of hell to terminate my life, to conceal and secure me in a sepulchre. Do your worst, and on the third day I will rise again in opposition to the religious world, and the political world, and all other worlds. I will prove myself to be sovereign over all."

I have not time to enumerate—I can only remind you of—the "infallible" proofs by which our Lord showed Himself alive after His passion, "being seen of the disciples forty days". Ah, but there was something more than *seeing*. Mary saw Him, and supposed Him to be the gardener and said, "Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." He Who had said, "Let there be light", and there was light; He Who divided the light from the darkness, and commanded all things to be, "without whom was not anything made that was made", uttered but one word, "Mary"! Just one word! She fell at His feet and said, "Rabboni", which is to say, Master. By His presence and person she was convinced of the reality of the resurrection.

If Thomas had lived in our day he would have been a university professor—and most likely he would have been a professor of theology. He was a good man, but he walked by the sight of his eyes. Half blinded by his temporary disappointment he said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." There came one day into the midst of the assembled disciples the Incarnate God, and very tenderly He said to Thomas, "Come a little nearer, just come a little nearer, Thomas. Put your finger into the prints of the nails; there they are." But Thomas was never guilty of that vulgar touch: he fell at His feet saying, "My Lord and my God."

Those who saw Him after His resurrection had not the shadow of a doubt that He was God. He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead".

III.

How I should like to show you some of the implications of that, but I must say this word at least. He was "declared to be the Son of God *with power*". "Declared to be the Son of God *with power*." Is there anything this world needs to-day, as in all other days, so much as a sovereign human personality able to understand all the perplexities of human life, and, at the same time, power to solve them? I grow weary of hearing men talk about difficult situations. I read the summary of a series of addresses delivered not long ago at a certain place, when the speaker told his hearers what the world needed, and what it was waiting for, was a leader. Well, I do not need to be told that, do you? I know that. That is true in every walk of life.

And here He is. Here is One Who came from heaven, Who lived on earth, Who died, and Who came forth from the grave "declared to be the Son of God *with power*". Tell me what else this world needs but the Son of God? This word does not mean authority: it is the same word from which we get our words, dynamite and dynamo, and dynamic. It is not an authority with which someone is clothed, not a delegated authority, but an inherent and inseparable dynamic in Himself. That is the kind of Saviour we have, One Who is the Son of God "with power".

What sort of power? I suppose we are cut off now, but a moment or so ago my voice was being carried I know not how far; I suppose consistently for a radius, according to communications received, of about three thousand miles. I could not make myself heard three thousand miles. I am not like the old-fashioned preachers. A man in the western part of Ontario said to me once, "Did you know Elder So-and-So?" "No; I had not the privilege." "He was a great preacher." "I suppose he was. I think I have heard of him." "Yes; he was a great preacher. He could be heard clean across two hundred acres"! That was fine. I can be heard further than that—but not by my own power; by another power that magnifies my voice and sends it through the air. You have all listened to many voices which were being carried around the world.

But we need more power than that. I suppose if this building were left to itself it would soon decay, as every other building would. Toronto is one hundred years old, but if there were not somebody to take care of Toronto, it would soon be a heap of dust. The work of disintegration and decay is going on everywhere. It is going on in you! I see some here this evening whose hair is gray; you are not as young as you used to be. You remember Tennyson's lament?—

"The path by which we twain did go,
Which led by tracts that pleased us well,
Thro' four sweet years arose and fell,
From flower to flower, from snow to snow:

"And we with singing cheered the way,
And crown'd with all the season lent,
From April on to April went,
And glad at heart from May to May.

"But where the path we walked began
To slant the fifth autumnal slope,
As we descended following Hope,
There sat the Shadow feared of man;

"Who broke our fair companionship,
And spread his mantle dark and cold,
And wrapt thee formless in the fold,
And dulled the murmur of thy lip.

"And bore thee whence I could not see
Nor follow, tho' I walk in haste,
And think, that somewhere in the waste
The Shadow sits and waits for me.

"Now sometimes in my sorrow shut,
Or breaking into song by fits
Alone, alone, to where he sits,
The Shadow cloaked from head to foot.

"Who keeps the keys of all the creeds
I wander—

* * * *

"Then might I find, ere yet the morn
Breaks hither over Indian seas,
That Shadow waiting with the keys,
To shroud me from my proper scorn."

The Shadow! The Shadow! We are all under the Shadow, the Shadow of death, the great warrior whom nobody has ever been able to withstand. The great conquerors of antiquity are all gone. Napoleon once said, "The lives of a million men are nothing to me." But he had only one of his own. The Shadow waited for him!

What are all the machines for, all the buildings, all electricity for light and power, this striving among men everywhere in business and national relations—what is it all for? In order to gain the ascendancy for a little while—at the outside, for perhaps half a century. Man lives but his three score years and ten. All the power that men can develop and exercise belongs to that brief period—then the Shadow comes. And Someone behind the Shadow says, "Time is up". The great man goes to his office no more; the king lays his sceptre down, like good King Albert; even the Napoleons of finance all yield to this Sheriff! The "power king" too? Yes; he goes with the rest. What are our great organizations for? To develop power. What for? To get rich. What for? Just to be rich, and to have more power. Then it crumbles.

What is everybody afraid of? The Shadow. What is the end of all our efforts? Alas! Alas! They lead to the place where I was this Easter afternoon, where many of you were, the place of the cold, dark grave. I will tell you what we need more than power to erect buildings, or to make armaments, or to make other implements for use in any of the other categories in which men exercise power, but which time prevents my enumerating. It is enough to sum it all up by saying that when the end of the road is reached, there comes from somewhere the giant monster of whose Shadow we have all been afraid. We are impotent to stay his coming. Men must die at last. But, thank God, the Shadow does not "keep the keys of all the creeds": and though still the Shadow waits, he is not "waiting with the keys".

For here is Someone Who has a power that is differentiated from all other kinds of power. Not power to pile the mountains—although He did that. Not power to command the lightnings—although He does that. Not power to give to the sea His decree that the waters should not pass His commandment—although He does that. It is something far more than that. Not power to feed the hungry—and He does that. Not even to open the eyes of the blind, or to alleviate the ills of life—although He can do all that. But this is a power that nobody else possesses. In all the long tale of human history nobody else ever had that power. What was it? A power which enabled Him to say, "Come, Death, try conclusions with me."

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

He put His conquering heel upon the neck of the world's conqueror, and extracted his sting. He harnessed him to His chariots and said, "I will make thee do my sovereign will, and drag my ransomed children up the shining pathway of the skies"—"Declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead."

They cut off your electric light because you could not pay your bills, did they? I called up someone the other day, only to get the answer from the operator, "That telephone has been disconnected." "Mr. So-and-So is not with the firm now." "What is wrong?" "Oh, he lost his strength, and could not serve us any longer." You may lose your wealth, your health, all your possessions, even your friends, and be so weak that the tenderest nurse cannot force a drink down your parched throat. The physician may say it is only a matter of an hour or so until he will be gone. Stripped of everything? No! There is still with you the Son of God "with power". He will do for you what He has done for Himself. He rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

I saw some of you wiping your eyes a few moments ago, and I joined you in that, as these dear children sang:

Jesus is coming with joy to the sky
Oh happy day! Oh happy day!
Then all who love Him shall heavenward fly
Oh happy day! Happy day!
We upward shall fly to the Lord in the air
Together with Jesus we all shall be there
Far from the earth, and from sorrow and care
Oh happy day! Happy day!

Parents and children shall then again meet
Oh happy day! Oh happy day!
Sisters and brothers, oh it will be sweet!
Oh happy day! Happy day!
We missed them on earth, but to Jesus they went;
We love them as ever, their absence lament
Soon we shall meet them and then be content,
Oh happy day! Happy day!

Some will stay weeping, unable to sing,
Oh happy day! Oh happy day!
All may rejoice and their glad praises bring,
Oh happy day! Happy day!
For Jesus still waits, He tarries that we
May trust in His name and thus ready may be,
When brightly beaming His glory we see,
Oh happy day! Happy day!

And all because we have a Saviour equal to the utmost power of evil, able to destroy even "the last enemy", death, and lead us at last triumphantly into the glory of His presence. What do you know about Jesus Christ? You have read about Him, and heard about Him; but do you know Him? Have you seen Him by faith? And do you know that He is the Son of God "with power"? He died, He was buried, and He was raised again.

And everyone who really believes in Him is partaker of the benefits of His resurrection. Some day we shall be like Him, "for we shall see him as he is". May the Lord help us that we may have Easter in our souls—not Easter morning only, but Easter evening too. Some of the disciples did not see Him in the morning, but in the late evening. That is why I read that to you this evening: He appeared to them in the evening. May this be Easter evening! May we all see Jesus Christ, the Son of God "with power".

Let us pray:

We thank Thee, Lord, for this salvation. It is an old, old story; but it is ever new. Help us that we may live and walk in the likeness of Thy resurrection. Forgive all the sins of the past, we pray Thee. Blot them out, and cleanse us in the precious blood. Help us that we may have life in the overcoming Christ; for His glory's sake, Amen.

DAVID AS A MAN OF WAR

A Bible Lecture by Dr. T. T. Shields

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto,
Thursday Evening, March 22nd, 1934.

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Lectures on Biblical Theology, which is included in
the Curriculum of Toronto Baptist Seminary.*

(Stenographically Reported)

Lesson Text: II. Samuel, chapter 8.

The chapter before us, at first blush, would appear to be a chapter of dry and uninteresting history. History often appears to be dry and uninteresting to certain types of mind, but it is very dangerous willingly to remain in ignorance of people and of things which have gone before us. But there is nothing more humbling, and nothing that will tend to a wiser regularization of life, than some knowledge of those who have gone before us. We are really not so superior to our forebears as sometimes we persuade ourselves we are.

I venture to say it is quite impossible to understand and properly to appraise current events without some knowledge of the historical causes from which those events spring. It is difficult for anyone to understand the attitude of France toward Germany who does not know something of what France suffered in the Great War, or who is ignorant of that which really planted the seeds of the Great War, namely, the Franco-Prussian War. And perhaps to understand that, we need to go back to a diligent study of the Napoleonic wars, and all the influences which were released by those long and widespread conflicts and conquests.

If this chapter be regarded as merely a chapter of history, aside from all typical and spiritual suggestiveness, it is necessary for us to become somewhat conversant with the history that lies behind it. Even then it would be difficult for anyone to understand such courses as are here recorded, who is without that larger view of a far-seeing, predetermining, justly-overruling Providence to Whose power nations and individuals are subject. Whether we will or no, we inherit the entail of the past. We have entered into other men's labours. We reap something of our own sowing, but very much of the sowing of others. The sins of the fathers are visited upon the children, however vigorously the children may object both to the law and to its operation. We are what we are, and our circumstances are what they are, largely, not by our own willing, by our own power to determine

life and its correspondences, but because these things are the outgrowth of things and persons which have preceded us.

In a little place in Canada, a township or county council, I am not sure which, met for their last session before the election. There was some very knotty problem which came before the council for consideration, and, properly, for decision. But one man, who was in the habit of evading responsibility whenever it could be evaded, a man of little education and small experience, quite seriously, and without intending to be humorous, moved that "this matter be referred to our ancestors for decision"!

Of course he meant, successors; but thereby hangs a tale, for many of their problems had been committed to them by their ancestors. Many of the difficulties we face to-day are the result of errors committed by persons, in many instances, who have long since been dead.

I remember when the Grand Trunk Pacific Railroad was projected, and with what great enthusiasm the proposal was greeted by very large numbers of people who were ready to welcome any sort of spending programme. The Grand Trunk Pacific was built. The Canadian Northern Railway was built in sections. And the credit of this great country was pledged until, by the acquiescence of sleepy voters who did not know they were being exploited, the country's resources were pledged. At last the government, to avoid a financial crash, had to take all these scattered elements and forge them into a great railway system, the biggest railroad system in the world, duplicating the next largest; and giving a nation of ten millions of people the two largest railway systems on earth—with only ten millions of people to use them. When you complain of your tax bills, and wonder why you should be so heavily taxed, and why this country should spend between fifty and sixty millions of dollars a year in paying interest on the Canadian National Railways, remember, that is history! Do not forget! We must bear our burdens because somebody was careless in years gone by.

A knowledge of history is very necessary to a wise and practical observance of any prudence in life. That, by the way. I have thus spoken to feel my way to my subject; but it is enough perhaps to lay a foundation.

I.

This chapter records a series of conquests. In our last study we observed that God had given David rest from all his enemies round about. They had ceased to be aggressive, and David had had some time to attend to domestic affairs. Having built his own house, he proposed the building of a house for God. But now he takes the initiative himself, and we find David once again appearing as a man of war.

I called your attention to what seemed to me to be the rather absurd implications in the titles given pictures in a certain city paper—titles that seemed to imply that the world's statesmen, and I know not who else, are all plotting and desiring war. And yet I think it is fair to say that nobody of any sense wants war. I do not think France wants it. I do not think Germany wants it. I am sure Britain does not want it; and I am equally sure that it is far from the thoughts of the United States. I do not believe Mussolini is planning it. Nobody is deliberately planning war. Even the highwaymen who go out with their revolvers in their pockets do not want to shoot anybody. They will not shoot you if you will be quiet

and let them take all you have! They would avoid the risk involved in shooting if they can possess themselves of your property without shooting. The same is true of nations; they do not want war, provided other nations will let them have what they want.

Then the same paper publishes the story of the execution of Nurse Cavell. Did you read it? I did. When I read it, I wanted war. I was ready to enlist right then. The nation guilty of that, as a nation, is not fit to live. Somebody ought to punish it for all the atrocities of the Great War. They never were punished, and they ought to be.

There is justification for war sometimes. Society sometimes adjudges an individual unfit to live. He has taken another life, he has violated the laws of the land; and he must pay the penalty. Every person of any moral sense recognizes that as an absolute necessity to the stability of any state. The first law ever entrusted to human hands for enforcement was a law designed to protect human life. It is the very foundation of human society: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood he shed: for in the image of God made he man." Even the devil said, "All that a man hath will he give for his life." That being so, life is man's most valuable asset; it is useless to protect his property if you do not protect his life. It is written in the Book, and the closer you keep to the laws of the Book, the closer you will keep to practical common sense.

Long before the date of the chapter before us, God made promise to Abraham. He is the God of all the earth, and He promised that His people should be given certain land. He is the Landlord. Suppose you own a house. You have in it a tenant who has signed a lease, and therefore you are under legal obligation to permit him to live in that house to the expiration of the lease, unless he violates the terms of the lease, in which case you are free to cancel it. But the man may be a very undesirable tenant, even though he may not give you legal reason to cancel the lease. But someone comes to you one day and says, "I am looking for a house. I want a house about next May." "What sort of house do you want?" "A house of so many rooms." "Where do you want to live?" The man names a certain locality. "What rent can you afford to pay?" He names a sum. You tell him you have such a house, but it is occupied, and your tenant's lease will not expire until the end of April; that you are not satisfied with him, and are indisposed to renew the lease. In due course the house is leased to another tenant, who will occupy the house as soon as the current lease expires.

After a while the present tenant requests you to renew the lease. But you refuse, and tell him the house is already leased to another tenant. Is there any injustice in that? You have allowed the tenant to stay to the expiration of the lease. The tenant being unsatisfactory, you are under no obligation to let him stay longer, and you have found somebody else.

The great Landlord is up yonder. He owns this earth, and all there is in it. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." He said to Abraham, "There is a bit of land there, Abraham, that I am going to give to you, and to your seed after you. You cannot have it yet; you will have to wait a while. It is leased. The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. You must wait four hundred years. But when the lease runs out I will not renew it with the present tenant. You shall possess it." You remember the record that iniquity had so prevailed in the land, that

the people had forfeited all right to divine consideration. Such were the abominations of the heathen in that land that God decreed that they should be blotted out. The time of judgment had come in the days of Joshua, and God's people entered into the promised land. The work was not entirely completed in Joshua's day, and even in the time of the judges we read, "These are the nations which the Lord left, to prove Israel by them, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan; only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof; namely, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in Mount Lebanon, from mount Baal-hermon unto the entering in of Hamath."

As a matter of fact, neither Joshua nor any of the judges, did lead God's people into the full possession of the land which God had sworn to give to Abraham their father.

David's day came. The Philistines have been a thorn in the flesh of Israel for a long time. David now goes forth against them, and subdues them, and takes from them Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the Philistines. That is the bridle of the mother-city, a key position. Metheg-ammah was identical with Gath the metropolis of Philistia. He destroyed their defense, and made them defenseless before Israel. Then he smote the Moabites. You will remember that when David went down into another country when he was exiled from his own country, he entrusted his father and his mother to the care of the Moabites, and in all probability, so tradition says, they had betrayed the trust. Sentence against their evil work was not executed speedily, but now judgment is meted out to them. It is rather a significant word: "He smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive." Some commentators think they were actually measured. Whatever it may mean, some were appointed to death. But the line of life was a little longer than the line of death: Thus "where sin abounded grace did much more abound."

Again "David smote also Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah unto Hamath as he went to establish his dominion by the river Euphrates." (I. Chron. 18:3). That was moving the line fence. In order to understand that, one must go back to the days of Abraham. God's covenant with Abraham was, "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt, unto the great river, the river Euphrates." (Gen. 15:18). But it does not appear that Israel's northern border, hitherto, had ever extended to the Euphrates. David, therefore, makes "the great river" to be the northern boundary of his dominion, and God's promise to Abraham is thus far fulfilled. Subsequently, it was said of Solomon: "And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt." (I. Kings 3:21).

He took from Hadadezer certain of his possessions, "and when the Syrians of Damascus came to succour Hadadezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand." Their partnership with the king of Zobah was rather an expensive one: it cost them twenty-two thousand men. "Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus: and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought gifts." It would appear that David personally led the forces of Israel, and "the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went". He was a con-

queror who subdued these nations, with every one of which the God above him had an account, thus he became God's instrument of judgment.

Look now at the ninth verse: "When Toi king of Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer, then Toi sent Joram and his son unto king David, to salute him and bless him," etc. Nothing succeeds like success. He came to congratulate David because this wicked king had been a predatory foe with whom he had had much trouble, and he was relieved by the victory which David had won over Hadadezer and his forces. The action of Britain and France in going to the help of little Belgium was not new. That is how wars have spread in times past. This very king against whom David led the forces of Israel had been a menace to the peace, and a destroyer of the property, of another king.

So may we go through the whole story. Toi sent his son Joram unto king David, "to salute him, and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him: for Hadadezer had wars with Toi. And Joram brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass: which also king David did dedicate unto the Lord, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued."

The thirteenth verse says that David "gat him a name". He put garrisons in Edom, he reigned over all Israel, he executed judgment and justice; and in the closing verses you have an account of the organization of the whole kingdom: "Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; and Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, were the priests; and Seraiah was the scribe; and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over both the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief rulers." For the first time Israel, under David, had an ordered and thoroughly organized government, with David reigning over all Israel, and the kingdom established under his hand.

At your leisure you may study several of the Psalms, notably the sixtieth, belonging to this period. The Psalms which have been a comfort to countless millions of people were born amid fierce conflicts such as are here recorded.

II.

But let us remember that DAVID IS A TYPE AND ILLUSTRATION OF GREAT DAVID'S GREATER SON, and that as such he affords in the scriptural realm a type and example for all true believers. There are spiritual Philistines, and Moabites, and Edomites, and Syrians. There are principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places. The real battle against evil is not a battle against flesh and blood, primarily. These evils, principalities and powers, as well as principles, find their human incarnations, and sometimes in doing battle against principles one must do battle against persons. But these forces of evil which found expression in David's day in these heathen nations round-about are still present in the world to-day. Many are accustomed, even among those who believe the Book, to look upon the teaching of the New Testament respecting the principle of demon possession as a bit of history that has no current counterpart. A missionary remarked to me that he believed it was impossible for anyone to go to the heathen world, and to see human nature untouched, directly or indirectly, by the gospel, or by the indirect civilization effected by the gospel—for

do not forget there are by-products of the gospel as well as its direct product in the regeneration of the individual—he said it was impossible for anyone to go with an open mind and face conditions as they exist in the heathen world without being forced to the conclusion that demon-possession is still a reality, and that devils do take possession of human beings still.

I cannot say I subscribe to it, but I met with an interpretation the other day of the twentieth chapter of Revelation, where the devil is described as being released for a little season that he might deceive the nations. I am not an expert in these matters, but to me it was marvellously suggestive. The writer said that Russia, as a nation, has manifestly gone mad; that Germany, as a nation, had gone mad; and that some other nations seem as though they have not very far to go until they will be mad. And what explanation is there of this—I had almost said, mass insanity? I do not know, but this writer's view was that the devil just now is dealing with nations—deceiving the nations. In individual cases at least I believe the devil does still possess people as he did in the days when our Lord walked the earth. Certainly we know that behind all physical and material manifestations of evil there are these principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world. And you remember that the victory of our Lord at Calvary is specifically said in the New Testament to have been a victory over principalities and powers: "Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

Our Lord's saying was most significant when he said to Pilate who boasted of his authority: "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." He knew very well that behind Caiaphas, and Annas, and Pilate, and all the kindred of the high priest, there were these spiritual intelligences with whom He was doing battle. Poor Peter! By and by he will play the coward, and he will deny his Lord. What is our Lord's explanation of that? "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." How terrible those words of His, "I pray not for the world"! "None of them is lost, but the son of perdition"! What is the explanation of Iscariot's act? When Jesus Christ dipped the sop and gave it to him, and said, "That thou doest, do quickly", what does the record say? "Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. And he went his way, and communed with the chief priest and captains, how he might betray him unto them. And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money." Peter's denial and Iscariot's betrayal were due to what? The devil. The only difference being that our great High Priest prayed for Peter—but He did not pray for Judas. With His discerning eye He saw it all: Caiaphas, and Annas, and Pilate—the spiritual Philistines, the Moabites, and the Syrians, in the heavenly places. And our great Conqueror was girding His sword upon His thigh, and going out to do battle with them.

But we had that some time ago when David slew Goliath, did we not? Yes; but our David Who has been seated upon His throne from the time that He was welcomed through the everlasting doors as the King of glory, has been waging war upon His enemies from that day until this. Citadel after citadel has been taken and re-taken; and we have here a picture—I do not think I

should be exaggerating if I were to say, a kind of illustrative representation of the history of the Christian church. Fight after fight, battle after battle, victory after victory. And in the end our David is always victorious.

"And David gat him a name." "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

As for the gospel programme, let it be understood that our message must not always and exclusively be one of tender persuasiveness. "He has commanded all men everywhere to repent." We are to go, not as the representatives of the rejected Jesus, but as the ambassadors of Him Whom God has "exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." We are to magnify His name, and magnify His power, and command in His name—and that is no job for a weakling meekly to persuade some timorous soul to yield to Jesus Christ. He is to be presented with all winsomeness and attractiveness, I grant you; but we must be careful to let it be known that He is the Conqueror. He sits on no precarious throne, nor borrows leave to be. What an example for us!

Do you like fighting? Of course you do not. None of us does. We look forward to a period of rest and undisturbed tranquility in the city that is yet to be. Meanwhile, we must endure hardness as good soldiers. We must wrestle against these principalities and powers. We must take unto ourselves the whole armour of God. We must be ready to suffer shame for His name. And we must emulate David in this: we are to take up a positive and aggressive attitude toward evil. Not waiting until we are attacked, but attack. "Resist the devil"—that is the only safe way to treat him—"and he will flee from you." He is the biggest coward in the universe, the biggest bluffer, with all his skill and power. In the name of the Lord we are to resist him.

That was a wonderfully significant word which Mr. Brown read as the context of Sunday evening's text, where the sons of one Sceva, when they saw what wonders were wrought by the apostles, undertook to exorcise devils in "the name of Jesus", saying, "We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth." And with what result? "The evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded." The devil knows whether you are fighting in the name of the Lord, and whether you are wearing the divine panoply. It will not do merely to make use of the name of Jesus Christ. "The devils also believe, and tremble." They know who Jesus is, and they know who you are too, if you are really in the apostolic succession.

So then we need to emulate the example of David, and press the battle, as another scripture has it, to the gate; we must attack all along the line. At your convenience, study this chapter to see how profitable the battle was. David took a thousand chariots, and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen, shields of gold, and by and by vessels of silver,

vessels of gold, and vessels of brass. By his conflicts, by the spoils of war, he was greatly enriched. So shall we be. You and I want an easy time, do we not? I do. I get tired of fighting all the time. Don't you? I am an amateur gardener—very amateur. I do not know much about it: I wish I did. But I get very tired of the bugs and the blights. I just get one under control, and go out the next morning only to find something else. But if I am to have a garden, I have learnt I must watch those plants almost as though they were little children. My garden is full of plants—and just as full of enemies.

That is how you will find it in the garden of the Lord when you become pastors. You will have a hard time, and then perhaps you will have a little rest like David. You will say, "Let me build a house"—and scarcely will you have conceived the plans when you will hear the war drums again, and Mrs. Somebody will be on the rampage. Then you will find yourself saying, "Who would be a pastor after all? One must be on the lookout all the time." What did you say, brother pastor? No bugs, no blight in your garden? You are half inclined to run away from it all. Do not do so. For one reason, you cannot. There is no place to run. Perhaps it is a good thing there is not. Perhaps it is a good thing to come to the place where, as Mr. David Lloyd-George said during the war, "We must go on, or go under."

Years will pass, and you will meet other difficulties, and, I trust, overcome them. Then some younger man will come to you, full of ailments, complaining that everything is awry. He will pour out his tale of trouble, and you will be able to smile as you say, "That is not a fight; that is not a war." And he will reply, "Then I should like to know what it is?" Calmly you will be able to say, "The noise is not rifle fire but only a few hens cackling in the back yard. You do not need to be afraid of them." At last you will discover that if you have any strength at all, any power, any composure of mind, it will have been won, not so much in the quiet of the study, nor "far from the maddening crowd's ignoble strife," but rather on the field of battle and under fire. But you will come through it all, like David: "The Lord preserved David whithersoever he went." You will have to say, "What narrow escapes I had! How many dark clouds obscured the way! How many enemies tried to make me afraid!" But they did not succeed, and you will come to the place where you will be enabled to say, "Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice."

It is a bonnie war we are in. It is real fighting. But it has its compensations. There we learn something of the joy of the Lord.

I wanted to get into the ninth chapter this evening, but we will leave that for another time. The ninth chapter of the Second Book of Samuel is one of my favourite chapters. In it you have Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, The Acts, Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, Peter and John—the whole New Testament. It is all packed into the ninth chapter of the Second Book of Samuel; it is full of the gospel of grace. That will be our lesson text next week.

THE WEEK-END IN JARVIS STREET

Good Friday and Easter Sunday were happy days in Jarvis Street. Friday evening a great service of praise was conducted by our director of music, Mr. W. J. Hutchinson, with our beloved Mr. Penny at the organ, assisted by the Jarvis Street orchestra. The regular choir was increased by a good number of singers who were members of the church, and this still further augmented by two choirs from the Bible School, the Intermediate and the Junior choirs. The whole choir numbered about one hundred and seventy-five voices. The programme was arranged by Mr. Hutchinson.

We cannot give details except to say that it was a worshipful, gospel service throughout. The programme was so arranged that the way of salvation through Christ was clearly set forth. The great auditorium was packed to capacity, people being seated on the gallery steps, in the aisles, and were standing roundabout the walls.

On Sunday the same choir assisted at both services. The church was filled in the morning; the attendance of members of the Bible School itself being, by actual count, past the 1,100 mark, out of 1,332 present in the School. At the evening service six were baptized, and the church was again crowded as on Friday evening. It was altogether a happy day, and we have heard from many of our radio friends that the singing of the children was particularly appreciated. Thus with joy and thanksgiving Jarvis Street faces another year. All we can say is cry, Ebenezer.

Perhaps we ought to add a word in the form of a postscript. This is the first issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS of a new year, and Sunday evening last means the cost of another broadcast service; so that our friends who have helped us so generously will still help us to pray for all these enterprises, that our gracious God will be pleased to give to each of them its "daily bread".

ANOTHER LETTER FROM DR. CARLILE

We have received another letter from Dr. J. C. Carlile, dated March 20th, in which he replies to our letter printed in our issue of March 8th. We print Dr. Carlile's letter in full as follows:

Phone: Holborn 2045

Wire: Preacher, Westcent, London

"THE BAPTIST TIMES"

The Baptist Church House
4, Southampton Row
London, W.C.1

Baptist Union of
Great Britain and Ireland

Editorial Department

Editor:

J. C. Carlile, C.H., C.B.E., D.D.

Secretary:

Acting Sub-Editor:
H. J. Cowell

Rev. M. E. Aubrey, M.A.

Dr. T. T. Shields,
130 Gerrard Street East,
Toronto 2, Canada.

20th March, 1934.

Dear Dr. Shields,

Thank you for your letter of March 8th. It arrived with copies of your publication on March 19th. I have read with interest your reply to my previous communication, which you print in small type. I recognize your courtesy in offering me space without limit and promising that anything I write to you will be faithfully reproduced. I do not propose to trespass very much upon your kindness. Let me say at once that I accept your statement of "sincere apology for having explicitly stated that which, at most, the article to which you refer may only imply". Further you say "I hope I have made ample amends for my error" and again "this is one instance in which we would far rather discover ourselves to be wrong than right".

I do not propose to follow you through the three or four columns of statements and argument which you too generously devote to me. The facts are clear. A copy of your paper was sent to me, containing the following statement:—

"I have a magazine in my files called the 'Christian Spiritualist', in which is an article written by a

leading Baptist of Great Britain, no less a personage than Dr. J. C. Carlyle, who is to come to Canada, according to *The Canadian Baptist*, to assist in some sort of celebration in connection with the centenary of the birth of the great C. H. Spurgeon. This article written by Dr. Carlyle, and published in this Spiritualist magazine, states that when he was asked to become the Editor of *The Baptist Times* of London, he resorted to this spiritualistic medium to ask her whether he should accept the position. She told him that he was eminently qualified to become a journalist, and strongly advised him to accept the editorial chair of *The Baptist Times*, and promised that he would be eminently successful. When a Baptist paper accepts for an editor someone who is approved by a witch, they are rather hard up! I thought of publishing the article—I may some day."

I challenged the accuracy of your statements, and invited you to print the article. This you have done, with the result that any reader can see, as you admit, that what you gave as quotation from the article was not there. It was your own deduction, not my statement. I do not press the point further. You do not quote me—you quote what you thought about me, a very different thing for which I have no responsibility.

Perhaps, without trespassing upon your space unduly, you will let me add. The article says that I was invited to test the capabilities of a medium—an unprofessional person, a member of a Baptist Church. I accepted the invitation and wrote an account of what happened. My questions were not arranged for purposes of eliciting information, but, as stated in the article, as tests of the powers of the medium. The article began with my statement "I am not a Spiritualist, neither am I hostile." The obvious meaning of the sentence is that I do not accept Spiritualism. I never have done so, and I have never said anything that would justify labelling me as a Spiritualist, but I am not hostile to investigation. From your own statements, you were at one time in exactly the same condition of mind. I may add the concluding words of my article, concerning the phenomena—"There must be some explanation. What is it? I wonder".

It may interest you to know that I was editing the "Baptist Times" nearly two years before I wrote the article in question. The only alteration in my duty was that, by a resolution of the Council of the Baptist Union, the two offices, that of Secretary and Editor, were separated, and I continued the latter office at the unanimous invitation of the Assembly. The question as to literary work, of which you make so much pleasantry, had nothing whatever to do with the "Baptist Times". An Editor is usually described as a journalist, which you of course know. I have been a journalist for many years, and the idea of a medium telling me that I was eminently qualified to become a journalist would be rather ludicrous. It would probably be twenty years too late.

I think it regrettable that you did not consult my article before venturing upon a quotation. Had you done so, there would have been no occasion to write to you. There can be no reflection upon the Baptist Union or upon the "Baptist Times". As it is, I am at least indebted to you for giving me the opportunity to satisfy the curiosity of many of my friends in Canada. In this country my views are pretty well known.

Yours sincerely,

JNO. C. CARLILE.

OUR COMMENTS ON THE ABOVE LETTER

We intended no discourtesy to Dr. Carlile in printing his letter, as he points out, "in small type". Our readers will have observed that the main text of THE GOSPEL WITNESS is always in nine point, and we are in the habit of printing quotations in eight point to distinguish them from the main text.

In his first paragraph Dr. Carlile makes three quotations from our letter: the first will be found at the beginning of the second large type paragraph on page 11; the second will be found in the third paragraph from the end of our letter on page 12, and the third quotation, in the second paragraph

of our comment introductory to Dr. Carlile's letter, page 10. All these quotations are printed in bold faced type in our reprint for facility of reference.

Knowing that this issue will be read by many who did not read our issue of March 8th, and that, those who did read that issue may not have a copy before them, we are reprinting the whole matter in this number so that our readers may have the whole story from first to last before them.

For the sake of clarity, we repeat, that the identity of "the literary work" offered Dr. Carlile, whether the Editorship of *The Baptist Times* or something else, and concerning which a question was asked of the spiritualistic medium, matters but very little. Incidentally, we would remind Dr. Carlile that in our letter we stated clearly that we understood he had been Acting-Editor for eighteen months before his actual appointment as Editor. Our readers may now have a chance to read both letters of Dr. Carlile, the quotation from our letter to which Dr. Carlile objects, and our comments thereon. We have no doubt they will draw their own conclusion.

Dr. Carlile remarks in this second letter that he was "invited to test the capabilities of a medium—an unprofessional person, a member of a Baptist Church". It does not seem to us to be important whether the person was unprofessional or professional: she was a professing medium. Nor do we think that the principles of Spiritism are rendered less objectionable by the fact that the medium was a "member of a Baptist Church". We wonder what sort of Baptist church? We wonder why this lady had not been instructed by her pastor, or, otherwise, why she had not learned from the reading of Scripture herself, that witchery and wizardry belong to the black arts with which a professing servant of God should have nothing to do?

Dr. Carlile quotes from his article: "I am not a Spiritualist, neither am I hostile." That, of course, was the point we were making in our lecture. We were recommending to the students an attitude of pronounced and uncompromising "hostility" to that which was manifestly condemned by the Word of God. The only proper attitude of a Christian toward the devil and his works is one of resistance.

We call attention to the fact that Dr. Carlile, whatever his motive, contributed an article to a magazine which existed for the propagation of the principles of Spiritualism. We would remind Dr. Carlile, and our readers, also, that his article was given editorial treatment; and the fact that he was "a leading minister of the Baptist denomination" was especially emphasized. The Editor of *The Christian Spiritualist* also says:

"If he will but continue looking into this matter for the good of his Church and the humanity his Lord loves, what more can we desire?"

The Editor of *The Christian Spiritualist* remarks also on "how faithfully he has remembered his great responsibility to that denomination which honours itself by honouring him". Apparently Dr. Carlile remembered his responsibility to the Baptist denomination by his attendance at this Spiritualistic seance.

According to the article in *The Christian Spiritualist*, the spirit guide of the medium consulted, or tested, by Dr. Carlile, was a Brigadier-General on the Southern side in the American Civil War.

The principle of the question raised in our lecture had to do with the wisdom, or justification on any ground, of a Christian's having anything to do with Spiritism. Our readers must form their own judgment as to the propriety of one who was Editor of the official organ of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, and for some time Acting-Secretary of that organization, consulting a medium at all, even as a test; and especially must they judge of the wisdom of his writing an article for the official Spiritualist organ, which he must have known would be used by that paper to capitalize its position.

We very cheerfully publish Dr. Carlile's letter, and suggest to our readers that they read Dr. Carlile's two letters, the article written by Dr. Carlile reproduced herewith, together with the editorial comment from *The Christian Spiritualist*; and, on the basis of what is contained therein, form their own judgment.

We may add that we have given such space to this matter, not for the benefit of our Canadian readers, who know little about it, but for the benefit of our British readers, several of whom have written us on the subject.

(The Following is Reprinted From Our Issue of March 8th, 1934)

A LETTER FROM DR. J. C. CARLILE

Minister of the Baptist Church at Folkestone, and Editor of "The Baptist Times", London, England

In January last, in the course of a Thursday evening lecture on "The Witch of Endor" (See GOSPEL WITNESS, Volume 12, Number 35, January 11th, 1934, page 9) we referred to an article appearing in *The Christian Spiritualist*, of London, under the name of Dr. J. C. Carlile, in which Dr. Carlile reported a visit he had paid to a Spiritualist medium, to whom he submitted certain questions, and received from her certain answers.

In a letter from Dr. Carlile dated February 21st, and received March 5th, he characterizes our reference to him as "definitely untrue". This is one instance in which we would far rather discover ourselves to be wrong than right, and we shall welcome any communication from Dr. Carlile which will entirely clear the matter up. In the meantime we have had facsimiles prepared: first, of the heading of the title-page of the paper; secondly, the heading of the editorial page; and, thirdly, the entire page on which Dr. Carlile's article appears. If any of our readers should be unacquainted with modern methods, let them understand that these are printed from plates which are photographic reproductions of the original. Therefore there is no alteration even of a comma. We have done this in order absolutely to avoid all possibility of misrepresentation.

We have written a letter to Dr. Carlile in reply to his, which will be found below, following Dr. Carlile's letter. The plates we have had prepared will be found on pages eleven and twelve, and will readily be identified by their number. Number one is a facsimile of the title-page of *The Christian Spiritualist*; number two is a facsimile of the heading of the editorial column of *The Christian Spiritualist*; and number three, a facsimile of the entire page carrying Dr. Carlile's article. Our letter to Dr. Carlile will be mailed to him on the date of this paper's issue, together with copies of the paper itself. Our letter to Dr. Carlile offers, we believe, the fullest explanation of the whole matter it is possible to give.

LETTER FROM DR. CARLILE

THE BAPTIST TIMES

The Baptist Church House

4 Southampton Row
London, W.C. 1.

Baptist Union of
Great Britain and Ireland

Secretary:
Rev. M. E. Aubrey, M.A.

Dr. T. T. Shields,
130 Gerrard Street East,
Toronto 2, Canada.

Dear Dr. Shields:

You may have forgotten our very pleasant intercourse during the period of the War, when you were with me at Folkestone, and we had the pleasure to have you in our pulpit, and when I was with you in Toronto, and had the opportunity of taking a service at Jarvis Street.

Your paper THE GOSPEL WITNESS for January 11th contains a lecture by you on "The Witch of Endor", in which you make extensive reference to me though you misspell my name. You are reported to have said—

"I have a magazine in my files called the 'Christian Spiritualist', in which is an article written by a leading Baptist of Great Britain, no less a personage than Dr. J. C. Carlyle, who is to come to Canada, according to *The Canadian Baptist*, to assist in some sort of celebration in connection with the centenary of the birth of the great C. H. Spurgeon. This article written by Dr. Carlyle, and published in this Spiritualist magazine, states that when he was asked to become the Editor of *The Baptist Times*

of London, he resorted to this spiritualistic medium to ask her whether he should accept the position. She told him that he was eminently qualified to become a journalist, and strongly advised him to accept the editorial chair of *The Baptist Times*, and promised that he would be eminently successful. When a Baptist paper accepts for an editor someone who is approved by a witch, they are rather hard up! I thought of publishing the article—I may some day."

I read the paragraph with amazement. Your memory must be hopelessly at fault, or I must be labouring under a delusion. I have no recollection of consulting any medium in reference to any question concerning the "Baptist Times" and certainly do not recall having been told by a medium that I should accept the editorial Chair of that paper, and that it would be eminently successful. As a matter of fact, the paper is successful, but I do not think any satanic agency has anything to do with it. You threaten to publish the article. You not only have my permission to do so, but as a matter of common honesty I appeal to you to print it or to retract your statement which is definitely untrue. I am not concerned to enter into controversy with you. You are a past master of the art, but I cannot believe that you would willingly bear false witness against one of your brethren. Had you followed the Scriptural method of approaching me you could have known the facts at once, and would not have laid yourself open to the charge of circulating untrue statements. Please publish that article and send me a copy!

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) "J. C. Carlile."

OUR REPLY TO DR. CARLILE

130 Gerrard St. East,
Toronto, Canada,
March 8th, 1934.

Dr. J. C. Carlile,

Editor, *The Baptist Times*,

4 Southampton Row,
London W.C.1, England.

Dear Dr. Carlile:

Your letter of the 21st ult. reached me on March 5th. No; I have not forgotten our pleasant intercourse during the period of the War. I have frequently recalled those days of fellowship with pleasure. I remember, too, having the privilege of speaking from your pulpit; and, of course, I very distinctly remember your visit to Toronto, when you favoured us by preaching in Jarvis Street Church.

Now as to the principal subject of your letter. Before I deal with that part of my lecture which you quote, I beg leave to quote the next four paragraphs, though they are somewhat long:

"Read what the Bible has to say about witchery and wizardry, and about those who have familiar spirits, and you will find that the Bible always ranks them with those who do the devil's business. As for example: 'Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God.' When you find something labelled, 'This is not for you', keep away from it. You do not need to study it any further. You can learn all there is to be learned about spiritism from the Bible itself; and, learning what the Bible has to say about it, you will shun it as you would shun the devil. You need not investigate further.

"If someone says, 'It will not hurt you to come to a seance', my advice to you is to keep away. I am not going to keep company with the devil, nor attend his meetings. I have a vivid recollection of a funeral service I conducted on one occasion. I spoke of the revelation of God in Christ, of the principle that He had brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, and that the only way we could know God was through Christ. I do not think I ever had a more difficult time in speaking. I am not super-sensitive in matters of that sort, but it seemed as though the very atmosphere would choke me. Everything I said came back. I shortened the service, and when I came out of the house somebody said, 'Do you know where you were?' 'No; but I know I was not far from the pit.' 'Well', said

my friend, "that room was crammed full of Spiritualists. There were two or three mediums there." I felt as though I had been in the presence of the devil himself, and I believe one must be whenever he touches it.

"There are many things in this city I have not seen—I do not want to see them. There are places indispensable to the health of the city, but I do not want to see them. So far as this principle is concerned, when anybody says, 'What do you know about Spiritualism? Have you studied it diligently', do not be ashamed to say, 'I know all the Bible has to say about it, and that is enough. It says it is of the devil, and I will have nothing to do with it.'

"Is that strong? Well, say what you like about it, I think it is well to be prejudiced sometimes—when your prejudice is scripturally based. Do not admit poison to your mind on the plea that you are 'investigating'."

You will see from this that in my lecture I was counselling the students and others to have nothing to do with Spiritualism, but to abide by the teaching of the Word of God.

Having said that, I next proceed to offer you my sincere apology for having explicitly stated that which, at most, the article to which I referred may only imply.

I am this week doing what you have requested me to do, publishing the entire article; and in order to make sure there was not the slightest alteration in it, I have had a cut made of the entire page, as also of the top of the title-page of the paper, and the heading of the editorial page. Each of these is reproduced from a photograph so that readers of THE GOSPEL WITNESS may see exactly what was said in that paper.

When the copy of *The Christian Spiritualist* was sent to me, the suggestion was made that probably "the literary work recently offered me (you)" was the Editorship of *The Baptist Times*. The article was published in *The Christian Spiritualist* of October 7th, 1925. The particular date on which your article was written is not named, but *The Baptist Times* of September 10th, 1925, reported that you had accepted the invitation to continue as Editor after having been Acting-Editor for eighteen months previously. And the Baptist Handbook of 1926, reporting a meeting of the Baptist Union of that year, records a resolution passed, expressing appreciation of your work as Editor of *The Baptist Times*. The report of your acceptance of the Editorship appeared in *The Baptist Times* a little less than a month before your article appeared in *The Christian Spiritualist*. It might readily be inferred, therefore, in view of these dates, that the literary work offered to you to which your article refers was the Editorship of *The Baptist Times*.

It is quite possible, however, that such inference was entirely wrong; and if so, I most sincerely apologize, and ask your forgiveness for the mistake. I think, however, the context of my lecture which I have quoted, and which perhaps you had read as well as the paragraph referred to by yourself, shows that the specific character of the literary work offered you, whether the Editorship of *The Baptist Times*, or something else, was of only secondary importance. The point is, the article, said to have been written by yourself, represents you as submitting to a medium this question:

"Should I be right in taking up the literary work recently offered me?"

Whether it was the Editorship of *The Baptist Times* or something else is relatively of small importance. The fact which the article states, that some literary work had been offered you, and that you asked the medium whether you would be right in accepting it, is really the point at issue.

This article in *The Christian Spiritualist* states, more-

over, that the message written on the slate, in answer to your question, was as follows:

"My dear good friend, Dr. C., your guide says it would be well for you to take up the literary work which has been offered you. You will make it a success. It will harmonize with your present activities."

What I said in my lecture, except for the fact that I identified, rightly or wrongly, the "literary work" as the Editorship of *The Baptist Times*, I think any candid reader will admit is in substantial agreement with your report of what the medium said, it certainly recommended you to accept what was offered you, promised you success, and said it would harmonize with your present activities. Again I say, the literary work offered you may not have been the Editorship of *The Baptist Times*; but whatever it was, you submitted the question to the medium, and received from the medium an encouraging answer.

So much, therefore, as an explanation of what I said respecting the article in *The Christian Spiritualist*.

The next question arising is, Did you write the article? The photostatic copy of the article appearing in this week's GOSPEL WITNESS, certainly credits the article to Dr. J. C. Carlile, of Folkestone. In this connection I print an extract from the editorial column of *The Christian Spiritualist*, of the same date, commenting upon your article.

"Another privilege falls to our lot this week in that we are permitted to publish the fact that a leading minister of the Baptist denomination has accepted the invitation to look into our subject with serious intent. How Dr. J. C. Carlile has done so, and how honestly he has stated the facts, how fairly he has dealt with the persons concerned, how respectfully he has responded to the urge of the Spirit, and withal how faithfully he has remembered his great responsibility to that denomination which honours itself by honouring him, our readers will be able to attest when they read his contribution. Like a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, he intends to look at a thing in all its bearings before he commits himself. No honest man could wish him to do otherwise, nor to rush him into premature statement of opinion or belief. If he will but continue looking into this matter for the good of his Church and the humanity his Lord loves, what more can we desire? The Spirit of Truth will guide him into all the truth in due course; and happy he will be to learn more here, rather than to leave his progression wholly until he arrives There, as so many of his fellow-ministers are doing. We feel it to be also a peculiar pleasure to be able to print this communication beneath Dr. Carlile's name, for it declares him a superbly honest and courageous man; and that both Dr. Carlile and ourselves made our beginning in ministerial life from the same Alma Mater gives but added joy to this historic event."

Thus there can be no possibility of doubt that *The Christian Spiritualist* declares this article to be of your authorship, and says, "We feel it to be also a peculiar pleasure to be able to print this communication beneath Dr. Carlile's name." Thus it tells us that you wrote it, and that it is printed under your name, with your consent. It also says that this was the result of your response to "the invitation to look into our subject with serious intent."

There is, however, a bare possibility of the article being a forgery, and of your name having been set to an article for which you were not responsible. If that had been done, however, I should have expected you to demand of *The Christian Spiritualist* what you now rightly ask of me, the retraction of whatever in it was untrue.

There is one other still more remote possibility, and that is that the article printed in your name was never brought to your attention, and that, therefore, you had no

FACSIMILE OF TITLE PAGE—PLATE No. 1

THE CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST, October 7th, 1925.

REGISTERED AS A NEWSPAPER.

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opportunity of repudiating it. If any of these hypotheses be correct, I feel that I have done you a service in calling your attention to it, that through the medium of THE GOSPEL WITNESS you may have the opportunity of entirely repudiating responsibility for the article.

Having said that, however, I must in honesty state further that all these possibilities seem to me to be very improbable, and that I fear we are driven to accept the assumption that the article was written by yourself, and that it was published under your name, with your consent. That being so, we have your own word for it that in respect to this offer of literary work, whatever it may have been, you consulted a medium, and received an answer; and that you submitted also the following question:

"Can you get into touch with any of my dear ones who have passed over? If so, do. Is there anything they wish to tell me about themselves?"

To this you report receiving the reply:

"My dear J. C., my lad, I am here. We have quite a family circle here, but I have been able to get in touch with you since I have been in this world. My work is along your lines. My dear boy, I have played an important part and have helped you. Grandfather Carlyle."

In your letter to me you say:

"I am not concerned to enter into controversy with you. You are a past master of the art, but I cannot believe that you would willingly bear false witness against one of your brethren. Had you followed the Scriptural method of approaching me you could have known the facts at once, and would not have laid yourself open to the charge of circulating untrue statements."

I fear you compliment me too highly. I am not "a past master" in the art of controversy. I have, however, had what is alleged to be a "scriptural method" recommended to me before. The matter to which I referred, however, the fact that you had consulted a medium, is reported under your own name in a public journal; it was a matter that was given to the public. I regret very much the error in naming the "literary work" offered you as the Editorship of *The Baptist Times*, when perhaps it was something entirely different. Notwithstanding, I must insist that there is no difference in principle. The point is, that as a Baptist minister, occupying a prominent position, recognized as an official of the Baptist denomination, you did submit certain questions to a Spiritualist medium.

It may be said that it was done merely out of curiosity. But at the beginning of the article you said:

"I am not a Spiritualist, neither am I hostile."

The point I was making in my lecture was: that I am not only not a Spiritualist, but I am definitely and unalterably hostile to that which is so plainly forbidden in the Word of God. We are living in a day when multitudes of people are running about after every new thing that

promises them some sort of religious stimulus, and I was warning my students and others against that tendency, and counselling them to recognize that Spiritualism is not of God, and can only be of the devil, in so far as there is anything superhuman in it.

I ought also to apologize, for inadvertently misspelling your name. I hope you will not think I was uncomplimentary in associating you, by my orthographical error, with the great Carlyle.

I hope I have made ample amends for my error. Sincerely and abjectly I apologize for the error of identifying the literary work offered you with the Editorship of *The Baptist Times*, if indeed it was an error.

Please allow me to say that I shall welcome any statement you have to make on the subject. There will be no limitation of space, and you have my promise that I shall faithfully reproduce everything you write.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) THOMAS T. SHIELDS.

P.S.—In order to save time, and get the whole matter into print immediately, I am venturing to publish this letter in THE GOSPEL WITNESS to-night, that my answer may thus appear in the same paper with your objection.
—T. T. S.

FACSIMILE—PLATE No. 2

THE CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST

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PERSONAL SACRIFICE.**

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	£	s.	d.
Previously acknowledged	92	15	0
Received this week	21	19	6
Balance needed	353	5	6

Acknowledgments.

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'See that YE ABOUND in THIS grace also.'

October 7th, 1925.

THE CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST.

75

Famous Baptist Minister Enquires.

The following article was written by a distinguished Baptist minister, Dr. J. C. Carlile, of Folkestone, after his sitting with Mrs. Pruden, the American slate-writing medium, who visited London a few weeks ago. We print it as an impartial account by an enquirer.

By REV. J. C. CARLILE, D.D., O.B.E.

I am not a Spiritualist, neither am I hostile. It was suggested by an old friend that I might like to meet an old American lady, a Baptist, who was visiting England. She has acted as a medium for many years, and secured wonderful manifestations in connection with slate-writing. She is a lady of independent means, and does not follow mediumship for money.

An appointment was arranged, and I made my way to the hotel, facing Kensington Gardens, where the medium was staying. I found her a delightful old lady, very ready to talk about all sorts of subjects, with a keen sense of humour and an idealism not uncommon to American Baptists. The far-away look in her eyes and occasional momentary suggestions of aloofness were all that indicated the mediumistic temperament.

We were quite strangers to each other, and had no one to introduce us. The room was perfectly light; there was no attempt even to draw the curtains. We sat by the table, quite an ordinary bit of furniture, and simply talked.

"How long have you been in touch with the spirit world?" I enquired.

"All my life, I think," she replied, though I did not begin to get writing upon the slate until about forty years ago. Since then I have sat with judges, ministers, and people of all sorts."

"You would hardly be regarded as a professional medium?" I ventured. "I mean you do not sit for payment, as most of the mediums in this country do."

"No," she answered. "I have always been comfortably placed, and my object has been to help my friends into the fuller life which has been such a blessing to me."

"Have you met many people in England?"

"Oh, yes. I have been sitting two or three times each day, but only with people who come for a special purpose. I do not like large circles, and I would rather sit with those who are enquiring."

To my surprise my friend switched off the conversation to little pleasantries about the people she had met, some of whom I know; all the names that were mentioned were the names of people of eminence in their own departments.

Another friend arrived, Miss Cohen. We had not met before. I had no idea of Miss Cohen's existence. Then we got to business.

The medium explained that it would be necessary to cover one side of the little table to prevent the light falling upon the slate during the process of writing. Two double slates were placed upon the table. They were ordinary school slates, fastened by a piece of cloth on each frame, so that they could be doubled over closely, one on top of the other. A bit of pencil was placed between, so that the control could write on the slate while it was closed.

Being of sceptical turn of mind, I asked permission to examine the slate, which I did, and to turn up the table and examine the carpet. It was all quite satisfactory. My Spiritualist friend was very much amused at the precautions I was taking. Then we sat in a perfectly light room, just the three people. The medium on one side, Miss Cohen and I upon the other. Each could see every movement made by either of the others.

OPEN-MINDED PASTOR TESTS A SLATE-WRITING MEDIUM.

"WHO CAN EXPLAIN?" ASKS DR. J. C. CARLILE.



WILBUR THOMPSON.
Mrs. Pruden's Spirit-Guide.

Wilbur Thompson was a Brigadier-General on the Southern side in the American Civil War, and was the Baden-Powell of his day. They called him "The Swamp Fox of the Confederacy."

Knowing what might happen, I had written about a dozen questions of various kinds, which might be used for test purposes. I had placed them in my pocket, and purposely mixed them up so that I could not tell the particular question I took out. That was done in order to prevent the possibility of the question being distinctly in my mind, and, possibly by the process of telepathy, conveyed to another.

There was a faint sound of scratching between the surface of the two slates. The slate was held by the medium's right hand. It was under the table, behind the cover, the other parts of the table being partially exposed.

"They are writing now," the medium said. "The slate is heavy. Would one of you hold the other end?"

I immediately lifted the cover on my side and held the slate, taking care to have a good look at it. The sound stopped, and the slate was opened. I copied the writing, which was quite clear, the characters well formed, and this was the message: "Good morning, my new friends. I shall be happy to give you the very best at my command."

"Miss C., your dear spirit mother is here, and sends you loving greetings."

"Dr. C., I thank you for this morning's visit. Spirit control W.T."

It was explained to us that W.T. was the pet name of Wilbur Thompson, who was the medium's spirit guide. Then Miss Cohen placed one of her written questions out of the reach of the medium, and the second slate was held behind the table cover.

Miss Cohen's question, it is learned after was: "Is there a George over there we are trying to find? My sister wants a message so badly." The reply I copied was: "My dear friend, it is best, in order to get a perfect message through, to have your sister sit for herself. But she is guided by her loved one, and there is a wide field of work in front of you."

The medium became clairvoyant, and said, looking over to me: "Wilbur has found three people who are closely connected with you. They must have been very dear ones. They are here, and want to talk to you. They do not understand why you do not speak to them."

The three were then described. Without attaching very serious importance to this message, it is only fair to say that three of my dearest have passed over. The medium then described a man who was said to be a friend of mine, and I had no difficulty in identifying Mr. William Bird, who was closely associated with me some twenty years ago in Folkestone.

Miss Cohen tried another question.

"Florence's Mother. I am greatly in need of evidential truth. Do try and sign your name and send a message that will help."

The same process was followed. We held the slate, and the sound of writing was distinctly heard. I read the message.

"Madeleine, dear child, your father will be spared to you for some time to come. We are helping to make him as comfortable as possible, and to give him strength in his declining years. Madeleine, dear, as time progresses you will receive the evidential messages you hope for. You have done your part well."

In clairvoyance, the medium asked Miss Cohen if she had with her a spare handkerchief. If so, would she put it under the table so that her mother might tie it up in the old way, to convince her of the reality of the visitor. A pocket handkerchief was placed under the table. After a while, this message came: "My dear child, I have tied with my own spirit hands your handkerchief as a wreath, the old emblem of life without end."

When the handkerchief was picked up, it was tied in small knots and shaped as a ring. Miss Cohen still has it.

I then placed my first question. I did not know at the time what it was. After a while this message appeared on the slate: "My dear good friend, Dr. C., your guide says it would be well for you to take up the literary work which has been offered you. You will make it a success. It will harmonize with your present activities."

When I opened the question, it was: "Should I be right in taking up the literary work recently offered me?" So far as I know, neither of those who sat with me in the room had the least idea that I had any special work offered me.

The second question I took out of my pocket without knowing what it contained. I placed it upon the floor just under the table, and put my foot over it. The paper was doubled up; it certainly did not move. The question was as follows: "Can you get into touch with any of my dear ones who have passed over? If so, do. Is there anything they wish to tell me about themselves?"

The writing was heard on the slate, and this was the answer I copied: "My dear J.C., my lad, I am here: We have quite a family circle over here, but I have been able to get in touch with you since I have been in this world. My work is along your lines. My dear boy, I have played an important part and have helped you. Grandfather Carlile."

There was an initial to the surname; but it was not clear enough for me to be absolutely sure what it was.

The medium seemed tired and the sitting came to an end, with the suggestion that we might like to sit together again, or to sit separately. We went to lunch to talk over possible explanations. Many were suggested, but they were hopelessly inadequate. *There must be some explanation. WHAT IS IT? I wonder!*

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 9

No. 2

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 15 SECOND QUARTER April 15th, 1934

HISTORY OF THE BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY

Lesson Text: Jeremiah, chapter 29.

Golden Text: "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."—Prov. 14:34.

Bible School Reading: Jeremiah 29:1-19.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Monday—Ezek. 14:12-23. Tuesday—Ezek. 33:21-29. Wednesday—Ps. 137:1-9. Thursday—Rom. 11:1-8. Friday—Gal. 3:1-9. Saturday—Mark 2:13-17.

I. THE REASON FOR THE CAPTIVITY.

In previous lessons we have observed the reason for the captivity of Israel, but it is well that we should again revert to it in studying the history of that event. The captivity was in the nature of a judgment for sin. First the tribes, constituting the northern kingdom were exiled by the Assyrians, (2 Kings 17:23), then the Babylonians carried off the members of the southern kingdom of Judah, (2 Kings 24:14-16). The sins of Manasseh were the culmination of the many sins of this latter division of Israel which led to the final pronouncement of its doom, (2 Kings 24:3, 4), but, in general, it may be said that this punishment came upon the nation because of its rejection of the Lord, and its acceptance of idolatry. For such an attitude there was no excuse. God had revealed Himself to His people, He had sent His servants to warn them of the error of their ways, and to call them back to Himself; but they declined to be guided by Him, except at brief intervals, and thus sinning against the light they brought upon themselves the evil consequences of their deeds. Note the sinfulness of men these days, their attitude toward the preaching of the gospel, and the inevitable judgment awaiting the unrepentant.

II. THE DURATION OF THE CAPTIVITY.

The merciful nature of God is manifest in His relations with men, and even in the midst of judgment it may be observed. Adam and Eve were prevented from forever living in sin, and their progeny after them, (Gen. 3:22-24), the scattering of the people at Babel led to the development of a larger area of the earth's surface, (Gen. 11:8), and the captivity of Israel meant, not the total abandonment of that nation, but its exile for a stated period, with certain beneficial effects due to that experience. The Israelites had sinned grievously enough in God's sight to warrant Him setting them aside forever, but His mercy limited the time of their sojourn in Babylon to seventy years, as made known through Jeremiah to his compatriots of the southern kingdom, (Jer. 29:10; 2 Chron. 36:21), and fulfilled in accordance with prediction, (Ezra 1:1; Dan. 9:2). The captivity began in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, extended through the reigns of Evil-merodach, known to archaeologists as Amil-Marduk, the son of this monarch, Neriglissar, his son-in-law, Labashi-Marduk, son of the latter, and Nabonidus, father of Belshazzar, the last of the Babylonian kings, to Cyrus the Persian, under whom Babylon was captured, (Ezra 1:1-4). Note the patience and justice of God, and the certainty of the fulfilment of His word.

III. THE NATURE OF THE CAPTIVITY.

Information concerning the Babylonian captivity of Israel is found in such books as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, and certain secular sources. Isaiah predicted matter pertaining thereto (Is. 41:25ff, 44:28, 45:1ff.). Jeremiah did likewise, (Jer. 21:1-14), while Ezekiel and Daniel were both in exile and portray conditions around them, as well as foretelling future events. From these sources we learn several things. We observe first that the Israelites were in a strange land, among a strange people, and face to face with strange customs of a religious and social nature. The people with whom they mingled were idolaters pure and simple, alien in mind and action to the worship of the true God, therefore their association would be anything but helpful.

It would give the Lord's people a conception of idolatry, however, in its native setting, such as they had not had before. And one cannot understand heathen religions by their manifestations in the presence of the true religion; they, like Atheism, must be seen apart from the same in order properly to be understood. Such an understanding would be gained gradually by the Israelites, and would not be without its effect in leading them to their decision to return to the religion of their fathers.

It may be noted further that at first the Israelites were under a certain measure of restraint. They were captives, subject to the will of their captor, and compelled to engage in bond service, although later this condition was ameliorated, and they were given freedom to engage in their various occupations. This change may have come about in the natural course of events, but it may also have been aided by the influence of the captive king of Israel, Jehoiachin, (2 Kings 24:15), who had been favoured by the king, (2 Kings 25:27-30). The captive prophets Daniel and Ezekiel, together with the companions of the former, would also exert considerable influence in this respect especially the first-named on account of his high position in the government of the realm, (Dan. 2:48; 5:29). The people were blessed with these prophetic messengers in their midst. Daniel proclaimed his messages in court circles, although, possibly not limiting his efforts to these, for his fame was acknowledged by his countrymen in other places, (Ezek. 14:14), while Ezekiel patiently counselled with the elders of his people and others who visited him from time to time, (Ezek. 14:1). It is seen from this that, while under chastisement, God did not neglect His people. He continued to reveal His will, and sought to win them to Himself. Note the patience, forbearance, love, and wisdom of God in dealing with men.

At the first, it would seem there was very little change in the religious attitude of the people. They were sorrowful on account of their exile from their beloved land, (Ps. 137:1, 2), but they failed to realize their sinfulness in God's sight. They were under the impression they were suffering for the sins of their fathers, (Ezek. 18:2), while they continued to neglect the service of Jehovah. They were quite evidently self-righteous, and blind to their own condition. The teaching of the servants of God, combined with their affliction changed their conception of this matter, and many forsook their idolatrous ways, and turned to God in sincerity, realizing that while the Lord punished the nation for the sins of the past generations, yet their own sins were included in the condemnation, and were bearing their own judgment. God never condones sin, and even in His most devoted servants He deals with it, (Num. 20:12). It may be noted further that the Israelites carried the Word of God with them into captivity, (Neh. 8:2). Note the blessing of this possession in affliction. And as a testimony to their eventual prosperity in a foreign land, many of them declined to leave when given the opportunity to return to their own land in the reign of Cyrus.

IV. SOME EFFECTS OF THE CAPTIVITY.

It may be said truly, as far as the testimony of the returned exiles warrants it, that the captive Israelites in Babylon were cured of their idolatry by their experience in that alien land. On their return therefrom they set up the worship of God, (Ezra 3:2), and continued therein throughout the time of their sojourn in the land of their fathers. Helplessness due to sin, with its consequent affliction, often leads to a repentant awakening. When man realizes his helpless position, and the utter inability of others to help him, 'tis then he is inclined to look to the One Who alone can help. Note the helpless, hopeless condition of men these days, and the necessity for children of God to direct their attention heavenward.

Attention may also be drawn to the vindication of God's word in the fact of the captivity, and the return therefrom. God never utters idle words, and what He predicts will surely come to pass. Observe this in relation to future events, such as the return of the Lord, (1 Thess. 4:13-18), and the judgment on the wicked, (Acts 17:31). The Israelites were convinced of the truth of God's word. They had witnessed its vindication, and to-day we are likewise assured of the same when we study fulfilled prophecy, and observe God working in our midst. In the last place we may note that the Lord's people were more inclined to listen to God's message after their experience, although their obedience was far from perfect.

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 9

No. 2

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 16 SECOND QUARTER April 22nd, 1934

THE DECREE AND PREPARATION

Lesson Text: Ezra, chapters 1 and 2.

Golden Text: "Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem." Ezra 1:5.

Bible School Reading: Ezra 1:1-11.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Monday—Is. 44:21-28. Tuesday—Ps. 119:17-32. Wednesday—Lev. 26:39-46. Thursday—Dan. 2:14-23. Friday—Acts 6:1-7. Saturday—Romans 8:22-30.

I. THE DECREE OF CYRUS, (1:1-4).

In this lesson we enter upon the study of Israel's post-exilic history. Ezra was one of the leaders of this period, with Zerubbabel, and Nehemiah, and he has given us in his book an account of the return of the remnant of Israel, of the rebuilding of the temple, and of the reformation respecting national conduct. There is brought before us in a somewhat vivid manner the state of the land to which these exiles returned, the difficulties encountered in their resumption of national life, particularly in reference to the work on the temple, and the necessary emphasis placed on separation from heathen contamination. The faithfulness of God, the blessing of good leadership, and the ultimate victory of implicit trust in God are manifest in the record.

Two things evident in the affairs of men are, man's free-will, and God's sovereignty. Their relationship cannot be fully explained, but their presence is too obvious to be denied. In connection with our Lord's birth both are observed, in the decree of Caesar, (Luke 2:1), leading to the presence of Mary in Bethlehem at the right time, (Luke 2:4, 5), where Jesus was born in fulfilment of prophetic prediction, (Mic. 5:2). The same are manifest in relation to the return of the Israelites to Palestine. Cyrus exercised his free-will in issuing the decree, while the divine purpose was carried out thereby, (Isaiah 44:28; Jer. 29:10). It may seem at times as if the will of God was being thwarted, but eventually an overruling power is manifest, and the purpose of God is carried out. This knowledge is a distinct encouragement to faith, and should lead us to give more devoted service to our Lord.

The relation of God to the decree of Cyrus is stated in the words, "the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing", (v. 1). The Lord is supreme over every life, and can make use of any individual in the carrying out of His purpose. In making it possible for his captives to return to their own land Cyrus was carrying out his own enlightened policy, yet doing so on the initiative of God. Note the wide publicity given to the proclamation, the obvious sincerity of the king, and the fact that God is always on time in the carrying out of His plans: He is neither early nor late.

The nature of the proclamation is worthy of attention. Respecting this we may observe the acknowledgment of God as the source of the King's power, and the nature of the divine charge given to the monarch in connection with the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem, (v. 2). Cyrus was but a heathen king, but we may well follow his example in acknowledging God as the Giver of that which we possess. It is only too often the case that we receive without giving Him His due. Thanksgiving is enjoined upon all, (I Thess. 5:18). There is also manifest in this the realization by Cyrus of that which God desired him to do, and the willingness to carry out the divine plan. We know not how this consciousness came to the king, but it is quite possible that God used His written Word, and His servant Daniel to convey the necessary information, (Dan. 9:2; 10:1). God reveals His will to us through His Word, and gives us guidance in accordance with its teaching.

Following the announcement of the change, the offer is made to whosoever will to return to Jerusalem, (v. 3). This implied the possibility for the Jews taking up residence in their own land, and meant the fulfilment of their long-ling desires, while on the part of Cyrus the offer was both gracious and wise, gaining him the favour of a grateful people. Not all the Jews were desirous of accepting the offer, however, many of them, probably, due to the leniency of the rulers, would be making a good living in Babylon, and would fail to see the advantage of leaving comfortable surroundings to take up life of a pioneer kind in their own suffering country, merely for sentimental reasons, not to take into account the long dangerous journey thither. To those who declined to return, the request was made to aid those willing to go, (v. 4). Many things would be required, and they could help in furnishing them. Mutual help is not only a privilege, but it is a necessity, and an obligation laid upon all. Note its manifestation in the days of the early church, (Acts 2:45; 11:29), and its need in the present time in home, church, and state. Christian work depends upon it for home and foreign work.

II. PREPARATIONS FOR THE RETURN, (1:5-11).

There was immediate response to the proclamation of Cyrus on the part of the chief men of the captives, and many of lesser position, and preparation was made for the journey to the homeland, and for the service of God in that land. A striking factor in this response is that those who responded were those "whose spirit God had raised", (v. 5). They were patriotic, earnest, religious, adventurous citizens of Israel, willing to brave the dangers, and sufferings of the expedition, but such an attitude was begotten of the action of God on them. Not much is accomplished in the realm of spiritual activity until there is a genuine stirring up of the spirit. Paul was stirred when he was brought face to face with idolatry in Athens, (Acts 17:16), and our Lord was deeply moved on several occasions, (Matt. 9:36; 14:14). Such a stirring of spirit is needed these days, that there may be more genuine, deep feeling in the work of the Lord, a greater earnestness in combating sin, and saving sinners. Note our dependence on God for all the gifts necessary in Christian service, and also for the life manifest therein. What He desires on our part is willingness to use what He has provided, and obedience to His will.

In response to the request of Cyrus those who were journeying to Jerusalem received many gifts from those who were remaining in Babylon, (v. 6), and the king delivered to them the vessels of the house of the Lord which had been captured by Nebuchadnezzar, a list of these being given, (v. 7-11). These gifts imply thorough preparation as far as circumstances would allow, for both sustenance, and religious worship. Note particularly this last aspect of the whole movement. This seems to have been the chief motive governing all arrangements, and this is rightly so, as God should come first in national life as in private life, (Col. 1:18). It implies also that the Jews were in high favour with ruler and people, and gives evidence of a spirit of real enthusiasm for the Lord's cause. Note the need for genuine spiritual enthusiasm.

III. THE LIST OF THE RETURNED EXILES, (3:1-70).

In this chapter we have the historic record of the names of those who returned under Zerubbabel to Jerusalem and Judah, (v. 1). Another company returned later under Ezra, (8:1-20). The total number is stated, (vs. 64-67), and the interesting incident is related respecting the children of the priests whose purity of descent was questioned, and who as a consequence were not permitted to officiate in the priesthood, (vs. 61-63). In order to serve God in this high and privileged office, the one officiating must have a clear and pure descent from Aaron, unto whom and his family, the priesthood had been given, (Ex. 28:1). In the spiritual priesthood purity of descent from our great High Priest is also essential. No one can serve the Lord unless he is a partaker of the new life in Christ. He must be born again, (John 3:7; 1:12, 13). Observe further the fact of the list of names of this company of returned exiles. There was order, usefulness, and efficiency in this, and it is not without its bearing on the church membership roll. Note also the free-will offering in a time of depression. Those who had possessions gave in accordance with their ability, (vs. 68, 69; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2; 2 Cor. 9:7).

The Union Baptist Witness

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THE SECRETARY-TREASURER'S ITINERARY

It is always a joy to visit the churches, presenting the work of the Union. Our Foreign Mission work has a large place in the affections of our whole constituency, and the Home Mission work shares equally with it; but what about the other objects of our Budget? There is the Toronto Baptist Seminary, where the young men are being trained for the gospel ministry, and young ladies for missionary service at home and abroad. The appeal for Western Missions must not be ignored. The Union is glad to assist the work in Alberta and British Columbia. We have received a splendid letter from Rev. W. J. Thompson of Dunbar Heights, which will be printed next week. Keep in mind also the needs of our French Pastors, and the work in the Province of Quebec. This work bears real fruit each year, and is a splendid investment for Regular Baptists. And while we rejoice with Calvary Baptist Church, East Windsor, in procuring a suitable building, we also think of and pray for Beneficent Baptists in Montreal; Chatham Regular Baptists; Lindsay Regular Baptists; Trenton, Sydney, and St. Catharines Regular Baptists, that they, too, may soon secure more permanent meeting places.

The Itinerary of Rev. W. E. Atkinson for the next three weeks will be as follows: Thursday, April 5th, Willowdale; Friday, April 6th, Chatham; Sunday, A.M., April 8th, Chatham; Sunday, P.M., April 8th, Wheatley; Monday, April 9th, Wilkesport; Tuesday, April 10th, Courtright; Wednesday, April 11th, Essex; Thursday, April 12th, Ambassador, Windsor; Friday, April 13th, Sunday and Monday, the 15th and 16th, Calvary, East Windsor; Tuesday, April 17th, Central, London; Wednesday, April 18th, Briscoe St., London; Sunday, April 22nd, Shedden and Fingal.

If any of our readers are able to attend any of these services, it will be a pleasure for the Secretary to meet you, and to impart some further information about the work at home and in Liberia.

Calvary, East Windsor

The pastor of this Church, Rev. F. S. Kendall, writes to say that they have secured a more suitable building for the holding of their services. It was a Lutheran Church, with a parsonage attached. "The Lutherans are completely renovating the building for us," he writes. "It can seat about one hundred and fifty, and there is a basement with a kitchen and large class-room where meals can be served. We are ourselves installing a baptistry, and changing the platform. The building is expected to be ready by April 15th, when we hope to use the new baptistry at the opening services. We should be delighted if you could plan to be present on Sunday, April 15th, and preach the dedication sermons. The new building is more central, and we are hoping to be in a position to minister to the needs of a larger number."

For a long time this work has been carried on in a hall where the accommodation was inadequate for the growing needs of the work. This will give the people of East Windsor a greater sense of the permanency of the work.

Conference at Bobcaygeon

On Good Friday a very happy and united company of God's children met here for a day of hearty Christian fellowship. Representatives from Lindsay, Fenelon Falls, Norland, and Kinmount, Rock Schoolhouse, Scotch Line, and other groups of those bearing testimony in connection with the Union of Regular Baptist Churches. Rev. M. B. Gillion, the pastor, proved himself a very capable leader and director, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit a very blessed time was enjoyed by all present. The afternoon session was addressed by Rev. J. M. Fleming of Lindsay, on the leadership of the Holy Spirit in the Christian from his second birth to presentation in the glory, and was specially helpful to the babes in Christ, showing relationship to God by faith, and kept by the power of God. Mr. Groat of Kinmount followed in a very able talk on Peter, who, notwithstanding some failures proved himself a man of faith in obedience to his Lord, and

walked on the water to go to Jesus. In the evening session the Church was well filled, many having driven in from surrounding country, and addresses were given by Rev. O. Boomer, Mr. John Cunningham of the Seminary, and Mr. J. J. Burton, Toronto. All realized the power of God manifest in the gathering, and were aware the Lord would honour His Word and testimony all through the North land, and many would be brought to a saving knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. A very enjoyable supper was served by the ladies of the church, when one hundred and ten partook of the good things provided.

—J. J. BURTON.

THANK YOU ALL MOST HEARTILY!

Jarvis Street Church differs in several important respects from the average church, in this that the work of the church proper, while it is our major interest and responsibility, represents but a part of our work. The church itself, with a Bible School which, so far as we know, is the largest of any denomination in Canada, is an enterprise of some magnitude: the maintenance of its buildings, the payment of its overhead, all the cost of operation, is a heavy obligation at any time; but particularly at a time like this.

In connection with that work, we broadcast every Sunday evening service, using, for the purpose, Canada's most powerful broadcasting station; and while we have a lower rate than the commercial rate, it is still a heavy expense. The "coverage" of that station, as demonstrated by letters received from one broadcast, represents an area of 1,690,000 square miles, containing a population, as of the last census, of 104,000,000 people.

Among our extra-church enterprises THE GOSPEL WITNESS ranks first in seniority. The subscription price does not pay more than the cost of printing,—if, indeed, it covers that. Then, in addition, we have the Seminary, where we have a present enrolment of between fifty and sixty students—reduced at least one-third by the depression. It is because of the manifold character of our work that we appeal, through THE GOSPEL WITNESS and some other channels, to interested friends to assist us in balancing our books at the end of the fiscal year. Having made such appeals, our readers have a right to know something of the result.

Our church year closes the 31st of March, and our Annual Business Meeting is held the last Friday in April. When the books have been audited, and the statement is ready for the Annual Meeting, we shall be happy to share it with our readers. Meantime, although we cannot give exact figures, we are happy to tell our friends that once more we have been able to balance our books in all funds, except that of Toronto Baptist Seminary. The Seminary has stocks and bonds which are among its "frozen assets", but which we believe in time will be worth their face value. If these could be liquidated, even the Seminary books would be balanced. At present, however, some of these securities are about as useful to the Seminary as the gold which lies under the Arctic snows.

Without giving exact figures, we can confidently say that the other funds, all funds of the church, the Radio Fund, and THE GOSPEL WITNESS Fund, were balanced March 31st. Once more we say, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."

We are profoundly grateful, however, to all our Christian friends: our radio hearers, our WITNESS readers, and Seminary supporters, as well as to the members of Jarvis Street Church, who have been God's instruments in making this great achievement possible. We shall give further particulars after the Annual Meeting. Meanwhile, to all our friends we express our heartiest thanks.—(T. T. S.)