

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.
\$2.00 Per Year, Postpaid, to any address. 5c Per Single Copy.

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.
Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada.

Vol. 14, No. 44

TORONTO, MARCH 12, 1936

Whole Number 721

"COLLECTIVE SECURITY"?

No thoughtful person can wholly escape the uneasiness occasioned throughout the world by the actions of Germany in general, and especially by her latest act of lawlessness in remilitarizing the Rhineland. A very grave responsibility rests upon the world's statesmen today. Everyone to whom prayer is not merely a theory, but a privilege of priceless value, may well continuously pray, "Scatter thou the people that delight in war."

In the view of some it may appear to be beyond the province of a paper like THE GOSPEL WITNESS to pronounce any opinion on such matters. But a somewhat extended experience has shown us the wisdom of comparing the judgment of experts on any matter with the common-sense opinion of laymen. Even premiers and foreign ministers make mistakes, as the Laval-Hoare incident of a little while ago plainly proved. Premier Baldwin frankly acknowledged that the proposal involved was a mistake which would never be revived. It was the collective common sense of the British people, and not the skill of diplomats, nor the unique discernment of supposedly expert statesmen, which saved Britain and France from a course which would have been as foolish as it was unethical. In all walks and departments of life, the principle of Shamgar's oxgoad, and David's sling and stone, which proved superior to all approved military weapons and methods, still occasionally obtains.

There is an ancient passage which records the fact that while others lectured Job, Elihu, the Buzite, for a long time remained silent in the presence of men whom he felt were his superiors; and he explained his silence thus:

"I was afraid, and durst not shew you mine opinion. I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom. But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment. Therefore I said, Hearken to me; I also will shew mine opinion. Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst ye searched out what to say."

Many of our readers will recall incidents in their own experience when it was given them to see clearly the solution of a problem, while they stood amazed at the blindness of the expert. Of course, the expert has his place: we are only justifying the expression of the lay opinion.

There is another classic passage to which we would direct attention:

"This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me: There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man. Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard. The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools. Wisdom is better than weapons of war; but one sinner destroyeth much good."

This is our apology for presuming to write upon so great a matter as now confronts the statesmen of Europe particularly, but, indirectly at least, the statesmen of the world. When the Great War was still in progress, about October, 1918, and when the Armistice was first mooted, this Editor was preaching in Spurgeon's Tabernacle, London, England; and one Sunday evening expressed the opinion that the world would rue the day on which terms of peace should be discussed with Germany anywhere outside Berlin. There need have been no more bloodshed, but as a prerequisite to the discussion of peace, the German army might have been required to surrender its arms; and when the Allied Armies had taken possession of Berlin, peace terms could have been discussed there.

We have not changed our opinion. We believe that it has been justified by the logic of events. British thought has been poisoned by the discussions of pacificism which are at the poles from Christianity, and are indeed, philosophically, distinctively, anti-Christian. The failure to recognize sin for what it is, and the necessity for its punishment in any just system of government, has taken much of the iron out of British blood, and has led people to substitute tongues for strong arms. Hence we have found men condemning the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, and justifying Germany for refusing to submit to such severity.

That Germany has experienced no change of heart, her recent history has abundantly proved. Can anyone therefore doubt that, had Germany been victorious, she would have imposed upon the Allies much severer terms than were contained in the Versailles Treaty? We do not

believe the severity of that Treaty had anything to do with Germany's present development. The terms of the Treaty have been repeatedly violated by Germany, and there can be no doubt that she would have repudiated any treaty, no matter how mild, that sought to curb her ambitions, as soon as she was strong enough to do so. We greatly fear that sooner or later the world will discover that the League of Nations is really a league of incompatibles, and that while it may serve some useful purpose in small affairs, it will prove utterly inadequate to cope with such matters as the Italo-Ethiopia situation, or with such a problem as that now raised by Germany on the Rhine. One has grown weary of reading the reports of the League of Nations' discussions. It reminds us very much of the meetings of many religious Committees and Boards who so often talk all day, and do nothing. For, after all the awesome discussions of the effectiveness of "sanctions," the fact remains that Italy practically has Ethiopia under her conquering heel. The League of Nations may have retarded Mussolini's movements somewhat, but it has offered him no effective opposition; and the reports one reads of the wholesale slaughter of the Ethiopians, whose only demand was that they be allowed to live their lives in their own way, and in peace, must fill every man and woman that has the semblance of a conscience, with horror.

If, for the sake of analysis, such a procedure could be reduced to the action of one man, or, say, a small group of men, defying the law of the land, can it be supposed that the authorities in any civilized country would negotiate with outlaws?

But now the point of interest is transferred from Abyssinia to the Rhineland. Can anyone blame France for her attitude in this matter? If a man had had half his family murdered in their beds by bullets fired from the window of a house next door, and the murderers had subsequently been driven from their place of vantage, if some day he should find the house once more occupied, and armed men standing in the window, would he not be justified in feeling some resentment and alarm? But Germany now proposes to return to the League, and help keep peace in Western Europe. Perhaps that means that she will not fire out of her front windows, so long as she is left free to bombard her neighbors in the rear.

But who is it that makes these promises? A statesman? So-called perhaps. But in reality, a murderer, reeking with blood up to the elbows, who will promise anything that will give him time to complete his plans for further depredations, but who will break every promise he makes the moment it suits his convenience, or as soon as he thinks he may do so with impunity.

If Hitler is permitted to continue his military occupation of the Rhine, what effect will that have? It may put an end to all division in France, temporarily at least; but it will make France more suspicious, and more determined to defend herself, than ever. What effect will it have in Germany? It will be accepted as another victory for Hitler, and will tend to the unification of conflicting parties in Germany. There is nothing succeeds like success, and Hitler's daring remilitarization of the Rhine will enormously increase his prestige in Germany, and make him a greater menace to European peace than ever.

And if Germany returns to the League, what then? Why does Hitler propose it? We have heard much of Germany's present military strength on land and in the

air, and of her increased strength on the sea. But one need not be an expert to know that Germany cannot possibly have the resources that would enable her to stand a prolonged siege. We are of the opinion that she is like a bandit hunted by the police, who has a few dollars at his command, and who, notwithstanding he may feel somewhat hungry, decides to invest his all in a pistol and a supply of ammunition with the purpose of shooting his way to freedom through a police cordon in a very short time. But time would be an element with him, and should he fail to do it quickly, the pangs of hunger would soon bring him down. It must be a fact that Germany is economically incapable of withstanding the ring of iron which her own lawless ambitions have forged around her.

What would be likely to follow Germany's return to the community of nations known as the League of Nations? She would recover her respectability. Her foreign trade would very soon revive, for no one disputes Germany's ability to compete with others in the markets of the world. She would thus recover her economic strength; and by so doing, would be preparing herself for the stroke of vengeance which manifestly she now purposes in her heart. Can anyone imagine a greater folly than to facilitate her preparation toward this end?

No one outside official government circles can have the information as to Germany's present military strength, which is available to the British Government, and therefore one must speak with reserve. The Government may have reasons, or think it has reasons, which amply justify its present course; but to our lay mind British foreign policy just now seems to be dangerous to the last degree. When a burglar breaks into a house containing much treasure, it may on the principle of giving all for one's life, seem wise to accept his terms, namely, to keep quiet while he fills his bags with all one's treasure; but is it not possible to pay too great a price even for one's life itself? We are of the opinion that if British policy prevails, and Hitler is allowed to consolidate his gains on the banks of the Rhine, it will be but a little while before he will demand other concessions. There is another Old Testament story of a king whose brutal and ever-increasing demands reminds one of Hitler's methods. Here it is:

"And Benhadad the king of Syria gathered all his host together: and there were thirty and two kings with him, and horses, and chariots: and he went up and besieged Samaria, and warred against it. And he sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel into the city, and said unto him, Thus saith Benhadad, Thy silver and thy gold is mine thy wives also and thy children, even the goodliest, are mine. And the king of Israel answered and said, My lord, O king, according to thy saying, I am thine, and all that I have. And the messengers came again, and said, Thus speaketh Benhadad, saying, Although I have sent unto thee, saying, Thou shalt deliver me thy silver, and thy gold, and thy wives, and thy children; yet I will send my servants unto thee to-morrow about this time, and they shall search thine house, and the houses of thy servants; and it shall be, that whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes, they shall put it in their hand, and take it away.

"Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land, and said, Mark, I pray you, and see how this man seeketh mischief: for he sent unto me for my wives, and for my children, and for my silver, and for my gold; and I denied him not. And all the elders and all the people said unto him, Hearken not unto him, nor consent. Wherefore he said unto the messengers of Benhadad, Tell my lord the king, All that thou didst send for to thy servant at the first I will do: but this thing I may not do.

And the messengers departed, and brought him word again. And Benhadad sent unto him, and said, The gods do so unto me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people that follow me. And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."

We were glad to read that one of the French statesmen had spoken by radio to the people of Germany. That is an excellent plan. Hitler's infamous "blood purge" of a couple of years ago, not only showed what he is at heart, that it were as reasonable to expect consideration, or any degree of faithfulness from him as from Satan himself; but it showed too that Germany is not a unit behind him. They are ruled by fear. There must be millions of people in Germany who have no heart for Hitler's slaughter-house programme. He has at present the whip-hand, and they are helpless; but we refuse to believe that the whole German people can be in sympathy with Hitler's lawlessness.

Many of the finest citizens in Canada are of German extraction, many of them literally of German birth. Some of them left the Fatherland to get away from its militarism. We have no more useful or loyal citizens in Canada than those who have come from Germany. And there may be millions of the same sort still in Germany who hate Hitlerism just as cordially as any Anglo-Saxon can hate it. Is it not the duty of the statesmen of the world to withstand such lawlessness as that of Hitler and Mussolini, and to endeavour to restore the nations to sanity? We think it would be an excellent plan to follow the French example, and make an appeal to the German people.

If we had our way, we would join with France in sending Hitler an ultimatum; and since Hitler has resorted to barbarous methods, we would frame that ultimatum in rather a primitive fashion. We would serve Hitler, and Goebbels, and Goering, and the leading Nazi officials with notice that he must immediately evacuate his troops from the Rhineland, and that if he refused so to do, within a given time, military measures would be applied to force him; and we would inform him that if, in such an event the life of one single soldier was sacrificed, he and his aides would be held personally responsible; and that the primary condition of any discussions of peace would be the delivering up of Hitler, and Goebbels, and Goering, and such other of their fellow-murderers as could be named, for trial like common criminals, and that on being found guilty, they would be hanged like any other murderer.

In the United States a year ago, or thereabout, the police of the country for some time hunted a man called Dillinger, whom they described as "public enemy number one". But Dillinger was an amiable and inoffensive gentleman in comparison with Hitler.

There is a very interesting and suggestive narrative in Holy Writ which illustrates a principle which we think might well be applied by statesmen of our day. The story reads thus:

"And David said to Abishai, Now shall Sheba the son of Bichri do us more harm than did Absalom: take thou thy lord's servants, and pursue after him, lest he get him fenced cities, and escape us. And there went out after him Joab's men, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men: and they went out of Jerusalem, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri. . . . And he went through all the tribes of Israel unto Abel, and to Bethmaachah, and all the Berites: and they were gathered together, and went also after him. And

they came and besieged him in Abel of Bethmaachah, and they cast up a bank against the city, and it stood in the trench: and all the people that were with Joab battered the wall, to throw it down. Then cried a wise woman out of the city, Hear, hear; say, I pray you unto Joab, Come near hither, that I may speak with thee. And when he was come near unto her, the woman said, Art thou Joab? And he answered, I am he. Then she said unto him, Hear the words of thine handmaid. And he answered, I do hear. Then she spake saying, They shall surely ask counsel at Abel; and so they ended the matter. I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel: why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord? And Joab answered and said, Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy. The matter is not so: but a man of mount Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name, hath lifted up his hand against the king, even against David; deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall. Then the woman went unto all the people in her wisdom. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast it out to Joab. And he blew a trumpet, and they retired from the city, every man to his tent. And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king."

The wise woman talked to Joab over the wall, and Joab talked to her. Why should not a proclamation of peace be broadcast to the German people? And who knows that there might be found someone in Germany like this peaceful woman, who would find some way of disposing of Hitler? As some people read this they will be filled with horror. There are people in our day who are so pacifically inclined that they would be kind to everybody in the world, murderers included, *except the victims of the murderers*. Hitler is a murderer. Of all those who have been hanged by the neck "until they were dead", by the decision of a British court of justice, not one was ever worthier of a judicial death than this unspeakable criminal, Adolf Hitler.

Admittedly, such a course as was pursued by Joab, with the help of the wise woman of Abel, would be difficult. But it would be the only just course; and, however British and other statesmen may endeavour to avoid war, and whatever compromises they may make, they will only postpone the evil day. And when it comes at last it will only be the worse for the postponement. We do not believe that the people of any nation, as such, desire war; but such mad men as Hitler and Mussolini have taken their respective nations by the throat, and rendered them helpless. The world's peace is being threatened, not by nations with a lust for war, but by a few mad-men.

But are peace-loving nations to hold converse with such outlaws? We believe that Germany will yet punish herself, that the people of Germany sooner or later will deal with Hitler, as did the wise woman of Abel with Sheba, the son of Bichri. We can only hope they will do so before he sets the world on fire.

But what of the League of Nations? Is there no hope of the peace of the world being established through that instrumentality? We believe the doctrine of collective security is a worthy ideal. To make the strength of each the strength of all, and the strength of all, the strength of each, would be a most praise-worthy achievement. But what has the League of Nations accomplished so far? The British Foreign Secretary seems to be obsessed with the idea of the League. We greatly fear that he is doomed to disappointment. The League expressed condemnation of Mussolini's action, but their resolution did

not render Italian tanks, and guns, and aeroplanes, and bombs, impotent. Ethiopians by the thousand have been slaughtered; notwithstanding the League of Nations solemnly warned Mussolini that if he attacked Abyssinia, he would be regarded by world opinion as a very naughty boy!

Very probably the League will warn Hitler that if he does not behave himself all sorts of penalties will be inflicted "within the framework of the League". Years ago a friend of ours told us that as a soldier he was once on duty in the Citadel in Quebec, and was detailed to conduct a party of American tourists over the Citadel, in the course of which he showed them a gun that had been captured from the Americans at the battle of Bunker Hill. The tourists smiled, and one of them said, "Well, you have the gun, and we have the hill"! The League of Nations has many such victories to its credit. They have a number of very finely-phrased resolutions on their books. But Mussolini has Abyssinia at his mercy; and Hitler has his soldiers on the Rhine—and both of them have defied, indeed have mocked at—world opinion as expressed by the League of Nations. What was designed to effect "collective security" has resulted only in *collective humiliation*.

In Richmond, Virginia, we once visited the church in which Patrick Henry made his famous speech, in the course of which he exclaimed, "Give me liberty, or give me death." A coloured man, who was for the time being substituting for the janitor, another coloured man, pointed out to us the place where he said Patrick Henry stood as he delivered the speech. The old negro did not know much about the speech, but he stood at the spot and declared that "it was just here that Patrick Henry said, 'Give me liberty, or give me death'." Then he remarked, "That, you know, sur, was at the time of the Revolutionary War".

The international outlaws that threaten the peace of the world care little for resolutions. The great Theodore Roosevelt once said something to the effect that it is vain for a man to shake his fist first, and his finger afterward. It may be that under great provocation, the League may double under its fingers, and show the criminals a fist, but so far Germany and Italy have defied the League, mocked at its prohibitions, and continued their programme of violence. Hitler has promised to return to the League if everybody will let him have his own way. Who knows but that he has concluded that the League council chamber would be a useful place from which to broadcast his empty promises to the world?

In times past we have heard much about John Bull "muddling through", and we have before remarked that the difference between John Bull and others is that while everybody muddles, shrewd John usually manages to "muddle through". It may be we are very ignorant, and very blind. It may be that our view of the present situation is all wrong. We would not state too positively that we are right; but we think we are. And it seems to us that if the present British "muddling" foreign policy is continued, nothing short of a stupendous miracle will enable us to "muddle through". Perhaps that miracle will take place. But at the moment it seems to us that short of some providential intervention, the British foreign policy is preparing the world for a still greater disaster.

THE RETURN TO THE BIBLE

(Reprinted from *The Christian Herald*, London)

A very Timely Address given at the Bible Testimony Demonstration at the Royal Albert Hall, London

By THE REV. MARTIN LLOYD-JONES, M.D., M.R.C.P.

[NOTE BY EDITOR.—This address, specially reported for the "*Christian Herald*", aroused considerable interest among Christian people at the time of its delivery, and as some of the points have since given rise to discussion, the address will be of interest to readers, especially when it is remembered that Dr. Lloyd-Jones was a Harley-street doctor until a few years ago, when he gave up his practice to preach the Gospel, and he is to-day considered one of the outstanding preachers in Wales.]

There is a growing concern among Christian leaders because of the thinness of so many congregations and the general unsatisfactory spiritual condition of the churches. What is the cause of it all? The War, and the spread of education, the improved social conditions, the amelioration of the injustices in life, the motor-car, and the cinema, and the wireless—all these things which we mention so frequently as causes of the present condition of spiritual decline are, in my opinion, mere secondary causes, mere results and by-products of something else which is very much deeper and much more important; and it is to that something deeper that I would like to direct your attention this evening. For to me the real cause of the present state of the Church of God on earth is to be found in the Church's voluntary departure from a belief in the Bible as the fully inspired Word of God, and from stressing and emphasizing

Real Evangelical Truth.

From the moment that philosophy was given the place of revelation in our studies and in our pulpits, things really began to go wrong. Of course, for a time, people continued to attend church and chapel in fairly large numbers, partly out of mere habit and custom, without realizing exactly what was happening, but we can be perfectly certain that the Church lost her authority and power from the moment that she ceased to believe firmly in the authority of the Word of God, and when she became doubtful and hesitant in her presentation of its doctrines to the people.

From the moment that the idea began to gain currency that the Bible was the history of the quest of mankind for God, rather than God's revelation of Himself, and the only way of salvation to mankind, the Church began to decline and to wane in her influence and in her power. From the time the Church threw overboard the great evangelical doctrines, and substituted for them a belief in the moral and spiritual evolution of mankind, and began to preach a social gospel rather than a personal salvation—from that moment church attendance really became a mere matter of form, or a merely pleasant way of gratifying one's appetite for ceremony, ritual, oratory, and music. Church attendance was no longer absolutely essential and vital.

At that point I suggest to you that the rot set in, which has led to the painful and pathetic state of affairs with which we are face to face at this present moment. The greatest testimony, in a sense, that I know of to the truth and power of the Word of God, is the present state of the Church of God on earth: and I make that statement not in any spirit of pessimism or hopelessness, but rather feeling that the present position augurs well, and that the

Present Moment is Auspicious.

I do believe that at long last we are coming to the end of the terrible spiritual winter through which we have been passing: I believe I discern the signs of an oncoming spring. On all hands I think there are indications which justify us in saying that there is a new interest in religion among the people, not merely in the Press and in the newspapers, but really in the minds and hearts of the people themselves.

At the same time I think it is correct and true to say also that there is a marked and very striking tendency at the moment for some of the most notable leaders of religion to turn back once more to the old positions and to the old standards. There again we have a situation which really merits our analysis. I have not time to analyse it as I

(Continued on page 10)

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

A SAVOUR OF LIFE UNTO LIFE OR OF DEATH UNTO DEATH

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, March 8th, 1936

(Stenographically Reported)

"For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him."—Acts 13:27.

Paul and Barnabas, in the course of their first missionary journey, "came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down". It was the "custom" of our Lord to go "into the synagogue on the sabbath day." He respected the institution of public worship; and, though there was much in the synagogue of which He disapproved, yet it was His custom regularly to attend on the sabbath day. These missionary-apostles did the same, and listened to the reading of the law and the prophets.

It would be well were we to give more attention to the simple reading of Scripture. That constituted the major and most important part of the worship of the synagogue. Paul and Barnabas, being strangers, were asked by the rulers of the synagogue if they had anything to say, and were invited to exhort the people. The Apostle Paul thereupon preached, and his sermon was really a summary of Scripture history, going back to the time of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, leading them through to the promised land, the period of the judges, the reign of Saul, then of David. He linked the history of the past with the more recent history with which he was more particularly concerned, and preached to them Jesus.

In the course of that address, Paul explained to the people that the dwellers in Jerusalem, and the rulers of the people, because they did not recognize Jesus of Nazareth for what He was, and because they did not know, notwithstanding they regularly heard them, the voices of the prophets as the Scripture was read to them each sabbath day, in their ignorance they fulfilled the Scripture by condemning Him of Whom the Scripture spoke. Then he proceeded to show how God, in His sovereign mercy, had overruled all this, how the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, by the fulfilment of God's promises of grace, had made it possible for him to declare unto them good tidings, and to say, "To you is the word of this salvation sent."

I would have you examine this verse from this simple and yet profound narrative, that we may see how God sovereignly works in His world, and brings to pass His counsels both of grace and of judgment.

I.

We may learn from our text that IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE FOR PEOPLE REGULARLY TO ATTEND THE ORDINANCES OF RELIGION, REGULARLY TO HEAR THE WORD OF GOD, AND YET TO BE UNPROFITED THEREBY. We are in danger of assuming that because people go to church, because they show some religious interest, and go through certain forms of worship, they are of necessity set in the road that leads to heaven. That is not necessarily true. It is possible to have a profound religious inter-

est, and to attend the house of God, and hear the Word of God—not once, but frequently—and yet to hear it, not for one's salvation, but for one's condemnation. When the end of life comes, and a religious service is held in connection with the funeral of the one departed, how seldom do we hear any note of warning, any recognition of the fact that "there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death"!

You will remember that Paul spoke, not to the people generally, but to those who assembled in the synagogue; not to an irreligious crowd, but to those who were versed in Scripture, and who regularly assembled and listened to the reading of the law and of the prophets. Perhaps it was because of that fact that he reminded them of the dwellers at Jerusalem, and the religious rulers of the holy city, so highly privileged, who regularly heard the Word of God, and yet failed to receive its truth.

Let us turn over that principle this evening, that we may enquire whether it has any application to us; for it is possible to fall into the same error. I say, it is possible for people regularly to attend on the means of grace, to hear the Word of God, to hear it perhaps read at the family altar in a Christian home, to attend a Sunday school where the Word of God is read and expounded, and to come under the sound of the preaching of the gospel where God's Word is not discounted, but honoured, and where it is read and expounded for what it really is, the word of God—it is possible for people to be under such influence, and yet, though religious and regularly observing certain religious duties over a period of many years, to find absolutely no spiritual profit.

Thousands of people in this city, week by week, go to their several places of worship, go through a form of prayer, even bowing the knee, saying prayers for themselves, saying or singing an apparently fervent Amen to what others read or pray, and yet are entirely on the outside of it all, and never open their hearts to the truth of the gospel.

There were certain rulers in Jerusalem—not civic rulers, but rulers in the synagogue. They were the high priests and the officials of religion, whose duty it was to give attention to religious affairs, to instruct themselves, or to be instructed, in the Word of the Lord, and regularly to read it for the public profit—who, Paul said, did not know the One of Whom the Word spoke. Nor did they ever know what the voices of the prophets proclaimed. It never entered into their hearts. They heard merely with the outer ear, receiving an intellectual knowledge of that which was written, missing entirely the spiritual import of the inspired writing.

I sometimes wonder if some of us in the ministry are not too reserved, and perhaps too fearful of telling the plain, bald facts of the case. Sometimes we in this place are looked upon as being unnecessarily controversial. We are told, "Every man has his own religion; let him alone. It is none of your concern what men preach, or what men believe. Believe for yourselves what you like, but mind your own business. We are all going the same way, and as long as a man is perfectly sincere it does not make much difference what he believes." So do men superficially—not reason, but speak, in our day.

I remember a religious journalist—one who was the religious editor of one of the daily papers in Toronto—some years ago coming to me with a book, saying, "I want you to read this. I have just reviewed it. Some of your critics say you are very extreme, that you go too far in your denunciation of error"—he was what I considered a very moderate man, but he continued—"my criticism is that you do not go far enough. Read that book, and you will conclude that the half of Modernist infidelity has never been told." I cannot but reach the conclusion from what I hear and read, that there must be scores of men occupying pulpits in this city who have never known Jesus Christ. They have never been converted; they have never really heard the voice of the Good Shepherd; they have no understanding of what the Bible really means. They read it; they talk about it; they discuss it; they go through various forms of religion—but they do not know Christ or His Word. The people are unfeared; the sinner is unwarned; the believer, if there be any there, is untaught, because the man who is supposed to be a teacher does not know the truth himself.

I am positive that is true. The most charitable conclusion that can possibly be put upon the utterly infidel deliverances of many men who call themselves Christian ministers in the city of Toronto, is that they do not know what they are talking about, and have never known the Lord. Do not forget that the men who chiefly opposed the Lord Jesus, and the men who at last bore Him to the cross, were the religious leaders of His day. The worst of all devils is a religious devil; and the gospel of Jesus Christ encounters in our day its strongest and most persistent opposition from those who profess to be its proponents. The dwellers in Jerusalem, and the rulers of the people, though they heard the voices of the prophets every sabbath day, failed to recognize the truth the prophets declared.

There are some who have given themselves to a study of the Bible, men of profound scholarship, and men whose industry amazes one, and makes one ashamed, who, in spite of years of devotion to a scholastic examination of the Bible, have never once heard its voice, have never once looked into the face of Him of Whom the Scripture speaks. I have read many books that bewildered me, and have said to myself, What a workman! How he laboured! What ability he displays! And yet all the time one was conscious that he was outside the temple of truth. The Light that shines from heaven had never shone in his heart "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ".

Our Lord Himself said that the day would come when the Master of the house would rise up, and would shut to the door, and without that door, closed and finally locked against all their appeals, there would be many

who would complain, "We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets." It is a terrible thing for a man to go from a Christian church to hell! It is a still more terrible thing for a man to go from a Christian pulpit to the burnings of the pit, and to have to face for ever the curses of those whom he led astray! But there are many doing it. Trust not in religion, as such, nor in religious observances—church-going, Bible-reading, and sermon-hearing. One may do all that, and never know Christ. That is the teaching of our text.

Think of it! The very men who, looking at Him Who was the fulfilment, the incarnation, the supreme and ultimate exemplification, of everything that God had ever said, the Word that "was made flesh, and dwelt among us"—the dwellers at Jerusalem, and the doctors of the law familiar with the law and the voices of the prophets, of which and of whom Jesus Christ was the Theme, it was they who said, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him." It was religion that nailed Jesus Christ to a cross. And the most effective and deadly agents of the destroyer of human souls are the men who stand in the pulpits of our land, and of other lands, and preach something other than Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

II.

I would remind you, however, that ALL SUCH, HEARING THE VOICES OF THE PROPHETS, HAVE THEIR PART, IN SPITE OF THEMSELVES, IN FULFILLING THEM. Is that not a striking saying, that the very men who did not recognize what the prophets were speaking of, the men who failed to recognize in Jesus Christ the Son of God, yet fulfilled the Scriptures by their attitude in condemning the Lord Jesus? "It is all right for those of you who are backward enough to believe the Bible, but I am not interested", someone says, "I do not read it. I do not believe it. I do not bother my head with it. It is none of my business." But it is. "I have resolved that I will have nothing to do with it." That will not excuse you. *There is no man living who is immune to the influence of the Word of God.* There is no man who can escape either its grace or its judgment: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

My friends, every man and woman here, whether you are Christians or not, are subject to the decrees, the judgments, of this Book. You cannot escape it. Everybody here will discover sooner or later that his character and destiny are determined, one way or the other, by his attitude toward the Word of God. You cannot get away from it. It must be so. You will have to have your part in fulfilling the Scriptures.

Even though a man ignore the Bible, and refuse to open his heart to the grace which the Word of God offers him, but shuts himself off from it and says, "I am quite independent of it", is not independent of the Word; for if you thus ignore it, the very things that the Word of God says will characterize you will flower in your life—and there is no power in yourself, in any institution, in the world itself, that can by any possibility prevent the literal fulfilment of any syllable of the Word of God. You cannot escape it. Regardless of what the critics say, God's Word will have its way.

A certain man denies the Word of God. He says, "It is not true. It is not the word of God. I do not believe

the Bible." I heard the other day of a certain man who said that, in the circle in which he moves, everybody makes light of the Bible, and of a seven-day-a-week religion. Their idea of religion is a kind of mental diversion with which to occupy their minds on Sunday—but the idea of a new life, and of a personal relationship to Christ, and a life under the authority of the Bible as the word of God, they laugh at, and say it is out-of-date.

Deny the truth of the Bible—what then? The very things that God's Word says will come to those who thus deny, will come to pass in your life; you will fulfil the Scripture in spite of everything.

There are those who mock, who scoff at religion. They say, "The people who tell us that Jesus Christ is coming back to this earth ought to be put in an asylum. And that old record in Genesis, about the creation of the world, no enlightened person believes to-day." Is that your attitude? If it is, I have only to tell you that the Bible has anticipated your scorn. It says, "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Another says, "I should not like to be classed with the irreligious crowd, but I do not accept the Genesis stories of the creation, or of the deluge." This is what the Bible says about you: "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water, and in the water; whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." You cannot exclude yourself from relationship to God's word by denying or ignoring it. Scoff at it, oppose it, do what you will, the Bible will fulfil itself in your experience if you are the veriest infidel that ever breathed. You cannot escape it. God will have His witnesses. Nobody shall ever go to perdition and be able to say that the justice of God is not vindicated in his destruction. The gospel and its messengers, must inevitably be the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death.

Consider for a moment *how specifically these blind religionists actually fulfilled the Word of God*. I suppose they had read in the law about the passover; they all knew about it historically. There was not one of them who had not read the word of Moses, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." The high priests, the scribes, and pharisees, must have read in the Psalms that which Paul on this occasion quoted to the congregation in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." But they did not recognize in that a prophecy relating to Jesus of Nazareth. They must have read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah: "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." But they failed to recognize the One who was "despised and rejected", in Him Whom they despised. Notwithstanding they had read it, they hailed Him before Pilate, and when he was determined to let Him go, they said, "No! No! Crucify him." They took Him to the cross, and nailed Him there. And even as He hung thus suspended between earth and heaven, there were some who passed by who said, "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now." They did not know that a prophet had uttered those very words cen-

turies before. Even as they mocked at the dying Son of God, they fulfilled the Scriptures. When they mockingly offered Him vinegar, they fulfilled the Scriptures; when at last the Roman soldiers, to make sure that He was dead, drove a spear to His side, they fulfilled the Scripture; when these high priests, with their immaculate robes, came to Pilate, they said, "We are very careful about the observance of the sabbath; we do not want bodies to remain on the cross over the sabbath; we should like to have them taken down" and by compelling the breaking of the legs of the malefactors they fulfilled the Scripture respecting Christ; and when they put Him in the grave, and sealed the sepulchre, they fulfilled the Scripture; and even when Pilate, driven by their hatred, at last gave Him up to their will, and took the pen (or whatever he used), and wrote the title to be put on the cross over His head, they said, "Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews", but Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written." Why? Because even as Pilate, the ruling governor, began to write, an unseen Hand was laid upon his. There was One Who said, "I will write that title. In the blackest hour of the world's history it shall be recorded, This is *the* King." And He was! He was never more manifestly an absolute Sovereign than when He laid down the life that no man could take from Him.

Unbelief—it sounds almost a paradox—*can fulfil the Scripture just as truly as faith*; because the Scripture takes cognizance of unbelief, and specifically predicts the inevitable fruit of unbelief.

I will go farther than that, and show you how *the utter unreasonableness of unbelief vindicates the divine judgment*. Said Paul, "I have told you that your rulers condemned Him, but they found no fault in Him." His judge, ere he issued the decree which authorized His crucifixion, said, "I find in him no fault at all." But said they, "We do not care. We will kill Him anyway." That is unbelief. You cannot reason with unbelief. The strutting professor who talks much about his "intellectual difficulties", did he but know the nature and working of his own mind would discover he has no intellectual difficulties. I affirm that it is most reasonable for a human creature to submit heart and intellect, and all there is of him, to the judgment of God; and that the most unreasonable act of which any man is capable is to set up his puny intellect in opposition to that which the mind of the Infinite has been pleased to reveal, and to record.

They condemned Him. So does every man and every woman here this evening who does not receive Jesus Christ. The Scripture will ultimately vindicate itself in your experience, here or hereafter; every mouth shall be stopped, and "all the world become guilty before God". There is no escape.

III.

But there is ANOTHER WAY BY WHICH THE SCRIPTURE MAY BE FULFILLED, for when Paul had thus shown how God sovereignly makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and how the One Who was by "wicked hands crucified and slain", was nevertheless delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, he says, in effect, "In spite of all your wickedness, and the wickedness of your rulers, God raised him up, and we declare unto you glad tidings." They did not know Jesus, and they did not understand the Scriptures, yet Paul said, "God has ful-

filled to you the promise that He made to our fathers." I can imagine Paul rather enjoyed that sermon as he looked into the faces of some of the learned doctors of the law, and quoted the second Psalm, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee"; or again, "Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption", thus declaring that the prophetic scripture forbidding the corruption of the body of Jesus Christ had been fulfilled in His resurrection, saying, "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

"He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life"—believe that, and the Scripture will be fulfilled in your experience. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him"—take that position, and the Scripture will be fulfilled in your everlasting condemnation. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Believe in Him, and the scripture will be fulfilled; and you shall not perish; but have everlasting life. Refuse to believe in Him, and you will perish—and in your awful doom the Scripture will be fulfilled.

The Word of God says that the gospel messenger is "the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death". The Gospel either washes a man in the blood of Jesus Christ, brings him to the gates of heaven, and numbers him among the multitude of the redeemed of whom we spoke last Sunday evening, who sing a new song before the throne—it does that, or it will leave him without excuse when at last judgment is passed upon his impenitence. Do not think lightly of the appeal of the gospel. You must do something with it. Every time the Word of God is read and proclaimed it is part of God's preparation for the judgment-day. "But last Sunday is past," saith one. No, it is not. "This Sunday is nearly over"—No! No! We shall every one of us meet these privileges again. We cannot escape from the responsibility which rests upon every man to whom God, in His mercy, speaks.

I have heard of one who called himself an infidel who engaged a godly man in conversation on the subject of religion, and mocking at the believer's Bible, tried to draw him into an argument. But the man of God was divinely taught, and he refused to argue. He said to the avowed unbeliever, "I am sorry, sir, very sorry, but all I can say to you is, 'He that believeth not shall be damned!'" "Yes, I know. That is in the New Testament. That is what your Bible says; it says it in many places—but I do not believe it." "That is what makes me sad", said the man, "for 'he that believeth not shall be damned'." "But I do not even believe the Bible, not even the record that tells about your Jesus. I do not believe a word of it." "Well", said the Christian, "the Bible has only one word for you, if that is your attitude, and that is, 'He that believeth not shall be damned'." Again and again the unbeliever tried to draw the good man out, but he said, "I dare not argue the case with you, I have nothing to do with it, my dear friend, except to remind you what the Word of God says of you, and that is, 'He that believeth not shall be damned'." "You are utterly unreasonable," said the skeptic, "you will not even reason with me, or argue, but only quote from the Book which I tell you I do not believe." "I have nothing else to say to you," said the Christian, "there is nothing else

worth saying than that which God Himself has said, and that is, 'He that believeth not shall be damned'." "But I do not believe your God." "Very well. But God says, 'He that believeth not shall be damned'." "But I tell you I do not believe the Bible that claims to be the word of God." "He that believeth not shall be damned", said he, "I must bid you good-bye for I have nothing more to say."

The man went away, and when night came he went to bed and tried to sleep. Then he began to reason with himself, saying, "I have always entertained an almost subconscious assumption that if by any chance I should ultimately find myself mistaken, I should at least have this defense that I never believed the Bible, and that I never believed in Jesus Christ. And that, since I never believed in Him, I could not be condemned for my attitude toward Him. But this is another view of it. That which I thought would be my defense, becomes my condemnation. The very excuse that I proposed to offer will be the divine witness against me—'He that believeth not shall be damned'."

When a sleepless night had passed, he sought out the wise man who had had a greater confidence in the Word of God than in his own arguing, and said, "Tell me, sir, what must I do to be saved?" "Just the opposite of what you told me yesterday: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved'."

What will you do to-night? Will you who do not believe bring upon yourselves the condemnation of God Himself, inasmuch as He has given us the testimony of His Word, and thus fulfil the Scripture, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment"? Or will you, instead of that, receive the Word of God, put it to the proof, cast yourselves upon its provision, delight yourselves in the divine faithfulness, and find it blessedly true, "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life"? I give you this text: do with it as you will. Our Lord Himself declared, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath"—not *shall* have, not *may* have—but "*hath* everlasting life; and shall not come into condemnation, but is past"—perfect tense—"is passed from death unto life."

Many of us believe the Word of God because it bears witness to itself by verifying itself in the experience of all who believe. Therefore we know it is true! We have absolutely no doubt about it. You also may be surer of the truth of God's Word than of any other fact of your experience.

Let us pray:

O Lord, we thank Thee that Thou dost have compassion upon our folly. We thank Thee that Thou dost overrule even our enmity. We bless Thee that, though human hands nailed the Lord Jesus to the cross, yet the blood that was thus shed cleanseth us from all sin. This may be the night, in Thy providence, when some soul shall be brought to the parting of the ways, when the decision which some shall make shall for ever determine whether they will fulfil Thy Word by being made subject to its judgment, or whether, as believers, they shall fulfil it by becoming partakers of its grace. O Lord, forbid that any of us within these walls should be found other than among Thy people when Thou shalt come. We would fain be among those whom Thou shalt seat at Thy right hand, whom Thou shalt esteem righteous because clothed in the righteousness of Christ, and who shall go into eternal life. O Spirit of God, we commit this word to Thee, in the confidence that Thy Word never returns unto Thee void. Let it be a word of life, of grace abounding, for Thy name's sake, Amen.

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 11

No. 1

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 13 First Quarter March 29th, 1936

CONDEMNATION FOR TRUSTING IN EGYPT

Lesson Text: Isaiah, chapters 30 to 33.

Golden Text: "And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."—Isaiah 32: 2.

Bible School Reading: Isaiah 32:1-20.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Ps. 72:1-11; Tuesday—Zech. 9:9-17; Wednesday—Josh. 23:1-13; Thursday—Luke 2:8-14; Friday—Luke 19:11-27; Saturday—I. Thess. 4:13-18.

FOLLY OF TRUSTING IN EGYPT (chapters 30 and 31)

Rebellious children (30:1-7)—In the purpose of God, the Israelites were called to be a peculiar people (Deut. 14:2), separated unto the Lord, glorifying Him, and carrying out His will. They were brought into being as a nation to accomplish this end. They were commanded not to intermingle in a close relationship with other nations (Deut. 7:1-6), and were given assurance that God would be their defence in all their troubles (2 Chron. 15:4). On the occasion of our lesson, they had disregarded the divine injunction, and had gone to Egypt for help. They were therefore a rebellious people. They had taken counsel of man, instead of going to God for instruction. This was a sin, for it implied disobedience to the Lord's revealed will, and backsliding from His service. It meant ignoring Him, and giving precedence to man. Fear may have driven the people to take such action, but this was due to living out of touch with God. Note the dangerous tendency of many of the saints in this day, of going to the world for help in spiritual things, instead of to the Lord. The necessity is laid upon us to keep in touch with God at all times, and be instant always in prayer (Rom. 12:12). Observe the failure of such worldly help. Egypt would be a shame unto Israel. The world fails us in these days. It is better to trust in God than in the arm of flesh.

Deceived people (vs. 8-17)—Isaiah is here commanded to inscribe on a tablet the disobedience of the people, that after the predicted event had occurred respecting the failure of Egypt, they might be able to read God's message. Their attitude was one of self-deception. They desired good news from the prophets, and would not believe the truth when it was placed before them. At the end of this age such an attitude will be particularly manifest (2 Thess. 2:10-12); and in these days it is evident in relation to false teaching, and otherwise (2 Tim. 3: 1-5). Evil consequences always ensue from such conduct (vs. 12-14, 16, 17). The remedy lies in returning to God, and calmly resting in Him. The representatives of Judah were thus instructed to return to their own land from Egypt; and to rest quietly in the Lord; in the face of their enemies. The child of God, in the same plight spiritually, is enjoined to repent, separate from the world, and trust in God (2 Cor. 6:17; I John 1:9). Note the possibility and blessedness of being at peace in a world of strife (Phil. 4: 7). The Christian's strength comes from God (Phil. 4:13).

Divine mercy (vs. 18-26)—In the midst of chastisement, God manifests His mercy toward His people. And "blessed are all they that wait for him". He hears their cry, and answers it (Ps. 91:15); permits them to be aided by the presence of teachers; directs them by His voice; and gives them prosperity. Note particularly the fact of divine guidance (v. 21), with its comfort, direction, and warning; and

its exemplification in New Testament times in the experience of the Lord's servants (Acts 16:6-8). God's guidance should be sought in all things, and confidently expected by those in fellowship with Him. Observe also the defilement of the images (v. 22), reminding us of the necessity for completely breaking with all that is opposed to God.

Divine burning (vs. 27-33)—In these closing verses of the chapter a storm is described as sweeping down upon the Assyrians, having God as its source, its end, the destruction of the enemy in Tophet, the "place of abomination". This was the place of burning in the valley of Hinnom was later used as the place for burning the refuse of the city, to consume which, fires were kept constantly burning. As such a place, it was used by our Lord to portray the final destiny of the wicked (Matt. 10:28; 25:41). Hell was prepared for the devil and his angels; but if men serve him, they must go to be with him.

Egypt's weakness (31: 1-9)—The folly of trusting in the power of Egypt is again set forth. The Egyptians were but men, and when God stretched forth His hand, they would fall. The Lord was the defence of His people, and they are urged to turn unto Him. The failure of their idols is indicated. And the destruction of the Assyrian is predicted.

MESSIAH'S KINGDOM (32:1-20)

The righteous king (vs. 1-8)—There may be a fulfilment of the teaching of this section in some king of Judah, but its ultimate application is found in Jesus Christ, the King of kings (Rev. 1:5). He appealed to His people as their King (Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:1-9). He is acknowledged in our day in His royal nature by His own (I. Tim. 1:17), and in the future everyone shall acknowledge Him in this capacity (Zech. 14:1-9; Phil. 2:10, 11). Several things are noted here respecting the reign of such an One. He "shall reign in righteousness". Note the necessity for this in these days, and the blessedness arising therefrom. Each person will be treated justly. The only righteousness in the world is His righteousness (64:6; I. Cor. 12:9). The people in the kingdom will be affected righteously. The prophets shall see; the hearers shall harken; the rash shall understand; the stammerers shall speak plainly; and the wicked shall no more be esteemed good. Note the blessedness of the holy life in the present time.

The careless reprov'd (vs. 9-20)—Warning is given in this section to the careless women respecting the depredations of the enemy, and the promise is given to the coming of peace. Note from the spiritual standpoint, the stirring message to the careless, the promise of the outpouring of the Spirit, with its outstanding fulfilment on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 1-4), the blessedness following the same, and the encouragement to sow beside all waters. It is our duty and privilege to labour in season and out of season for our Master (2 Tim. 4:2).

OVERTHROW OF ASSYRIA (33:1-24)

The spoiler spoiled (vs. 1-12)—The Assyrians had spoiled the Israelites, and are here informed of a similar experience for themselves (Gal. 6:7). This would occur in process of divine judgment. God permits nations to go a certain length, and then He brings them to a halt. Their spoiling of others does not benefit them. With individuals, the same principle is operative. We receive the same kind of treatment as we mete out to others. Note the cry of the oppressed, the suffering of the people, the wickedness of the enemy, and the intervention of God.

The righteous blessed (vs. 13-24)—The judgment of God on the wicked creates fear in the hearts of the hypocrites in Zion. Note our Lord's attitude toward hypocrites (Matt. 23). The righteous shall be safe in the time of judgment. "He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks." He "shall also see the King in his beauty", and when he sees Him, he shall be like Him (I. John 3:2). And in that time all shall be peace; the enemies of God and man shall be disposed of, and no more shall they be permitted to carry on their wicked ways. May God hasten this time.

THE RETURN TO THE BIBLE

(Continued from page 4)

should like to, but even in this brief moment I would ask you to bear with me while I suggest the real explanation of this present tendency to turn

Back to the Old Position.

In the case of the Church I do believe that the mere logic of facts is at last beginning to have its due weight. Men, observing empty churches and chapels, are at last beginning to see that organization and efforts which are merely human are not enough. Many leaders in the Church are also turning back to the old position, because of their sheer intellectual bewilderment and confusion as a result of the work of the so-called higher critics and the philosophers. There is an increasing demand at the present moment for what is called a "realistic theology", and for a definite, certain, assured message for the people.

In the case of the people, this awakened interest in religion is, I think, to be traced, not merely to the economic depression through which we have been passing, and the stress and strain of circumstances. I think there is another reason also—namely, that men and women are becoming heartily tired of this life of moral laxity and moral looseness to which a turning of one's back upon the Bible almost inevitably and certainly leads. I believe this generation is realizing that Isaiah spoke nothing but the simple truth when he said:

"There is No Peace,

saith my God, to the wicked."

Surely, there is our opportunity. The people are waiting for something: they are asking for something: they are crying out for new authorities and new sanctions. The old self-satisfied, confident, flippant mood of the late Victorians and many others who since then have believed that science could prove and solve everything, has gone. The old cocksure attitude has vanished. Everything is uncertain. Men and women do not quite know where they stand, nor where to turn, and they are crying out for an authoritative word. They desire something certain that promises and offers to help them and to deliver them from the problems of life. If you feel tempted to dispute that statement, I would simply ask you to explain how it comes to pass that there are so many cults and false movements round about us at this present time. The need of the people at this moment is so deep and so great that they are prepared to listen to anybody or anything which offers a possible solution. Alas! it is because the Church of God has been so

Uncertain of Her Message

that the cults and the false, spurious movements have seen their opportunity and have taken it.

Still it is not too late. I believe that the position confronting us is still hopeful. There is much that we can do. There is much that we *must* do. The people are waiting. Do we discern the signs of the times? Are we ready with our answer? For my part, there is but one answer, and it is to repeat both in word and in the Spirit, what Paul said to those stoics and epicureans on Mars Hill in Athens so long ago: "Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you." I believe the great call to us at the moment is to declare the great central, eternal verities of the Word of God.

I believe the paramount and most urgent duty at the moment is not to defend the Bible, not to argue about the Bible—I believe we are called upon at the present moment to *declare* the Bible: to announce the eternal truths contained in the Bible. I would not be misunderstood in that remark and be interpreted as saying that I do not believe in the defence of the Bible. Actually, I think that the case for the defence of the Bible against its attackers is stronger at this present moment than it has ever been. I think we can safely leave the various schools of higher criticism to defeat and to demolish one another. Indeed, according to the latest and most radical German school of criticism, the old fundamental article in the faith of the higher critic, which was the distinction between the synoptic gospels and the Gospel of John, was

An Utterly False Distinction.

I think we can now claim that higher criticism has turned a complete circle, and that we stand more or less exactly where we stood a hundred years ago before it began its evil and unfortunate course. Not only that, but the whole position of the critics at the present moment is one of utter confusion, and the counter-attack from the side of the philologist and archæologist, yea, and even from the side of the philosopher, is literally overwhelming.

The Barthian School and its teaching which is inadequate from the truly evangelical position, is more than sufficient to shew the utter futility of the human reasoning and philosophizing, which has been placed in the position of revelation in the world of religion for the last hundred years. I say, therefore, that defence is exceedingly valuable, but the call comes to us to-day to go forward, to advance, and even to attack. I suggest that we are called upon to pronounce, to declare, and to state in no uncertain way the central verities and truths of the Bible, to proclaim that it is the full and final revelation of God's will for men, and God's salvation for mankind. I believe we are called upon to bear this testimony in a very clear and definite manner.

What Then Are the Truths

of the Bible that we need to proclaim?

I believe we need to declare to this generation that first and all-important truth of regeneration and justification by faith only. I do not want to be controversial, but must we not admit and confess that there is far too much heard at the present time of the word "decision", as if the great thing is that you and I should decide for Christ, rather than that He should do something for us. Is there not a tendency to emphasize results at the expense of regeneration?

Let us face this question quite honestly. As I read of the work of the great evangelists in the Bible I find they were not first and foremost concerned about results: they were concerned about proclaiming the Word of Truth: they left the increase unto God. They were concerned, above all else, that the people should be brought face to face with the truth itself. I watch Paul going into the town of Corinth. He might have thought of many things in order to attract the people and to obtain results. But actually he does nothing of the sort. He says: "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

The great apostle was afraid of rhetoric, of eloquence, of oratory.

I Think He was Terrified

lest a man might join his church simply because he had been carried away by Paul's own preaching. No, our business, our work, our first call is to declare in a certain and unequivocal manner the sovereignty, the majesty, and the holiness of God; the sinfulness and the utter depravity of man, and his total inability to save and to rescue himself; and the sacrificial, expiatory, atoning death of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, on that cross on Calvary's hill, and His glorious resurrection, as the only means and only hope of human salvation.

We must come back to that old position, and declare the justice and righteousness of God as well as the love of God. We must emphasize once more the wrath of God as well as the mercy of God: and we must picture salvation, not merely as something that makes people feel happy and comfortable, but as the one and only means of saving them from hell and from the wrath of God, and the punishment of sin. At any rate, as I read my Bible that is

The Only Method of Evangelization

I find there, as it was the great and only evangelical method of the Protestant reformers; as it was the great method of George Whitfield and John Wesley, and of all the great leaders of the evangelical awakening of the Eighteenth Century. May God, in His mercy and grace, deliver us from our present weakness and sentimentality, and grant unto us again boldness of utterance that we may convict and convert this sinful generation from the error of its ways. We need to go back and declare and testify again that central message of God's Word.

I believe we also need to go back and declare again in no uncertain terms the great Biblical message with regard to sanctification also. And this is obviously a word primarily meant for the Church. There is nothing that so sad-

dens me as to find the number of good Protestant people who seem to derive all teaching on sanctification and holiness from the writings of certain Roman Catholic saints and mystics rather than from the Word of God itself. I refer to the tendency to exalt and propagate the ideas of quietism, passivity, and various forms of perfectionism.

There is a danger of our developing a sickly sentimentalism, a pietism which really lacks power and strength. I am afraid many good people whom I know would be very doubtful about the holiness of a man like Paul, who could be vehement and sarcastic and say, "If any man preach any other gospel than that which we have preached, let him be accursed." I doubt whether they would not say he was rather a nasty, unpleasant man, not quite nice enough to be really holy and sanctified. Such is the result of preaching repression in terms of surrender, instead of emphasizing the liberating power of the Holy Ghost and the cleansing power of the Spirit of God.

Such is the result of emphasizing and stressing holiness and sanctification primarily as something that gives us release or happiness, or that gives us a fuller or happier life, instead of saying that men should give up sin,

Not that They May be Happier,

but because sin is sin, because sin is ugly, and foul, and utterly incongruous with everything that Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, came into this world in order to achieve. We must give up sin, not because it disturbs and troubles us, but because it is an outrage upon the nature of a holy God. The Bible in its teaching on sanctification starts with God and not with man. I think the call to us is to return to that position.

Then, lastly, I think that we need to declare also the Biblical doctrine, not merely with regard to the salvation of the individual, but with regard to the salvation of the whole world. And here, I think, we have a very great opportunity at this present moment. We need to emphasize at such a time as this, Biblical history, Biblical cosmogony. We need to shew that the Bible looks forward right to the end of all things, and sees the day coming when God's full purpose will have been entirely worked out. I think this is very important at this present time, because there is a tendency among some people to substitute a sentimental idealism, a mere humanism, for

The Real Position of the Bible.

We need to tell this generation that the world will actually wax worse and worse during this dispensation, and that there will be wars and rumours of wars, that evil men will multiply, and that the future course of this world is the very opposite and antithesis of that which is believed by our evolutionist friends. We need to face the fact of that central doctrine which preaches, not the development of evolution, but an apocalypse, a return of the Son of God, no longer as a servant, but as the King and as Lord. We need to tell people about that last great judgment, when the sheep and goats shall be separated, and when Christ shall be all in all. We need to tell them that in spite of present appearances there is a day coming when

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run,
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

Blessings abound where'er He reigns;
The prisoner leaps to loose his chains;
The weary find eternal rest;
And all the sons of want are blessed.

There it seems to me, are the central doctrines and truths which we are called upon to declare to this present generation. Some of us will do it in pulpits and on platforms. You are not all called to do it in that way, but you are all called upon to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour". That is the doctrine. Let us by word and by look, by life and by song, by everything we do and everything we are, declare these unsearchable riches of Christ to all and sundry. God grant us the needed grace and strength to fulfil His will, for His Name's sake. Amen.

NEWS FROM LIBERIA

From our Geah-bar Zondo Station in Liberia, West Africa, comes this word from Rev. Gordon D. Mellish: "During December our work has been almost entirely confined to the Mission station, or it seemed that way at least, attending to many of the small tasks which fall to the lot of a missionary. We long to be out preaching the Word all the time, but these other things must be done as well in order to make preaching possible. The principal item of this work has been the re-thatching of our old house, and the cleaning up as a result of it, and then immediately following this, whitewashing the house both inside and out, for the thatching leaves the whole house very dirty. Now all that is cleaned up fairly well; the men who did the work have gone out to cut their rice farms, and we are left to catch up on reports and correspondence, and make plans for reaching more towns, which we hope to do this week.

"December in the native towns is a time of great devil palaver, and we were very well aware of it this year. Just at the new year the town people were putting some new girls in the Gre-gre bush. This is superintended by the old women, but the men do their part as well in beating the drums, which they did for at least four days, drumming day and night. The last thing we heard at night was their steady drumming, and again the first thing in the morning. One morning, however, we were treated to a lovely silence, and later we learned that the top skin on the drum had broken, so that finished them. Then a few days after, the devil people went to another town three and one-half miles away to continue, but fortunately they were too far away for us to hear the drums again. If we could only tell you about what goes on at these palavers you would be astounded, but we are sorry to say many of the things that go on there are too dreadful even to speak of, but they do portray the sin and degradation into which the black man has sunk, and in which he has lived for so many years. Many of these people who are engaging in these things, if not all, have heard the gospel on the Mission, some even seeming to show some interest at times, but they still think they cannot live without these things. We praise God, though, that 'the gospel is the power of God unto salvation', and it can break down these evil customs. So we continue to pray that the barriers of sin may be broken.

"Last Friday night one man from Geah-bar Zondo town, by the name of Madekpa, came to our usual Friday evening Bible Class and prayer meeting. After the meeting they told us that this was the first time he had ever been at a service on the mission, though we have seen him many times on the mission during the day. Now he was just interested and wanted to see what went on here, and what we have to talk about. Then there are some men around the district, of whom we very seldom see anything, except when they come to sell something or when they know there is going to be work around, and if they come to church for a Sunday or so before they may get a job. Two of these men were around when we wanted men for thatching, and so once more we consented to give them work. One man we have not seen since the thatching was finished, but the other man, Nufodo, has been attending Bible Classes and Services, and yesterday he asked me for a Gospel of John, as he wants to study it and try to learn to read, as many of the Christians do. We are praying for these two men that they may have a real interest and come right out for the Lord.

"Very often we are surprised at the progress that our Christian men are making in learning to read. They are receiving no instruction from us in this, but just watch when we read the Bible and then sit down, often by the hour, and puzzle out the words in English, while at the same time they can hardly speak a word of English. We continue to look forward to the time when we can give them the Word in their own tongue, and to this we are pressing forward. Mr. Clubine still continues his work in the language, and so, slowly, slowly, things are going forward in that line.

"Continue to pray, for we have a great battle to fight, but we know that the Lord is with us and the forces of the devil must be vanquished. We do not often mention the work at home, but, that, too, is very much upon our hearts, and we always rejoice in evidences of blessing on the preaching of the Word there, and we continue to pray that many may be raised up in the homeland, that this work may be supported, especially by prayer, and that soon we may be able to advance to fields as yet untouched by the sound of the gospel."

ONLY NINETEEN MORE DAYS!

By that, we mean to the 31st of March, on which date the fiscal year ends for Jarvis Street Church, THE GOSPEL WITNESS, and Toronto Baptist Seminary.

The Gospel Witness a Missionary

THE GOSPEL WITNESS is a missionary in the sense that it preaches the gospel to the unsaved; and carries instruction, comfort, and inspiration, to the Lord's saints in many lands.

What would you think of a home missionary who received a salary of less than 4c a week—or only \$2.00 a year? And what would you think of a missionary who managed to pay his own transportation out of that munificent sum? But that is what THE GOSPEL WITNESS does. And it has been used of God to bring large numbers of people to Christ in the home land.

And what would you say of a foreign missionary whose allowance was no more than \$2.00 a year? And what if that amount had to cover the cost of clothing, and food, and transportation to the most remote field, such as India, China, or Africa? THE GOSPEL WITNESS is a foreign missionary, and travels to the uttermost parts of the earth—and all its allowance amounts to for maintenance, travelling, and everything else, is \$2.00 a year.

THE GOSPEL WITNESS is a *hospital visitor*. It visits the sick; it comforts the bereaved; it goes into countless homes of sorrow, with a message of comfort. And the salary of this hospital visitor is less than 4c a week. It would not pay for one car fare in Toronto.

But more than that, THE GOSPEL WITNESS is a *Theological Professor*. It instructs young ministers. It steadies those who are tempted to turn aside. And in addition to that, it helps Sunday School teachers, and assists missionaries and Christian workers in more than fifty different countries, in many languages, and many climes.

Truth to tell, this versatile minister does not get enough to pay for the paper dress it wears, and is rather dependent upon its many friends to keep going. Help this worthy messenger to continue its work, by sending a substantial contribution to The Witness Fund between now and March 31st.

The School of the Prophets

Toronto Baptist Seminary is a real school of the prophets. It turns out ministers, missionaries, and trained workers for many forms of Christian service. Its graduates are scat-

tered all over the Province of Ontario, and indeed the Dominion of Canada. Some are in the United States; some are on foreign mission fields.

The Seminary has no Endowment Fund, and is dependent wholly upon the gifts of God's people. Every member of the Faculty believes the Bible to be the inspired and infallible word of God; and declares the whole counsel of God as understood by historic; evangelical, Christians called Baptists. It is free from fads and vagaries, and exists to produce symmetrically-developed, whole-hearted, old-fashioned, Baptists.

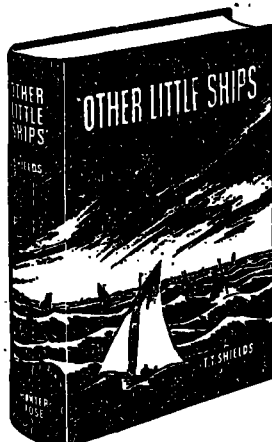
No gift would be too great for Toronto Baptist Seminary, even to the extent of half a million dollars. Nor could any sum be so small that it would not be appreciated. Help us to balance our books by the 31st of March.

Jarvis Street Church Members

For the funds to Jarvis Street Church we make our appeal to Jarvis Street members—to weekly offering contributors, to urge them to endeavour to make sure that all arrears shall be paid up; to some who do not use our weekly offering system, to remember that the sum of \$20.00 or \$25.00 at the end of the year does not total anything like the amount of people who regularly give \$1.00, \$2.00, or \$3.00 a week all the year round. We suggest to those who do not give systematically that they bear in mind that those who do have borne the greater part of the burden. Therefore try to make your offering by March 31st a very substantial one.

There is a sense in which Jarvis Street Church might be justified in appealing to those beyond its membership. If Jarvis Street Church were like the average church, and concerned itself mainly with its own work, and its contributions to missions, it would have little difficulty. But the greater part of the support both of THE GOSPEL WITNESS and of Toronto Baptist Seminary comes from the members of Jarvis Street Church; and for that reason we feel we should be justified in appealing to the Lord's stewards to remember also our ordinary church funds. Our appeal in this respect is especially to the members of the church, although we are not averse to others "listening in" to that appeal, and responding as the Lord may direct.

Please do not wait until the 31st of March. Send what you can at once; if you can send a little more later, do it. But it will greatly help us to have a steady stream of support coming in from now until March 31st. Please send your contribution at once.



An Appropriate Easter Gift "OTHER LITTLE SHIPS"

ORDER FORM FOR DR. SHIELDS' NEW BOOK

THE GOSPEL WITNESS
130 Gerrard Street East
Toronto, Ont.

Please find enclosed \$1.50 for which send me, postpaid, one copy of "Other Little Ships". (If remitting by cheque, add 15 cents for exchange.)

Name _____

Address _____