

The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF EVANGELICAL PRINCIPLES
AND IN DEFENCE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.
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"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."—Romans 1:16.

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"Thy Name Is As Ointment Poured Forth"

We received Tuesday afternoon our annual letter from one of our sons in the faith, which reads as follows:

Hamilton, Ont.,
December 30th, 1935

"Rev. T. T. Shields,
Jarvis St. Baptist Church,
Toronto, Canada.

"My Dear Pastor:

"Greetings in the name of Him Whose 'name is as ointment poured forth', and to all the beloved saints at Jarvis Street.

"It will be twenty-four years now since that memorable night in your study when I as a lost sinner, unable to help myself, came to the lost sinner's Saviour, and in simple, childlike faith, claimed Him as my Saviour. Do you remember that evening? As soon as I was saved, I tore out of your study and into the church parlour where there was an after-meeting going on, and told all the gathering in no uncertain terms, how God in His matchless grace had just saved me. What an evening that was for me! I hardly knew how to contain the joy that flooded my soul.

"Now after twenty-four years of marvellous grace and shepherd care, I can still say, 'My beloved is mine, and I am his.' And the glory is just ahead—Hallelujah!

"Your wonderful exposition of the forty-fifth Psalm, the wedding Psalm, is still fresh and sweet; and will most surely be our actual experience in a soon coming day.

"In closing, I take this opportunity of once more commending you and your beloved people to God and His matchless grace for the coming year. May you all be daily conscious of His shepherd care and providential grace.

Your genuine son in the faith,

(Signed) _____"

"P.S. My own personal text for this year is, 'Thy name is as ointment poured forth'."

After some consideration, we have thought we could not do better than pass this on to our GOSPEL WITNESS family.

The Editor dropped in to the New Year's morning meeting in Jarvis Street, and gave this text as the motto for the year. The whole verse reads; "Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth." When Mary brought her alabaster box of spikenard, which was very precious, she broke it upon the head of the Saviour; and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. Thus if we examine and make full use of the name of Jesus, it will have the effect

of Mary's broken alabaster box; and His name will be to us "as ointment poured forth".

The text is so full of suggestion that we have preached from it many times, but we can say but little to disclose the richness of its content in the brief space at our command.

But how healing is the name of Jesus! Verily,

"It soothes our sorrows, heals our wounds."

Let our readers reflect but a moment upon the wounds and scars which this last year, and all the years, have left upon the spirit. Some of them may be but superficial; some of them very deep; and some perhaps have become as festering sores, as thorns in the flesh, which inflict a deep and constant pain. The name of Jesus may be applied as ointment to all such lacerations of the spirit; and it will prove "as ointment poured forth". Especially is this true of wounds which our own sins have inflicted. There is no other cure for these than the name of the Lord Jesus.

But the spouse in the Song speaks of "the savour of thy good ointments." The ointment not only healed, but carried with it a rich fragrance, and, like Mary's ointment, filled the house with its sweet odour. How distressing often are the atmospheres of life—we use the plural—the atmosphere of the home, of the school, of shop, and office—the place of daily occupation! How stifling sometimes these places are! And, alas! even the house of the Lord may sometimes have a religious atmosphere that is as fetid as the physical atmosphere of an ill-ventilated building. There are people, objectionable as the figure may be, who seem to carry an unpleasant atmosphere with them. The cure for all these ills is in the name of Jesus Christ. To meditate upon it, purifies our minds. To use it often in speech and song, sweetens our conversation. To be unashamed of confessing that Name amid all life's associations stills the voice of criticism and of censure, and silences the tongue of gossip and of slander; and will help to fill our spheres of life with triumphant hallelujahs.

Facing the New Year, let our souls exclaim:

"Jesus, my Shepherd, Saviour, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring."

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MOSES

A Sermon by Rev. E. E. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, December 29th, 1935

(Stenographically Reported)

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:
"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."—John 3:14, 15.

It is customary on this Sunday of the year to speak of the passing of the old year, and of the coming of the new. But we can learn lessons of the past year most accurately in the light of Calvary, and we shall be most thoroughly prepared for the coming year if we come to know Him, Whom to know is life eternal. Christ is the solution of all life's difficulties, the Guide along all life's way.

There is scarcely a circumstance in connection with the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and their journey through the wilderness to the promised land, which has not its antitype in the way of salvation by Christ Jesus. But no separate circumstance, no single incident or type, can be taken as illustrating all the redemptive work of Christ or the beauty of His character.

The high priest was a type of the great High Priest, but imperfect even in this single relation, for "they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

The brazen altar, the laver, the table of shewbread, the seven-branched candlestick, the ark of the covenant—all the furnishings of the tabernacle—foreshadow the salvation which was wrought by Christ. But no single one of these types set forth the entire story.

Our text recalls to us the circumstances of Moses' lifting up the serpent in the wilderness. I suppose Moses, at the time he obeyed the Lord's commandment, had no idea that he was furnishing the world with an illustration of Calvary. He simply obeyed the Lord's command. But if you contemplate it, you will see that the raising of the serpent on the pole falls far short of illustrating Calvary after all. There was no sacrifice connected with it; whereas the very basis of the work of Christ is the sacrifice which He made when He paid the price of man's redemption. But how marvellous that nearly fifteen hundred years before the event, God arranged that there should be a cross in the wilderness, something prophetic and typical of the redemption of the world by Christ Jesus! What a marvellous redemption must God have in mind when He actually typified it more than a millennium in advance!

I.

LET US LOOK INTO THIS STORY. Notwithstanding its imperfection as an illustration, the incident of the raising of the brazen serpent upon the pole in the wilderness does speak to us of the tragedy which had fallen upon humanity, which brought our Saviour from the skies. We cannot overlook the fact that the malady had come to Israel's camp through *fiery serpents*.

Surely we cannot remember that without thinking of that one who "brought death into the world, and all our woe". We read of "the fiery darts of the wicked", of "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world". These serpents which afflicted the Israelites must remind us of the originator of man's woe.

Then the fact that they were *serpents*, that the affliction came in that precise form. Does not the poison of the serpent speak to us of that which has inoculated the whole human family? As the poison from the serpent's tooth got into the blood, setting up an irritation and inflammation, affecting the entire body, and bringing the man into a condition which steadily grew worse, leading him on inevitably to death, so sin has poisoned the whole human family. We are all inoculated. We have all been bitten by the serpents. All men everywhere, apart from Christ, are going on to the inevitable end. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." "They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." We recognize there are degrees of sin, as there were degrees of sickness in Israel's camp due to the serpent's sting. Some still went about their work, some were desperately ill, and still others were at the point of death—but the end was inevitably the same for all. There was no remedy for the serpent's poison. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Death! Death! All men are condemned to die. There is not a man or woman in this place to-night outside of Christ, who is not condemned, and going on to eternal death.

And we Christians only half believe it. I heard a certain evangelist say on one occasion that he had been tackled by an infidel who said to him, "Mr. Brown, you say you believe the Book when it says that all men are lost. You say you believe the Book when it says that there is no way of salvation except through the Christ Whose story is told therein. I do not believe that you believe it. If I believed the Book, I would never rest. I would go out on the street, into the homes of the people—go everywhere—telling men of their lost condition, warning them to flee from the wrath to come, and telling them of the Christ Who died for human sin. I do not believe that you believe it."

But it is true. It is as true that "he that believeth not shall be damned", as that "he that believeth shall be saved". What we all need to-night is a new realization of the awful state of lost men, in order that we may be stirred up by the Spirit of God into a conscious-

ness of the need of men. Paul said, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." "Our God is a consuming fire." Outside of Christ there is no salvation. Outside of Christ and His precious blood, God Himself cannot save men. I pray God may give us a vision of the state of lost men.

I saw it once years ago, before I was converted. Day and night God's hand was heavy upon me, and I had visions of His terrors. Job said, "Thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions." It may be He is scaring some of you, that He is speaking to you in the night watches. I dreamed that somebody brought word into the house that Christ had come. I rushed into the streets. I saw the heavens blaze with the glory of the Christ. I opened my mouth in a vain effort to cry out—but I could not cry. I realized that I was lost—lost—lost—and going down into hell. I wakened, trembling with the terror of the second death. But God saved me; He has saved all those in this house who have put their trust in Him. Oh, that God would give us a vision of the state of lost men. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

We can find some analogy, strangely, between the serpent and the Lamb. There was, of course, no direct sacrifice in the raising of the brasen serpent upon the pole, and yet the sacrifice is suggested notwithstanding. There may be some significance in the fact that by the Lord's order, *the serpent was made of brass.* I wonder why? When Christ appeared to John in Patmos, His feet were as brass, as though they burned in a furnace. They tell us that brass in its white-heated state is insufferable to the human gaze. It speaks of His holiness. Brass may have spoken of the durability of His character, and in point of fact this serpent was durable; because it was preserved to the days of Hezekiah, and was an object of worship until good king Hezekiah destroyed it, and put it out of their sight.

The serpent was a cursed creature: "And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field." God said to Moses, "Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live." "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Christ was made a curse for us.

But the most significant thing is *the form of that which became the object of the Israelites' faith at that time. The serpent was an image of that one which brought sin into the world.* It speaks of Christ Who "became sin for us". He not only had sin put upon Him for our sakes, not only is it true that He "bore our sins in his own body on the tree", but God "made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him". I hope you Christians feel like shouting, Hallelujah, whenever you think of that text. Do you ever meditate upon it, try to fathom it? Do you marvel at the grace of God that could provide a salvation through the death of His Son, a death of ignominy and shame? "He made him to be sin for us"—as though He were the very embodiment of sin—"who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." God reckoned Him to be

the embodiment of sin in order that He might reckon us, sinners though we are, to be the very embodiment of righteousness. Oh, the wonder of it, that God should pass over our sins, and reckon us to be righteous for His sake! Sin is put away in Him; we are free from the law; we are dead to the law by the body of Christ. He has died for us, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God". Let us exult in it. Let us never forget it, but eternally praise God for "so great salvation".

II.

Let us look at SOME OF THE CONDITIONS UPON WHICH MEN WERE HEALED OF BODILY SICKNESS IN THE WILDERNESS, AND SEE THAT THE CONDITIONS ARE THE SAME AS THOSE ON WHICH MEN MAY BE HEALED OF SPIRITUAL MALADIES TO-DAY. Turn back the centuries. Here were the Israelites gathered together by the thousands; and the Lord, as a judgment, had sent fiery serpents into the camp: "They bit the people; and much people of Israel died." But when God gave the order to Moses, and he made the serpent of brass, set it upon the pole, and it was set up in the camp, "it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived".

Here he is, the man who has his hand bitten. He says, "That man across the camp had a bad bite, his hand was terribly injured. I could see the inflammation working. He looked at the serpent of brass, and was healed. I believe it, but I have only a touch here; I am not going to bother about it. There is no use being in a hurry about it. If I find the poison working too rapidly, I will get me away toward the serpent, and will look and be healed. But there is time enough yet. I am going to the other end of the camp. The wound is not serious, I am in no immediate danger. Certainly I will look at the serpent by and by. The bite is deadly, but not in the immediate future. I have business to transact, many things to see about—there is time enough yet."

I can see that man going on, not realizing the deadly nature of that with which his veins have been inoculated. He is at the farther end of the camp, with the wound becoming worse, with his step becoming a little hesitant, and the whole effect of the poison spreading throughout his frame; then his coming to a realization of the fact that after all it may be serious. I see him turn about and run as fast as he can toward the other end of the camp where the brasen serpent has been raised upon the pole—but before he can reach the spot where he could see the serpent he dies in his tracks. Believing in the remedy for others, and half believing for himself, he yet paved the way to his own death by his procrastination.

Men and women, hear me. It is possible to reach a place where it is impossible to turn to God. It is possible so to harden the heart that you cannot repent. It is possible to go on until God will deny you repentance. It is possible, not only to "grieve", but in some cases, finally to "quench" the Spirit of God. "My spirit shall not always strive with man." If you would come, come now. No gospel preacher in the world is authorized to offer you salvation beyond the present. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Harden not your heart. Come to God while time and opportunity are yours.

A member of this church told me last week of an incident which came under his notice years ago, of a man who had been attending religious services where an opportunity to accept and confess Christ was given. This man rejected the message, and went out. He was later cut down in an accident, and when found was crying out, "I am lost—lost—lost." An ambulance was called and men rode with him to the hospital; and on the way he still cried, "I am lost." He died with the cry upon his lips.

God promises us mercy now: he promises no mercy to-morrow. God takes men at unexpected times. He gives men opportunity to repent and turn to Him: it is His prerogative to withdraw that invitation.

Here is another man who says, "Do not tell me a story like that. I could understand a doctor's coming along, and healing the serpent's bite with curative herbs. I could understand that through the application of a poultice, the malady would be healed, and the man's life saved. But do not ask me to believe that by a look at that inanimate object my trouble would be cured. I do not believe—I will not believe." I can see that man, bitten and condemned to diē, go out and gather herbs in an effort to find an antidote for the poison that is fevering his system. But death is inevitable in either case. It does not matter whether men believe for others and half believe for themselves, and procrastinate until they are damned; or whether they wholly refuse to believe God's gospel, and go on fighting against Him—and go down into utter darkness and perdition—the issue is the same. "He that believeth not, shall be damned."

In the case of the Israelites, *the healing was absolutely restricted to those who looked at the serpent of brass.* Nobody else was healed in all Israel's camp. That look was a look of faith. The man simply believed that, at God's command, the serpent had been set up for his healing by a look—and he looked. He said to himself, "This man has looked, that man has looked—and they have been healed. I have seen the thing done. God has said it, and that is sufficient. Moreover, I have seen men healed. The word has gone out that whosoever looketh, shall be healed. That includes me. I will make my way to the serpent. It may seem foolish, I may not be able to explain it, but I do not care. I want to be healed of this malady—and there is no other way." I can see him go—"and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." It was a complete salvation.

That is what happens to those who look to Christ. They live! They live! There is not merely the healing of the outside, not the cleaning up of some symptoms, not the sloughing off of a bad habit: it is the cure of the disease, deliverance from death, salvation for the whole man. "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost (completely) that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."

Salvation—the salvation that is in Christ—means not alone the cancellation of the debt of sin, but the *incom- ing of His power to keep us.* "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." You who are saved, but are having a hard fight, look anew to Him for power over sin—as you looked to Him for salvation in the beginning. It is our privilege to be free, to be saved from the dominating power of sin.

Then, of course, *it is for everybody.* If it were not, I would not be in the company of the redeemed. "It came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten *any* man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." There was no restriction as to age, wealth, power, prestige. "If a serpent had bitten *any* man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." There is hope for you, hope for me, for our Lord said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Do you not see, *it was because there was a sacrifice that He can be the object of our faith?* This is speaking of the matter rather from the manward side. Christ, lifted up, becomes the object of our faith; and all we have to do in order to be saved is to look to Him: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." He is able to save. Look to Him. He is all powerful; He is a personal Saviour. We are not saved by the acceptance of abstract truths. All the gospel gathers around, and is centered in Him. All the promises are in Him. All the power is in Him. All of salvation is in Him. He is salvation to the ends of the earth. If you accept Him, you have all. Everything is in Christ "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." What a Saviour is this Christ of ours! Is not that a salvation worth having? Will you not look to Him now?

Many years ago there was a young man who was a seeker after God. He went from church to church; he studied the Bible; he wanted to find salvation—but could not find it. One morning he set out for church, a snowy day. Because he could not make his way to the place for which he originally set out, he turned aside to a Primitive Methodist chapel. After a while an illiterate man came into the pulpit and gave out his text, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." The preacher seemed not to know what to say, so he repeated the text again and again, saying, "It does not require much effort to look." Then his eye fell upon this miserable young man in the congregation, and directing himself to the lad alone, he said, "Young man, you look miserable. Look to Jesus; look and live." And Spurgeon, for it was he, testifying years after in a great gathering in London, said, "In that hour I looked—and lived."

In every Christian life there has come that moment when we have seen that salvation was all of grace, that we could contribute nothing toward our salvation, that all God wanted of us was to trust Him, to direct the look of faith toward Him, to count the thing done as He counts it done. Will you do it, unsaved one? Will you believe, on the Lord Jesus Christ? "As Moses

lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

"There is life for a look at the Crucified One,
There is life at this moment for thee;
Then look, sinner, look unto Him and be saved,
Unto Him who was nailed to the tree.

"Oh, why was He there as the Bearer of sin,
If on Jesus thy guilt was not laid?
Oh, why from His side flowed the sin-cleansing blood,
If His dying thy debt has not paid?

"It is not thy tears of repentance or prayers,
But the Blood, that atones for the soul;
On Him, then, who shed it, thou mayest at once
Thy weight of iniquities roll.

"Then doubt not thy welcome, since God has declared
There remaineth no more to be done;
That once in the end of the world He appeared,
And completed the work He begun.

"Then take with rejoicing from Jesus at once
The life everlasting He gives;
And know with assurance thou never canst die,
Since Jesus, thy Righteousness, lives."

LOOKING FOR PROSPECTS

Men in business, particularly salesmen, form the habit of looking upon people generally as possible customers. Some of them have many ingenious ways of discovering whether the people to whom they speak could, by any means, be made into customers.

Surely that is the attitude believers, everywhere and always, should assume toward the people they meet. It ought to be a matter of concern to us to discover whether the stranger already possesses eternal life; and, if not, whether he desires salvation.

We were somewhat rebuked recently when a taximan, almost immediately upon our entering his car, introduced the subject; and told us that he and his wife spend many an hour in the evening discussing religion, and wondering what it really means to be saved. He began the conversation by referring to the fact that the Emperor of Abyssinia was "supposed to be a good Christian", and from that proceeded to enquire what is involved in being a Christian. We had a most interesting conversation, and endeavoured to explain to him the way of life; and extracted a promise that he would see us again. We were but a few minutes in his car, and yet what an opportunity that afforded!

So may we all discover that the people we meet with daily are confused by the many forms of religion bearing the Christian name, and by the fact that few who are called Christians seem to be really interested in them; but who, notwithstanding, are really desirous of knowing what they must do to be saved. Let us keep this in mind, and assume that every one we meet in the most casual way is a prospect, a soul for whom Christ died, and to whom perhaps already the convicting Spirit is speaking.

ODDMENTS

By E. E. Shields

JANUARY

January derives its name from Janus, a Roman god, who took precedence of all other gods. He had two faces—one youthful, looking forward; the other, aged, looking backward. He was the god of all beginnings.

ARE YOU MOODY OR SANKEY?

There was a certain old lady whose declining days were brightened by the companionship of her canary,

which sang beautifully, and was always cheerful and active. She called the canary Sankey: "Because," she said, "it was not Moody."

SHALL WE HAVE A NATIONAL GRUMBLING DAY?

"How it would revolutionize life if we could agree to have one day a year for murmuring and complaining, for letting out the flood of pent-up annoyances and grudges and slights, and be thankful the rest of the time! How much better than to try to be thankful one day by law and grumble by impulse for three hundred and sixty-four! Let us to-day sound a thankful note to ring through the year."

—Maltbie D. Babcock.

DWELLING WITH THE ROSE

A Persian fable says: one day
A wanderer found a lump of clay
So redolent of sweet perfume,
Its odor scented all the room.
"Who art thou?" was his quick demand,
"Art thou some gem from Samarcand,
Or spikenard in this rude disguise,
Or other costly merchandise?"
"Nay! I am but a lump of clay."
"Then whence this wondrous sweetness—say?"
"Friend, if the secret I disclose,
I have been dwelling with the Rose."

—Selected.

Carlyle declared that for one man who will stand prosperity there are a hundred who will endure adversity.

GOD, THE FATHER

There is, therefore, a very real sense in which we may give thanks for God's holy anger. Our friends smile upon our sins, and so help to nourish them. They are tolerant with our stains, and so keep us from purity. But God loves us in such wise as to be intolerant of everything that would destroy us.

—J. H. Jowett.

BEHIND THE SCENES

There are those that have been laid aside from active duty—who have no district to visit in, no church to preach in, no mission to serve in. Through sickness, through poverty, through the requirement to attend on others, they have been retained indoors—their names are not enrolled. Lament not that thy life has been lived behind the scenes! It is behind the scenes that all great things are born. Many a fireside existence has taught the belief of immortality—taught it by the mere spectacle of moral beauty. Jacob has gained more by his night vigil than by his merchandise. His deeds in the exchange never touched the world; but the world has been awakened by his vision on the couch of clay. He has bloomed in his brokenness; he has conquered in his concealment; he has flourished in his frailty; he has soared in his silence; he has reigned in his repose.—George Matheson.

ARE YOU POOR ENOUGH TO BE SAVED?

The reason great numbers of people are not saved is that they will not come down to God's price. If you

have nothing, you may have everything with God. But if you have anything, you shall have nothing. "The rich he hath sent empty away." There is—or was—in Montreal, Quebec, a home for consumptives, called, "The Grace Dart Home", which operates upon this principle of grace. In this home it is a positive disqualification to possess anything in the world. Applicants are carefully questioned, and if they have a friend who can help, or have any means in the world of helping themselves, they are refused admission. But the door of this home is ever open to those who are in the last extremity—who have no help, and no helper.

This is God's price of admission to His salvation and the Father's home. The price which He paid for our salvation was so infinite that we insult Him even by the thought that we are able to add to it. But if you have nothing, come and welcome:

"Ho! ye needy, come and welcome,
God's free bounty glorify;
True belief, and true repentance,
Every grace that brings us nigh,
Without money,
Come to Jesus Christ and buy."

ETERNAL JUSTICE NEVER MISCARRIES

A very pitiful story came from France some years ago, of a certain village blacksmith who was wrongfully shot as a German spy in 1914. After the lapse of many years his innocence was established, and proclaimed. But who can bring him back?

How entirely dissimilar to the operation of God's justice is this incident! He knows infallibly the measure of human guilt. There is no possibility of escape for the guilty. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." And just as impossible is it for the justice of God to err by imposing the penalty upon any whose penalty already has been paid by Calvary's crimson stream. We are saved by God's infinite mercy—but also by His unerring justice.

And God's justice is in operation, if you please, in all the course of the Christian's daily life. Our daily cleansing is based upon the eternal satisfaction which has been made by the Saviour's precious blood. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and JUST to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Our confession of our sin immediately brings into operation the justice as well as the mercy of God through the blood of His cross.

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

Central, London

It is a joy to visit a growing field and see what progress its plants are making. This joy in a spiritual way came to the writer on visiting the Central Baptist Church, London, on Sunday, December 29th. Since my last visit the Central brethren have greatly improved the efficiency of their building by adding an annex of two storeys. The upper storey contains class rooms only, but the lower storey has its class rooms ranged round a central auditorium. This is used for prayer meetings, and by folding doors can be opened into the main church so that a good number of people may from it see the preacher. In this way the opening exercises of the Sunday-school can be conducted with the Bible Class, which meets in the church auditorium, and the older children gathered in the annex. A couple of years ago the

church was employing one large bus in order to bring the young people to the Bible School on Sunday morning, inasmuch as the London street cars do not start business until ten a.m. At the present time the number of buses has been increased to six, and these will often bring from forty to sixty each.

In spite of times of depression, the erection of this building was so arranged that the Central brethren owed only \$1,500 on it when it was opened. Surely the Lord touched the hearts of friends and members to provide in this way accommodation which makes possible the continuance and increase of the Bible School.

From the spiritual side, the work is progressing rapidly. An aid to this is the regular radio broadcast over CFPL, London Free Press (660 kilos.) from 1.45 to 2.30 each Sunday afternoon. The broadcast is made from the home of Dr. Frederick Egner, Mus.D., where he uses his studio pipe organ for his instrumental and vocal work. This station, we are told, has an audience not only in the local district, but in other districts, particularly to the south and west; so do many thousands every Sunday afternoon hear the gospel from Pastor McGinlay. An immediate effect upon the Central Church from the radio work has been a material increase in the number of strangers to be seen at a Sunday evening service. For a number of weeks running there have been some six to ten professions of faith each Sunday evening.

Mr. McGinlay is popular as an evangelist outside of his own congregation and receives far more invitations than he is able to fill.

—W. G. B.

Briscoe St., London

The blessing of the Lord continues at Briscoe St. Baptist Church, London. This is revealed in the continual growth of the Bible School. The dividing of classes has been decided upon with the incoming of new teachers in the work of the Lord. The young men's class in particular is steadily on the increase.

On Sunday, December 8th, six recent converts responded to the invitation for baptism and church membership. These included two married couples, and a brother and a sister. Sunday, December 15th, was a memorable day in the work of the Lord. Both services witnessed splendid congregations. The morning service was broadcast over CFPL when the pastor preached a stirring message that brought a good response from radio listeners. At the evening service six were baptized, and seven were given the right hand of fellowship. In response to the invitation another husband and wife came forward. The ordinance of baptism was observed on Sunday, December 22nd.

While Briscoe Street Church is located in South London, its ministry is becoming city-wide with the passing of time. Radio listeners from all parts of the city, and some from out of town, are in attendance at almost every service. For every evidence of the good hand of God upon us we are truly thankful.

—Harry Watson.

Maple Hill

The Maple Hill Baptist Church brethren have started services on Sunday afternoons. They are branching out into new districts, and are planning in the new year to have cottage gospel services in some of the communities around them. At present there are two splendid openings for that sort of work.

Services have been started at Baldwin, about nine miles from Maple Hill. The people have turned out well, averaging fifty at a meeting. At one recent Sunday evening service there were ninety present. Many of these people are unsaved, and the prayers of God's people are requested for them.

Galt

Student John Greening of the Toronto Baptist Seminary was a visitor in Galt during the Christmas holidays, and preached at the morning service of the Galt Regular Baptist Church. In the evening the pastor, Mr. A. J. Burnham, preached, and one young man was converted. It was a day of rich blessing, when the Spirit of God was present with manifest power.

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

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No. 1

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, Editor

Lesson 3 First Quarter January 19th, 1936

THE LORD'S VINEYARD

Lesson Text: Isaiah, chapter 5.

Golden Text: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"—Isaiah 5:20.

Bible School Reading: Isaiah 5:1-17.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Lev. 25:8-17; Tuesday—Jer. 12:7-17; Wednesday—Joel 1:1-7; Thursday—Hosea 7:1-10; Friday—Mark 12:1-12; Saturday—Luke 7:24-35.

THE VINEYARD OF THE LORD (vs. 1-7)

Before pronouncing a series of woes upon certain companies of his people on account of their sins, Isaiah portrays his nation as God's vineyard, planted by the divine hand, but despoiled and ruined because of its fruitlessness. The illustration would be understood by those in whose hearing it was given, and its lessons are simple enough for our comprehension. Our Lord used a similar illustration in depicting the relationship of His own to Himself (John 15:1-8), and the vineyard is used to describe the sphere of the servant of God's labour (Matt. 20:1-16). Respecting its application in the case, several things may be noted. First, it signifies divine ownership of Israel. That nation was peculiarly the Lord's (Deut. 14:2). He had chosen its people in Abraham (Gen. 12:2), and definitely set His seal upon them as His own (Gen. 17:10). The child of God in the present day has also been chosen (Eph. 1:4), and sealed (Eph. 1:13). Second, it implies divine purpose. God desired fruit from His vineyard. He had separated the nation unto Himself, that it might glorify Him, and be the vehicle for His plan of redemption (Matt. 1:1). Each saint of God has been separated in a very real sense for the carrying out of God's purpose in life (Eph. 1:4), and in service (I Thess. 1:9). In this sense, the saints of both Old and New Testament periods were and are a peculiar people (Titus 2:14). We should exercise with care our divine mission.

In the third place, we note the divine labour. God did not plant His vineyard, and then permit it to grow as it would. He made every preparation for its success, and bestowed much labour upon its cultivation. And in the history of the nation we see abundant testimony of this. We have but to trace the hand of God in relation to His people to be convinced of His marvellous kindness and consideration. We observe His power, His love, His patience, His longsuffering, and His wisdom. He was truly great unto Israel. He has manifested a similar attitude toward His people in the present day, and His love is made known to the wicked (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8). In the fourth place, we observe the divine disappointment. The Lord had expected grapes from His cultivated vine, but wild grapes were produced instead. Israel was the most highly privileged of nations, with a direct revelation from God, and blessed with His guidance; but the people backslid, and apostatized from His worship, and gave themselves up to idol-worship, with all its abominations. They declined to live up to, or in accordance with, their privileges; and chose to follow instead the dictates of their own hearts. Note the possibility of acting similarly in this enlightened age. We require constantly to read our Bible in order to know God's revealed will, and then in simple faith, and in the power of the Lord, we need to carry it out. In the fifth and last place, we note the divine judgment. The vineyard was laid waste, its walls were broken down, briars and thorns were permitted to grow in its soil, and many feet were allowed to tread it down. This is a vivid picture of Israel's condition after her enemies had entered her land, and overthrown her as a nation (Lam. 5:1-22). Judgment is coming upon those who reject Christ (2 Tim. 4:1); but the child of God must remember that for him there will be a judgment of works, at which time some will be rewarded, while others will

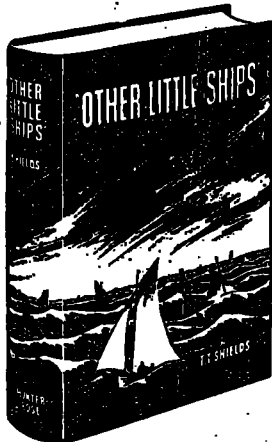
suffer loss (I Cor. 3:13-15). May we so love as to please God now, and receive His reward at that day!

WOES RESPECTING ISRAEL'S SINS (vs. 8-30)

Six woes are pronounced in this section against the sins of Israel. The first relates to the sin of avarice (vs. 8-10). Some there were who joined house to house, and field to field, with the purpose of owning as much of the land as possible, and so live in privacy and dignity to the detriment of those less fortunate. To these, the warning is given of the forthcoming barrenness of the soil, and desolation thereof, which would fall upon it as a judgment for their avarice. The jubilee year was given as a means of preventing just such a condition (Lev. 25:10); but evidently it was not respected in Isaiah's day. Note the same spirit in this day, manifest in business, political, and social life (I Tim. 6:10). The second woe relates to the sin of intemperance (vs. 11-17). Several things are mentioned in relation thereto. The drinking was of a determined, continuous kind. They rose up "early in the morning", and continued until night, "till wine inflame them". They also had music at their drunken revelries. But "they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands". Man cannot sin and enjoy God's presence: so those drunkards left Him out of their pleasures, and forgot His claim on them. Note the intemperance of the present day, with the constant temptation of the beer-parlours for old and young, men and women. The fellowship of God is never enjoyed by those who frequent such places, or partake of such demoralizing liquid. Observe further the punishment of those drunkards in captivity and death. At the invasion of the Babylonians, this took place. Other nations have been dragged down in a similar manner. Liquor is always a curse. It never uplifts, and it always degrades. Every saint of God, and every person who wishes well for his nation, should be its implacable enemy.

The third woe relates to the sin of obstinate defiance of God (vs. 18, 19). The persons indicated were evidently plunging deeper and deeper into sin, and defying God to punish them. The ancient rabbins stated, "An evil inclination is at first like a fine hair string, but the finishing like a cart rope." Indicating the ever-increasing power of sin when submission is given to it. Sin is lawlessness, and inevitably leads to open rebellion against God. This may be noted in individual lives; it is also to be observed in the history of Israel and other nations; and will be manifest worldwide at the end of the age (2 Thess. 2:7, 8). We must be on guard against the deceitfulness of sin (Heb. 3:13). The fourth woe relates to the sin of confounding right and wrong, with a preference for the wrong (v. 20). This would be evident in the attitude of the idolaters and other sinners, and is manifest in our day in the case of those who follow false teaching. They "call evil good, and good evil". Note the danger of such an attitude, together with its heinous sinfulness, and its present prevalence (2 Pet. 2:1).

The fifth woe relates to the sin of self-deceit (v. 21). Such are "wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight". Such an attitude manifests pride, and closes the mind against the reception of instruction displeasing to it. The Pharisees in our Lord's day are illustrations of this. A humble spirit is essential to true learning, and particularly to absorption of the teaching of God. Pride is condemned, and humility is enjoined (Luke 18:9-14). Man has nothing of which to be proud, but he has many things to make him humble. Note the foolishness of self-conceit, self-sufficiency, self-will, and self-righteousness. The sixth and last woe pertains again to the sin of intemperance (vs. 22-30). It is probable there were in those days, as in this day, men who boasted of their capacity to drink liquor without being overcome thereby. They were "mighty to drink wine". This woe is uttered concerning them. They were evidently leaders, members of the magistracy, for their public work was affected by their evil habits. They justified the "wicked for reward", and took away the "righteousness of the righteous from him". This meant corruption of the course of justice. Liquor always has a detrimental effect on individual and national life; and inevitably accentuates the evils of society, leading to moral degradation and divine judgment. The law of the Lord is also cast away by such persons; for only those love it who live pure lives. A description of the divine judgment, in the overthrow of the nation, concludes the chapter. How may we take a strong stand in the face of present-day sins?



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