

The Gospel Witness

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

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WHERE IS FINCHLEY?

Geographically, Finchley is a part of London. But geography has to do with location, with the earth written. But there are places which are independent of geography. Geographically, the exact position of a person or place may be indicated in terms of latitude and longitude. But Finchley cannot be defined in geographical terms. Finchley is a mood, an attitude, a state of mind, an estimate of one's self. All of which to the readers of this article means nothing at all. It is as unintelligible as Sanscrit. Therefore to our tale.

This Editor on one occasion was in London, and preached at several different places. One of these was a church that once of a day had seen prosperous times. It was a fairly large building, which one would suppose had never been erected had there not been at the time a need for the accommodation it provided. But that day was in the past. We judge that for a good many years one could have found in that church what Dr. Alexander McLaren said had obtained in respect to a church he once served: a seat for yourself, one for your hat, and one for your umbrella.

The Editor was a stranger, and the congregation was fairly good—the usual congregation augmented by some visitors: In the vestry we were introduced to a certain deacon, and were informed that he was the author of a book. We did not tell our informant who introduced us that we had neither read the book, nor even heard of it. Probably the book was all true, and very good. We fancy it would be. If it approximates the author's estimate of the worth of anything emanating from himself, it must be a very good book! The deacon-author impressed us as a man who would be disposed to congratulate this old earth that it was still enriched by his presence.

There are people who need no favourable circumstances, and no comforting adjuncts. They are their own favourable circumstances, and revel in the luxuries resident in their own personalities. We have often envied their complacency. It must be most comfortable to be so independent of other persons and things, and so supremely content with one's self. Our deacon-author did not tell us these things in so many words: there are occasions when speech is superfluous.

During the service of the first evening our hero sat on the platform. As we met in the vestry following the

service he was kind enough to speak appreciatively of the service, and said, "It has been a pleasure to meet you. I may not have the opportunity again: *I live in Finchley.*" What we now record was not an afterthought: we are willing to admit that we were naughty enough to think of it on the spur of the moment; but congratulate ourselves on the control which enabled us to withhold the hasty word. But that which instantly occurred to our mind was to reply, "You live in Finchley? I live in Toronto." By invitation we had journeyed across the sea, a matter of well on to three thousand miles, in order that we might speak in several churches including the one of which our Finchley resident was a deacon. We were to speak every night, but this brother who said he had enjoyed the service was not sure he would be able to be there because he lived in Finchley—about five miles distant. We ought to add, however, that notwithstanding his residence five long miles away, in that very remote place called Finchley, our good deacon managed to be present at nearly every service.

But where is Finchley? That is the question. Where is the Canadian Finchley? the Finchley of the United States? or of Australia, of New Zealand, or of many parts of England? For the London Finchley is not the only Finchley of the British Isles. The disposition which expresses itself after the Finchley manner is a very common one.

We remember travelling nearly a thousand miles to a place in the middle western states for two addresses, an afternoon and an evening address. At the close of the afternoon session rather an important young minister—that is to say, according to his own estimation—greeted us, and expressed the deepest appreciation of what he had heard. He felt it was quite worth his while to have come. We remarked, "We shall see you again this evening?" To which he replied, "No. I am very busy, and I live some distance away. I fear it will be impossible for me to come in this evening." We later discovered he had driven his thoroughly reliable Ford car twenty-five miles to attend the meeting. The speaker must travel two thousand miles to give two addresses: this preacher was pastor of a little church of about fifty members, but his twenty-five miles seemed a long way apparently to

him. He too lived in Finchley, and was very busy,—as all the residents of Finchley seem to be.

That is where all people live who concern themselves with their own interest and comfort. It is not always convenient to do good unto all men. It is not always easy to do good even to the household of faith. To bear somebody else's burden, and so fulfil the law of Christ, usually entails a journey from Finchley to somewhere else. But some people live altogether in Finchley. They live within the circle of their own interests and pleasures. They never inconvenience themselves for anybody. Though somebody else carries seven-eighths of the load, the dwellers in Finchley do not voluntarily take even the remaining one-eighth of the burden.

Years ago, when motor-cars were not so plentiful as now, and even a Ford car indicated some measure of special privilege, we were invited by a brother-minister to step into his car. We had been at a committee meeting together, and came out of the board-room together, into a drenching rain. It was the late Fall or early Winter. There had been a fall of snow, and the streets were very slushy. This brother lived in the general direction of our house. It would have required a slight deviation from his course—only two short blocks—to put us down at our own door. But he took the straight road to a certain intersection, and then stopped, saying, "I suppose you want to get out here?" The fact is, we did not want to get out at all in that driving rain, much less in the slush. But then we lived all of two blocks aside from the straight road that led to Finchley, and as the brother lived in Finchley it was quite impossible for him to detour to serve another's comfort or convenience. Learning the lesson, we have disliked that road to Finchley ever since; and scores of times since then have turned aside from the beaten track in order to drop someone on his own doorstep.

People who live in Finchley seem to set a very high estimate on all that belongs to that select district. We do not know a thing about Finchley except that the gentleman we have referred to here lives there. But since he selected it as his place of residence, it must be very select! But a Finchley mile is equal to six hundred of anybody else's miles. Five miles from Finchley is as far as three thousand miles from anywhere else. It is absurd to expect people who live in Finchley to attend church when it rains, when it is hot, or when it is cold; when they are slightly indisposed, or even to the smallest degree preoccupied—when, indeed, they have anything else to do, or anywhere else to go.

People who live in Finchley greatly condescend when they give a dollar to the Lord's work. We recall a deacon who some years ago, referring to a certain man, said to us, "He is quite an extraordinary character. For some reason he always assumes that one of his dollars is as good as ten of anybody else's." He gave little, with the air of one who gave much. But why should he not? A dollar coming from Finchley must surely have a special value.

The Finchleyites always carry about with them an air of—well, an air of Finchley! Not everybody is privileged to occupy a villa in this select suburb. They seldom go to church more than once a day in Finchley. A single attendance on the part of a Finchleyite should count for at least several attendances of anybody else. And any pastor who has a member living in Finchley who condescends to come once a day, ought to feel highly flattered,

and never complain on account of his absence from other services.

There was a man who was charged with being a Galilean; and, though he denied it, his identity was established by his speech. The people who live in Finchley are readily identified. They are like the people of Boston—not literal, geographical, Boston, but proverbial Boston, the American Athens that used to be, according to all reports. Well, some wag said on one occasion, "You can tell a man from Boston, but you can't tell him much." The same is true of Finchley. If Finchley approves, one's scholarship and reputation are established—at least at Finchley. They write books in Finchley. Whether they read any or not, is another matter; but they write them. And that certainly is a mark of distinction!

Where is Finchley? Sometimes it is the end seat of a pew. How often have we seen people who are very pious in their profession, who profess to be deeply concerned for the salvation of souls, but they live in Finchley. Which, being interpreted, is the end of the pew. And nobody can budge them from Finchley. A timid soul, looking up the aisle of a church, may see every end seat occupied, and may decline to allow an usher to conduct him to a seat in a pew, to enter which he would have to disturb some Finchley dweller. Instead, he drops into a back seat, and is the first to leave the church following the benediction. But for that man or woman who lives in Finchley he might have been in a pew nearer to the front, from which he could not possibly escape without some earnest soul having an opportunity to speak to him of his spiritual state. But the person who lives in Finchley is more concerned about occupying the end seat in a pew than in being instrumental in providing a seat in glory for a ransomed soul.

Finchley people are, as we have said, quite superior. They attend a very superior church. They have a very superior minister. The church is superior in this, that it has a pulpit and a reading-desk; and the minister is superior in this, that he wears a bit of millinery, and reads from one desk and preaches from another. And how they pity our simplicity in supposing that as long as people can hear, it does not make much difference whether one preaches from a pulpit or a desk, and that there is no special reason why we should have two pieces of furniture when one will do. But with what a superior air they refer to this bit of form. It may be the choir sings a "processional" and a "recessional". Ah me, how superior that is! The distance from the choir robing-rooms to their seat in church is not even a Sabbath day's journey: it is just the distance from Finchley and back. And these dear friends so often speak condescendingly and half compassionately of the people who prefer the happy freedom of a spiritual service to the formal bondage of a carnal ritualism.

They act as though it were a high privilege to live in Finchley. The fact is, there are streets of houses to let in Finchley. Anybody can get a house there if he wants it. But some people prefer to live elsewhere. Anyone may become an Episcopalian if he so desires. It is really not necessary to build a church about one's self of the cruciform pattern, just to advertise one's Finchley residence. But who wants to live in Finchley? There are districts which offer much more attractive places of residence. There may be a long road between some such happy place of Christian serviceableness and the place

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"HONEY OUT OF THE ROCK"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, June 16th, 1935

(Stenographically Reported)

"Oh that my people had harkened unto me and Israel had walked in my ways!
"I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their
adversaries.

"The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him: but their
time should have endured for ever.

"He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out
of the rock should I have satisfied thee."—Psalm 81:13-16.

Prayer before the Sermon

After the toil of another week, O Lord, we thank Thee for this resting place, for the privilege of coming together in Thy name. Thou hast been with us all the days; we thank Thee that Thou art with us as we are with each other; that where two or three are gathered together in Thy name, Thou are in the midst. We remember Thy word, that he who is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, and is clean every whit. We thank Thee for the blood of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, which cleanseth us from all sin. May we be made clean also by the word which Thou hast spoken to us.

So help us this morning that we may come to remove the dust of travel, the stain of contact with a sinful world. This morning wilt Thou help us to enter into Thy presence, and to lay aside all impediments; that every thought may be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

And now, as we turn to Thy word, we pray Thee to instruct us therefrom. Grant us the ministry of Thy Spirit, that the truths which are hidden from the understanding of natural men may become clear to us, for it is written: Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

Be pleased, O Lord, to communicate Thy truth to us this morning. Help us that it may be profitable to every one because it shall be mixed with faith.

Command Thy blessing upon Thy people everywhere, upon the whole household of faith, upon all who minister Thy word, whether privately or publicly. May Thy grace abound toward them! For those who are afflicted we pray; for some who are accustomed to meet with us in this place. Be gracious to them this morning. May Thy presence bring Heaven's climate to them. Uphold those who minister to the sick. Give them the comfort of the assurance of Thy favour. May those whose duties prevent their attendance at this sanctuary this morning find their sanctuary in Thee; help them this day that they may be enabled in spirit to worship Thee.

So graciously direct us all, since we ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

A very wise man, who had had unusual opportunities of observation, long ago said: "Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof." I suppose that any of us who have had a little experience of life will be able to understand that saying without much explanation. So many things begin well, and end indifferently, or disastrously. And so the wise man said, when the end is reached and all the intermediate hazards are behind, and we know the ultimate of things, that is better than the beginning that is fraught with so much uncertainty. And I think that is true, sometimes, of the life of the believer. When he has come safely along the pilgrim road, and the hoary head is found in the way of righteousness, and he has been kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and ends his days, and his sun goes down with a glorious triumph, how much better

that is often, than the beginning while yet so much is uncertain.

Israel began gloriously. They came out of Egypt by the power of the outstretched hand of God. When their enemies had been overwhelmed, and they had seen the Egyptians dead upon the seashore, Miriam led the people of Israel with her timbrel and with her song: "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." But how soon that pilgrim nation was hindered! How very soon in their hearts they turned back and tempted God, "and limited the Holy One of Israel". How full of complainings was their wilderness life! How full of tragedy! How tragic indeed, was their whole subsequent history; until at last another generation arose, and they passed over Jordan into the Promised Land. And here God laments that they so soon spoiled that which was rich in promise. He mourns that His people had not hearkened to Him, nor walked in His way; and He speaks of that which He would have done for them if only they had been obedient to His commandment. How often have we seen that history repeated in the lives of professing Christians! So many run well, but are soon hindered.

I had a long talk with Brother Barham last night, and he said, "I am concerned about a few of our people, who seem to be declining in spiritual interest. There is nothing radically wrong, apparently; no outward lapse, but just a steady decline of interest in spiritual things." What shall we do for them? That is the problem always—what to do for people who do not go on with God. And how many we have seen! I know there are those who hear the word, and who are like unto the seed falling upon stony ground. It soon springs up, but because it has no depth of earth, when the sun is up it withers away. And I know there are those that are like unto the thorny ground, in whom the word is choked by the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches. But it is not of these I speak this morning, but more particularly of those who are genuinely the Lord's children, and who bring forth thirty-fold at best, where they ought to bring forth an hundred-fold, who live at a poor dying rate, who experience little of the abundant life which the Lord Jesus said He had come to give.

What blessing follows the life's ministry of just one man, or one woman, given up to the service of God! Perhaps it may help us if we review this history a little this morning. It may save some of us from many pitfalls, and perhaps, with the blessing of God may recall some to a life of fellowship and obedience.

The Lord here very clearly indicates the cause of the trouble, and He mourns that His people have erred in two directions. First: they had not hearkened to His word, and then, as a natural consequence, they had not walked in His ways.

I.

It is one of the characteristics of age, usually, that the hearing becomes dull. You find old men, and old women—if there are any—who will, at least confidentially, admit that they do not hear quite as distinctly as once they did. And when the old man has the ascendancy in the life of the believer, and when the ways of the old man dominate the life, you usually find there is a want of sensitiveness. The spiritual hearing is not so acute, and they do not so readily hear the whisper of the Lord. I think that is where spiritual decline very often begins. We do not hearken as once we did to the word of the Lord. When one is in good health, spiritually, it is instinctive with the devout soul, before any course is taken, to seek divine wisdom, a knowledge of the word and will of God. The man says: "What ought I to do in the circumstances, as a Christian? I must listen to what God has to say." And hearing the word of God, invariably he is brought to his knees to ask direction as to what he ought to do. And when at last he takes a given course, he takes it because he is convinced from the study of the word of God that in taking that course he is in harmony with the principles of the word, and, therefore, with the will of God. But when his spiritual hearing becomes dull, and the Book is closed, he goes on and does a hundred things without ever asking what is the will of God. And as surely as anyone takes that course, he is led into trouble.

My question of you, my dear friends, this morning is: Do you listen attentively to the word of God? Do you hold daily and hourly communication with Him? Read the life of David and you will find that amid all the vicissitudes of that colourful life, he never failed to inquire of the Lord. Just read through David's life, and see how often that phrase occurs: "And David inquired of the Lord".

I have heard a story of a very prosperous lumber man, a very rich man who was once approached by the representative of some large affair and asked to consider the purchase of a great tract of timber land. The business man listened, and said, "Your proposal interests me very much, and I will consult with my Partner, and get His mind on the subject, and then I shall let you know." "Why", said the would-be salesman, "I was not aware, sir, that you had a partner. I supposed you were the whole firm!" "Oh no," he said, "I am really only the junior partner, although my name only appears. I have a Partner, and it has been the rule of my life in all my business career, never to take the smallest step without first of all ascertaining His mind." "Well", said the other man, "would it be possible for me to meet him? I would gladly meet him." "With pleasure", said the great business man. "I shall introduce you to Him if you will step this way". He took him into a little room adjoining his office, put up some little sign indicating that he was not to be disturbed; closed the door, and then he said, "My Partner is my Master, the Lord Jesus Christ. We will just kneel down and talk to Him about this matter now, and I will tell Him about you."

How often, dear friends, have we all failed in the exercise of that privilege. The mother about her duties,

perplexed as to what she shall do with a problem, perhaps of one of her children! A young man, or a young woman, just growing out from beneath parental care and influence; and the mother says, "I do not know what to do with him"; she uses her best judgment but sometimes does the wrong thing. Let me ask you mothers, Do you talk to the Lord about it? Do you hearken to His word? In your daily tasks, whatever they may be, do you bring all these problems of life into the light which shines from the sacred page, and earnestly endeavour to do what you have become convinced the Lord would have you do; or have you become careless at that point, and taken matters into your own hands? If you have, I am sure it has led you into difficulties, for it follows invariably that when people fail to listen to the word of God they fail to walk in the ways of God. We do not stumble upon God's ways without listening to His word. No man takes God's way by accident, for the reason that it is not natural for us to take it. If we trust to our carnal wisdom, to our own natural judgment, we shall invariably take another course than the one God would have us take, and as surely as we fail to inquire of the Lord, we take a course that is not in accord with the word of the Lord. That is inevitable in every case.

II.

These people, not hearing the word, did not walk in the way. Yesterday morning as I drew up at an intersection, and stopped by the red light, another motor pulled alongside, the driver of which was a lady. Our windows were open, and she said, "Do you happen to know, sir, where such a street is?" I said: "Yes, make a right hand turn here; go to a certain street, and then turn to the left and you will find it running south either two or three streets from there." She was in the midst of the traffic, and there were cars on the other side, but the moment I said that, she said, "Thank you", put out her hand, and the other cars stopped while she went roundabout them. She made a right-handed turn as she had not intended to do. She supposed the right way was to go straight on, but she heard my word, and hearing it she went in the way in which I directed her.

Now, my dear friends, that is a very simple thing, but we are pilgrims, all of us, and we have not passed this way before. To-morrow—I care not what experiences you may have had in the past—you will meet with certain emergencies unlike anything you have had heretofore. They may seem similar; you may say: "I have been here before", but you have not. There is a set of circumstances radiating from that situation, influences which may result in complications you cannot possibly foresee. When you get to the intersection, find out the road you ought to take. You need not ask a fellow-traveller, as did this woman: you have a radio in your car that can both broadcast and receive. Send up a message, and say, "Which road shall I take now, Lord? What ought I to do?" Consult the senior Partner, and make sure that the senior Partner is literally the Master, and when He says "turn to the right" turn to the right. That is all. You and I lose our blessing, dear friends, not by some great error, not by some grievous blunder, nor perhaps by what appears to be a great sin, but by failing to hearken to God's word, and to take His way just at the point where it ought to be taken.

That is true of you young people. Life is very complicated to-day. It is not easy to be true to Jesus Christ in all life's relationships. It is not easy to separate our-

selves from the world, and the things of the world, and so to live that we may have a clear testimony for God. Indeed, we shall, none of us, do it until we constantly inquire of the Lord, hearken to His word, and take His way.

III.

The Lord here was grieved because they had not hearkened to His word: "O that my people had hearkened unto me". We grieve the Holy Spirit when we neglect to inquire of the Lord, and, equally, when having inquired we do not take His way.

Perhaps you have had someone inquire the way, and when you have given direction, you have seen them start on the right road, but soon take the wrong turn. Before now I have sounded my horn to indicate that the person inquiring had misunderstood me, and I have said: "Oh, what a pity! they are going the wrong way." The Lord, having directed His people, they had not taken His way, and He said: "They are on the wrong track. Oh, that they had hearkened to My word, and walked in My way." That is what it is to grieve the Spirit of God. It is of no use to seek His counsel, if we don't obey it. No use to ask His advice unless we are prepared to accept the direction of His word.

That, I venture to believe, is where most blessing is lost.

And then, will you observe, the Lord is grieved because *He sees what they have lost by their folly*. He says: "If they had hearkened to My word, I should have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries." Let us lay it down as a principle that in the Christian life the way of obedience, strict, literal, implicit, obedience to the word of God, is always the way of victory. It may sometimes seem that you are going to be defeated, and in doing the will of God you may find yourself counted as sheep for the slaughter, and for His sake be killed all the day long; but in the end of the day you will find that if you obey God, and in the measure in which you do His will, He will subdue your enemies.

What enemies? Well, the temptations that assail you. A man is tempted by a violent temper; another man is tempted in the realm of appetite. A man says, "I want to give up smoking". Perhaps another young convert finds that the appetite for alcohol is still with him, and he is tempted in that direction. We may be tempted in many directions, tempted to take advantage of someone in business; tempted to be not perfectly frank in our business transactions, because we are afraid that if we are, we shall lose a customer. What are your enemies? I do not know what they are, but whatever they may be, in the way of obedience we shall have power to overcome them. The Lord says: "I will subdue your enemies; I will turn My hand against your adversaries; I will make common cause with you, if you will obey My word."

It is true, my friends, God becomes the adversary of every one who opposes His obedient children. Let us do His will, and we shall find the way, and we shall find it is the way to victory.

Have you met with anyone of recent days who answered to this description: "The haters of the Lord"? There was a time a few years ago when people who were not Christians were indifferent, sometimes scornful, sometimes rather contemptuous, in their attitude toward religion in general. But we find now a great many people who are positively and bitterly antagonistic to the Christian religion. Look at conditions in Germany to-day.

Did you read of a professor's recently speaking to fifteen thousand people, and his word broadcast by every broadcasting station throughout Germany, who declared that Germany would not rest until they had absolutely uprooted the last semblance of Christianity, and they would have another religion without Christ, another religion that concerns itself with this life, and that will recognize neither God nor the life to come? How appalling that there should be found a nation, and the nation of Luther, where millions of people would listen approvingly to sentiments of that sort! But you don't need to go to Germany. I cannot tell you how many people have said to me: "I stand amazed at the bitter antagonism of people toward religion. It is not only that they do not go to church, but they seem to hate everyone who does, and in the office and in the shop if anyone ventures a testimony for Christ, they almost froth at the mouth, and gnash their teeth at it. A brother, who gives his testimony, I think perhaps more frequently than most people, said to me only yesterday: "It seems to me that the time is rapidly approaching when it may even cost us life itself simply to witness for Christ. "The haters of the Lord"! People who seem filled with the very spirit of Satan himself, and who hate everything that has any relation to God.

How are we going to deal with such people? We cannot deal with them; and yet there were such people of ancient time, and God said that if only they had hearkened to His word and walked in His way, even the haters of the Lord should have been subdued; they would have been given power over those who hated Him. Do you remember that Jesus said to His disciples, that He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out. If we walk in God's ways, in obedience to His word, by the power of the Holy Ghost we shall see through our testimony even the haters of the Lord submitting themselves to Christ. Have I any example? Yes. Look at Saul of Tarsus. Have you ever considered that phrase: "Breathing out threatenings and slaughter"? Like a wild beast, like a beast of prey, hatred was breathed from his nostrils; slaughter was in his heart, hating the very name of Jesus Christ. And he says, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. That was the aim of my life." But after he heard that voice from heaven, and God broke his heart, and took possession of it, you remember that same man said in a later day, when they besought him not to go up Jerusalem: "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." That is conversion, that is genuine conversion,—the hater of the Lord made submissive to Him.

And there was a human instrument in that. There was a human instrument in that transformation, a man who never did but one thing, so far as we know, in all his Christian life. Perhaps he did more, but there is only one thing written down to his credit. The Lord said—and that disciple listened—"Ananias!" He said: "Behold, I am here, Lord." And the Lord said: "Go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus." Ananias said: "No; no! Lord. I cannot do that. He has come to kill us all." "Never mind," said the Lord, "I will go before you. He is praying, and you need never be afraid of a man who prays. I have taken the murder out of his heart. Go to him." Ananias went. So far as we

know, except Stephen who, by his testimony, laid down his life, there were none other than these two men used of God to make the apostle Paul what he was.

You will meet the haters of the Lord to-morrow, and it will hurt you when you hear them speak, and you will say: "What shall I do?" I will tell you what to do: before you go out, have audience with the King. Say, "I am going to meet some of Thine enemies to-day. Give me power to subdue them", and He will give you a new power in your testimony. "The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever."

IV.

And then the Lord said, "You will not only have victory, but I would have given you a good time, too, and plenty to eat; I would have given you the very finest of the wheat, no second grade, but Number One hard, the very best grain.

When the prodigal came back, his father said: "Bring forth a new robe and put it on him"? No; he said: "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him." God wants us to have His best, and we can have His best only as we hear His word, and walk in His way, for by that means He will feed us with the finest of the wheat. You say, "What does that mean?" Did you ever have a good time in a worldly way, rather a pleasant time? You went to the world's banqueting house, and you had a good feast, some kind of pleasure, some kind of entertainment; and you enjoyed it. But, like some other things, did you ever eat anything and say, "Well, that was rather pleasant to the palate, but I wish I had not eaten it." Some man here has a long face. What is the matter with you? "I have eaten something that did not agree with me." Some of you have done something that did not agree with you, and that was why you lost your testimony. It was all right for the time, but after it had a bitter taste about it. Let me tell you that the Lord gives you the finest of the wheat, and you will enjoy it, and there will be no after results; it will agree with you. In the way of His word, and His will you will find the way of satisfaction.

And not only that, but He said: "With honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee". I must say that, on the natural plane, that does not appeal very much to me. I never could understand why people like honey. I am assured it is an excellent food; I have no doubt it is; it is very sweet. But it represents that which is delicious and palatable. And it means this, I think, that God said He would not only have given you a good meal; but He would have given you the most exquisite, delicious dessert: "with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee". That is the way of the word of God. May He lead us all to take it, for His name's sake.

WHERE IS FINCHLEY?

(Continued from page 2)

where we must witness for Christ. There may be no street-car, and no motor-car. It may be an old-fashioned Sabbath day's journey from such a place to the house of the Lord. But if one enjoys the privilege of living where they live whose hearts are enlarged, and who run in the way of the divine commandments, though in actual distance they must traverse twice the length of the road that separates Finchley from the sanctuary, they delight to walk it. The ransomed of the Lord return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads.

Some readers of this paper may actually live in the Finchley of which we have been speaking. They will no doubt understand our parable, and will see that no reflection is intended upon a district of which we have no personal knowledge except that it houses somewhere a smugly complacent soul. In this metaphorical sense, the Lord Jesus never lived in Finchley. He may have entered and passed through it, as He did the city of Jericho; but when there, it was ever His saying, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for therefore came I forth." Happy the man who through the abounding grace of God finds nothing a burden which is done for Christ's sake.

THE WEEK-END IN JARVIS STREET

Sunday was a very happy day in Jarvis Street. We were favoured with the ministry of Rev. John Wilmot, Pastor of Highgate Road Baptist Church, London, England. Mr. Wilmot preached a great sermon in the morning from Ephesians 1:3-10; and delivered another great message in the evening from I. Timothy 1:15. Both addresses were solid, illuminated expositions of Scripture. They tasted very "moreish" to all Jarvis Street people. We regret they were not stenographically reported. Had they been thus recorded, we should have shared one of them with our readers. But we promise to do this at an early date. Already, by his Thursday evening address and his two sermons of Sunday, Mr. Wilmot has made a large place for himself in the hearts of Jarvis Street members, where his ministrations will always be welcome. We published one of Mr. Wilmot's addresses delivered in London, last week; and shall give our readers a treat by publishing more of his fine expository work.

THE HOME-GOING OF DEACON J. J. BURTON

Jarvis Street Church has sustained a severe loss in the death of Mr. J. J. Burton, who departed to be with Christ, Friday, July 12th. Until last Fall Mr. Burton, by no means an old man, was active in all the affairs of Jarvis Street Church. He was the teacher of a young men's Bible class, and was invariably present at all the public services of the church; and his counsel as a deacon was highly valued by the Pastor and his fellow-deacons.

Last Fall Mr. Burton suffered a slight stroke, and had to relinquish many of his duties, but as long as it was possible he continued to attend the house of the Lord. But his strength gradually failed, until he fell asleep last Friday morning. Mr. Burton was a stalwart and gracious man of God. He had been for many years a member of the *Gideons*, and was International Chaplain at one time of that organization. Sometime before his health failed he found it necessary to withdraw from the organization because, locally, at least, it had endorsed the principles of the Oxford Group, which he felt were subversive of the gospel. Mr. Burton was a man of real faith, who had the courage of his convictions. He was always about the Master's business, was instant in season and out of season, a living testimony to the power of the gospel. No man was more beloved in Jarvis Street Church.

The funeral service, held Monday afternoon in the auditorium of Jarvis Street Church, after a brief service

(Continued on page 3)

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 10

No. 3

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 31 Third Quarter August 4th, 1935

AN EXALTED LORD

Lesson Text: Psalms 108 to 110.

Golden Text: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."—Psalm 110:1.

Bible School Reading: Psalm 109:1-5; 21-31; 110:1-7.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Is. 30:1-7; Tuesday—Gen. 14:17-24; Wednesday—Zech. 6:9-15; Thursday—Luke 20:41-47; Friday—Rom. 2:5-13; Saturday—I. Cor. 15:20-28.

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHT

This psalm sounds forth praise to God for the greatness of His mercy, and the complete nature of His triumph over His enemies; closing with an appeal for divine aid, and a prediction of victory. The context, with some slight variations is found in two previous psalms: verses 1-5 corresponding with psalm 57:7-11; and verses 6-12 with psalm 60:5-12. We know not the reason for this duplication, but we feel sure there was some good purpose accomplished thereby, possibly in relation to some triumph of Israel's armies under David. Truth requires reiteration, and even sermons of the better sort may be advantageously repeated.

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND NINE

This is one of the outstanding imprecatory psalms. In it David complains of his enemies, prays for the punishment of the leader of them, beseeches God for help, and ends with a note of praise in anticipation of deliverance. There are three divisions of content in the psalm. In the first there is a prayer of complaint against enemies (vs. 1-5). This opens with a petition for divine action against the wicked, followed by a brief record of the evil deeds of such. They used deceitful and lying words against the psalmist, and rewarded him evil for good; and hatred for love. Note the sinfulness of such an attitude, the heavy burden borne by the psalmist in consequence thereof, and the evidence of his attitude in giving himself to prayer. Prayer is the refuge of the child of God in trouble, and of this he cannot be deprived by enemies. Observe in this respect Hezekiah (Is. 37:14-20); Daniel (Dan. 6:10); Nehemiah (Neh. 6:9-14); Paul (Acts 16:25); and our Lord Himself (John 17:1-26). Emphasis requires to be laid on the necessity for prayer in order to overcome sin and Satan, and to gain victories in the Lord's name (Eph. 6:18).

In the second division the imprecatory part of the prayer is found (vs. 6-20). The petitions in this stand out clearly in their unmitigated severity. Fortunately it is quite evident they are not uttered through spite, or merely personal feeling, but on account of the wickedness of a certain person before the Lord. The identity of this person we know not, but he may have been the leader of the psalmist's enemies. Of this we are certain, he was most ungodly in his behaviour. The petitions respecting him relate to his condemnation at the hands of a wicked judge, the futility of his prayer, the brevity of his life, and the visitation of his iniquity upon his posterity (vs. 6-15). The reasons for such fearful requests are then stated to be the failure of this person to show mercy, his persecution of the poor and needy, and his slaying of the broken in heart. He also loved cursing, and delighted not in blessing; and the psalmist prays that he might receive that which he loved. Note the certainty of reaping what is sown (Gal. 6:7). We receive what we give. If we treat others in an unchristian manner, we shall, sooner or later, receive similar treatment. And if we sow to the flesh we shall reap corruption. On the other hand, if we sow to the Spirit we shall reap everlasting blessing from such sowing. Carefulness of conduct should therefore be enjoined; putting God first, and doing unto others as we

would like others to do unto us (Matt. 7:12). Observe also the extended consequences of evil living (Ex. 20:5).

In the third and last division there is a prayer for deliverance (vs. 21-31). God is the helper of the psalmist, and to His mercy he appeals for aid. After which he describes his condition: he is poor and needy, with a heart wounded within him, and a body weak through fasting and care. His persecution at the hands of enemies had left its work on his body, as it generally does, until he became a reproach before men. Note the reality and intensity of the psalmist's suffering; also that of the Lord, of which it reminds us (Matt. 27:39). Another petition for help follows, and the psalm concludes with a promise of praise for anticipated deliverance. Observe the motive underlying the psalmist's petitions, "that they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, Lord, hast done it". In this, God is promised the glory for answered prayer. This is the only valid reason for offering prayer. Our petitions are offered in the name of Jesus, and they are answered for His sake, that testimony might be given to divine grace (John 16:23, 24). Note also the divine advocacy in favour of the poor, reminding us of our Lord in this office (I. John 2:1); and the note of praise, the outcome of faith in the faithfulness and goodness of God. How should we pray for our enemies, and what kind of treatment should we give them?

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND TEN

This is a psalm of a different type from that of the preceding one. In this the Messiah is clearly set forth triumphant over His enemies, and imprecation of any sort is lacking. The psalm is prophetic in character, setting forth the combined office of king and priest, so foreign to Israelitic practice, but found so distinctly in our Lord. He is King of kings (Rev. 1:5), and great High Priest (Heb. 3:1; 8:1, 2). He is both ruler and offerer of sacrifice. In its opening, the psalm brings before us a statement of God the Father to God the Son, the Messiah of Israel, in reference to ultimate triumph over enemies: "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Note our Lord's use of this scripture (Matt. 22:41-45), references to its teaching in other parts of the New Testament (I. Cor. 15:25; Heb. 1:13); its implication respecting our Lord's present position in the presence of the Father (Heb. 1:3; Col. 3:1), and its prophetic significance concerning future victory over all enemies. Every knee shall bow unto Him (Phil. 2:10), and His will shall be supreme over all (v. 2; Ps. 2; Eph. 1:22). This is encouraging for children of God, who in these days see much rebellion against divine law. They need not become discouraged: they are on the winning side.

The promise is thereafter made that the Lord's people shall be willing in the day of His power, or they shall be free-will offerings; implying their entire submission unto Him. We are enjoined in these days to present our bodies unto God, a living sacrifice, acceptable unto Him (Rom. 12:1, 2). Such a presentation is voluntary, definite, wise, essential, blessed, and privileged. God desires free-will service. He has a special claim on each of us for such, and can only use those to the fullest extent who thus recognize His claim, and give Him the use of His own purchased possession (I. Cor. 6:19, 20). In the accompanying clauses of the verse the perpetual freshness of both Messiah and His host is possibly implied. Another statement of the Lord is found in the following verse, wherein the eternal priesthood of the Messiah, the Christ, is sworn to, and affirmed. Note the difference between this and the Aaronic priesthood. Men die: Christ ever lives (Heb. 7:23-28). Observe the significance of this in relation to our salvation.

In the concluding verses of the psalm our Lord is portrayed as a warrior victorious over His enemies. He strikes through kings in the days of His wrath. He judges among the heathen, and wounds the heads, over many countries. And the last verse likens Him to one faint, yet pursuing His enemies, refreshed by drinking of "the brook in the way". This implies complete victory, and a clear manifestation of omnipotent power. It also teaches the reality of a future day of wrath, when the wicked will be divinely judged (Rev. 11:18). Such a day will be fearful for those outside of Christ, as there will then be no hope for salvation, and only a fearful looking forward to of God's fiery indignation (Heb. 10:26, 27). Observe the necessity for present salvation, and the danger of delay respecting its reception. Now is the day of salvation (II. Cor. 6:2). What do we owe in the present day to the high priesthood of Christ?

THE HOME-GOING OF DEACON J. J. BURTON*(Continued from page 6)*

at the home, was attended by a very large number of people. The attendance alone showed how highly Mr. Burton was esteemed by a host of people. No man would be more missed from Jarvis Street than Mr. Burton, for he was always present, and always took his part in the services of prayer and of praise. Such godly characters as that of Mr. Burton serve to make Jesus Christ real, and are a mighty apologetic for the gospel.

THE GOSPEL WITNESS sympathizes deeply with Mrs. Burton and the other members of the family. The greatness of their loss we are able somewhat to estimate by the measure of our own.

JARVIS STREET PICNIC

Jarvis Street Sunday School held its annual picnic at Exhibition Park Tuesday of this week. The day was ideal, and a host of people—how many we dare not attempt to say—were in attendance. There was nothing remarkable about it except the inexhaustible and incomparable capacity for fun-making exhibited by our Superintendent, Mr. W. J.

Hutchinson. On such occasions he is always surrounded by a swarm of children. How any man can keep it up as he does for a whole picnic, we have never been able to imagine. But he loves the children, and the children love him: he is a children's man, who seems never to weary of making them happy, and trying to do them good in the name of the Lord. The picnic concluded with a service of praise, and prayer by Deacon J. G. Hyde.

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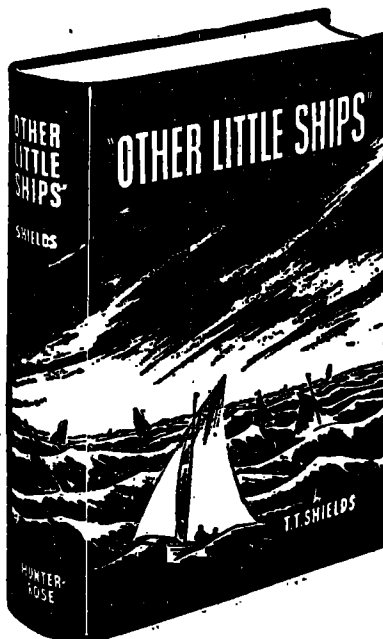
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readers will profit by the thoughtful earnestness of these sermons. They are refreshingly human and deeply spiritual.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES
Philadelphia

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It is not at all difficult to credit the announcement regarding this book,—that three of its sermon-talks were each published four times in a noted religious journal, the supply of copies in each case becoming immediately exhausted. A great variety of subjects is herein presented; sometimes those particularly suited to young people, again, that which makes the theologian prick up his ears; here, a ready dart is thrust at the "philosophical simpleton" who decries our "slaughter-house religion"; there, parents are shown the result of using such modernized commandments as, "Children, obey your parents—I'll give you a penny if you do." But most often the weary and disheartened are addressed, the Mr. Fearings and Ready-to-halts in church and home life,—those too seasick to crawl on deck and see that "other little ships" are likewise buffeted by storm of wind and wave. The book abounds in seed-thoughts: "There is a tendency to welcome all the inhabitants of Shundem and yet to have no place for the prophet of God." "Never has God asked anyone to work for him, but with him." These sermons are sound in exposition, inimitable in illustration, and brimful of well-mixed admonition and comfort.

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