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Editor: T. T. SHIELDS

Associate Editor: ALEXANDER THOMSON

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

Address Correspondence: THE GOSPEL WITNESS, 130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2, Canada.
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FAILURE AND RECOVERY

By P. W. Philpott, D.D.

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"Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.

"And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

"But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

"And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

"And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him; for he is a Galilaean.

"And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

"And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crew, thou shalt deny me thrice.

"And Peter went out, and wept bitterly."—Luke 22:54-62.

The Bible never attempts to hide or excuse the faults or sins of its favourite characters—even though it be Abraham, "the friend of God"; or Moses, the man who "talked with God face to face"; or David, the "man after God's own heart"; or Peter, the leader of the twelve. The story of their sin and shame is written with a baldness that is startling. It is very evident that the Scripture is not given to display human virtue, but rather the marvellous grace of God; hence the picture is of man as he really is; and then, on the black background of his failure and shame, God spans the bow of heavenly mercy and love.

The story before us in this scripture is of Peter's fall and restoration—a shameful failure we must admit, but a most glorious recovery. Indeed, the high point of this story is that Peter was fully and completely restored: "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound."

I.

In this connection there are some things to be said on behalf of Peter, some extenuating circumstances to be considered. He was the outstanding personality of the twelve apostles. His name appears in the gospel story more frequently than that of any other man. The Lord

spake to him more often than to any other. He received more praise—and more blame—than any of the apostles. He was rebuked and reprovved more pointedly than any of the others. But he had a keen sense of sin and of his own unworthiness, and with all his faults he was a very lovable character.

In considering his failure we must not overlook the occasion. It was the world's darkest night, the night when men laid unholy hands on the Son of God and led Him "as a lamb to the slaughter"; the night when they "plucked out his beard", and "crowned Him with thorns". "Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves?" said Jesus unto the chief priests and the captain of the temple. "*This is your hour, and the power of darkness.*" That night Satan was given divine permission to do his very worst, and his purpose was two-fold. He would kill Jesus, the Christ; and he would bring about the downfall of Peter. "Satan hath desired to have you", said Jesus, "that he may sift you as wheat." Before we judge the apostle too harshly, let us consider if we would have stood up any better than he did under those conditions.

In his second letter to the Corinthians Paul warns the believers lest they give Satan an advantage over them.

This is exactly what Peter did. *He gave Satan the advantage, first, by his self-confidence.* Had Peter been less sure of himself that night he would have been more secure. Probably Paul had Peter in mind when he wrote these words, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." When Jesus Christ told the twelve that they would all forsake Him in the hour when the shame and sin of the world should come upon Him, Peter meant it when he replied, "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death." He meant that! I believe he was prepared to fight the whole company of Christ's enemies that night with a little sword that he had concealed beneath his flowing garment. Indeed, the first thing that offended Peter was Christ's rebuff: "Put up thy sword into the sheath." That was a hard thing for Peter to do. He could not take the rebuke. Not many of us can.

Years after when this apostle was an old man he gave some good advice on this point. Possibly he had in mind his own experience when he wrote, "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time; casting all your care upon Him for He careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith." The trouble with most of us to-day is that we are too big for God; we are too strong; we know too much; we have too much confidence in the flesh. "When I am weak", says the apostle, "then am I strong."

"When my own resources fail,
Then His power shall most prevail."

Then Peter gave Satan the advantage by his failure to pray. "Pray that ye enter not into temptation", said the Lord, as they came into the garden. If ever a man needed to pray it was Peter that night. We frequently hear it said that prayer changes things, and that prayer makes a difference. I wonder how much difference we believe it makes, how great a change can be effected through the ministry of prayer? It might have meant that night the difference between defeat and victory had Peter waited upon God as the Master admonished him to do. I know this, that during the nearly fifty years of my ministry I have suffered some defeats, and I can trace a great many of them, if not all, to prayerlessness, a failure to pray.

I do not think the Master was soliciting prayers of those three apostles in the garden on His own behalf. He wanted them to pray for themselves that the temptation might not enter into them. Remember how that story reads. He, the Christ, went "a little way further" and fell on His face and made intercession with strong crying and tears. We are told that He prayed the same prayer three different times: "If it is possible let this cup pass from me, but not as I will but as thou wilt." In answer to His prayer the cup did not pass from Him—but something did happen. An angel came and strengthened Him. I sometimes think when I get to heaven that I want to find that angel who comes in the hour of some great trouble in answer to prayer and gives us extra strength to drink the bitter cup, or to meet the fiery trial that has come to try us. I wonder what would have happened had Peter watched and prayed? Possibly that angel would have paid him a visit also and given him the strength necessary for the ordeal that awaited him. "Men ought always to pray and not to faint."

He gave Satan the advantage by mixing with the wrong company. He drew back, and walked afar off from the Master. When I read that I know that Peter is going to get into trouble. He is the kind of man that must keep close to Jesus or he will stumble and fall. "If any man draw back", saith the Lord, "my soul hath no pleasure in him."

Next, we see him in the seat of the scornful. He sat down with the enemy by their fire to warm himself. In that atmosphere it is difficult to confess Jesus Christ, and it is easy to deny Him.

The other day I was reading the story of Belshazzar's feast in the book of Daniel. A new thought came to me. You remember that that feast was prepared for all the leading lords and ladies of the land, and a thousand or more of them were present. At midnight it was a drunken revelry. They brought in the great vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from the temple in Jerusalem; they filled those vessels with wine, and drank toasts to their heathen gods. Then suddenly a hand began to write something on the wall. There was great fear and consternation. Belshazzar's knees smote together. He could not read that writing. He called on the wisest of his great men, but not one could interpret those words. It was God's writing. But there was a man who could read it and tell them just what it meant, *but he was not at the feast.* That is the reason he could read it. There are some places Christians cannot go and keep their testimony. There are some things Christians cannot do and retain their influence for God. "There is a man that can read that writing", said the grandmother queen. It was Daniel, but they had to send out and find him and bring him in.

The call of Christ is not only to heaven, it is to separation: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

II.

But Peter found his way home again, and just as there were several steps that led to his downfall, so there were contributing causes to his restoration. The story of Peter's failure is told by each of the gospel writers. Three of the evangelists associated his repentance with the crowing of a cock, but Luke gives us another cause: "The cock crew, and the Lord turned and looked upon Peter." It was that look that brought about the change, that sent him out with a broken heart.

It was a look of knowledge. It told Peter that Jesus Christ knew all that had happened. "And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him. And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee? And many other things blasphemously spake they against him." And is it not rather remarkable that all this was taking place while Peter sat with the soldiers out in the court beside

that fire; and yet in spite of this, the Lord Jesus heard and knew all that had transpired. He is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of our hearts. He knows all we do; He hears all we say.

It was a look of pain. Nothing had so hurt the heart of the precious Lord that night as the denial of Peter. The spitting and the smiting of the enemy did not give Him half the pain Peter's denial did.

It was a look of pity. There was anguish in it, but not anger. It was full of compassion and yearning love. It said to Peter, "I know all that has transpired, but oh, Peter, I am praying for you that your faith fail not." I think it was John Newton who said:

"Never till my dying day
Can I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me with his death
As near his cross I stood."

It is a wonderful thing to have looked in His face.

I noticed the other day when reading the first chapter of John that when Andrew brought his brother to the Lord, the Master turned and "beheld Simon". It is the same word that you have in this connection. Peter had seen that look before, and now it broke his heart. He "went out and wept bitterly". We know that everything will come out right with Peter—it always does when we feel the shame of our sin and failure, and turn our eyes upon Christ. "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise"; "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

Luke tells us that when the Lord Jesus looked, "Peter remembered the word of the Lord"—he remembered that Jesus had assured him of His prayers. Satan would have us forget the word of the Lord in the hour of our defeat, forget the word that assures us that when we sin "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous". The very same Christ that prayed for Peter "is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us".

There was another member of that little company who "went out" that same night, but not as Peter did. Judas saw his sin in the lurid light of an awakened conscience, and he went out and hanged himself. Peter saw his sin in the light of the loving look of a pardoning Lord, and went out to repent and to be restored. For Judas there was remorse and despair: for Peter, repentance and recovery. Would God to-night that I could help those who have fallen by the way, overcome by some sudden temptation; who have gone down to defeat. But I want to read you the words of Another that are full of assurance and comfort: "But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

One thing is sure, Jesus Christ intended that this picture should teach us that, though we go down into the far country and forget God, He never forgets us. The plain teaching of this parable is, He waits and watches for our return. "He was moved with compassion", and "he ran". In the dignity of a great love he ran to meet his boy. That is Christ's picture of God, and it teaches us that no matter how low we have fallen, how far we have wandered, the Almighty is waiting to receive us with the eagerness born of compassion. Come to Him to-night.

SHOES OF IRON AND BRASS

A Sermon by Dr. T. T. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto,
Sunday Morning, July 15th, 1934.

(Stenographically Reported)

(Printed without the Editor's Revision)

"Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."—Deut. 33:25.

Prayer before the Sermon

O Lord, we desire this morning to render to Thee the praise that is due Thy holy name. We come to offer to Thee the adoration of our hearts; and as we bow in Thy holy presence we remember who and what Thou art. We recognize and acknowledge that we have sinned against Thee, and therefore have no right to come. We are ourselves unfit to be where Thou art. Yet we bless Thee that where sin abounded grace did much more abound. We thank Thee for the cross and for the precious blood, for the mercy seat where the blood is sprinkled, for the promise that Thou wilt meet with us there. We thank Thee for the truth that when Jesus Christ was upon earth He received sinners, and did eat with them. Such were we all, but many have been washed and made whiter than snow. Therefore we come in the name of the Lord Jesus; depending upon the merit of His sacrifice; rejoicing in the assurance that we are clothed with His righteousness, and that looking upon the face of Thine Anointed Thou dost see us in Him, and for His sake Thou dost receive us.

Help us, O Lord, that we may have no confidence in the flesh; but that even as we pray we may approach Thee with penitence of heart: a broken and a contrite heart Thou wilt not despise. We are here as a company of people who have not found life easy, and we need Thy help once more this morning. Thou hast told us that in the world we shall have tribulation; but Thou hast guaranteed to us Thy peace. May the peace of God garrison the hearts of all Thy people this morning! In the midst of difficulty and distress, may there be rest! Help us all to rest in the Lord, and to wait patiently for Him.

We thank Thee that before Philip calls us Thou dost see us under the fig tree. We thank Thee for Thine intimate knowledge of all the details of life. If there are any this morning cast down, and their souls disquieted within them because of some unusual situation in which they find themselves, or because of some form of difficulty which they fear will face them on the morrow, we pray that Thou wilt enable such to-day to cast their burdens upon the Lord, even all their care upon Him, in the assurance that He careth for us. Is it not written, Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. We thank Thee for Thy tender compassion. We thank Thee that Thou hast been touched, Thou great High Priest, with the feeling of our infirmities. We bless Thee that Thou knowest when the spirit is willing, even though the flesh may so manifestly be weak.

Help us, we pray Thee, this morning that through this service we may receive from Thee grace for grace, that we may be girded with strength for the battle, that the back may be prepared for the burden, and that we may be enabled really to believe as we read this morning, that the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord, and He delighteth in his way. Oh, order our steps, guide our feet, and make us to walk in the path of the just, which is as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Look graciously upon Thy people everywhere, upon all the assemblies of the saints, upon all who endeavour to witness to the grace of the Lord Jesus. Give Thy Spirit, O Lord, in His fulness, in the fulness of His grace and power, to every one whom Thou hast commissioned to do Thy will, and to execute Thy work in the world. May this be a day of progress, and of permanent advancement of all the interests of the kingdom of God the world around.

Minister to those who are in affliction this morning. Have compassion upon them, O Lord. Be gracious to them in a time of discomfort. Cool the fevered brow; rebuke the malady whatever it is, where it is Thy will. Uphold them all by Thy Spirit, and send to them Thy ministering angels who are sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.

Bless all the children here this morning, even the youngest of them. Draw the boys and girls, and young people, and older ones, and all the families from whence they come, to Thyself. Let Thy benediction rest upon us all. Cover us with Thy feathers, that under Thy wings we may trust; and find in the fellowship and upholding grace of the Saviour of men, a Helper such as we need. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Moses is approaching the end of his pilgrim journey. He has been advised from heaven that he must yield the leadership of the people to another. He is shortly to be summoned to Nebo's mount, there to be sepulchred by the hand of God Himself. And ere he leaves them he assembles the people that they may receive his parting benediction. What a ministry of love and of self-sacrifice, of utter unselfishness, this great man of God had exercised! And what a fitting climax to that great ministry is this benediction pronounced upon the people whom he had led and loved!

And the time of our departure is predetermined. Some Nebo is appointed for us, the place where we must lie down and die, where these bodies must be laid away to rest. The only difference is that we do not know just when, or where, that time and place will be. But it is none the less divinely ordered, for there is no hap or chance to the people of God, and no accident can befall those who are safely held in the Father's hand. How fitting it would be for any one of us to leave those whom we love, and with whom we have associated, with words of love and tenderness upon our lips! And because we do not know when the end of the journey shall be reached by us, we ought always to be engaged in such ministry, lest haply the last word which should fall from our lips should be one of harshness, that would leave a sting and a wound that would be long in healing.

How lovely were those parting words! Who would not choose to close his life with such a benediction? "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency!"

Moses had a prophetic word to utter to all the tribes. To Asher he said, "Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil. Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." *He describes a power, enunciates a principle, and gives us a promise.*

I.

The people are warned, by the very fact that the shoes of iron and brass are provided, that the path over which they must travel will be a rocky one. God is never wasteful, and though there is always, when He provides, some bread left over, it is ever His rule that we should gather up the fragments that remain. God never provides that which is unnecessary; and the mere fact that shoes of iron and brass are promised implies that they will be needed. Who of us has not had experience enough already to enable us to understand that principle?

Let us remember that those who have spent much time going downhill will not regain the uplands without much climbing. And shoes wear out more quickly in the hill country than on level roads. It means something to climb the hills of life, and we are disposed to complain of them. But let us not forget to take an occasional retrospect, to look behind us; and we shall learn that many a hill we have to climb is before us

because first of all we have descended. Many of our difficulties are of our own furnishing.

If we must break a chain, very often it is because first of all we have forged it. If we must obtain deliverance from some habit, it is because we have readily yielded to its dominion, and have become enslaved thereby. If, indeed, we sail on stormy seas, it is often—not always—but often because, like Jonah, in running away from duty we have run into a storm. And if we carefully analyze the elements of life we shall usually find that these things which so grievously afflict us, and make life to become such a burden, are nearly always to be traced to some act of our own. We must climb the hill, I repeat, because we first descended it. And if sometimes you are disposed to complain that advancement is difficult, reflect a little on how easy you found it to backslide. But what a blessing, though the trouble be ours, the grace and power to deliver us therefrom are His! Even though we must climb the mountainside because we descended, He still graciously provides shoes of iron and brass for the journey.

II.

The text implies that *the path will be rough*. Shoes of iron and brass will not be needed on golden streets; but we have not yet arrived there, and life is beset with hardships. It is not easy to live under any circumstances to-day, nor was it ever easy. A very wise and keen observer long ago said: "Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward." I am not here to wrap you with gloom this morning, but rather with a desire to give you "the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." But we may as well face the fact that we have no easy task before us. There are many people who spend their lives idly dreaming about paved sidewalks, and who complain because the path of life does not lie along "easy street". Perhaps it is a good thing for us that it does not! I have observed when travelling through a pleasant country that I am not disposed to think of distance, for I am not anxious to be done with it; but when my car runs upon a piece of very rough road I begin to inquire, "How long must I endure this?"

Children are likely to be long on their errand if their way lies on a street where there are many windows filled with toys; almost certainly they will be loiterers. I used to be, on many occasions, my father's errand-boy when I was a little fellow. And I can hear his admonition even now, "Run along, and be sure you come directly home; do not loiter by the way." Ah, yes, in pleasant circumstances Peter proposed that three tabernacles be made that they might abide. If life were easy for us perhaps we should be content with it; and that is no doubt why our heavenly Father sends us over a dark and rough road, so that we may come home to Him more quickly. Certain I am that the path has been rough, and will be rough for all of us; hence the promise of shoes of iron and brass.

And then, *shoes are for walking*. Slippers will do for riding, but you need good stout shoes for walking on rough roads. The religion of Christ consists in walking: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." To Abraham God said: "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." There are people who would like to be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease. The Lord has not promised us a

car: He has promised us shoes because the way to heaven is the way of patient walking—not that we win it by our labour, but patient continuance in well-doing is ever the highest evidence that we are heaven-bound. We are to walk before God. And that is just what it means—one step, and then another. “Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”

You must not expect any sort of Jules Verne experience in the Christian life. You are not likely to be shot out of a gun from all the troubles of earth into the felicity of heaven. You had better look after your shoes of iron and brass; you are likely to need them: “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” You will have nothing else to the end of the chapter, I fear. We must walk before Him and be perfect.

The word might imply *bars*. We travel through an enemy country. Life for the Christian is not like life in a sober, orderly, community where we may at any time invoke the protection of the governor. We are surrounded by bandits, by those who would trip us up, and rob us of all we have. We need sometimes to be shut in places of safety; hence, our *bars* shall be iron and brass. The Lord will care for His own.

There is a principle here, namely, there is no guarantee that the path will be made ready for our feet—but every assurance that *our feet will be prepared for the path*. That is the distinctive thing about the Christian religion. There are a great many socialistically-inclined people who say that the function of the gospel is to pave the streets, to remove all the difficulties, and make life easy for everybody. But there is not a word in the Scripture to support that contention. “We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” The Lord does not promise to gather out the stones, to remove the briars, and to make everything comfortable; but He does promise that He will give us shoes of iron and brass. You may have to walk through the waters; but “when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.” The Lord does not promise that you shall not meet the lion, but He does promise that He will shut the lion’s mouth, and send His angels to take care of you. It is far better that we should be made superior to our difficulties than that our difficulties should be removed.

In the days of Joshua, the Lord made a path through the Jordan; the waters stood on an heap, and the people of God went through dry-shod. The kind of religion we all should like is one that would make everything smooth and easy for us. In David’s day there grew up about him some mighty men, and of some of them it is said, “These are they that went over Jordan in the first month, when it had overflowed all his banks.” Sometimes God has pity on our infirmities and compassion on our weaknesses, and He does allow us to cross a few rivers dry-shod; but there is a greater miracle than that, the making of men, as in David’s day, who are superior to the flood, and who can go over Jordan when it has overflowed all its banks. Thus, my dear friends, thank God for the difficulties that come to you. They are afforded you that you may make proof of His grace, and test the reality of His promises, and the genuineness of your holy religion.

“Thy shoes shall be iron and brass.” The Lord does not promise, I say, to order our circumstances always

to our liking—but He does make us *superior to circumstances*. Leaving the hills and all the difficulties of life to be encountered, He gives us shoes that we may walk in triumph over them. He may let you go into prison, but the angel will go with you. He may allow the iron door to clang and clash upon you, but in His own time, if you will but trust Him, He will see to it that it shall “open of its own accord”. Do not let us complain of our trouble, of the time of distress. It is easy to say, Hallelujah, when the winds are in your sails. It is easy to say, “I have a mighty faith”, when you do not need to exercise it. It is easy to say you believe God when there does not appear to be any necessity for divine help. But when you are stripped of everything, and nothing is left to you but the mountain with its rocky slopes, and it is yours to climb it and attain its summit, then thank God for the promise of shoes of iron and brass.

III.

Look, then, at the promise for a moment. You have ordinarily looked upon it as a promise of grace for your day. I wonder are any of you afraid of death? I have known people who were. I knew one who always prayed that he might be delivered from sudden death—and God answered that prayer. He had a long illness. It may be there is someone here fearful of the difficulties to come. I do not know what they are, but I do know that “as thy days, so shall thy strength be”. The Lord does not promise to give you dying grace in advance of the hour of death. Perhaps you will not need it! He may give you a sleeping-car over the river, and you may go to sleep in time and wake up in eternity and say, “Am I really here?” Whatever grace may be needed, He will give it to you when the hour comes. Do not worry about it in advance. Day by day He will feed and supply us: “As thy days, so shall thy strength be.”

I think that strength will be multiplied by our days. The mature man ought to know more than he knew in his infancy. The Christian of long experience ought to be a stronger man than the babe in Christ. Having been taught to number his days, and to apply his heart unto wisdom, every day should make a deposit of faith in his life, so that even as by the ordinary processes of nature, as we partake of our food from day to day and it is absorbed by our bodies and becomes a part of us, giving us bone and muscle and sinew and blood, so all the experiences of life are designed to build us up in our most holy faith. You want to avoid your difficulties? Welcome them, rather. They are designed to leave with you a deposit of spiritual wealth without which you would be poor. May the Lord save us from the folly of asking always for the green pastures! Blessed be God, He will give them to us when we are tired, and make us to lie down in green pastures; but He will lead us in paths of righteousness, and for the path of righteousness we shall need shoes of iron and brass; and as our days are multiplied, and experiences become richer and fuller, so our strength shall be, going from strength to strength, until every one of us at last shall appear in Zion before God.

So was it in the case of David who kept his father’s sheep in the wilderness, and developed his strength in their care by slaying the lion and bear. When the great crisis of life came at last, a crisis that tested all the possibilities of his spiritual manhood, he was not afraid, but was able to say, “The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear,

he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice, and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live." "How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! Therefore"—because we have learned to trust Him through long experience—"the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings."

Do you want a new pair of shoes this morning? When the prodigal came home, his torn and bleeding feet did not escape his father's notice. Almost the first words he spoke were these: "Put shoes on his feet." So shall we be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. So will He prepare us for all life's emergencies.

Have you been washed in the blood? Have you been made His children? Is there the beginning within you of this mighty strength of which my text speaks? Are your feet set in the path of the just? If so, I give you God's word for it, that path shall be "as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day".

"TUMULT OF THEIR WAR"

The much-sung hymn tells us that it is

"Mid toil and tribulation and tumult of her war" that the church

"waits the consummation of peace for evermore".

It is only with these three "t's" that pastors gain the desired fourth, "triumph". We report here some of the toil and a little of the triumph of the men who have gone out into the home mission fields from Toronto Baptist Seminary.

In Spite of Mud

When Mr. K. M. Cutler last spring took over the work of the Maple Grove, Providence and Rock Union Churches, country appointments located near Fever-sham, Ontario, he found "mud to right of one, mud to left of one", but the mud dried up,—as, fortunately, it has a habit of doing,—and the work went on. For years past this has been a summer field only, that is one on which preaching services were regularly held only in the summer time. It has been pastored in their student days by Brethren J. H. Garbig, J. W. Knight, C. H. McGrath, R. E. Faulkner and others. By the efforts of these men, especially of the last named, who spent two summers on this field, the way was prepared for it to become an all-year-round work; so that last spring Mr. Cutler went there with that understanding. And so it is working out. "The prospects are bright at present"; may hopes become realities.

Conversions and Crowds

Since graduating from the Seminary a year ago last spring, Mr. H. G. Hindry has faithfully laboured in the fine lake village of Westport, Ontario, where he succeeded another of our men, Mr. C. Hardy. A few weeks ago his heart was much rejoiced to have three walk forward at a regular church service. At the end of last month special meetings were held with the assistance of the four Seminary students who form the Invictus Male Quartette. Apparently, the way had been well prepared for the meetings, and, writes Mr. J. Scott, one of the Four, they "produced the most sustained adult attendances that we have had all summer. On Sunday evening we sang in the open air on a platform where an 'old time' dance was conducted the previous night, to a crowd of two to three hundred, while Mr.

Hindry brought a stirring message to the people. . . . On the Wednesday night Mr. Hardie spoke, and on Thursday and Friday Rev. Lorne Hisey brought the message. So the 'graduals' had a chance to hear the graduates." One of the evening services in the church found the place so full of interested people that some forty could not get nearer than the outside of the windows!

"Unfit" T.B.S. Man the Means of Revival

A large-salary association secretary of the Northern Baptist Convention accuses the secretary of the Interstate Evangelistics Association of getting "men who are entirely unfit into the Baptist churches". These men are getting the churches to withdraw their support from the N.B.C. missionary programme—with its policy of inclusion of Modernists and Evangelicals as missionaries to the benighted heathen—and "therefore the poor missionaries are starving". Rev. Adam Galt, a graduate of this School in 1933, was specially mentioned as "unfit". In the Baptist Church at Pavilion, N.Y., where he and his delightful wife, herself a Seminary girl, are working, "the missionary giving has increased and is still increasing, there have been eleven added to the church in the past year, seven or eight others have been converted and are on the prospect list for baptism. The people are looking forward to a good time this winter, and already they are praying for their friends and relatives and for revival." A number of churches of that region are out of sympathy with the inclusive policy programme of the Northern Baptist Convention. They meet in conference every second month, express their determination to stand by the Gospel of grace, and are enjoying the blessing of the Lord upon them.

Northwest Evangelism

Rev. G. R. Dawe spent a year in our School of the Prophets, and then took up pastoral work in his native province of British Columbia, followed by evangelistic tours. This past summer in Prince George, over five hundred miles north of Vancouver, a town of some three thousand, he was used of the Lord to arouse sleeping believers and bring some souls to our Saviour. Pastor E. V. Apps (a graduate of 1931) later visited them, and regretted because of the lack of financial backing he could not settle among them to fill the place of the undershepherd whom they need.

A Seventy Mile Trip to Duparquet

Rev. Stanley Wellington (graduate of 1930) is working in the mining district of Rouyn and Noranda, and in his vision of the need of the towns around has had others to help him during the past summers. This year the helper has been Student R. B. Morrison, and he has worked chiefly in mining town of Duparquet, P.Q. There has he preached the Gospel to Jew, Romanist and atheist. On several occasions brethren from Noranda, thirty-five miles distant, visited the mission. Of one of these excursions the Noranda secretary, Mr. F. Carbone, writes: "On our arrival, the meeting, which is held in a splendid club-house building, was already in progress. At once we were quite surprised to see the number in attendance." A sermon by Mr. Morrison, which the visitors felt was both sincere and forceful, made their seventy-mile journey worthwhile. Four have professed faith in Christ through the efforts made here.

Hand-Picked Fruit

During the summer Student L. Horne has been helping the Rev. O. Boomer raise the Gospel banner in what the former describes as the most scattered district he has ever seen. "It is truly missionary work. It must be done mostly by personal contact, visiting the homes, etc." Mr. Horne has preached three times on Sunday, requiring thirty-five to forty miles travel, and taken part in the three prayer meetings and one Bible class each week. Through his efforts three have professed faith in Christ.

"Protestants" Harder Than Catholics

From the first of June on into September, Student F. M. Buhler, a native of Alsace, our instructor in French here in the Seminary, and Student T. D. M. Carson, of Ottawa, have done door-step evangelism. Assisting Rev. Jas. Hall and then Rev. Lorne Hisey in Ottawa, they took a religious census of their districts. Then for some weeks they visited homes in Montreal, sought to engage the people in conversation on eternal things, to present the claims of Christ, and thus personally to preach the Gospel. Mr. Buhler wrote of this difficult work chiefly among Roman Catholics: "Our duty is to turn their confidence or faith which they have in their Church and in their works into a confidence in Christ and in His merits . . . We have to work patiently and tactfully." Even such meagre efforts as these men could make were possible because of Mr. Buhler's native command of French and Mr. Carson's acquired knowledge of this, Canada's other tongue. French Catholics will listen only to those who will speak to them in their own language. Mr. Buhler reports a strange thing: the non-Catholics with whom they met in their visitation were less open to the Gospel than the Romanists. They had turned from the Church, and alas, with this from God. What a great mission field is Quebec and the French sections of Northern Ontario! How little is being done to win these millions of fellow-Canadians to a knowledge of the grace of God!

Keeping the Fountain Open

And so the story goes on. We hope to take it up again next week. Meanwhile we hope we shall not be thought "beggarly" if again we "beg" for help for the School that trains these men and women, and so is able, under God, to prove itself a fountainhead of blessing to increasing numbers in more and more places. You intended to remember us in your will; have you done it? You intended to send us a contribution; did you neglect doing this gracious thing? You have prayed for the Seminary; keep on praying.—W.G.B.

PROTEST AGAINST LIQUOR MEASURE

Have you sent your signature to add to our protest against the present beer and wine regulations? To date, 31,188 have been received. Send your name at once to "The Gospel Witness", 130 Gerrard St. East, Toronto. Or better still, secure the names of friends and neighbours who are opposed to the measure, and send as soon as possible.

SEMINARY CONVOCATION

The public service in connection with the commencement of the year's work of the Seminary will be held next Thursday evening, September 27th, at 8 o'clock, in Jarvis Street Church auditorium. The Trustees and Faculty will publicly sign the Statement of Faith, as is usual.

DR. P. W. PHILPOTT

will be the special speaker. It will be a splendid night, and we hope many of the friends of the Seminary from out-of-town will attend, as well as all our Toronto friends. An offering will be taken for the work of the Seminary.

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

GALT

A Gospel Campaign was launched on Sunday, September 16th, by Rev. W. N. Charlton of Hespeler, in the new Galt Baptist Church. There were record-breaking attendances, and at night one woman was saved. To God be the glory! The meetings are being continued throughout the week. Mr. Charlton will speak each evening, with the exception of Thursday, when Rev. A. J. Lewis of Kitchener, will give the message.

LIBERIA

Recently our missionary on furlough, Mrs. E. Hancox, received a very interesting letter from one of the Bassa boys in Liberia. We publish it below, and ask the continued prayers of our readers for these needy people.

C. R. B. Mission,
Grand Bassa Co.,
July 24th, 1934.

Dear Mrs. Hancox:

I am hoping and trusting that when this reaches you it may find you in the best of health, as I am O.K. I am herewith writing you to ask your pardon for not writing before. I am therefore sending by teacher Hancox, so that you will think about me. I have not forgotten about you yet. We are both far from one another, but I will not forget you at all. I am here with Mr. Hancox, I will try to do what you have told me to do. All my best I can do for him. I am very sorry that your father is very sick. So we always pray to God for him. I hope and trust that he may be better by this time. Please tell your mother and father howdo for me. And all your friends also. Nothing strange here but hard hard times.

Yours truly affectionately,
PETER C. LOGAN.

ORDINATION OF F. WELLINGTON

On Friday, September 14th, a Council of Churches gathered in Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church to consider the advisability of ordaining to the gospel ministry Mr. F. Wellington, a member of that Church, and Pastor of the Fort William Regular Baptist Church.

With Rev. A. Thomson, as Moderator, in charge of the proceedings, the council heard Mr. Wellington's statement. This statement was clear and ably delivered, and after a time of questioning—which questions were well answered—the Council voted unanimously to fellowship the candidate in his statement, and to proceed to ordination.

At the evening session Pastor R. Brackstone led the song service; Rev. P. B. Loney read the Scriptures and led in prayer; Rev. W. E. Smalley offered the ordination prayer; Rev. A. Penman gave the charge to the candidate; Rev. C. J. Loney extended the right hand of fellowship on behalf of the ministers of our Union; and the Rev. A. Thomson preached the ordination sermon. The benediction was pronounced by Rev. F. Wellington.

It is the prayer of all that Mr. Wellington may be blessed of God in his work in Fort William.

D. MACGREGOR,
Clerk.

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 9

No. 4

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 40

Fourth Quarter

October 7, 1934

ZOPHAR CALLS JOB A HYPOCRITE AND LIAR

Lesson Text: Job, chapter 11.

Golden Text: "Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?"

Bible School Reading: Job 11:1-20.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Lam. 3:22-36; Tuesday—Gen. 4:1-7; Wednesday—I Samuel 7:1-10; Thursday—Psalm 143:1-12; Friday—Ephesus 3:1-12; Saturday—Romans 2:29-36.

I. ZOPHAR'S REPROOF (vs. 1-12).

The two friends of Job having participated in the discussion relative to his affliction, Zophar, the third member of the company, participates therein in no uncertain way. It is evident from his speech that he was far from pleased with that which he had heard from the afflicted one, and his intention is to correct him, and give reproof for his wrong attitude—and possibly, incidentally, to condemn the other two for what he deemed to be their weak replies. His impatience is manifest, together with his misunderstanding of Job's state; although his intentions were probably good. It is possible to be sincere in the service of God, and yet adopt a mistaken attitude toward others. Our judgment in this respect should be arrived at with extreme care, and exercised in love. The Lord alone knows the great evil wrought in Christian realms through rash and unjust judgment of others. Sometimes it is necessary to take notice of the actions of others, and even to take action respecting them; but for the most part it is well to be so busy helping people that we shall not pay heed to their faults. In all things let us treat others as we would like to be treated by them (Matt. 7:12).

The oriental is somewhat taciturn, but Zophar is so deeply stirred with the words of Job that he feels an answer should be given thereto: "Should not the multitude of words be answered?" Evidently he thought Job's speech was of unusual length. "Should thy lies (or vain boasting) make men hold their peace?" Job's vain boasting pertained to the upholding of his sincerity in the face of his friends' insinuations of guilt (v. 4). Job was but stating the truth when he affirmed his innocence of specific wrong-doing, though not his faultlessness. He knew he was a sinner in God's sight, but he felt that he was not suffering on account of any great sin. In God's purpose both the innocent and the guilty suffer. This was what he upheld, and he could not rightfully be accused of vain boasting. A great deal depends on the way in which a thing is said, in manifestation of the spirit governing it; as well as in the thing said. And it is not likely that under the circumstances, Job would feel like boasting about anything. His desire was to die, and so escape from his misery.

So deep was the feeling of Zophar against Job's attitude he expressed the wish that God would speak, and open His lips against him. God did speak later, and gave correction; but He also condemned the friends. He desires also that God would show him the secrets of wisdom, and declares that the Lord exacted of him less than his iniquity deserved. God is the source of all true wisdom (I Cor. 1:30), and blessed indeed is the person who in the mercy of the Lord is granted access to the supply. It is true in relation to all, that in this life the Lord exacts less of us than our iniquity deserves. If He should deal with us strictly in accordance with our guilt, we should not be able to stand (Ps. 130:3). We have much cause for thankfulness in the wondrous mercy of God (Ps. 57:10).

"Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" To ask these questions is to answer them. Man has discovered many things pertaining to nature, but with all his investigation he has been unable to find God. Nor can he find anything about Him except by inference, unless God reveals Himself. This we know He has done through His servants, and above all through Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1, 2). Man's smallness and weakness are evident in this statement. He is after all only a creation, with very little knowledge of the vast realm of spirit and matter, and encompassed in a very limited sphere of activity. He is therefore a most dependent creature. He cannot live without God; nor can he gain knowledge of divine things apart from the initiative of the Lord. He is in every way a contrast to his Creator. This is further emphasized by a description of God's wisdom: as "high as heaven", "deeper than hell", "longer than the earth", and "broader than the sea". The wisdom of man is foolishness beside this (I Cor. 3:19). Note the picturesque way of presenting this teaching, embracing the whole of the universe, and magnifying the greatness of God. He is truly inaccessible except through Christ, and His wisdom unapproachable except in the same manner. His power and knowledge are also great. No one can hinder Him in His acts (v. 10); He is the omnipotent One (Gen. 17:1). He knows men (v. 11); He is the omniscient One (I John 3:20). Man, in contrast, wants to consider himself wise, though he is untamed like the colt of a wild ass. Real wisdom on man's part consists in submission to divine wisdom.

II. THE BLESSING OF REPENTANCE (vs. 13-20).

Having magnified the wisdom and greatness of God, Zophar proceeds to inform Job of the proper way of approaching Him. There is much in what he says that may be beneficially applied in the present day, for his principle was right, if his understanding of Job's case was wrong. First of all, there must be preparation of heart in approaching God (v. 13). The Pharisee prayed with himself, and received no heavenly justification because of his proud spirit. The publican was "justified" because of his humble dependence upon God (Luke 18:10-14). In approaching the Lord there must be the humble attitude of submission to the divine will, an attitude of repentance for sin. This manifests itself in a practical manner in the putting away of all sin (v. 14). Real repentance is not only sorrow for sin, but a determination to be done with it: God will not hear the one who holds on to his sin (Is. 59:2). He hates sin, and desires His creatures to be done with it. To this end Jesus Christ came (Matt. 1:21). Note the nature of sin, as lawlessness against the divine law (Dan. 9:5); the misery sin has caused—and is still causing in the world; the impossibility of serving God while such an attitude is assumed; the fearful eternal consequences involved in a continuance therein; and the way of salvation from the power thereof.

The blessings of the repentant attitude are placed before Job in a simple manner. He would be able to lift up his face to God without spot, and to be steadfast and not fear. It is only the unrepentant who need fear God. The repentant are sure of a welcome from the Lord. In the second place Job was informed he would forget his misery and remember it as waters that pass away. God gives a new life to those who come to Him in repentance and faith (John 1:12, 13); old things pass away, and all things become new (2 Cor. 5:17). This is a pleasing prospect for all, and God keeps His word. Another blessing announced affected his life, which, though dark at that moment, would be clearer than the noonday, and shine forth as the morning. He would also be secure and rest in safety. He would lie down and none would make him afraid. Many would even make suit unto him (v. 19). And in contrast thereto, the wicked would fail, and their hope would leave them as the breath does the body. The only hope for the sinner lies in repentance. The hope of the wicked, such as it is, rests on a false basis, and will vanish quickly in the presence of God. Note the blessings of salvation: forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7); rest (Matt. 11:28); communion with God (I Cor. 1:9); peace (Romans 5:1); joy (John 15:11); hope, (Titus 2:13); an inheritance (I Peter 1:3-5); blessed service (I Thess. 1:9); and many others too great in number to mention.