

The Gospel Witness

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Editor: T. T. SHIELDS

Associate Editor: ALEXANDER THOMSON

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

Address Correspondence: THE GOSPEL WITNESS, 130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2, Canada.
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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"NOT AN HOOF SHALL BE LEFT BEHIND"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, April 7th, 1935

(Stenographically Reported)

"And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your little ones also go with you.

"And Moses said, Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God.

"Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God; and we know not with what we must serve the Lord, until we come thither."—Ex. 10:24-26.

Prayer before the Sermon

We bow in Thy holy presence, O Lord, rejoicing in the assurance that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. We thank Thee for every one in Thy presence whom Thou hast brought by the sweet constraints of Thy grace to a recognition of his need of Christ, and to an acceptance of the atoning Sacrifice. We bless Thee for those who are the children of God by a second birth, having been born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

We desire to know something more of the privileges which are ours as Thy children. Enable us to understand that which is written, that we may be instructed out of Thy Book, that we may be so energized by Thy Spirit that we shall not be hearers of the word only, but doers also.

Graciously look upon any who are still strangers to Thy pardoning grace. May they be the recipients of Thy mercy this morning, receiving the Lord Jesus as Saviour, and as Lord. We pray Thee to make every one in this congregation to know that Thou hast taken account of him or of her; that our presence before Thee is known, and that Thou hast come to speak to every one of us a word in season.

Vouchsafe Thy blessing, we pray Thee, upon the whole household of faith, for all who minister Thy word publicly, or privately. Make this, we beseech Thee, a day of marked progress in the kingdom of God.

Hear us in these things, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

This morning I remind you of a very familiar chapter of history, that I may direct your attention to one principle particularly contained and illustrated therein.

The people of God were in bondage to Pharaoh in Egypt. Through the lips of Moses, God commanded

them to leave Egypt, and to set their faces toward the Promised Land. You recall how reluctant Moses was to deliver the message to Egypt's king, and how at last he and Aaron together were sent to Pharaoh. Before Pharaoh they wrought certain miracles by the use of Moses' rod. But as the Lord had predicted, Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not let Israel go. Then, in obedience to divine direction, a series of plagues was sent upon Egypt, but Pharaoh continued to harden his heart, and to refuse to let Israel go. At length he relented in part, and suggested that they go, but that *they should not go very far away*. They had demanded that they be permitted to go three days' journey into the wilderness. Moses would accept no compromise, and the plagues were continued. Then Pharaoh yielded a little more, and said, "Very well, you may go." But who are they who shall go? "Ye that are men, go; leave your wives and your families and your property behind." Again Moses refused to compromise, and insisted that their families should go with them. To this at length Pharaoh consented, but he said, "Leave your flocks behind." But Moses refused once more to consent to half-way measures. He said, "We will go, and we will take our families. We will take our flocks. We will dedicate ourselves, and all that we have to the service of the Lord, and not an hoof shall be left behind." To this Pharaoh still objected. Then came the final plague, a visitation of judgment upon Pharaoh, and the slaying of the first-born of all the land of Egypt. At last Pharaoh consented to let them go, and they went with their wives, and their families, their flocks and their

herds. They took everything with them; having been sheltered under the blood, they passed through the sea, the sea returning in its strength, and when the morning appeared their enemies were strewn along the seashore dead.

I.

God does not change. THE REQUIREMENTS OF HIS SERVICE ARE JUST AS EXACTING TO-DAY AS THEY WERE IN THAT DAY. He still requires that His people should yield to Him themselves, and all that they have; that they should devote themselves to His service in such a way that "not an hoof shall be left behind". Nothing short of that can satisfy the divine requirement. Nothing short of that can fulfil the divine plan in any redeemed life. We are to be wholly His, all that we have and are.

That principle is carried forward into the New Testament. Our Lord Himself said: "No man can serve two masters." God's people in Old Testament times are described in the New Testament as the church in the wilderness, and the word church means "called out". They were a company of people who had been called out of Egypt, a peculiar people separated unto God for His service. In the New Testament believers constitute the Church, and they are called out; they are separated from all other people, a peculiar people, zealous of good words. They belong to the Lord. The Apostle Paul described himself as an apostle separated unto the gospel of Christ; and that ought to be true of every one of us. The blood of Jesus Christ has separated us from everything that is alien to the divine will. God requires that we should be shut up wholly, without any reserve, to His service.

It is a mere commonplace to remind you of the analogy, but *how frequently God's people are tempted in our day not to go very far away*, to be servants of God, to profess His name, to render Him a kind of service, but not entirely to divorce themselves from the old life. Be religious on Sunday, be reasonably respectable and honest; at least, allow the ethical principle of the Christian religion to regulate your conduct, but "be not righteous over much: Neither make thyself over wise: why shouldst thou destroy thyself?" Do not go very far away.

There is another temptation, too, to *make religion exclusively a personal matter*. "Go now ye that are men." Someone says "It is no one's business what you do. Religion is a matter of the heart. Providing you trust the Lord, that is all that is required." How little family religion there is to-day! The religion of Christ is a personal matter, but it is a *social religion*, too. It relates us to other people, and it specially enjoins us to go home to our friends, and tell them how great things the Lord has done for us. We are to seek, first of all, to take our families with us, those who are nearest and dearest to us.

And then there is a *temptation sometimes to leave our property behind*. A very clear distinction is sometimes drawn between the secular and the sacred. Religion is well enough on Sunday, but it ought not to be mixed with business or with politics. Leave your property outside that realm. That is an entirely different matter. But the requirements of the gospel are that "not an hoof shall be left behind"; not only ourselves and all that we are, but everything is to be dedicated to the divine service.

How is that possible? It is possible to us only as it was made possible to the children of Israel when they were sheltered by the blood, and they passed through the sea, and were the recipients of the divine power,

channels through which God's power worked, bringing them out from under the bondage of Egypt, leading them into the wilderness, it is true, but making them there a free people, with liberty to serve the Lord.

Now that is the story.

II.

Let us look for a minute or two at SOME OF THE REASONS WHY THIS PRINCIPLE OF COMPLETE SEPARATION SHOULD APPLY TO CHRISTIANS TO-DAY.

The first reason is that *the Lord explicitly requires it*. Whether we understand all the implications of the divine precepts or not, it is the function of faith to enable us to obey a wisdom which we cannot always fathom. If we really believe God, we must do what He says. Spurgeon once said, "If the Lord were to require me to put twelve stones in the middle of the road, I would go and do it; not because I could see there was any reason for it, or any wisdom in it, but simply because it was commanded."

There is very much in the gospel which carnal minds cannot understand. There is very much, indeed, that must be hidden from the mind of the spiritual man, while he is in his nonage, in his spiritual infancy. But surely the children of God must sometimes obey the parental word without understanding it, even as children here are often required to do as they are told, to obey their parents in the Lord because "this is right." So it is for us not to reason why, except to assure ourselves that a certain course of action is required by the word of God; once persuaded of it, we have no option but to obey.

It is not enough, dear friends, to hold as a theory the doctrine of the supreme authority of Scripture: it is utterly valueless for us to say, "I believe the Bible from cover to cover." I have heard some people say that, whom I had reason to fear had but the vaguest idea of what the Bible contains, and who therefore really did not know what was involved in their declaration. A mere profession of faith in the divine inspiration and authority of the Bible will not bear witness to its superlative worth unless we do in a very practical and definite way yield ourselves to its authority. It should be the supremely authoritative rule of life to every believer; it should be enough for us to know that the word of God commands for us to endeavour with all the help that the word of God will give us, to obey His precepts. A mere theoretical orthodoxy is as dishonoring to God, and as fatal to human spiritual interests, as Modernism.

In the case before us it was not difficult to understand how impossible it was for them really to serve the Lord while remaining in Egypt. Nor is it possible for us, with divided minds, to render an acceptable service to God. The average church of to-day is a half-way house between Egypt and Canaan. It makes a religious profession, but it is scarcely distinguishable from worldly institutions. It has not gone very far away. It is so intermixed with all carnal interests, with all temporal affairs, that it is very difficult to distinguish, often, between the church and the world. Such a church, in the nature of the case, must be utterly powerless. And what is true of believers in the aggregate is true of each individual. Unless we are separated unto Christ we shall accomplish absolutely nothing in His service. You cannot serve two masters. If I were a business man, employing men to work for me, and a man should come and

say, "I should like to serve you, and give you part of my time, and the rest of my time to your competitor," I should certainly refuse him employment and say, "I do not believe you can serve two masters at the same time." So in God's work. We must give all our time, and all our energy, and all our thought, or we shall accomplish nothing. So must it be with the believer: we cannot be of service to God while we still dwell in Egypt. There must be a complete separation.

Some years ago I had in this church a very dear friend; and when a good many left us, I really asked the Lord to let him remain. I wanted him; he was a man of great wealth, but I did not want him for his wealth: I wanted him; I loved him. We were very intimate, and day after day I asked the Lord to let me have that man. But at last when others left he went with them—it was to me one of the most painful experiences of life. He left us—he did not actually go with them, but he left us; he did not go very far away, but he went away. And I have thanked the Lord ever since that he did, for I am sure that had he remained every time I preached he would have listened with one ear to the word from this pulpit, and with the other ear to what somebody outside might say. I know very well what would have happened at least occasionally of a Sunday. He would have said, "Pastor, I got a blessing this morning, but oh, I wish you had not said so and so. I am much afraid. I am afraid that will get out, and somebody will be hurt unnecessarily." That same man said to me one time: "Do you know what they say about you?" I said, "No." "They say they can go to other churches and feel quite comfortable, but after they have heard you preach they cannot sleep for a week." I said, "I hope that is true." He was a good man, but he was always nervous lest some proud flesh should be hurt somewhere. He wanted to leave Egypt, but he did not want to go very far away. Had he remained with us he would have been like that little copper wire somewhere in the ignition system of your car that short circuits, and stops the engine, when the cause is difficult to discover. It is only a little thing, but it makes a powerful engine helpless. We can do nothing except on this principle that not a hoof shall be left behind; all moorings must be cut, everything that would tie us to the world, and restrict our testimony, or make us afraid to declare the whole counsel of God; everything of that sort must be cut or we shall be useless in the divine service. Is it so with you?

I will tell you another reason: *the service of God is so exacting that it requires all our energies, all our time.* We have a large Sunday School here, a Sunday School that is difficult to operate in many ways. It requires hard work, and concentrated effort always. We have had committees come to see the Sunday School. They say, "How do you do it?" And when we have explained how it is done, they have shaken their heads and said in effect: "The car is all right, but it would take too much power to operate it. Your organization is all right, but it would require more spiritual energy than our people possess to operate it. We could not get our people to give all their time to their classes, to go here and there looking after people, trying to lead them to Christ. They will come only on Sundays and perhaps one night a week." Two young ladies said to me in the old days: "Don't you think, Pastor, that if we serve the Lord on Sunday, and give Him one night a week, that is about

all that He should require?" That is the idea some people have of the religion of Christ, that it consists in church-going, and duty-doing, and the performance of certain religious obligations, instead of recognizing that it needs seven days a week and twenty-four hours a day, that the Lord Jesus requires all of us, all that we are capable of. We must follow this principle: "not an hoof shall be left behind."

You teachers know what that means, don't you, when you get mixed up with Egypt for a little while, and when you have engagements in Egypt—I mean if you allow yourself to get into worldly ways, and to cultivate worldly associations, your class begins to decline. You have a list of absentee scholars that you ought to visit. Why do you not visit them? "I have not time." Why have you not time? Because you are giving your time to somebody else, Egypt is getting a share of your energy, that is why. That is the reason we fail as teachers. Do not let anyone say, The times are difficult. I tell you the Lord Whom we serve is equal to any time, and to all time, and if we fail individually, as a school, as a church, if we fail, shall I tell you who is to blame? Not our circumstances, not the conditions without, certainly not God—the whole responsibility rests exclusively with ourselves; it is our own fault. Do not blame anyone else if you are fruitless as a Christian, if you are getting no satisfaction out of your life. There is a compromise, a half-way measure somewhere, and it is that one thing that paralyzes and makes it impossible for one to do all that he ought to do. There is no other practicable principle: "Not an hoof shall be left behind."

It is very significant that Moses said: "We must have sacrifices", and he anticipated what Pharaoh would say. "Take your sacrifices." But Moses said, "No; for we cannot tell until we get there just what God will require, and in the day, in the hour, in the moment, that which He requires of us we shall have it all ready at His disposal. Therefore, not an hoof shall be left behind."

There are some Christians who are like plumbers. Did you ever know a plumber when called to a house to do a piece of work to have all his tools with him? I have never had one come to my house and finish a job without having to go away for something. He had left a tool behind, and he had to go back to the shop. And many Christian people are like that; they are never ready for anything. Moses said, "We will be ready, we will take all our tools with us, all our cattle, all our property; we will leave nothing as hostage behind us, nothing to require us ever to return; not an hoof shall be left behind." There is no other way to serve the Lord. There is no other way to put to the proof God's promise, but to fulfil His requirements, and go with Him all the way.

I like to observe how true, in principle, the religion of Christ is to the nature of things, for I have frequently reminded you that it serves to confirm one's faith in the divinity of our religion when we see it in harmony with that realm of things which derives its nature from Him Who is the Author of the nature of things.

Look at the shallow stream. What do they do with it? Dam it back; turn all its power into a narrow course, and concentrate upon one point. Then it drives the mill wheel. What is separation? Concentration. What is concentration? Consecration. That is what it means. Every drop of water is, so to speak, consecrated to the task of turning that wheel. "But," someone says, "I like the broadminded man"—yes; like the broad and

shallow stream that little children can wade through where the water scarcely reaches to their knees. But that does not drive the mill-wheel. It is only when all its energies are compressed into a narrow space, and concentrated upon one point, that it accomplishes anything. You cannot scatter your energies over worldly interests and serve the Lord as you ought to. They need to be dammed back, to be concentrated, dedicated to one purpose. The Apostle Paul said: "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

How many of you came in motor cars this morning? (Many raised their hands). How many of you came in street cars? (A great number raised their hands). Well, those of you who came in motor cars, and street cars, as well as those who had no wheels at all, all had to walk a little, did you not? What is the principle of your motor car, of the internal combustion engine? A quantity of gas in liquid form sprayed into that chamber, and when it explodes it drives the piston. Why? Because there is nothing else for it to do. It cannot go up; it cannot go on either side: it takes the line of least resistance, and with that explosion the pressure is brought to bear upon the piston and down it goes. What brought you here this morning? The separation of the gas. Not the gas in the tank; that would never bring you here; but when it is put into the combustion chamber of that cylinder, it explodes, and all its energies are concentrated upon that task. It drives it. And that is what brought you here. If there were any other way for it to get out, it would not drive the piston. The same is true of the street car. The air is full of electricity, but only that which is insulated and conveyed by wires to motors drives the car. And the communication of that power is effected by the insulation of the wires.

What makes the steam engine go? You remember the story of Watt and the tea-kettle? He saw the lid of the tea-kettle bubbling up. Not much power there, just steam, and the most of it going out the spout. But he got the idea that if that could be confined, separated, concentrated, the natural expansion would drive something; that is the principle of the cylinder of a steam engine. But if you let the steam escape into the open without confining it, and concentrating it, it will drive nothing. The same is true of the electric current. It is illustrated in those great towers all through the country, with wires hanging from them, by which electric power is conveyed. Some people are observing Lent just now. I wonder what the electric power companies would do if they used their insulators only during Lent? We should be in darkness, and without energy the rest of the year. There are some people who insulate themselves during Lent, and think the Lord is specially pleased because they are religious for a week or two. But what a burlesque of the religion of Christ. He must have everything, or nothing! Not one day, nor even one in seven: He must have three hundred and sixty-five days every year, if we are to be wholly His.

Is that what we are doing? Oh, the joy of it! When they observed that principle, and refused to compromise, do you know what happened? All the power of God came into the life of that people, all heaven's energies were concentrated upon their deliverance; they were un-

der the blood, and they passed through the sea out into newness of life. The Bible says that the Lord brought them out with an outstretched arm. The Lord said, "In the day that you give yourself entirely to Me, I will answer your faith by giving Myself entirely to you." If we would have more power from God, then let there be a deeper and fuller measure of consecration. Let us give ourselves, and all that we are, entirely to His service.

I wish I had time this morning to speak of the other aspect of it, the joy of it. You can never really enjoy your Christian life until you get out of Egypt. It is the greatest fun serving the Lord that can be imagined. A consecrated Christian life is full of holy fun. It is a happy day when we fix our choice on Jesus as our Saviour and our God. Did you ever see a man with white collar and cuffs, and a very respectable suit of clothes, trying to do something to his motor car? He touched it here and there but he was afraid of himself all the time. He was shackled by his good clothes. At last when he saw how serious the case was he went to the back seat and got out some overalls. He took off his coat, rolled up his sleeves, covered himself with the overalls, and said, "Now I am ready for anything." Then he got the job done. Why? Because he was separated to the task, ready for his job.

We cannot serve the Lord unless we are dressed for the occasion, our loins girded, sandals upon our feet, ready for the road. That is how Israel travelled. Will you get ready for the journey? Will you say, Not a hoof shall be left behind? If you go with Him the pillar of cloud will lead by day, and the pillar of fire by night.

May the Lord help us to explore—let me put it that way—all the possibilities of a life given up to His service.

"HIS STAR"

"His star." That is a new language. We have heard of a millionaire: we speak of his house, his railroad, his mines, his millions; we have read of kings, of their armies, their jewels, their crowns, and their kingdoms; but what master of millions or monarch of men can speak of "his star"? What manner of child is this? Why "His star"? "All things were made by Him." "He made the stars also." Why His? They speak of Him: "The heavens declare the glory of God." But which is "His star"? They are all His: "He telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names." Then why not "His stars"? Of all these sparks from the divine anvil, these fragments that remain from the cutting of the foundation stones of the gold-paved, graveless city, of all these myriad gems scattered like dust of diamonds on the floor of the Eternal's workshops, where "the clouds are the dust of His feet," which is "His star"? Can anyone identify it?

The wise men said: "We have seen His star." Perhaps they can teach us. They were astrologers; it was their special work to "consider the heavens." Was it a new star, or was it one of the ever-shining worlds which had a new meaning and mission because they who considered the heavens had been given new sight? Nature needs not to go out of her way to lead to Jesus. "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera"; but "in their courses", without leaving their appointed track, they light the way to Bethlehem and the King. "There is

one glory of the sun and another of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory." "The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind." "He will give grace and glory"—subjective grace for objective glory, the opened eye, and yonder—"His star." When "the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land," all but the physically blind and deaf have complimentary tickets to Nature's opening concert; but she has only a small audience; so many have eyes but see not, and ears but hear not. The same is true of spiritual harmonies of sound and sight—only the wise men see "His star."

In the firmament of truth there are many stars, but there is one which outshines all others, which always leads to where the Young Child is; we call it the Bible. It is, in a peculiar sense, "His star"—"a light that shineth in a dark place." But thousands who are called educated people have never seen the Bible. They have seen the cover, and the pages, and the cold type, they know something of the mere grammar of the text; but they have never seen the Bible. Only the spiritually wise men see "His star." There are literary vivisectionists whose favourite subject is the Bible. They call themselves "scholars," and think they know all about the Book because they have cut it in pieces; while the fact is, they are as ignorant of the beauty and value of their subject as the blind man is of the brilliance of the stars; they have no spiritual qualification for their work; only the wise men see "His star."

"We have seen His star in the east and are come to worship Him"—that is the proof of the vision, a changed life. Many profess to know all about the stars; they know the course of every planet, the track of every little world of light—but they do not come to worship. They know the path of the star better than the long, weary road to Bethlehem. You know the people I mean; their admiration of Nature's beauty does not make their own human nature any more beautiful. Or they are lovers of the Bible. They read it? And believe it? Of course! How they love the truth—with their heads! How they measure everybody by it—but themselves! How its light is made to discover everybody's sin—except their own! They have seen the star, but they do not come to worship.

There are those who love a religion of stars. They believe in a religion of culture; they are star-gazers. What connection, say they, can there be between a star and a stable, between a Monarch and a manger? They can exalt themselves above the stars of God, but cannot humble themselves to worship. You have never seen a lily if you have not learned to trust; you have never "considered the heavens" if you have not been humbled by Divine visitations. You have never really seen the Cross if it has not broken your heart and made you worship the Crucified.

"They departed into their own country another way." And "His star" led them to the place where they saw the Child—that was the turning point, that was conversion. They saw "His star", they walked "another way." You have never really seen "His star" if the vision has not changed your life, if you are not living "another way." This is the message of Christmas.

NOTE:—The above article has been published before, but on account of certain articles on the subject in Toronto papers, we have thought it might be profitable to re-print it.

SANCTIFIED GOSSIP

Some years ago a humorous story drew my attention to the scripture, "And Gashmu saith it"; and from it I preached—before it appeared in THE WITNESS!—on "Our Town Gossip". The odd thing was that the worst gossip in three counties was present, perhaps by Providence, for the sermon. We knew she was; we had called at a home where she was visiting that same day! But "Aunt Mary" at the home where I boarded, on hearing about the sermon, made some objection. To her, gossip was just "chitchat". Well, there is a gossip which is slanderous and wicked; from that Christians must abstain. There is also, however, a gossip which is sanctified and profitable. It is like what newspaper men call "human interest stories". We wish we could share some of our more personal ones with our readers, but then—

Stew for Three Weeks

We could tell of student struggles. One young man said to me this Fall when I spoke of finances: "I have very little money, but plenty of faith." He has needed it! It was at his rooming-house that, some friend having given them the beasts and the Seminary cook having prepared them, the students had rabbit stew for three weeks. Personally, I like rabbit, but to have it for three weeks on end would be well, just too much. But rabbit stew is much better than nothing.

Painting and Furnishing

The lady students are quite proud of their new common-room, for truly it is a new room. One kind man in the church spent hours and hours—one night they say he left here at 1.30 a.m.—painting; another hung the paper; friends donated a used carpet, a couch, some pictures, and so on. When it was completed, we had a social evening for the students and some friends, a time when hymn-singing and game-playing went well together, as the head girl presided. On that occasion a presentation was made to Miss M. Brownlow who has, since the dining-room for students was opened, superintended it with real interest. "A good time was had by all."

Services Past and Future

Then to-day, being the last day of lectures, the tables, through kindness of more friends, were tastefully decorated for a special dinner. The stateliest teacher set off a cracker, and the youngest student laughed over his candy—and wasn't the mince pie good? (It was made on the premises.) After dinner the high kakiak presented the cooks, Mr. and Mrs. A. Cullington, with very pretty boxes containing small tokens of our appreciation of their services, as he said, past and future!

Satan or Satin

And so with all their trials students do have good times. Of course, there is the grind of studies, for, as one who apparently knew by experience, said long ago: "Of making of many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh." Satan—one student spelled the name "satin" the other day—has many devices of which the seminary man must beware in his efforts to overcome such weariness so that in the sweat of his brow, intellectually, he may eat bread.

"It Makes Me Want to Pray"

But spiritual interests are the main thing. Other things are secondary to seeking first the kingdom and His righteousness. Pray with us, friends, that daily classes may be stimuli to higher Christian living. Of some study he was making one student remarked: "It makes me want to get down and pray." Amen, brother, and amen.

Chapel services help on the spirit of prayer, as do student prayer groups. Usually the teachers take the daily chapel service, but once a week one of the students leads. We have been privileged these past weeks by some inspiring visits from ministers and missionaries.

Four Divided Into Three

We greatly rejoice to hear good news from the fields to which our men and women have gone. Not long ago a personal letter came from Rev. Adam Galt, of Pavillion, New York, telling of some young people who had publicly confessed Christ. One of the lady students was talking to-day of her Bible School work in connection with one of our

small churches. Some fifteen months ago she took over a class of four girls who had just come out of the primary. Then she said her class had been divided into three. I was wondering how many times three will divide into four (!) when she explained that during the time she had had the class, it had increased to twenty-four!

In Jamaica

Some weeks ago a letter came from the former Dean of this School, Dr. T. I. Stockley, in which he told of his special ministry among the Baptist churches in Jamaica last summer,—work which was interrupted by the ill health of Mrs. Stockley but which may be resumed early in 1936. Said Dr. Stockley: "I was so glad to see O. T. Johnson, and I should have seen Knight if I had been able to continue on as I had hoped." These men are graduates of Toronto Baptist Seminary, both carrying heavy pastorates in Jamaica and doing solid work for the Lord.

A letter which reached here to-day is delightful: "There are always gleams of sunshine, of course. About a month ago a young man boldly accented the Lord and confessed him publicly the next Sunday. I consider him splendid. So accustomed am I getting to seeing Christians who are worthy of abundant criticism that I feared for a time about the depth of earth into which the seed was planted, it sprang up so quickly and lustily. But he is reading the Bible daily and studying it eagerly and is actively engaged in personal work. He is having a measure of success, too. You can guess how encouraging this case has been. . . . Another, a woman who accepted the Lord last year, is taking a more public stand. Two others accepted through personal work, but while confessing to others the step they have taken, they have not made a confession in church yet." We do rejoice in such quiet but lasting work. May the Lord increase it among us.

—W. G. B.

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

LIBERIA

"At The Sign of The Banana Tree"

The Missionaries on the Geah-bar Zondo Station, Rev. and Mrs. G. D. Mellish, and Mr. Percy E. Clubine, are sending to the office a monthly news sheet, which they have named, "At the Sign of the Banana Tree." It contains some very interesting items, as follows:

Items for Prayer and Praise

Praise for good numbers attending all the services and Bible Classes each week, and for supply of needs day by day in a material way.

Pray that our Christians may learn more of the Word and may be brought to a closer walk with the Lord and the yielding of their lives to Him.

Pray for many who have received medical treatment recently, that the Seed sown may bear fruit.

Pray for the people in the towns at some distance from the Mission that they may come and hear the Word and receive it.

Pray for Clan Chief Geah-bar Zondo and the Townmasters of the many towns in the district.

The Weather

As an item of general interest to indicate the conditions under which the missionaries are working, the weather for October was as follows: Temperature—Average 79° F.; Highest 89°, and lowest 69°. Rainfall—15 inches. Highest rainfall in one day 3½ inches. The rains are now practically over, and each day it is getting warmer.

District Visitation

As the rains are now coming to an end, it gives us many more opportunities of reaching the towns at a distance with the gospel. Last Saturday we made the first of a number of short treks which we intend to make during the coming weeks. The purpose of these treks is twofold: The first being to preach the gospel and invite the people to attend the services at the Mission, and the second, to map out the district, finding how many towns there are, how many houses in a town, and thus how many people, in order that the evan-

gelistic work may be done in a systematic way. We estimate now that there are at least 35 towns in the district.

The results of this trek were seen in the service on Sunday morning when a large delegation of people arrived, including the Townmaster from the farthest town which we visited, three and one-half miles from the Mission.

G. D. M.

Language Study

Mr. Clubine adds a bit about the progress they are making in the study of the Bassa language, as follows: "We are still working away with our language study, which seems to be an unending task. By Christmas time, however, we hope to have very much of the hard work done. We hope at that time to be able to present to the field a fairly good grammar, as well as a dictionary of all the words we know. The dictionary will be arranged in two ways, first the Bassa will be in alphabetical order with the English equivalent beside, and then will follow English words in alphabetical order along with their Bassa equivalents. We shall be glad, when this is done, to leave off investigating things so that we may begin to study and drill the things into our heads.

"Perhaps the most interesting part of the language work is on its grammatical structure. Often we get a slight clue and from it unearth an amazing amount of things that were entirely unknown to us before. At other times we know about a problem, but never seem to be able to get to the bottom of it. When such a situation occurs it is best to let it alone for a while to simmer away, and in the end it usually comes out all right. When we go back to it again we may happen to attack it from a different angle and thus be able to solve the difficulty. It is trying to spend a day or so at a problem and find oneself at the same place at the end of that time, but great is the satisfaction when it is finally cleared up never to trouble us more.

"The days seem too short to get all done that we desire. We hope to get two of the gospels which we have translated worked over again for our own use as well as to be ready for printing when that time comes. We should be very much delighted if someone would present us with a good duplicating machine (for which already some money is on hand), or with a small printing press so that we might put the printed Word before the people. Much has been done in other lands by putting the Bible in the hands of the people. We continually pray that God may soon open up the way for us to do the same. Please pray for this side of our work here in Liberia."

Photographs of Liberia

People of the churches of the Union and friends at home may secure copies of any pictures taken in Liberia, and we are endeavouring to have a larger number of pictures than before, so that a good choice can be made. These pictures will show scenes taken on the journey to Liberia, pictures of the coast towns, scenes and life on the Mission stations, and life of the Bassa people in their towns, showing their various activities.

All orders for these pictures, accompanied by cash, should be forwarded to the Union Office, 337 Jarvis Street, and the pictures will be mailed promptly by a Photo Finishing firm who have undertaken this work for us. Pictures will be finished in a glossy finish, unless the dull finish is requested, and will be size 2¼" by 3¼" unless enlargements are made. The prices charged are slightly in excess of the ordinary rate for finishing this size of picture, the extra being charged to cover mailing and help for developing, mailing of rolls from Liberia to Canada, and the cost of the films. All profits will be used in this photographic work or turned into the missionary work of the Union.

It is suggested that on the first order an assortment of pictures be requested. Then it will be noticed that all pictures have a number on the back for reference, so that additional copies of the same picture may be ordered by number.

The following are the prices for these prints: One to ten prints, six cents each. Eleven prints or over, five cents each. Enlargements, size 3¼" by 5½", twenty cents. Fifty or more of one kind, size 3¼" by 5½", printed as postcards, \$3.50 per hundred.

Lantern slides may be secured of any pictures. Prices on application. No negatives will be sent out, and no exchanges can be made.

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 11

No. 1

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 2 First Quarter January 12th, 1936

DIVINE JUDGMENT ON JUDAH

Lesson Text: Isaiah, chapters 2 to 4.

Golden Text: "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."—Isaiah 2:3.

Bible School Reading: Isaiah 2:1-22.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Deut. 18:9-14; Tuesday—Dan. 2:36-45; Wednesday—Mic. 4:1-7; Thursday—Zech. 14:16-21; Friday—Matt. 24:42-51; Saturday—II. Thess. 1:1-12.

A BRIGHT PROSPECT (2:1-5)

Before dealing with the sins of his people, and predicting the divine judgment upon them, Isaiah describes a vision of a brighter nature which he saw "concerning Judah and Jerusalem". This vision relates to the time when the Lord's house shall be exalted in Jerusalem, and many people of all nations shall "flow into it"; to the time also when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." We note in this a time of blessing; a time of seeking the Lord; a time of peace; a time of prominence for the Lord's house in Jerusalem; and a time also of judgment among the nations. Inasmuch as difference of opinion exists respecting the interpretation of this scripture, it is necessary very carefully to note just what it says; and then as far as possible, discover if its prediction has been fulfilled. The time of its prediction is stated as, "In the last days." This is a term with rather a wide significance including these days in which we are living, and the end of this age.

Various interpretations have been given of this prophecy. One, that therein is contained the pronouncement of judgment on Judah fulfilled in the overthrow of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. But this hardly gives a complete answer, particularly affecting the establishment of the Lord's house, which the Babylonian king threw down; and the going up of the people to Jerusalem to learn the ways of God. Second, that this is simply an ideal picture given for the encouragement of the people. This view may be dismissed as falling short of the requirements of Scripture interpretation. God's statements mean what they say, and are never impossible of realization. There is a sense in which this prediction may be looked upon as having been fulfilled spiritually in Christ at His first coming, resulting in the going forth of the word of God from Jerusalem; but there is a literal application which it is necessary to observe. The return of the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, has a relation to Israel, as well as to the church. One cannot be dogmatic on the matter, but the following scriptures would seem to indicate such a relationship (Eph. 37; Zech. 14; Romans 11). Note the invitation in the light of the prediction (v. 5); and the practical aspect of the Lord's coming, for the saint (I. John 3:3).

THE SINS OF JUDAH (2:6-9)

After the call to "walk in the light of the Lord", the sins of Judah are recorded. These give a picture of a people who had forgotten the law of their God. They were filled with the superstitions of the east; had soothsayers in their midst; made alliances, matrimonial and otherwise, with strangers; accumulated treasures, horses and chariots; and engaged in idolatrous practices. For such sins, Isaiah states God will not forgive them. When people forsake God they are liable to go far from Him. The Israelites knew the truth, retained an outward form of worship, yet held on to their sinful religious practices (II. Kings 15:4). Their responsibility and guilt were great, and the consequences eventually suffered were in keeping with the sins. Note the nature of the sins—superstition, soothsaying, forbidden alliance, aggrandizement, and idolatry (Deut. 18:10-14; Ex. 23:31-33; Deut. 17:17); and their prevalence these days. It is only as we realize the state of the human heart (Jer. 17:9),

that we can understand the repeated falling away of Israel from the standard of God. Observe the necessity for keeping close to the Lord in prayer and Bible study.

PREDICTION OF JUDGMENT (2:10 to 4:6)

Sin unrepented of, brings judgment; and this Isaiah predicts for his people. They are enjoined to hide for fear of the Lord (v. 10), after which the scope of the divine judgment is stated. The proud would be brought low, together with all that ministered either to their idolatrous rites, or their luxurious habits (vs. 11-18). The fear of the Lord would send them into the holes of the rocks, and caves of the earth; and they would lose confidence in their idols in the presence of the divine judgment. It is probable that this occurred at the time of the Babylonian invasion (vs. 19-21; II. Kings 25); but it is of interest to note a recurrence of the language affecting a future judgment (Rev. 6:15-17). Judæa is a land of rocks and caves, and it was not at all unusual for people to hide when an enemy overran the land. It is impossible, of course, to hide from God. Note the injunction to cease "from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of" (v. 22). Man cannot protect from the judgment of God. The only safety for all lies in repentance for sin, and trust in the mercy of God (Jas. 5:11). This is the day of God's mercy, but judgment is certain.

Continuing his account of the judgment, Isaiah shows its effect on Jerusalem. Instead of luxury there would be want. The mighty men would be taken away; incapable leaders would govern them; they would oppress one another; disrespect would be shown by youth toward age, and by the base toward the honourable. They would appeal in their distress to those who were in possession of most of this world's goods, to come to their aid as leaders; but would find no favourable response in the presence of the nation's ruin (3:2-8). Note the fulfilment of this in the time of the Babylonian conquest. God's word never fails. Let us remember that, as we read the unfulfilled portions of prophecy. May we also pay heed to the awful nature of sin in God's sight, with its fearful consequences manifested in this life, and in eternity. Jerusalem was destroyed, her people slain and scattered, with only the poor left in the land in a desperate plight. There was no doubt concerning the sin of the people: it was shown in their countenances, and declared as the sin of Sodom (v. 9). The face has been declared to be the index of character, and those who are at all observant can read it, and arrive at a conclusion without much trouble. The righteous will be saved in the judgment, while the wicked will suffer punishment. Then follows an indictment of the princes for their wickedness against the people (vs. 12-15). The Israelites were most unfortunate at times in their leaders, secular and religious, and suffered the consequences of their folly. Note the influence of present-day leadership, and the necessity for men of God in such positions.

The condition of the daughters of Zion is then described, together with the judgment meted out to them. They were haughty, worldly, and heedless of the teaching of God. Their condition is noted in their walk (v. 16); and their judgment is more severe, affecting their persons, their possessions, and their partners (vs. 17-26). They would be reduced from proud, well-dressed and adorned women, to sad, disillusioned, lonely, and poorly-dressed creatures. Note the sad condition of many of the women these days, with cigarette smoking, liquor-drinking, and other evils affecting them; and the fearful influence upon the children of such examples. Sin will again bring its evil consequences upon the nations. The scarcity of men, due to the slaughter of their ranks by the enemy, is strikingly illustrated by the action of the women in claiming the privilege of being called by the name of a man in order to remove their reproach (4:1). The women would outnumber the men to such an extent it would not be possible for all to secure husbands. This was more serious than it is esteemed to be now. War always depletes the male population, as was evidenced in the Great War. Note further the blessing promised for the remnant of Israel (vs. 2-6), particularly the references to the branch of the Lord (Is. 11:1; Jer. 23:5), the condition of the dwellers in Jerusalem, the action of God in purging the blood of Jerusalem, and the covert from the storm and the rain. The fulfilment is past, yet in Christ there is another fulfilment. He is a shelter unto His people. How may we escape future judgment?

A New Year's Gift to Point to A New Life

A gift at New Year's is as appropriate as at Christmas, and a book, providing it is a worthy book, is always in good taste. One can send a book to anyone without embarrassment. But a Christian would like, surely, to make a gift which would be beneficial to the recipient in a spiritual sense. What better, therefore, could you do than present your friends with a copy of "Other Little Ships"? We have heard already of conversions resulting from the perusal of the messages in this book. It is, indeed, doubtful if there is one message in it that has not been used of God to lead great numbers to Christ, and to build up the saints in their most holy faith.

A story book, however good, when read once, is usually laid aside. But such a book as this is likely to be read many times; and may continue to be a source of spiritual blessing in the household for years to come.

NOW PUBLISHED IN ENGLAND

"Other Little Ships" has recently been issued by Marshall, Morgan and Scott, London, England; and we have just received to-day a copy of *The Christian* of November 21st, in which "Other Little Ships" is reviewed. The article has also been sent us by friends, with the request that it be published; and we venture to reproduce that review here for the benefit of our readers.

"A CANADIAN PREACHER"

"It is always a risky thing to compare one man with another, particularly when both are preachers. We have heard Dr. Shields spoken of as 'the Canadian Spurgeon'. There are some among us even yet who could find no higher compliment than that for any minister of the Word. Consequently, we are a little jealous about its use. With this volume before us, however, we are inclined to confirm and to echo the judgment of those who, seeking to acknowledge the inspired genius of Dr. Shields, accord him such high honour as to class him with 'the prince of preachers'.

"'Other Little Ships' is a selection of sermons preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, the pastorate of which has been Dr. Shields' responsibility for a full quarter-century. Twenty-five years in one pulpit is sufficient time to test any man's ability. On the other hand, that church is indeed fortunate which can retain over so long a period the ministry of a man whose preaching is of such a standard.

"Dr. Shields has a reputation in England as well as in Canada. He is held in high esteem as a fearless leader in the controversy between scriptural supernaturalism and the destructive criticism of materialistic unbelief. He is known as a man with a sword—and that a highly-tempered blade that can be wielded with devastating effect. But this David can sing psalms as well as slay Goliaths. There are some men who cannot engage in defensive witness to God's unchanging truth without sacrificing all gentler qualities of the soul to an unattractive aggressiveness. These pulpit utterances of Dr. Shields plainly show that he is not of their number. The gospel is presented to the sinner in terms of loving appeal, and to the saint with a tender sympathy and understanding which breathe the very winsomeness of heaven.

"The preface of this most welcome volume informs us that the sermons selected have been 'specially used of God'. We cannot doubt it. And we are confident that, as these messages reach a new and larger circle than they have even yet influenced, they will continue to prove as honey-drops of gospel cheer and consolation."

WITNESS READERS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

GOSPEL WITNESS readers in Great Britain and Ireland who desire to obtain the book for Christmas should order it of Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 12 Paternoster Bldgs., London, E.C.4. The price is five shillings.

Canadian or American readers may order direct from THE GOSPEL WITNESS office. We print below an order form, offering FOUR COPIES OF "OTHER LITTLE SHIPS" FOR \$5.00 or, one copy and THE GOSPEL WITNESS to new (subscribers) for \$3.00.

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Perhaps you have four friends to whom you would like to give Dr. Shields' book as a Christmas gift. We are making a special offer of

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Single copies at \$1.50 will be treated in the same way.

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