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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE PRINCIPLE OF COMMUNION IN THE LORD'S SUPPER

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, October 6th, 1935

(Stenographically Reported)

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."—I. Corinthians 10:16, 17.

Prayer before the Sermon

In the name of the one great Mediator, O Lord, we come with boldness into Thy holy presence. We remember that He spake a parable to this intent, that men ought always to pray and not to faint. We thank Thee for the promise of renewal of strength to those who wait upon the Lord. We thank Thee too for the experience so many in Thy presence have had of the fulfilment of that promise.

This evening we come to wait upon Thee once again. We find many occasions for fainting, many reasons for being discouraged because of the difficulty of the way. But we bless Thee for the privilege of coming into Thy presence, and for the assurance that at the mercy-seat we may obtain grace to help in time of need. We come thus every one this evening, according to our special necessity. Our hearts are open to Thee; the record of our lives is as an open book; the future stretching out before us, to us unknown, is open to Thy gaze; Thou knowest what awaits us on the morrow, and on the other days, that lie beyond should we be permitted to live. We pray that every one in Thy presence may be fortified for the future, even as he has been forgiven the past.

Gather us all to Thyself this evening. We would find rest and security in the assurance of Thy love, and of Thy guardian-care. And when by and by this service shall close, as we leave this place, may we go in company with Him Who is the Friend of sinners. So would we walk in step with Thee, abiding in Thee always until Thou shalt summon us into Thine immediate presence.

It may be there are some present this evening who cannot say they are saved, who have not the full assurance of faith. We beseech Thee, O Lord, that the way of salvation may be made plain to all such. Then do Thou prepare us who are Thy people to come to Thy Table, that we may enter into the spirit of this ordinance, and participate in it to Thy praise, and to our own spiritual profit. We beseech Thee to use this common ordinary Sunday evening service as a means of grace to all who are here assembled. Make it to be glorifying to Thy great name. We ask it for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

We are this evening once again to observe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and I ask you to think with me a little while, that we may more thoroughly understand its significance.

The salvation which is in Christ is designed to minister to the whole man, to man in his entirety, in his completeness. In the immediate context the apostle says, "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say." The religion of the Lord Jesus is for the mind as well as for the spirit. Our Lord said that they that worship God must worship Him "in spirit and in truth". Yes; it must be a spiritual worship. But it must be a spiritual worship in harmony with the understanding, with the intelligence. You remember in the direction which the apostle gave respecting the use of unknown tongues, an apostolic gift, he said, "If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."

I have heard people sing as though they thought God were worshipped by mere noise. I have heard—and have seen people—exhorted to a frenzy of excitement, as though that involved real worship. We are to sing with the spirit, and with the understanding also. If some people understood some of the modern hymns, they would not sing them. The great classics of the church, "Rock of Ages", "Jesus Lover of My Soul", "Come Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy", "Abide With Me, Fast Falls the Evening", "Hark! Ten Thousand Harps and Voices, Sound the Praise of God Above"—such hymns as these appeal to the understanding because they are poetic expressions

of the great doctrines of the gospel; so that, singing with the spirit, we are able to exercise our understanding also.

When our Lord said that God is to be worshipped "in spirit and in truth", He implied that we are not to be mere automatons, we are not to allow ourselves to become the devotees of any kind of mechanical worship: we are to worship with the spirit; but in truth. The mind must be exercised. We must know what we say, and what we sing, and why we do it.

So in the observance of the Lord's Supper, we are not to become slaves to a system, and merely do these things because it is customary, or as a mere religious exercise; we must so engage in this service that "all that is within" us will bless His holy name. We are to render a spiritual devotion which will be all the more spiritual when our intelligence has been spiritualized, and the mind, the understanding, has been divinely enlightened.

When God confers upon an individual soul the priceless gift of eternal life, when such an one is really saved with an everlasting salvation, He does not superimpose something upon the man. I know there are figures which speak to the man of the "garments of salvation," which, taken by themselves, might seem to imply that salvation is something external. But in reality the Word of God always appeals to men for the co-operation of the human spirit with the divine. Well do I know that it is impossible for us to do anything of ourselves; but I have tried, I think a thousand times, to make it clear from this pulpit that the Spirit of God comes like the light of the morning, enlightening the understanding, doing a subjective work in the mind of man, and then disclosing the objective truth in the Scripture, just as the bush burned with fire, but was not consumed. The man thinks and reasons, and summons the stores of memory to his aid, and yields his affections to the appeal of the gospel, and ultimately surrenders his will, as though he had done it all himself. But he no more does it himself than the beautiful flower which yields to all the influences of nature as the sun shines upon it,—first of all, deep down in the earth life is germinated, by and by it rises above the surface, and gradually unfolds; and then the sun, some glorious morning, kisses that rosebud into beauty. It appeared as though it had unfolded itself—but it had not. The sun did it.

That is how God saves people: regenerating the heart, and effecting the co-operation of all the faculties of the mind which issues in repentance, faith, and obedience. Sometimes in the ignorance of our spiritual infancy we say, "I gave my heart to God", or, "I started out to serve the Lord." Yes, we did, but under the sweet constraints of grace—which means that God did it all.

With that as a basis, I ask you to come to the consideration of this subject which has engaged our thought so frequently, and to which we usually give our minds before we come to the Table of the Lord. Let us endeavour to see some deeper significance in this ordinance than we have hitherto seen.

Let me begin with this, that PARTICIPATION IN THE ORDINANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER—I speak of that particularly—is AN ACT OF SYMBOLIC WORSHIP: and unless we properly appreciate the symbol, and the spiritual reality which the symbol involves, our understanding, as in an unintelligent prayer, will be unfruitful.

We cannot accept the crass materialism of the Roman Church, which teaches the doctrine of the "real pres-

ence". That is to say, that when the wafer and the wine have been consecrated, they become the veritable body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is a materialistic conception of things that has no warrant whatever in the teaching of Scripture.

We do not repudiate it as does, let us say, Bishop Barnes of Birmingham, one of the leaders in the Anglican Church in the Old Land. Bishop Barnes, I believe, does not object to the reservation of the sacrament, or to the restitution to the National Church of all the rags of Rome, on the ground of their unscripturalness. He is an anti-supernaturalist. He objects to the supernatural principle involved in the Romanish doctrine, that it is within the power of the priest, by divine commission, to convert a wafer into the real body of Christ, or the wine into the real blood of Christ. He objects to it on the ground of its unscientific character, because he is an anti-supernaturalist. We do not object on that ground: we object on the ground of its utter unscripturalness.

The Lord "dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." It is well that a building like this should be dedicated to the worship of God, but there is nothing sacred about what people sometimes call "the sacred desk". It is only a piece of wood. This has been used for many years for the holding of a Bible, but it is none the better or worse for it. This building has been used for spiritual purposes, but in the building itself there is nothing specially sacred. "God is a spirit"; and the idea that the worship of God can be made acceptable by a material building, or such religious materialism as characterizes the services of the Church of Rome, to any spiritually-enlightened intelligence, it seems to me, is utterly offensive.

On the other hand, there is a system of thought represented, let us say, by Christian Science, which denies the material altogether. But the material is here: in our bodies, in the world about us. Christianity relates the two, and makes the one the servant of the other. I say, we object to the principle of Transubstantiation on the ground of its unscripturalness. Had I time I could quote to you many scriptures, as for example, Jesus Christ, standing in a fleshly body on the other side of the cross, while as yet His side had not been pierced, nor His hands nailed to the cross, taking bread, said, "This is my body"; and the cup containing the wine, while as yet His blood was unshed, He took, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." Surely ordinary common sense would suggest that when He, standing as the Incarnate Word, a Man in the presence of men—albeit, both Son of man and Son of God, and God the Son—said to His disciples, "This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me . . . This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you". He could not possibly have meant the principle of the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation, that the bread was actually His body, or the wine actually His blood. The whole tenor of Scripture is opposed to such a principle.

Here is a man of whom I read to you this evening, a doctor of the law, a teacher, a reverend Rabbi, who was supposed to know something of the things of God. When Jesus Christ said, "Ye must be born again", Nicodemus literalized it. He viewed it in a material way and said, "How can a man be born when he is old?" Our Lord

answered, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." God is a Spirit, and though we are men in the flesh, yet we are regenerated by the Divine Spirit; and we must worship Him in spirit, albeit, always with the aid and co-operative ministry of an enlightened intelligence.

We cannot believe that the water of baptism, for instance, has any regenerating power. Some of our Seminary students told me, I think it was last session, that they went to hear someone in St. Michael's Cathedral, who actually spoke about the quality of the water used, its chemical content, and so on—as though water could regenerate a soul! Yet how many people there are who believe that baptism, either by sprinkling or immersion (sprinkling is not baptism, but for the sake of accommodation, we will so denominate it) can change the nature of a man. That is not what it means to be a Christian. To be "buried with Christ" in baptism has its place, and is divinely enjoined; but it is a symbol, and unless there be a recognition of its symbolic character, and a participation in its spiritual significance, it means nothing. Without a vital faith in Christ, and a surrender to Him in spiritual obedience, one might be baptized a thousand times and be no better for it.

The same must be true of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Do not suppose for a moment that the mere taking of bread, and drinking of wine, can do you any good. The physical, material, aspect of things alone is of little consequence. I know that we need the concrete, I know that we need pictures in our books, not only do the children need them, but grown people as well. Long before people of modern days discovered the value of illustrating their books with pictures, the Lord put these illustrations in the Bible, the ordinance of baptism and the ordinance of the Lord's Supper; but they are only illustrations. As we obey them, we participate in an act of symbolic worship. We must get beyond the material symbol to an understanding of the spiritual symbolism.

II.

What does it mean? The text says THAT PARTICIPATION IN THE SUPPER IS AN ACT OF COMMUNION. Those who rightly, by faith, that is, true believers, participate in the ordinance of the Supper, taking the cup of blessing, and eating the bread, somehow enter into communion with the blood of Christ, and with the body of Christ. That must mean, of course, a *personal participation in the benefits of that blood*.

Again, when we read in the Scripture, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin", nobody supposes for a moment that there is a literal application of the physical blood of the Lord Jesus. He "died the just for the unjust". "The life of the flesh is in the blood", and when the blood flowed, His life was laid down as a ransom instead of many. His blood was significant of His life, for the Lord said, "The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." But when we speak of the blood of Jesus Christ cleansing us from all sin, we none of us mean the physical blood: we mean all that the physical fact symbolizes, the pouring out of His life as a substitute for ours.

Very well, then, "taking the cup of blessing", we enter into communion with the blood of Christ. That is a

profound saying, and unless the Lord has enlightened our understanding I despair of making it clear to anyone. I believe it is only by teaching from above that we can understand truths like this. Still, it may be clear to us that to commune with the blood of Christ, we must know its significance, and rest upon it. We must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Substitute, as the One Who died in our room and stead. It means that, but it means more than that.

We are introduced here to *the social aspect of the redemption that is in Jesus Christ*. The idea of communion is never associated with the ordinance of baptism. Baptism is an individual act, when the individual sinner, as an act of obedience, yields obedience to Christ, and makes confession of his faith in Christ. But the Lord's Supper is a social institution. It belongs to the body of God's redeemed people; and never do we find in the New Testament that the Lord's Supper was observed by isolated individuals.

The practice of the minister going about with the elements of the Supper in his bag, and administering them to sick people, has absolutely no warrant in the Word of God. There is no scriptural authority for anybody, as an individual, observing the Supper to himself, or by himself. Always the Lord's Supper was a church ordinance, an institution. You remember that the chapter to which this refers takes us back into the Old Testament, and the outgoing of the people of God from Egypt, and the passover feast. You remember there was a lamb for a family, not for an individual. When they ate the feast of the passover, they ate it together always. The blood was on the lintel and on the sideposts; and sheltered beneath that blood, that social unit partook of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. And as we drink the cup of blessing, we recognize, as did they, that all who believe in the Lord Jesus are under the blood; and we drink the cup together. It is the communion of the blood of Christ: I am saved by the blood, you are saved by the blood, everyone else who is saved is saved by the blood. There is no other way. Solemnly and joyously we partake of the cup of blessing, confessing our common dependence upon the blood of Christ.

Some years ago we had the privilege of having in this pulpit Sir Andrew Fraser, once Governor of Bengal. He was an elder in a native church in India, and, as such, he used to visit the members of that church, the natives, before the day of Communion. And when that native church gathered, the great Governor of Bengal, the representative of His Majesty the King who is Emperor of India, was there with the commonest outcast; and they drank the cup of blessing together. The Governor, by so doing, confessed that he was just as dependent upon the blood of Christ for his salvation as was the poor Hindu outcast who had been redeemed by the grace of God. The blood is a great leveler, and as we come to the Table of the Lord everybody is equal. We are all sinners saved by grace, and as we take the cup of blessing, our act is an act of communion with the blood of Christ.

The same is true of the bread. We all eat of that one bread; we are fellow-members in the body of Christ. Of course we confess our profit by His wounding; the broken bread speaks to us of the fact that "he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities". But, at the same time, it says that we are all one; we are partakers of the divine nature; we are all members

of that one body of which Jesus Christ is the Head. As we thus eat the bread we are, by faith, to discern the Lord's body—not only the body objectively broken for us, but that body of redeemed, sanctified, souls, into the union of which we have been brought by divine grace. In one Spirit we have all been baptized into one body. That is partly the meaning of the Lord's Supper.

We must remember too that *the Supper of the Lord is designed to remind us of something beyond our individual salvation*. There are many people who say, "It does not make any difference whether I belong to a church or not; I am saved, what else matters?" What did I read to-night? "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"; but it is also written, "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." He loved not only one, but many. He loved the body of His people. He loved other people beside you; and as we take the cup and the bread we enter into communion with our glorious Head, and with all the members of His body as well.

That is why we call it the "Communion" Service; participation in it gives us commerce with God, and with the whole company of God's elect. It is prophetic of that great day when there shall be a multitude that no man can number, out of all nations and kindreds and tribes; and the number of them shall be ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; and they shall all sing one song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." As we gather about the Table of the Lord we are really, in symbol, anticipating that heavenly life when the redeemed of the Lord shall come to Zion "with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads", when they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

III.

But let me call your attention, before I close, to ONE VERY SOLEMN REFLECTION INVOLVED IN THIS SCRIPTURE, and it is this, strangely enough, that the ordinance which speaks so strikingly of that intimate communion which subsists between the redeemed soul and Christ, and between the redeemed soul and all other souls similarly redeemed, at the same time *speaks of separation*. Paul said, "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say." What do you mean when you come to the Table of the Lord and drink the cup, and eat the bread? You mean that you are separated unto God. "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils." The very principle of communion with God separates us from all that is opposed to God.

Study that chapter at your leisure, and you will find that wrapped up in the idea of communion is the implication of its opposite, entire separation. I believe that the ordinances of the New Testament were designed for a witness. Paul teaches in Romans that we are "buried with him (Christ) by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Every time a believer, on profession of faith, is buried with Christ, he confesses his entire dependence for salvation upon the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In respect to the ordinance of the Supper, the same apostle, by inspiration, said, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew (or proclaim) the Lord's death till he come." There are those who say, "Let us include everybody in baptism, and baptize the baby too." No! The Scripture is very, very explicit that no one has any right to baptism who is not first of all born again, who does not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Baptism is restricted entirely to believers, and therefore infants have no right to it. Infant baptism is wholly a human ordinance which is absolutely destitute of divine warrant. As for the Lord's Supper: we are told we ought to be generous and say to everyone, "If you love the Lord, come along to the Lord's Table." Where is our authority for such a practice?

I have said this is but a symbolic act of worship, but the time will come when the Master of the house will rise up, and "will shut to the door"; when that of which this ordinance is a symbol will become a glorious reality, and we shall sit down with Him in Heaven when the marriage of the Lamb is come. What then? Who will determine upon what terms one shall come to that feast? "The Lord of the feast, of course." Many people have said to me, "I do not like to come to church with my husband, and have him leave before the Communion Service", or a husband of his wife, as the case may be. The Lord's Supper speaks loudly, eloquently, finally, of the terms upon which a man shall come to God, through faith in the blood of the Lord Jesus; and if we have not believed on Him, it has no meaning.

It is a witness to the gospel when unsaved children of godly parents leave before the Communion Service. God by His Spirit may use that to bring them to Himself. "It seems such a lovely thing to gather about the Table of the Lord, but I may not stay. Why can I not stay? I am not saved. I am not prepared for it." Could we not be more generous? But perhaps that father and mother shall some day be within the fold, and the children shut out? Who knows but one's exclusion from the Lord's Table may lead him to repentance before it is too late, before his unbelief excludes him from Heaven? Our Lord taught us that "in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage." Again He said, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." If there be anyone here this evening who feels, "I have no right to the Table of the Lord", that should be to you a solemn reflection. But I beg of you to think of something even more important than that. What if to-night your soul should be required of you, while you have no right to pass through the gates, into the City, to sit down in the heavenly banqueting-house?

I verily believe that if the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper were kept where the Word of God has placed them, baptism for believers only, an individual act; and the Lord's Supper for the church only, and for such as have been baptized into Christ, and into the fellowship of the church—if those ordinances were kept in their proper place they would themselves preach, and preach searchingly and finally, to us all.

Are you trusting in Christ? Do you know that your sins are forgiven? Have you obeyed Him? Can you come to the Lord's Table in spirit and in truth this night, to obey Him who said, "This do in remembrance of me"? May the Lord save us every one for His name's sake, Amen.

MODERATION VS. FOOLHARDINESS

A Bible Lecture by Dr. T. T. Shields

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto,
Thursday Evening, October 3rd, 1935

Second in the 1935-36 Series of Thursday Evening Lectures on Biblical Theology, which Subject is Included in the Curriculum of Toronto Baptist Seminary.

(Stenographically Reported)

Lesson Text: I. Kings, chapter 12.

There is a phrase in Scripture which refers to "the whole duty of man". Life consists, very largely, in our human relationships. The law of God is given to direct our conduct in respect to God above us, and our neighbours about us; and I am sure we all have had experience enough to know that it is a far easier matter to deal with things than with persons.

If the Bible were to ignore any department of human life, it could not be a sufficient guide for "the whole duty of man"; and, convinced as we are that it is the word of God, we are equally convinced that the Bible is authoritative in all realms; and not only authoritative, but adequate as well. All we need for our guidance on earth—and from earth to heaven—is in the Book itself. Much fuller is it of what is sometimes called worldly wisdom, than any of us have dreamed.

The chapter we have before us this evening relates to a very important period in Israel's history, the succession of Rehoboam to the throne of Israel; the separation of the ten tribes from Rehoboam; and the setting up of the Northern kingdom under its first king, Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

The world is fairly old, and it has had ample opportunity, one might suppose, to put to the proof almost every conceivable theory of human government. And yet it would appear that men have not yet learned how to govern themselves. I suppose our failures largely inhere in the fact that one generation is reluctant to learn from another. We insist upon being pioneers, pathfinders, ever attempting new experiments entirely on the ground of our own judgment, and very often in defiance of all the lessons of history.

I believe we still need to learn something of the science of human government. Indeed, we shall need to learn how to make choice in a few weeks of somebody to represent us—and I suppose we never had such a wealth of offerers as we have to-day. But again, human governments, human society considered as a nation, or as a community, is after all only human nature in the mass; and the action and reaction of various elements in it, upon each other, if properly analyzed, and the principles duly weighed, ought to teach us something of what human nature is; and it ought to make us wise—wiser at least than we are—in the matter of happily relating ourselves to other people in all walks of life.

I.

We begin, then, with this: REHOBAM SUCCEEDED TO THE THRONE. Solomon is dead, and Rehoboam his son reigns in his stead. It is a very simple line, a line which, in principle, may be found hundreds of times in the course of human history—so commonplace that perhaps we are disposed to pass it by without even pausing to look into the window of this storehouse of wisdom, to

see even if in that simple statement there may not be some lesson for us.

Here is one: that *no condition of human society in this present stage of life can possibly be permanent.* Death is no respecter of persons. It cuts down kings, and counsellors, and leaders of every rank; and very often the foundation of some social structure is destroyed with the death of the man who originated it, and confusion and sometimes chaos results. The very fact that sin has entered into the world, and death by sin, has brought to bear upon human life, considered in its individual manifestation or collectively, a disintegrating principle. Things are always tumbling down. When you were children you used to play a game, "London bridge is falling down." I do not know to what particular bridge that referred. I have seen men repairing London bridges, but I never saw one falling down. But the law of decay is ever at work, and the fact is that all bridges are falling down, all houses are falling down, and all states, all governments, all empires—everything within the sphere of human knowledge and experience is in a state of flux and change.

Which means that *men must be ready to meet these emergencies.* We cannot say, "That is done." Our work is never done, because Death will not leave us alone. Saul is gone; David is gone; Solomon is gone. Now we have a new star on the horizon: "Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead." That is taking place everywhere. Somewhere in Toronto to-night, I do not know where, but in some commercial house, in some financial corporation, some political organization, something will happen that will require a readjustment of everything from the ground up. The key personality will suddenly be taken away—Solomon will be gone, and some Rehoboam must take his place.

That means that *every man has a successor.* I suppose youth pushes the day of disillusionment and departure as far into the future as possible. Yet it is well for even the youngest of us to remember that life at its longest is very brief, and that it is well to number our days "that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" right from the beginning; for then we should be able to crowd into the brief space that we call life the largest measure of service to God, and to our fellows.

It is a matter of importance too that we should all stop to consider *what sort of heritage we shall leave to those who come after us.* Solomon had made his impress on his day and generation, and the man who succeeded him was not to be envied, for he inherited many things that had their origin in the reign of Solomon.

What shall you and I leave behind us? What preparation have we made for the generation to follow? It is said that David "after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep". How glorious that was! And when he discovered that he was not to be permitted, by divine providence, to build a house for the Lord, he did the next best thing. He assembled a vast amount of material. He did everything he possibly could up to the end of life, in order that his successor might have as easy a time as possible. He called his son and told him of the preparation he had made, and said, "And thou mayest add thereto."

Solomon is gone, having taken full advantage of David's preparation. But what has he left for his son? Better to be the son of David than the son of Solomon; better to have to step into the vacancy created by David's departure, who had "served his own generation by the

will of God", than to step into the vacancy created by the departure of Solomon who, in his later years at least, had spent his time serving himself.

Rehoboam inherited a great deal of trouble, which his father, in the unwisdom of his declining years, had bequeathed to him. You young men will be pastors by and by. Will you try to remember that the churches you serve will have other pastors after you are gone, if the Lord should tarry? Do not try to create a situation which will make it impossible for anyone else to carry on. Try to build the structure you are charged to build so securely that it will still stand when the scaffolding is removed, and the architect is gone.

I have known ministers who felt complimented if, when they were absent from their pulpit for a Sunday or so, their congregations should take French leave, and leave the church empty to whoever supplied for them. That, I think, is the most unkind reflection upon a pastor's ministry. I would rather have people go away when I am here than when I am away. We ought to feel it our duty, and try in every form of service so to do our work as to make it possible for someone to succeed us with as little difficulty as may be.

There is a sense in which *the vicissitudes of life in the ordinary course of nature provide every man with an opportunity.* Did you ever go to a crowded restaurant, when there was not a vacant table, and there was no other place to go? Did you ever stand and wait, in the certain knowledge that in ones and twos the people would finish their dinner and leave? Presently the head waiter signaled that he has room for one, then for two. That is a parable of life. You think life is crowded? Somebody will soon have finished his course; somebody's departure will make a place for you. When Solomon goes there will be a big vacancy for a Rehoboam to step into.

Are you students getting ready for a big place, or a small place? I did not agree with Dr. John Clifford in his general theological position. I always found it hard to forgive him his attitude toward Spurgeon. And yet I have no doubt that, mistaken as he was in many things, he was a good man, and beyond doubt was really a lover of the Lord Jesus Christ—I am sure he was. Many are, who do not agree with us! Do not forget that. Dr. Clifford was a good man, who commanded the respect of men in all walks of life. I had tea with him once in his garden in London, when he was eighty years of age, or thereabouts. He had just relinquished the pastorate of Westbourne Park, after fifty-seven years of continuous ministry. He said to me, "A number of universities in the United States have invited me to deliver a course of lectures. But it is absurd for a man of my age even to contemplate such a thing. I shall have to decline, much as I should like to go." As he said that he was wanted on the other side of the world after having lived about fourscore years, I remembered what was reported as having been said to him as a young man, by his mother. It was something to this effect: "John, let me advise you. Get ready, prepare yourself, not for John Clifford at thirty or thirty-five, but prepare yourself for John Clifford as seventy or seventy-five." And he did. He did not know where he was to serve, but some Solomon was to step aside and make room for his successor.

What sort of man will you succeed—a little man? What sort of place will you be fitted to occupy twenty-five years from now? That will depend upon what use you make of the present; it will depend upon the utmost exercise of your powers here and now, so that with the

multiplication of the years there will come an increase of strength, an enlargement of capacity, right up to the end of life's working-day. I advise you to get ready for the vacancy which some time, somewhere, Death will create; when the world will need you and your services.

II.

Let us look for a moment at THE CONDUCT OF JEROBOAM. We saw in our last lesson that he had been told by Ahijah the prophet that he was to be ruler of a new kingdom, that ten tribes would break away from the house of David, and would follow him. Jeroboam, while as yet he occupied no very conspicuous position, and had only displayed rather an unusual industry in the service of Solomon, *knew that in some way he was a man of destiny; there was something awaiting him in the future.*

There are some men who are quite persuaded of that without any prophetic instruction! They feel in themselves that a very important man arrived on this planet in the day their birth was announced; and they imagine that there are within them great latent powers awaiting development. Sometimes that is purely a figment of the imagination. Sometimes men who have but ordinary capacities, picture themselves wielding a tremendous influence.

But, on the other hand, *God has His special instruments.* Do not forget that. God has a way of bestowing here and there upon some one man extraordinary gifts which seem, in his generation, never to be repeated. William Pitt, "the Younger", was Prime Minister of England before he was twenty-five, and was the great pilot of Britain during much of the period of the Napoleonic Wars. But there are not many men wise enough to be Prime Minister of England at twenty-five years of age. Someone here may be! It may be that God has some special instrument here. But whether it be for a large service, or a small, one thing is certain. If we are Christians, there are "good works" in reservation which "God has before ordained, that we should walk in them". If we are Christians, just as truly as there was something for Jeroboam to do, there are things for us to do; and it is sometimes given men to know from a very early age, almost by instinct, what they will be.

Remember Joseph and his dreams. He was a very ordinary boy to his brethren. He was not half as important as Naphtali or Reuben. He was only a younger brother, useful to carry their lunch. "Behold, this dreamer cometh." But Joseph knew in his heart that God had spoken to him.

Sometimes God whispers His secret to a young man, or a young woman, very early in life; and such an one is made to know that some great piece of service lies before him. It is very important that the man who knows that should learn how to conduct himself, how to behave while awaiting that great day of opportunity. David had it. Do you not remember? He was anointed—the last of all his sons Jesse would have dreamed of. He did not even call him to the family gathering when Samuel came to anoint one of his sons—and after he was anointed he went back to the wilderness and looked after the sheep, and waited for God. That is a good thing to do, for there is no God like Him who worketh for them that wait for Him. One never loses time waiting for God, or in waiting upon God.

Jeroboam was not wholly an admirable character, as we know, and as we shall see more particularly; but we must give honour where honour is due, and commend such

wisdom as he exhibited. I directed your attention to the principle last week, that when Solomon opposed Jeroboam, and sought to kill him, he ran away to Egypt, ready perhaps to wait until God should call him. Very well, then make the best of your time in Egypt, if to Egypt you must go, until God calls you back to Israel's land to fulfil the purpose He has in your life.

III.

In due time, when Rehoboam came to the throne, THE PEOPLE TURNED TO JEROBOAM, AND THEY CALLED HIM: "They sent and called him." The time was ripe.

Incidentally, let me apply the principle. It is rather remote from the subject, yet there is a sense in which the principle is there. If God has called you to the ministry, you need not fear but that He will find some people somewhere to call you to a pulpit. I knew a man once, a very able man in many ways, a great theologian, really a great scholar. He had almost everything but common sense, but of that he was wholly destitute. He was a good preacher—who undid out of the pulpit in five minutes all he could do in the pulpit in a month. He was as unwise as any man could be—like the proverbial bear in a china shop. He was not ugly, but he had the faculty of unnecessarily rubbing everyone the wrong way. I heard him tell of one of his pastorates, saying, "I ought to be there now. Indeed, I should be if it had not been that the majority were against me"! He could not see any humour in that situation! He pitied the majority for not having better sense.

I have no doubt there will be several men in the coming Federal election who will say, "I ought to be in Ottawa. Indeed, I should have been if the majority had not been against me."

If there is anything about you worth calling, somebody will call you. The people "sent and called" Jeroboam. They called him! It is one thing to say that God has called you, but if He has, He will find some people to call you too, some people who will welcome your leadership.

IV.

JEROBOAM BECAME THE SPOKESMAN OF THE PEOPLE WHO APPROACHED REHOBOAM. There was wisdom in their approach. It is always wise to be reasonable and polite, especially if you think you have right on your side. The fact that you are enlisted in a worthy cause does not justify your making yourself a bore. Jeroboam headed a delegation. They waited upon the king, and presented their cause to him in the politest language possible. There is a place for diplomacy in the ordinary affairs of life. Nothing can justify rudeness. This delegation said to the king, "Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee." They found the burdens of taxation too heavy, and asked for relief. They did not want to be rebels, but obedient servants of the realm—but could not live under existing conditions.

That was very reasonable, was it not? Nothing is lost by such reasonableness. One grows almost weary of the discussions of the League of Nations. One could see long ago that the thing that happened to-day was bound to take place. Some people will say, "Why all the preliminaries then?" Just this: it has put Mussolini in the difficult position of having defied the reason—the mobilized reason and conscience—of the whole world.

When you are dealing with a dictator, a despot, an unreasonable man, be as reasonable as you can, and as patient too. If the break must come at last, let the onus be upon him, and not upon you. That was consummate wisdom on the part of the Emperor of Ethiopia when he asked for independent, neutral, observers, that he might have witnesses before the League of Nations and the world that he did not start the war.

"Thrice is he arm'd that hath his quarrel just
And he but naked, though lock'd up in steel,
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted."

It will strengthen your case later if you have explored every possible avenue where compromise would be legitimate, if you have exhausted all resources of reason and persuasion, before at last you come to the place where you can endure no more, and metaphorically or literally, draw the sword. Do not be precipitate; do not be impulsive; do not allow your temper to run away with you, nor persuade yourself that because your cause is just it would be wise at any time to be hasty. Wisdom will neither fear nor fail by waiting until to-morrow.

V.

The next thing is to look at REHOBOAM IN COMPANY WITH HIS EXPERIENCED COUNSELLORS. Fortunately, Death does not, as a rule, take a whole generation away at a time. Though Solomon was dead, some of his experienced counsellors were still alive. And though Rehoboam was young, he was surrounded by men who were older than he. Though he had no experience, he was able to avail himself, if he would, of the advice of others who had had a great deal.

We are all in that happy position. Do not be afraid to seek counsel of people who have had opportunity of experimenting along the road that you must now take. Rehoboam was wise, at least in this, that he said, "Depart yet for three days, then come again to me." It is well not to allow ourselves to be put in a position where the impatience of others can force us to an ill-considered decision. These people came to Rehoboam with a request that involved much, and he had a right to say, "You have pressed this upon me: you must give me time to think."

They were wise in consenting to await the verdict of three days' consideration. It is a good thing to take time to consider, even without additional information or evidence. The thing that seems wise to you to-day, if you think it over, may take on an entirely different colour to-morrow. Unless it be that you find yourself in a situation where immediate action is an absolute necessity, think it over. Of course, if a motor-car is coming down upon you, and you are in the middle of the street, do not take three days to weigh what action you will take! It will not take the motor-car three days to act! Someone has said that that situation divides the population into two classes, the quick and the dead! There are cases in life where one must act quickly, or not act at all.

But I am speaking more particularly of the ordinary conditions of life, in our relation one with the other; and it is well to form the habit of deliberation. That is a good idea for a preacher: spend three days on a sermon, take plenty of time to consider. Even when you preach, remember that if it took some time for you to think things through, the average hearer will need a little time to think as you deliver your sermon. There-

fore do not speak like a machine-gun. Give people time to think.

Some years ago I was in the United States, and I heard a man of whom I had read a great deal. He came on the platform with a rush and began! He spoke like a buzz-saw until he was actually out of breath. Then he gasped, and started off again. There was plenty of noise, plenty of words—but little sense. Take your three days! Be deliberate. Indeed, cultivate the habit of deliberation. Do not assume yourself to be so clever that you can form impromptu judgments on everything submitted to you. Rehoboam took three days.

Then he consulted with the men who had been, with his father. Let us see *what Experience advised him*. It is very significant. The older men said, "If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever." In other words they said, "Our advice to you is that you recognize that the function of life is to serve. Find out how you can be a servant to the people."

It was with that Solomon began when he asked not for wealth or honour, but wisdom: "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" These old men said in effect: "Rehoboam, we have lived long enough to see that what this old world needs is men who will use high position, or low position—all positions—so that they may serve their fellows."

That is a great lesson to learn, one for which we have the highest authority; for Jesus Christ said, "I am among you as he that serveth." He laid aside His garment, and girded Himself; and poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, saying, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." Do you know the meaning of the word, minister? It means servant. Do you know the meaning of the word, deacon? It means, servant. We are all servants, if we are Christians. Serving is our business. Our Lord said, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

Let me take the place of Rehoboam's counsellors, though no octogenarian, and tell you that no minister need ever want a position who will be a minister indeed. The world never needed public servants more than it needs them to-day. No matter where you are, your business as a Christian, is to be a servant, to do something for other people.

That is especially true of the church. The church should be an aggregation of servants. We are sent, not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

These older men said, in effect, "Rehoboam, if you will spend your life serving other people, other people will serve you. You will not go without your reward. There will be a mutuality about it." When people discover that you think more of them than you do of yourself, you will find yourself surrounded with people who will think more of you than of themselves. When you become pastors, do not forget to give honour where honour is due. If you expect your people to be loyal to you, you must be loyal to them. If they are to serve and help you, they will do it, and continue to do it, only as they find that it is the aim of your life to serve and help other people.

That is wise counsel, and is in accord with New Testament standards. I suppose the passage of time had

tempered the judgment of these older men. It is ever so with wise men.

Very young men may make heroes of Hitler and Mussolini, but wise men will know they are moving toward a precipice. The counsel of the old men was wise. Do not force things. Learn to be patient and charitable. Do not be harsh in your judgment of people. It will not pay. Rehoboam seemed to say of them, "I am not sure of your wisdom." The older statesmen said, "If you would be king of this people; if you would have them say, Long live the king, show them that you are here to serve them." That was good counsel, and I pass it on to you—and take it to myself. There is only one justification for our living: that we have some contribution to make to the world's weal. When our day's work is over, and we have no further service to render, the world will be done with us; and we must not complain.

VI.

Observe now REHOBOAM AND HIS YOUNGER COUNSELLORS. Rehoboam found the advice of the younger men much more palatable. Did you ever meet a young man who did not? A man is never quite so wise, he never knows quite so much, as at the age of twenty-one. Usually about that time there is not much that he does not know. It is rather difficult to teach him anything. If older men counsel him, they are "old fogies". Some people are like women I have seen in stores in England, where there were big cheeses along the counter. Some women would go along and push a cheese-taster into one cheese after another. One was too old, and one too young; one too strong, and another too mild. Finally, after tasting them all, and taking many minutes of the merchant's time, one would say, I suppose, "I think I will take a quarter of a pound of that!"

Some people are advice-tasters. They go about asking advice, taste it as it is given, but keep on until they find someone who will tell them to do what they want to do. That was Rehoboam. He accepted the resignations of the older men. *He forgot, perhaps that Jeroboam was coming back in three days!* Do not forget that someone is coming back in three days. Many things will be remembered when Jeroboam comes back. In the meantime, Rehoboam is getting ready to meet him. Hence he seeks counsel of the younger men.

Nothing flatters a man quite so much as to be asked for advice, and especially if he is utterly incompetent to advise anybody. Here were some young men Rehoboam knew very well, to whom he might go to get the advice he wanted; because it is said that he counselled with "the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him". They were contemporaries of his, they had the same outlook, the same point of view. They shook their heads and said, "Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that speak unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins. And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke; I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."

Any fool can talk like that. It does not require much wisdom to speak after that fashion. That is how they advised him—and Rehoboam was ready so to reply to Jeroboam. These young men did not distinguish between the power of position and the authority of experience. They thought Rehoboam was king: he could do

anything. No, he could not! There is no position in the world that will justify a man in playing the fool.

We Baptists do not believe in the authority of the clergy. There is no position that you can occupy which will clothe you with power. If you worthily fill your position, and use it in others' service, little by little you will win people's confidence and respect; their confidence in your judgment will increase, until by and by they will follow you because you have proved that sometimes at least you are wise. But never imagine that mere position, whatever it is, will clothe a man with power.

Mark what I say, and see if Mussolini does not learn that before he is very many years older. That man, at this very hour, is flying in the face of history, and is as sure to fall as any man is sure to be killed who would jump from the top of the Bank of Commerce Building. Every law of God and man is against his success. The stars in their courses did not more effectually fight against Sisera than the entire course of history is fighting against Italy. He may appear to succeed for a time, but ultimately he will fail—just as Rehoboam did. Rehoboam would learn nothing from history. Some people never do.

You remember the story of Pharaoh, and the trouble he got into in Egypt? It was all due to the fact that "there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph". If he had viewed the present in the perspective of the past, he would have come to an entirely different appraisal of values. Rehoboam would not learn. He would not temper authority with moderation. The young men said, "If I were you, with the League, without the League, or against the League, I would have my own way." That was what he did. That is what Mussolini is doing. I have seen pastors and others attempt the same thing. It cannot be done without disaster: one can go only so far.

Let me point out this one principle. *The abuse of power always issues in the loss of it.* I have had opportunity to study family life. I have been related to a great many families. I have seen families where the law of father and mother was as absolute as that of any despot, but it was exercised with wisdom, with patience, with consideration. In such cases when father or mother spoke, the children obeyed; but they never said, "Don't", for the sake of saying it; but when it was said, it was always with a gentle reasonableness, and the children grew up to call them blessed. Even in age, the young man wanted to know what father's opinion was. I have seen others, both fathers and mothers, who were arbitrary, who insisted upon the exercise of parental authority without reason or moderation. In such cases while the children were young, they obeyed; but as soon as they obtained their majority they rebelled.

You cannot abuse power, and continue to possess it. A man in any walk of life may gain influence until within a little circle he become a benevolent despot, and people delight to do his will. But let him make one mistake, let him presume upon that tolerance of other people, and he will lose at once his power. The house falls, and great is the fall thereof. Dictatorships, in the nature of the case, in any realm of life, must be short-lived. They break themselves to pieces. You cannot sit on the safety valve too long while the fire is in the boiler. Of course, you can sit on a cold boiler as long as you like.

So happened it that when Rehoboam returned that answer, and Jeroboam went back to the people, they said, "What portion have we in David? neither have we in-

heritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David." And ten tribes broke away. The proud Rehoboam was left with a mere remnant of his great kingdom. He assembled his army and said, "I will fight." But the prophet answered, "Do not fight. God is against you." He is always against the man who exercises authority unrighteously, and one can never recover it by the assembly of armies. Once lost it is seldom that it can ever be regained.

Rehoboam had to settle down as king of Judah only, and the ten tribes established the kingdom of Israel. But that is enough for this evening.

FROM "WATCHING AND WAITING", LONDON.

The following article appears in the October issue of the above paper. To say the least it is exceedingly interesting. We "despise not prophesyings," but we are not expert in their interpretation in advance of their fulfilment. This article is of value for the information it conveys and for what it suggests.—Ed. G.W.

THE ITALO-ABYSSINIAN DISPUTE

"Scatter thou the people that delight in war. Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God."—(Psalm lxxviii, 30 and 31.)

Mussolini is preparing for an aggressive war with Abyssinia, in violation of the Covenant of the League of Nations, the Kellogg Pact, world opinion, and the warning voice of Prophetic Scripture! He is riding for a fall!

Under the names of Ethiopia and Cush, there are some twenty-four references to Abyssinia in Holy Scripture. We cannot say with any certainty that its area or boundaries were such as is known to-day, probably the country was larger than now. But it is clear that it was to the Southern boundary of Egypt, and definitely connected with the upper Nile, or the White and Blue Niles, and extended to the coasts of Arabia.

Abyssinia in Secular History

"There were times when Abyssinian influence extended to the shores of the Red Sea and beyond them. This fact prompts the historian Gibbon's sagacious comment that had mediæval Christendom joined forces against the followers of Mahomet with the Christian nucleus in Arabia, instead of wasting blood and treasure in mismanaged crusades, Islam might have remained a mere sect, never able to grow up into a militant world-religion.

"For a thousand years Abyssinia was the only Christian country in Africa, and it was completely surrounded by war-like pagan and Moslem peoples.

"Though a Christian, the Abyssinian lacks some of the Christian virtues. But he is tolerant to those who hold another faith. Kindness to children and hospitality are two of his pleasant qualities. He holds the monophysite doctrine of Christ's single nature."—*The Morning Post*.

That the ruling portion of the Abyssinian population is of great antiquity is admitted by all competent ethnologists. The dry bones of Abyssinian history are presented in a handbook (No. 129), prepared under the direction of the Foreign Office and published shortly after the close of the Great War. "The population," we are there informed, "is 85-90 per cent. Hamitic. The Hamite race, which inhabits almost the whole of North and North-East Africa, is always distinguishable from the negro peoples by its comparatively European type of face, though the colour varies greatly. This race, invading Abyssinia and mingling with the aboriginal dwellers, laid the foundations (probably before 5000 B.C.) of the modern Abyssinian population. This branch of the Hamitic race is known as Cushite, and the original stock is still found in a fairly pure form in certain tribes. During the second millennium B.C. Semite invasions took place, and though the Cushite racial type does not seem to have been modified, Semitic traces can still be discovered in its language and civilization."

Abyssinia in Biblical History

This Country figures in several familiar scenes in Bible history. Job speaks of gold coming therefrom, so no wonder it has called forth human interest!

The boundary of the Persian Empire under King Ahasuerus is spoken of as from "India to Ethiopia", i.e., it included Egypt up to the Ethiopian border, but did not take in that land, or India. (Est. i, I, viii, 9).

She was an ally of Syria (2 Chron. xii. 3) and was defeated by King Asa (2 Chron. xiv. 9-13, xvi. 8). Her merchandise was brought to the help of Cyrus (Isa. xlv. 14).

As an ally of Nineveh she is denounced in Nahum (Ch. iii. 9) and by Jeremiah (Ch. xlvii. 9). And further, Assyria was in opposition to her as an ally of Egypt, as in Isa. xx.

The four great successive Empires of Prophetic scriptures seem to have extended their conquests to Ethiopia's borders (as in the case of Persia, above named) but not one of them seem to have effectually subdued her.

Three Blessed Ethiopians

There are three instances of individual Ethiopians, marked for blessing:—

1. The record of the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon is well known. But not too well known—for if it were better known there would be no ground for the tradition that the Ethiopian Emperors sprang from Solomon!

2. "Ebed-melech the Ethiopian" drew the prophet Jere-

miah from the dungeon-pit, and was consequently the subject of promised good (Jer. xxxviii. 10-13; xxxix. 15-18).

3. The record of the conversion of the Ethiopian, as in Acts viii. is full of gospel teaching and missionary instruction.

Abyssinia in Biblical Prophecy

It appears that she will have separate independence in the "Time of the End", as a nation outside the Ten Kingdom area; but that the Antichrist will seek to extend his conquests world-wide, and fail there. However, he will succeed in mastering Ethiopia to this extent, that he will obtain economic control over her; The merchandise of Ethiopia "shall be at his steps" (Dan. xi. 43). The context of Daniel xi. would lead one to expect that unable to hold his prey he turns back to Palestine to meet and resist the "Kings from the East." Certain nations will join with the Arabs in calling upon the Antichristian Roman nations to blot out Israel, among them probably Ethiopia.

B. W. Newton in our *Time of the End* tract, No. 8, p. 8, says:—

"There will be this gathering of the Roman nations, but, supplemented with what Rome has never been able to con-

(Continued on page 12)

UNION OF REGULAR BAPTIST CHURCHES OF ONTARIO AND QUEBEC

EIGHTH ANNUAL CONVENTION

to be held in

JARVIS STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, TORONTO

October 22nd, 23rd, and 24th, 1935

SPECIAL SPEAKER

DR. W. H. HOUGHTON, President Moody Bible Institute

PROGRAMME

PRE-CONVENTION MEETINGS

MONDAY, OCTOBER 21st, 1935

2.00 p.m.—Meeting of the Executive Board of the Union.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22nd, 1935

11.00 a.m.—Registration of Messengers.
Allocation of Messengers to Billets.

2.30 p.m.—Inspirational Conference in charge of Rev. P. B. Loney.

ADDRESS: "The Place of Prayer in Christian Life and Service"—Rev. John Byers.

Followed by Conference and a time of prayer and intercession.

TUESDAY EVENING

FIRST SESSION

7.30 p.m.—Prayer and Praise Service led by Rev. M. B. Gillion, Bobcaygeon, Ont.

8.00 p.m.—Opening of Convention, Rev. Alex. Thomson, President.

Adoption of Tentative Constitution.

Appointment of Committee on Nominations.

Reception of New Pastors and Churches.

ADDRESS: Rev. Alex. Thomson, President of the Convention.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23rd

Morning

SECOND CONVENTION SESSION

9.30 a.m.—Prayer and Praise Service led by Pastor A. J. Burnham, Galt.

10.00 a.m.—Rev. Alex. Thomson, President, presiding.

Presentation and discussion of Annual Report of the Executive Board of the Union, by the Secretary-Treasurer, Rev. W. E. Atkinson.

11.30 a.m.—Home Mission Address—Pastor Chas. Hardie, St. Amedee.

Afternoon

THIRD CONVENTION SESSION

2.00 p.m.—Prayer and Praise Service, led by Rev. Bernard Jeffery, Long Branch, Ont.

2.30 p.m.—Rev. P. B. Loney, Vice-President, presiding.

Foreign Missions: Rev. and Mrs. Edward Hancox.
Miss Florence E. Stacey.

4.00 p.m.—ADDRESS: Dr. W. H. Houghton.

Evening

FOURTH CONVENTION SESSION

7.30 p.m.—Prayer and Praise Service led by Rev. W. N. Charlton, Hespeler, Ont.

8.00 p.m.—Rev. Alex. Thomson, President, presiding.

ADDRESS: Dr. W. H. Houghton.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24th—Thanksgiving Day

Morning

FIFTH CONVENTION SESSION

9.30 a.m.—Prayer and Praise Service led by Rev. H. E. Buchner, Shedden, Ont.

10.00 a.m.—Rev. P. B. Loney, Vice-President, presiding.

Reports of Committees.

10.15 a.m.—Election of Convention Officers and Executive Board Members.

11.30 a.m.—ADDRESS: "Regular Baptists in the Western Provinces", Rev. Gordon W. Searle, Orangeville.

Afternoon

SIXTH CONVENTION SESSION

2.00 p.m.—Prayer and Praise Service, led by Pastor John Cunningham, Scotch Line Baptist Church.

2.30 p.m.—Rev. Alex. Thomson, President, presiding.

EDUCATIONAL SESSION

The Seminary and Missions

The Seminary and the Foreign Field—Miss Florence Stacey, '29—Liberia.

The Seminary and the Home Field—Pastor John Armstrong, '32—Maple Hill Church.

The Seminary and the Student—Student-pastor J. Scott, President of the Student Body.

The Seminary and the Future—Dr. T. T. Shields, President of the Seminary.

Evening

SEVENTH CONVENTION SESSION

7.30 p.m.—Prayer and Praise Service led by Rev. Leander Roblin, Otterville, Ont.

8.00 p.m.—Rev. Alex. Thomson, President, presiding.

Introduction of newly-elected Officers and Board Members.

ADDRESS: Dr. W. H. Houghton.

Meeting of Officers and Executive Board Members for purposes of organization.

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 10

No. 4

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 43 Fourth Quarter October 27th, 1935

THE WISE AND THE FOOLISH IN CONTRAST

Lesson Text: Proverbs, chapters 14 to 16.

Golden Text: "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; but the prayer of the upright is his delight."—Proverbs 15:8.

Bible School Reading: Proverbs 14:1-19.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Is. 51:1-6; Tuesday—Is. 34:1-8; Wednesday—Jer. 10:19-25; Thursday—Hos. 14:1-9; Friday—I. Cor. 3:1-11; Saturday—I. John 20:1-11.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The proverbs of this lesson, as in that of the previous one, are complete in one or two verses, and having no immediate connection, forbid proper chapter analysis. In general, in this chapter, wise and foolish conduct is contrasted in relation to the affairs of life. First, respecting the management of the home, concerning which we are informed that prosperity comes to it through the wise woman; while the foolish one ruins it. The woman in large measure makes the home, creating the atmosphere, guiding the children, and influencing and looking after the welfare of the husband. A godly woman is essential to the proper functioning of these duties. We may well pray to be delivered from the cigarette-smoking, cocktail-drinking, bridge-playing type which is ruinous to the peace and prosperity of husband and children.

Following the opening contrast, the daily walk is referred to, with the obvious conclusion derived therefrom respecting its nature. A tree is known by its fruit (Matt. 12:33), and a godly life is easily distinguishable from its opposite. After this, the use of the tongue is mentioned, together with the fruit of labour, the right attitude in the pursuit of knowledge, and toward sin, the consequences of life, the ways of life, the poor and the rich, witness-bearing, the fear of the Lord, self-control, wisdom, and righteousness. Several outstanding thoughts may be noted. First, respecting the tongue, in its use by wise and foolish (vs. 3, 5, 25). The wise speak the truth, and give help to others; while the foolish and wicked speak lies, and cause trouble. Note the way in which the tongue should be used for God. Second, concerning the right attitude toward sin (v. 9). Sin deludes fools, while the righteous find divine favour. Observe the necessity for adopting an attitude of antagonism to sin, beginning with that which may be in one's own life. Sin is deceitful (Heb. 3:13), is under the condemnation of God (Rom. 3:19), and unless forgiven and put away it will prevent entrance into heaven (Rev. 21:27). Third, in relation to man's lack of understanding respecting God's way (v. 12). His own way seems right to him, but it leads to death. The carnal mind is enmity against God (Rom. 8:7). It does not understand the things of God (Rom. 3:11), and travels on its own way to destruction regardless of the admonitions of God (Rom. 6:21). And fourth, respecting national life (v. 34). "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people." A nation is composed of individuals, therefore as are the individuals, so will be the nation. Its character is never higher than that of the persons composing it; therefore the necessity for getting individuals right with God. How may we know God's will, and be enabled to carry it out faithfully?

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

In general, the proverbs in this chapter relate to the tongue, revenues, sacrifice, way of life, instruction, divine omniscience, the heart and its effect on the life, the fear of the Lord, self-control, the slothful man, the foolish man, the word spoken in due season, the thoughts of the wicked, the prayer of the righteousness, and the fear of the Lord. All of these proverbs may very profitably be studied, but some will appeal more readily to this end. Among these are the following: first, relating to the control of the tongue: "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir

up anger." This is in line with what has already been stated respecting the tongue. It is a powerful little instrument, either for good or for evil. Second, the attitude of God toward the righteous, and the wicked, in the matter of sacrifice and prayer (vs. 8, 29): "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; but the prayer of the upright is his delight." The heart must be right with God before we can serve Him. Sin in the life severs fellowship with God (Is. 59:2), and its continuance therein prevents the acceptance of sacrifices by the Lord (Amos 5:21-27). He desires the person before the gift; the heart before the tongue, or the hands. Observe the prayer of the publican, and our Lord's comment (Luke 18: 9-14); also the invitation to approach the throne of grace (Heb. 4: 15, 16), and the wondrous promise respecting prayer (John 14: 13, 16, 23, 24). Third, the blessing of love, even in poor circumstances (v. 17). God is love (I. John 4:8). Those who are right with Him manifest the same spirit (I. John 4:7), and in a beautiful manner the characteristics of love are related (I. Cor. 13). Fourth, the direction of the righteous life, "The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath" (v. 24). The child of God is a citizen of heaven (Eph. 2:6; Phil. 3:20); and he is travelling thither (Heb. 13:14), with his affections centred on the things therein (Col. 3:1, 2). Fifth, the attitude of God toward the thoughts of the wicked: "The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord; but the words of the pure are pleasant words." God hates sin, and cannot approve of that which arises therefrom, or is tainted thereby. On the other hand, those who live righteously, please Him. It should therefore be our endeavour to live in this manner (Col. 1:10). How may we get the most out of life?

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Man proposes, but God disposes, is intimated at the beginning of this chapter. The Lord is sovereign in all things, and above the free-will of man carries out His purposes. This is followed by references to man's estimate of his ways, the committing of works unto the Lord, the purpose of God respecting all things, the blessing of pleasing God, matters relating to the king, the value of wisdom, the danger of pride, the effect of pleasant words, the evils self-control, and the divine ordering of events. Several of these may be dealt with. First, man's estimate of his own ways: they are "clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirits". This denotes his blindness, and his alienation from God. The Lord weighs man, and finds him wanting (Dan. 5:27). Conviction of sin is necessary to bring man to a realization of his lost condition; when he acknowledges that he has gone astray, and needs to be set down on the right way (Acts 2:37). Second, the committing of the works unto the Lord—intimating the necessity for relying upon God for success in life. We are told in another scripture to roll our cares upon God (I. Pet. 5:7): here we are enjoined to roll our works upon Him, and our thoughts shall be established. Trusting implicitly in Him, our minds are kept at ease, and our works are in accordance with His will. Third, the divine sovereignty (vs. 4, 9, 33). There is much we cannot understand about the exercise of this, but the manifestations of God's power in the affairs of men are too clear to doubt His overruling presence.

Pride may be noted in the fourth place: "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (v. 18). This may be illustrated from the records of Scripture, as in the case of Pharaoh (Ex. 5:2); and that of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:30, 31), and others. God's blessing is received by the humble spirit, and never by the proud one. Fifth, talebearing: "A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends." It is significant to notice the frequency with which the tongue is mentioned in these lessons; and when we realize its power for good or evil, we are not surprised at it. Here its power for evil is emphasized. Care should be exercised in listening, and the tale of the whisperer should be discredited. One-sided whispered tales should not influence us to change our attitude toward anyone. Sixth, self-control: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." The hardest victory to gain is that over self, and it is only as the Lord has control over us that this becomes a possibility in the real sense (Rom. 6:13). How may we become strong enough to stand boldly against the evils of the day?

FROM "WATCHING AND WAITING", LONDON

(Continued from page 10)

trol, viz., Arabia and the Ethiopians (Ps. 83)! We had an experience lately in the Soudan of what their immense power is. It was the same people of whom a million came up against Asa" (2 Chron. xiv.).

But not until after this, will the text at our heading be fulfilled, and "Ethiopia—stretch out her hands unto God"! In fact, it would seem that she is one of the last nations to yield to the reign of Christ, for she will be found an ally of Gog and Magog, in the early Millennial days, when these nations have the audacity to make an assault on Israel—defenceless other than in God (see Ezek. xxix. 10, xxx. 4-5, xxxviii. 5).

Judgments will come upon her, the Lord will in some measure visit destruction upon her for Israel's security—"I will give . . . Ethiopia for thee. Etc." (Isa. xliii. 3).

From beyond her borders suppliants of Israel will be found returning to God and the Land (Isa. xx. 3 and 5, Zeph. iii. 10), and it shall be said of some Israelites returning; "this man was born there" (Psa. lxxxvii. 5).

We gather from Isa. xx., following closely as it does on Isa. xix. 25, "Blessed be Egypt my People, and Assyria the work of my hands and Israel mine inheritance," that just as Egypt will remain a desolation forty years before this great blessing of Isa. xix. 25, is experienced, so Ethiopia will come under judgment before the words heading our article are accomplished.

Ethiopia, like all others who would supplicate the Grace of God, must stretch out *empty* hands, but this done, she too shall have that which she can bring to God with His acceptance; "Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts" (Psa. 72).

Of the Antichrist's attack on Ethiopia, Mr. Newton says, in *Prospects of the Ten Kingdoms*, p. 262: "Antichrist is fiercely attacked by the King of Syria and the King of Egypt—both of whom would be necessarily interested in the condition of Jerusalem, where Antichrist is at that time

practising (See chap. viii.). He overthrows them both, and becomes master also of Lybia and Ethiopia."

Mussolini Must Fail

While Ethiopia will thus in some measure come under the influence of the Antichrist, this will NOT be until the end-time. The fact of her being independent then, confirms our view that she cannot be conquered *until* then; especially is this the case with a Power such as Italy, which is *not* to be the seat of Antichrist. Italy is among the "Ten", but the Antichrist will rise not from her but in the Eastern parts of the revived Roman Empire. We said in our August issue:—

"Italy has put the League of Nations to a great strain and test by her resolve to make conquest of Abyssinia, a fellow member. Be it noted, Abyssinia is a non-Roman nation, therefore Italy, a Roman Power, will not succeed in holding it, even if she conquers it! B. W. Newton envisaged a divided Italy in the end-time, may be if she persists in rejecting national conciliation or arbitration, and breaks her League vows, she will collapse and split!"

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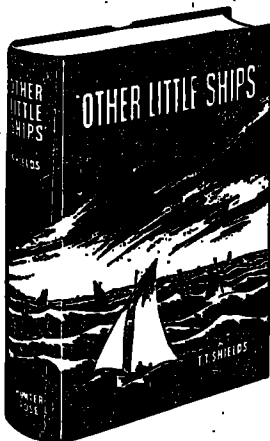
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THE MOODY MONTHLY, Chicago

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