

# The Gospel Witness

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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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## "HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD"

There are few people, having any experience of life, who have not learned how little dependence can be placed upon a mere rumour. We remember years ago a company of young people, on a social occasion, playing a most interesting game. A simple statement on some unimportant matter was written on a piece of paper and handed to Number One. That person then, having read it, was to repeat it from memory to Number Two, and Number Two to Number Three. Thus the matter of the original statement was to be transmitted from one to another through all the dozen or more young people present. The last one receiving the report was to write it out as he or she remembered it, and then the final statement was compared with the original. Invariably the final report bore scarcely the slightest resemblance to the original statement.

It was on the basis of rumours, of what certain people reported His having said; that the Lord Jesus was crucified. It is by this means all heresies have developed, and have been propagated. Reduced to simple terms, the spread of error is the result of substituting a human interpretation of the Bible for the Word of God itself. If A interprets a passage of Scripture in a certain way, he may be in error; if he communicates his interpretation to B, he will probably merely double his error. But if B accepts the interpretation as authoritative, in passing it on to C, he is almost certain to enlarge upon it; and so the error will grow. But if, instead, B should compare that interpretation with the Word of God itself, providing he is willing to receive the truth, A's error will be corrected.

Many of the ministers of religion deal almost exclusively in second-hand interpretations. We have known some Anglicans to whom the prayer-book and the general practice of the church were as authoritative as the Word of God. The substitution of sprinkling for immersion, in baptism, and the practice of thus "baptizing" infants, and, subsequently, admitting unregenerate persons to the membership of the church, are all the result of taking one's religion second-hand. It is illustrative of the divine complaint against Israel, that they had forsaken the fountains of living water, and had hewed out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that could hold no water.

Many so-called "Bible teachers" of our day are little better than animated gramophones; and many who pride

themselves on being students of Scripture, are nothing better than religious parrots.

When this Editor began his ministry he received a bit of very sound advice from his father. We were recommended, at least for the first three or four years in the pastorate, not to have a single commentary on the bookshelf, but to go directly to the Bible, and allow the Word of God to speak for itself. We shall always be thankful for that wise counsel, for it enabled us to form the habit of enquiring respecting any book, and the doctrines of any and all of the new cults, "What saith the scripture?" Thus we came early upon the little book entitled, "Jesus is Coming", by W. G. Blackstone. We devoured it with great interest, but already we had formed the habit of refusing to accept anything until it had been tried by the Scripture. Applying this rule to Mr. Blackstone's book, we discovered that much of it was utterly contrary to Scripture.

It is on the ground of this underlying principle we have always objected to the Scofield Bible. Even suppose, for the sake of argument, every note in the entire book to be thoroughly scriptural, and therefore absolutely true, the habit the use of the Scofield Bible induces, is a most unhealthy one. We live in a day when the housewife can buy ready-prepared soups, prepared fruit, ready-cooked meat, ready-made salad—in fact, ready-made anything; so that it is possible to slip around the corner, and prepare a fairly good meal out of a number of cans. This practice may be relatively harmless in that sphere, but it has at least this effect: under former conditions the young housewife was likely to make a great many mistakes in her early attempts at cooking, but she learned by her errors, and persevered until she became a good cook. By the new method, there is no necessity of learning the art of cooking; you warm up your can—and there you are.

The same principle has been carried forward into the religious realm, and instead of studying the Bible without note or comment, and giving the Bible a chance to speak for itself, the new convert is given a Scofield Bible. He no longer compares spiritual things with spiritual; a ready-made, thoroughly-elaborated system is spread out before him in the notes which occur on nearly every page; and naturally, coming upon a scripture which he does not understand, he looks to the footnote to

see what Dr. Scofield says. He assumes that what is there written is correct, he reads that into the Scripture before him, and thenceforth reads the Bible with a prejudiced mind.

Many so-called "Bible teachers" parrot-like say the same things. Systems thus rooted in prejudice, and growing out of the lazy habit of substituting a "Gashmu saith it", for a "Thus saith the Lord", always engender much bitterness. The man who sincerely desires to believe nothing but what the Scripture teaches, and who derives his religious knowledge from a firsthand study of the Bible, is likely to welcome any correction that is supported by scriptural authority; but the person whose religious views are based upon mere human interpretations, whether right or wrong, will resent any suggestion of amendment which necessitates an extended enquiry in order to arrive at the origin of the teaching.

This article is written to suggest to all who are sincerely desirous of knowing what the Word of the Lord really teaches, particularly respecting the second coming of Christ, that they should supply themselves with a Bible without note or comment, and begin with the New Testament and study it from Matthew to Revelation, listening to no man's opinion, consulting no book other than the Bible itself; and in the course of their reading, let them make a note of every passage which refers to the coming of Christ, directly or indirectly; and thus prepare a list of all the passages in the New Testament relating to the Second Coming; study them separately, study them all together, and, having done so, they will have learned at least something of what the Bible itself teaches on this important subject.

### THE WEEK-END IN JARVIS STREET

The Thursday evening service of last week, August 4th, was held in Immanuel Baptist Church, corner of Jarvis and Wellesley Streets, which church had kindly placed their facilities at our disposal for a baptismal service. Rev. W. H. Hayler, Pastor of Immanuel Church, conducted the service, and a number of Immanuel Church friends were present to assist in other ways, as ushers and in connection with the baptismal service. The Pastor of Jarvis Street preached, and seven candidates were baptized. We are most grateful to the Immanuel Church Pastor and people for their courtesy.

On Sunday evening there was a large attendance at the Communion Service following the regular evening service in Massey Hall, at which eight new members received the hand of fellowship.

### THE JARVIS STREET BUILDING

The Building Committee is now holding frequent meetings with the architects, for the purpose of examining every detail of the elaborate specifications. We were in the architects' offices yesterday, and observed fifteen draftsmen and two or three typists, in addition to the architects themselves, exclusively engaged on the Jarvis Street plans. It will not be many weeks now before the corner of Jarvis and Gerrard Streets will be a very lively spot.

We ask our readers to continue to pray for guidance in all these matters, for the supply of additional funds, and for direction when tenders are let.

### NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

**MEDINA**—*Pastor Melchie Henry.* Those who made profession of faith in Christ as Saviour and requested baptism during the special services last winter were seven. Six of these were members of one family, a father, mother, and four children. A week ago the Pastor visited one of the candidates for baptism, and a brother and a sister made a profession of faith in Christ as Saviour, and applied for baptism. This makes three from that family. A few weeks before our

special services, an elderly man invited me to his home after a Sunday service, and he accepted Christ and applied for baptism. His wife claimed to be a "Deist", the ancient Indian religion. The father and mother of this lady were both strong "Deists". Last Thursday evening after our prayer-meeting this lady came to the Pastor and accepted Christ and applied for baptism. Last Sunday we baptized eleven who will come into the fellowship of the church at our next Communion service.

**TENT CAMPAIGN IN SARNIA**—*Pastor W. H. MacBain.* We have just completed a little over a month's special tent campaign in Sarnia, with services every night. The results have been very gratifying and we have been enjoying the out-poured blessing of the Lord. The attendances varied considerably with the weather and outside attractions in town. Sometimes our attendance was very good but other nights we suffered quite a drop. However, for the most part the interest shown left little to be desired.

We had a special portable baptistry in the tent, and during the month baptized eight, most of whom made a profession of faith in Christ during the meetings. Among those who took their stand were several for whom we had been praying for some time. One lady who was to be baptized the first night came to the tent with her little four-year-old boy the night of her baptism, as her husband was disinterested and would not come. However, the next Wednesday and Thursday her husband came and was marvellously converted and asked to be baptized the next Sunday. He would not miss a meeting after that. This is only one instance of the working of the Lord in our midst.

Among the preachers which we were pleased to have minister to us were: Pastor J. Scott, Toronto, Rev. Jas. McGinlay, Pastors H. G. Hindry, Arnold Dallimore, Jack Watt, as well as several from Michigan. Next Sunday we are looking forward to a great fellowship service when many will be added to the church. Truly the Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad. One of the greatest features of the meetings has been the great help they have been to our own members. It has been a real inspiration to all, and Temple Baptist Church is united in its great desire to keep pressing on in the great work of the gospel and the winning of souls for Christ.

**COURTRIGHT AND WILKESPORT.** Sunday, July 24th, was a day to be remembered by the members and friends of the Courtright and Wilkesport Churches, when we said farewell to our beloved young pastor after four years of happy and profitable fellowship in the work of the Lord. Mr. Watt preached appropriate messages at Courtright in the morning, and at Wilkesport in the afternoon. In the evening a joint farewell service was conducted by Pastor W. H. MacBain of Sarnia, in the Courtright Church. Four farewell addresses were read on behalf of the Courtright Church and Sunday School, and the Wilkesport Church and Sunday School, expressing our appreciation of all that the Lord has done for us during the ministry of His servant in our midst, our reluctance to say farewell, and withal our desire that he should follow the Lord's leading and be richly blessed in his new field of service. Mr. Watt made fitting reply to these addresses and then preached a powerful gospel sermon from I. Cor. 2:1-5. After the sermon the ordinance of baptism was performed when a mother and her daughter from Wilkesport, and a boy from Courtright, followed the Lord in His appointed way.

On Saturday evening at the weekly Young People's meeting the President read an address, and the Young People presented Mr. Watt with a signet ring as a token of their esteem and in appreciation of the helpful ministry he maintained among the young people.

On Monday evening practically the entire congregations of both churches, and many friends, gathered at the home of Mr. and Mrs. S. W. Munday to enjoy an evening of happy fellowship before the pastor left on Tuesday morning for St. Catharines. As a gift from the churches Mr. Watt was presented with a travelling bag.

**ORANGEVILLE DISTRICT RALLY.** About two hundred and seventy-five young people of the Orangeville district gathered at Erin on August, 1st for a day of social and spiritual fellowship. Groups were present from Alton, Churchill,

(Continued on page 7)

# The Jarvis Street Pulpit

## SHUT IN WITH GOD

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

Preached in Massey Hall, Toronto, Sunday Evening, August 7th, 1938

(Stenographically reported)

"And the Lord shut him in."—Genesis 7:16.

This morning we thought a while of the saying of Cornelius when he declared to Peter, "Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." That, we observed, should be the people's desire, to hear what God commands. Equally it should be the preacher's aim, to be the medium through which the word of God may be communicated to the people. Therefore the preacher must not use the Bible as a book of texts, of interesting aphorisms, parables, or proverbs, upon which he may hang his own imaginings. The duty of the preacher is to discover, so far as is possible, by a diligent and prayerful study of the Word of God, what the Bible means. The preacher should be an expositor of Scripture. He should expound, and in expounding, expose the hidden wealth of the Word of God. He must ever be careful not to handle the Word of God deceitfully.

The text I have announced is part of the record of the Deluge. When God had commanded Noah to enter the ark which he had prepared under divine direction, and he and his family had obeyed the divine summons, "the Lord shut him in." What lessons may we learn from this bit of very ancient history?

A friend of mine told me of being in a certain city not very long ago, where he heard a certain preacher expound, as he would call it, the doctrine of the Lord's return. He began with the Old Testament, with the translation of Enoch, and then on to the salvation of Noah. He treated these historical events as types, and built up an elaborate doctrinal system upon his particular interpretation of these and other types, reading into them, obviously, his own preconceived notions.

We may safely turn to the Old Testament for illustrative truth. I believe it is as truly inspired as the New, and is the very word of the living God. If one quarrels with the Old Testament, he will be bound to disagree with the New. You cannot separate the Old and the New without doing violence to both. The roots of the New are in the Old. The New Testament everywhere fulfils the Old as, I think it was Dr. Parker who said, the noonday fulfils the dawn.

I have here a copy of the Scofield Bible. On the fifth chapter of Genesis there is this note:

"Enoch, translated that he should not see death' (Heb. 11:5) before the judgment of the Flood, is a type of those saints who are to be translated before the apocalyptic judgments (I. Thes. 4:14-17). Noah, left on the earth, but preserved through the judgment of the Flood, is a type of the Jewish people, who will be kept through the apocalyptic judgments (Jer. 30:5-9; Rev. 12:13-16), and brought as an earthly people to the new heaven and new earth."

Again Dr. Scofield says of the ark:

"Ark: type of Christ as the refuge of His people from judgment. In strictness of application this speaks of the preservation through the 'great tribulation' of the

remnant of Israel who will turn to the Lord after the Church (typified by Enoch, who was translated to heaven before the judgment of the Flood) has been caught up to meet the Lord."

Even if this interpretation were correct, it is surely hazardous to build a doctrinal system upon an interpretation of a type, unless such a figure is specifically named and interpreted in the New Testament. And if one comes with a preconceived notion to the Word of God, and looks for something that will illustrate his ideas, he will be sure to find something that, by a little accommodation, can be made to lend support to his theories. But nothing is more dangerous than to build a doctrine on a type. Indeed, I think it is hazardous to say that anything in the Old Testament is a type unless it is clearly declared to be so in the New Testament. Only then are we on safe ground.

I have often thought I should like to talk to some of my pretribulation rapturist friends about this theory. According to the chronology of the last eleven verses of the fifth chapter of Genesis, and the last two verses of the ninth chapter, a period of six hundred and sixty-nine years must have elapsed between the translation of Enoch and the Deluge. Enoch's translation therefore, as used by our pretribulation rapturist friends, it must be admitted, was not a very exact type, for I have not read that any of them allege that so long a period as six hundred and sixty-nine years will elapse between the rapture of the church and the development of the Lawless One whose course is said to parallel the Great Tribulation. Moreover, it is said "Noah, left on the earth" etc. whereas Noah was not born until about sixty-nine years after Enoch's translation. Thus our friends make a fine mixture of the types and Daniel's seventieth week.

What is intended by this? The New Testament clearly teaches us that Noah is one of the host of believers who, in advance of the first advent of the Lord, believed the promise of His coming: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." If the Spirit of God intended that Noah and the ark were to typify these fanciful notions entertained by our friends, surely in the several references to Noah made in the New Testament, the New Testament would have given some intimation of it. But the New Testament says not a word about it. It does not make the slightest allusion to it. Nor is there a solitary word in the New Testament that, by any unfair interpretation, can be made to support the theory of the church's rapture before a tribulation, or the conversion of the Jews after the church is gone, and the Spirit of God is withdrawn. I am convinced the whole theory is an error of the first

magnitude and is fraught with infinite danger. Wrapped up with this view of course, are the great essentials of evangelical truth—and in that we rejoice. But a young Christian who knows nothing about the Bible says, "I will begin to read at Genesis." He gets as far as the fifth chapter, and Dr. Scofield introduces his imaginative interpretation into the uninstructed mind, and from there into the end, the student will read the Scofield theory into every difficult text, until by and by it will not be the word of God, but Dr. Scofield who is speaking.

If you have a Scofield Bible, put it on the shelf with your other commentaries. The notes it contains are but the opinion of a man, and in respect to matters eschatological, I believe they are at variance with the Word of God. Substantially it is the teaching of J. M. Darby, the founder of the Brethren, who became to them as an oracle, and whose word with many of them became as authoritative as the Word of God itself.

The ark was a type of Christ. We have New Testament warrant for so regarding it; for Peter sees in it a "figure" of baptism, which is a symbolic representation of the burial and resurrection of Christ by Whom we are saved. The Deluge which came upon the world so that "all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died . . . and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark", was a divine judgment, typical, not of "the great tribulation," but of that great judgment that will come upon the world when the earth and the heavens shall melt with fervent heat, when Jesus Christ Himself shall come again, and finally, to judgment.

I do not believe there will be a chance of salvation for anyone, Jew or Gentile, after the manifestation of the Son of God. It is simply impossible, according to the teaching of Scripture, that there should be a great worldwide revival after the church has been removed, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit has been terminated.

"And the Lord shut him in." Just as He shuts everyone in who will receive the provision of His grace, and find salvation in Christ Jesus the Lord. I want to show you that Noah was shut in *by* the Lord, shut in *with* the Lord, and shut in *for* the Lord.

#### I.

The Lord shut him in BY HIS OWN GRACIOUS POWER, and every step in the stages of Noah's salvation was of divine provision. It was the Lord Who warned him, and Noah believed God. It was the Lord Who told him to build the ark, and how to build it—and Noah did as he was told. It was the Lord Who at last summoned him to enter the ark, and Noah obeyed the divine summons. And when he and his family had all passed within the ark, the Lord Himself "shut him in". All that ministered to the salvation of Noah and his household originated with God; the plan of it, the prosecution of it, the completion of it. God was the Alpha and the Omega of Noah's salvation—as He is of the salvation of everyone who has been saved, is now being saved, or shall yet be saved. "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

If the Lord has shut us up to Christ, if you have come to know Him as your Saviour, and to rejoice in His salvation, then from beginning to end—and all through the middle—it is of grace. It is the Lord's work, and He "has shut you in".

"How sweet and awful is the place  
With Christ within the doors,  
Where everlasting love displays  
The choicest of her stores.

"While every heart and every tongue  
Join to admire the feast,  
We each exclaim with thankful song,  
Lord, why was I a guest?

"Why was I made to hear Thy voice,  
And enter while there's room,  
When thousands make a wretched choice,  
And rather starve than come?

"'Twas the same love that spread the feast,  
That sweetly forced us in;  
Else we had still refused to taste,  
And perished in our sin.

"Pity the nations, O our God,  
Constrain the earth to come;  
Send Thy victorious word abroad,  
And bring the strangers home."

We cannot too profoundly believe, or too clearly state the truth—it needs to be stated over and over again; not ninety times, or one hundred, but a thousand times, until people believe it—that it is the Lord Who saves and no one else. It is the message of comfort, of hope, of inspiration, of confidence at last, for every poor bankrupt sinner, that when he has come to the end of himself, and has absolutely nothing left, the Lord takes compassion upon him, and shuts him up to Himself, and by the operation of the Holy Spirit shuts him in to Christ.

I should like to point out to you that Noah was shut in to the Lord *from things which as yet had not appeared*. I think it is plainly shown in the record, and confirmed by the New Testament in that it is said that Noah was "warned of God of things not seen as yet", that when Noah entered the ark, there were no signs of the coming judgment. It may be there was not a cloud in the sky, not a rumble of thunder was heard, not a flash of lightning had appeared. The windows of heaven were not opened, the fountains of the great deep had not been broken up. It is said that they did eat and drink, they were married and given in marriage, "until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all." They did not believe a flood was coming.

Noah had been a preacher of righteousness. He had communicated to others, beyond doubt, the revelation which God had made to him—but no one had believed it. For perhaps one hundred and twenty years he had faithfully testified in God's behalf without a solitary convert outside of his own family. He talked of things which no one could see, which no one could prove—even as no one could disprove—and in all probability it was under a cloudless sky that Noah at last entered into the ark—and "the Lord shut him in."

In the last days there will be mockers, walking after their own lusts, 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." There are even preachers who tell us that the only hell anyone will ever know is the hell that they make for themselves here and now.

Years ago in a ministerial meeting I heard a very prominent preacher say, "When I was a young man, my brethren, I preached from the text, 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.'" The majority of the men laughed as he continued quite facetiously, "I promised the Lord that if He would for-

give me that indiscretion, I would never repeat it"! How popular that sort of thing is to-day on ministerial lips, in religious publications! No judgment to come! Representatives of that anti-Christian cult known as Russellism go about our streets in sound-trucks preaching this doctrine, that there is to be no future punishment, just annihilation—no flood. And they have followers by the million.

But Noah and his family believed in the coming judgment before there was any sign of its coming; on the ground of what God had said respecting "things not seen as yet, moved with fear, (Noah) prepared an ark to the saving of his house"; entered therein; and "the Lord shut him in."

You and I believe a great many things, as Christians, at which the unbeliever mocks. We believe in the cross of Christ, and that Christ died in our room and stead, bearing in our behalf the judgment which our sins deserved. We believe that Jesus Christ is Himself the Ark to Whom we come, to Whom we are shut up for salvation—and the vast majority hold us in contempt and say, "But there is to be no judgment. We see no signs of it. All things continue as they were from the beginning." Quite so! So was it in the days of Noah: so shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man. We had better hear what God says, even though we see no signs of coming judgment. Let our faith lay hold of that which is written; let that be enough for us; let us lay hold upon the hope set before us in the gospel, and flee to Him Who is the Rock of Ages, Who is the Ark, that God may shut us in!

When God shut Noah in, He shut him in to what appeared to many to be rather an absurd situation. I should not be surprised if there were humorists, wits, in that day. If there were, they must have made sport of Noah and his great ship built on the dry land, where there was not the remotest possibility of launching it into high tide, far removed from any water; a ship made to sail, with nothing to sail in, and no sign of anything to sail in. Noah left the surrounding revelry and all the epicurean merry-making of his day, and entered into the ark—and "the Lord shut him in" with a few more fools who belonged to his own family. How utterly ridiculous it must have seemed to some people! What a foolish thing it is to be a Christian! To deny ourselves so many things in which other people indulge! To separate ourselves from the company of many, and to shut ourselves up within narrow limits, and become "narrow-minded", and "strait-laced", and "fanatical", and "bigoted", and "superstitious"—and I know not how many other epithets they hurl at us in order to describe our folly for daring to believe that things will not always continue as they are, and that it is the part of wisdom with all speed to get into the Ark, and to be shut in.

Did you ever have anyone laugh at you, call you names? I was introduced to a certain clergyman on one occasion, on the train, and after greeting me he said to the friend who introduced us, "The only thing I have against Dr. Shields is that he will not let his people dance, or play cards, or go to the movies." I did not argue with him, on the principle literally—and I do not say it unkindly—that we are admonished, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." There are some people who do not under-

stand spiritual things; they live in a dark world; they are blind; it is useless to talk with them.

What a picture of life! What a high standard! As though that were the be-all and end-all of existence, to gamble and dance one's hours away, and laugh or cry at things that have no reality, that are seen on the screen. That is life! Poor man! They pointed to the ark yonder, and to the man now growing old who was building it, an eccentric sort of man, clever in some ways, but a little beside himself or he would never have built it! "What is it for?" "He thinks there is going to be a flood some day." "And he thinks the water will reach as high as that?" "Yes; and he even says God told him to build that ark. I hardly supposed any man could entertain such foolish ideas."

You young people, wherever your business or recreation make take you, will meet with a great many young sprouts of both genders who will scoffingly say, "And you believe the Bible?" Poor diminutive minds! Why do they not believe it? They do not know, never did know. Do not be laughed out of your faith. Do not be afraid to be a fool for Christ's sake. What if they so call us? "He laughs best who laughs last", and some day "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh." Meanwhile, get into the Ark if it does seem an absurd procedure. Make sure work of your interest in Christ. "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure." There is one thing about which there must be no perhaps or peradventure: never rest until you are certain you have gone up the gang-plank, and are safe inside, and the Lord has shut you in. Let them laugh outside, to their own destruction, if they will. May we all be wise unto salvation through faith that is in Christ Jesus!

Noah was shut in by the Lord, and he was shut in very securely. I do not know how he was shut in. I do not know how that one and only door that admitted to the ark was made fast. Many times have I crossed the ocean. I always try to get on my ship early. I like to see the men making the ship "shipshape" ready for sea. It is very interesting when the holds have been filled, and a great crane lifts a huge steel girder, and lays it down across the hold. Then thick, bolted hatches are put down upon the steel beam, and made fast. Over that, a tarpaulin is placed, and around the rim of the hold an iron band is screwed, and as it is screwed men drive in wedges. It is a fine summer day, and the ship is motionless at her dock; and some landlubber says, "What a lot of vain labour those men are going to in fastening that hatchway. It would take a small army of burglars to open it." But wait until that ship goes out to sea, and see what happens when old Neptune becomes angry, when the waves rise like mountains and break on the deck, when there is what sailors call "dirty weather". When the storm breaks, what cannot the mighty ocean do?

"The Lord shut him in." Perhaps some people watched the door being shut—I do not know how He did it. I do not suppose He was visible unless it were in the person of one of His angels. God had given every direction for the ship to be made ready for the sea, pitched within and without to make it seaworthy; and at last the Lord shut the door. And no door was ever more securely shut than when the Lord shut Noah in. No army of mockers could open it. They could not say, "Come on, Noah; we are going to drag you out." No! No! The Lord had shut him in.

I do not believe Noah himself could have opened that door. It was beyond Noah's power, once he was in, to get out, for the Lord had "shut him in". All the devils in hell could not have opened that door when once the Lord had bolted it. I wish I could send some doubtful soul home this evening saying, "I learned in Massey Hall this evening, by the grace of God, that I may be as sure of my salvation to-night as when I shall have been a million years in heaven." "The Lord shut him in", and it was He "that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." When the Lord does really receive a sinner into the Ark of salvation, and He sets His seal to his confession of faith, and shuts him in, there is no power on earth or in hell that can ever open that door again. I would not be bothered preaching a salvation conditioned upon human effort. If there were an infinitesimal element of human merit or endeavour anywhere, it would be the weak link in the chain, and we should be bound to slip. The Lord trusts no one with that. "The Lord shut him in."

That is the doctrine of the New Testament: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish" because He has given us into the charge of angels? No. The angels are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation". But there are some things which our glorious Lord will not trust even to an archangel. There are some things He does Himself, as He died Himself, as He Himself paid our debt—"they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." We are brought into personal relationship to God, and God shuts us in. Hallelujah! In spite of all the uncertainties of life, we can pray to God,

"Oh Thou Who changest not, abide with me."

And God shut Noah in *only once*. Sometimes I am admonished, on coming in from my garden late, to be sure to lock the door—and I do so generally. But when I get upstairs my wife enquires, "Did you lock the door?" And the very suggestion fills my mind with doubt! "I do not know. I think I did"—but downstairs I go to see if I have locked the door! We have to do things more than once. We are experimenters, but God does not need to experiment. When He made the sun, He made just one; and I have not heard that even science itself says He has ever had to make another, or improve upon the one He has made. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." "I know," says the Wise Man, "that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever." He does not need to do things over again. He shut Noah in once: He designed only one ark; He put Noah and his family into the ark, all through the one door—and then He "shut him in". "Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Once! Only once!

Several years ago I took some friends to Niagara Falls, and we went into a restaurant in St. Catharines—two friends, my wife, and I. I ordered the dinner at their selection, and when we had completed the order right down to the dessert, I began to repeat it for the refreshment of the waiter's memory. He stood there with folded napkin, and with fine indignation lifted his finger and said, "Just once." Then he swept the whole room with his arm—"Just once." Meaning if all tables were occupied he could remember all orders by being told "just

once." In the course of my order I said, "And when you bring the tea, do not bring those little jugs, with a teaspoonful of cream"—the man who invented those things ought to be sent to jail!—"bring us lots of cream."

I am not sure whether it was late that summer or the next year—I rather think it was the next year—we went again with other friends, to show them Niagara Falls, and we stopped at the same restaurant, and were served by the same Chinese waiter. I gave the order for dinner, and when I had completed it he stood there, napkin on his arm as usual, and looking at me as expressionless as the sphinx, he said, "And lots of cream?" Just once!

We need to ask God to do things just once. Does He need to do the same thing over again? Our Lord said, "It is finished." Let it be finished! He died once. "Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him." He ascended, and He has shut us in by the word of His grace; and you can stake your soul's interest for all eternity upon a single word of God, Who cannot lie. Once! He shut Noah in finally. He did not need to examine the door. It was secured against all powers.

## II.

### Noah was SHUT IN WITH GOD.

What is salvation? Christ Himself. We speak of His imputed righteousness. What is righteousness? Is it something He can take off and hand over to you apart from Himself? You cannot have these qualities of righteousness and justice and truth and faithfulness and power and love and grace in the absolute apart from God. They are the materials of which the Ark is fashioned. They are indispensable to salvation; and they are of the very essence of Deity Himself. When He imputes His righteousness, He imputes Himself. When He gives us of His grace, He gives us Himself. He shuts you in from the inside, and you are shut in with God, so joined to Him that your soul and the Saviour are for ever inseparably "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."

What a field, if we had not another service and it were not a hot night! Shut in with God! Shut in *with* God! A good many things He shuts out, but all that was necessary to the security and comfort and assurance of Noah and his family was provided in the fact that the presence of God was with him in the ark. God did not push the ark out into the water and say, "Now go." He said, "COME thou, and all thy house, into the ark; and we will sail together, Noah." Do you know what you need to be absolutely sure of salvation? Only to be sure that you have Christ with you. John Newton, the saint, himself a sailor, sang,

"Be gone, unbelief, my Saviour is near,  
And for my relief will shortly appear;  
By prayer, let me wrestle, and He will perform,  
With Christ in the vessel, I smile at the storm."

Of course! No ship can go down when the Sovereign of the sea is on board. Thus we have Him with us, and we find our assurance in that glorious fact.

Noah left a world of revelry without—eating, and drinking, and merry-making, and marrying; going on as though nothing were about to take place, living on the principle, "Let us eat, drink, and be merry; for to-morrow we die." But the Lord commanded: "Come on, Noah, leave all that. Come with Me. We are going on board." They went on board, and "the Lord shut him in." Poor Noah! Deprived of all society,



separated from the world's revelry, shut up in that old boat—for it was old before it was launched. "And the Lord shut him in." But I rather think that the company and companionship of the Lord Himself compensated Noah for all that he left outside the ark.

Let me tell you an experience I had as a youngster, I think I was in my teens. I had preached a little, but was not a pastor. I was invited to go here and there to preach, and was invited to a certain country place. There were no motor-cars then, and I got a horse and buggy, the best I could get—a fine buggy and a good high-stepping horse, that I would not be ashamed of. There was room for only two in that buggy, and I invited someone to go with me—I will not tell you who it was. I expected to enjoy preaching—and I confess I expected to enjoy riding there and back. It was fine going, and I got on not badly preaching, but when the service was over and I was about to go out and get into my buggy, a dear old saint whom I loved very much—I knew him well, and he was interested in me,—he had heard I was to preach in that village, and somehow he had got to the service,—came up to me and said, "I wonder whether I could ride home with you?" Wasn't that a welcome suggestion! I did not know quite what to say. Then someone—if he was not a father in Israel, he was a brother in Israel—was quick to recognize my hesitancy, and said, "Mr. So-and-So, I will give you a ride home." I said, "Thank you," and drove home on a beautiful summer, moonlight night, along a country road, where two were company, and three would have been none! I frankly confess that I did not miss that old gentleman's company a bit. I was "shut in" with someone else.

To be shut in with Christ is no deprivation. To be alone with Him, consciously, would be heaven itself. If you really know what it is to hold converse with the Son of God, you will reckon it no hardship to be brought to the place where He and you can hold tryst, where there is no one to interfere. "The Lord shut him in" with Himself, safe, certain, in the full enjoyment of all the provisions of His grace.

### III.

Why? He was shut in *by* the Lord, *with* the Lord, and *FOR THE LORD*. God did not save Noah just for Noah's sake alone. I think He saved him for His own glory, so that He might show the world, in all generations, that He is mighty to save. The New Testament tells us that Noah, by his faith in God, "condemned the world". He bore witness against a world of unbelief, because he believed God, and acquiesced in God's saving him for Himself.

We are saved for something other than ourselves. We *are* saved for ourselves, blessed be God. He saves us because we are worth saving. We cannot understand why, but in His eyes we are. He saves us for some wondrous purpose yet to be fully revealed. You were not even saved primarily to *declare* the doctrine of God your Saviour: you were rather saved primarily to "adorn" the doctrine of God your Saviour.

I was in the cemetery yesterday, and when I had set a sprinkler at work, I sat in my car for a while. Then I said to myself, "I will go for a walk, and see if I can visit some of my old friends." I walked about an hour or so among the memorial stones; and saw the names of many whom I had known and loved. I came to one that particularly interested me before I saw the

name. It bore this inscription, "To the praise of the glory of God's grace, in memory of Miss Elizabeth Knox." Miss Knox was the first Principal of Havergal College, a glorious Christian woman of whom I had heard for years. I never met her. But as I stood before that stone for a good while, I said to myself, Yes, that is it. That is why we are saved, to the praise of the glory of God's grace. Shut in with Him, that He may exemplify his saving power.

Why are we called? That we might "shew forth the praises of him who hath called (us) out of darkness into his marvellous light." As you go to work to-morrow, as you pray to-morrow, or read His Word, or whatever you do, let that inspire you: He shut me in with Him, for Himself, so that I may be His, only His, wholly His, not His in part but His altogether, all the time."

While Noah was shut in the ark with the Lord, nothing but a wild waste of water without, his interests, as his salvation, were within. God saved him for Himself because—oh, hear it.—A simple thing, but I wish you could hear it, and believe it—because *He loved him*. When God went into the ark with Noah, it was no endurance test if I may say it without irreverence on the part of God. When God went into the ark with Noah, the great God was where He wanted to be, because He was with someone whom He loved.

I do not know why Christ loves me; I have never been able to understand it. I do not know why He loves you. Sometimes we think people ought to think more of us than they do! But how can He love me?

"He saw me ruined by the Fall,  
Yet loved me notwithstanding all;  
He saved me from my lost estate,  
His loving kindness, oh how great!"

Are you downcast or discouraged? Do you ever feel that life is not worthwhile? Sit down alone with your Beloved. Say it over and over in your heart, "Whatever comes, whatever be the attitude of others, I know that Jesus loves me." The divine Jeweller knowing the judgment that is coming, is gathering His jewels, and putting them into the jewel-case, for "they shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." When He had put them there, "the Lord shut them in." "They are mine," saith He. If not a brand plucked out of the fire then a soul saved out of the flood of judgment. I offer you this marvellous, this complete, this incomparable, this eternal salvation which is *in* Christ Jesus the Lord.

### NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

(Continued from page 2)

Hespeler, Horning's Mills, Maple Grove, Orangeville, and Tottenham. The afternoon was spent in a most enjoyable fashion as the ability of the young people was put to the test in many forms of competitive sports. The park also offered splendid facilities for boating and swimming.

At the supper hour all gathered in the large hall on the grounds where the various social committees had provided a most enjoyable meal. Following the supper a great gospel service was held. The ministers taking part in the service were, Rev. John Hunter of Alton, Rev. G. W. Searle of Orangeville, Rev. Grahame Reeve of Churchill and Tottenham, Rev. J. Fullard of Essex, Rev. K. M. Cutler of Maple Grove, and Rev. Chas. Bray of Horning's Mills. The sermon was preached by Rev. J. R. Armstrong of Hespeler, who took as his theme, "God's Peculiar People". At the close of the meeting Rev. Grahame Reeve invited the friends to Tottenham for a day of fellowship some time in September.

**Bible School Lesson Outline**

**OLIVE L. CLARK, Ph.D. (Tor.)**

Vol. 2 Third Quarter Lesson 34 August 21st, 1938

**PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON**

**Lesson Text: Acts 12.**

**Golden Text:** "And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod."—Acts 12:11.

**I. Deliverance Through Prayer: the Angel of God Delivering the Godly—verses 1-19.**

"Life is mingled shade and sunshine" as Longfellow says. While the Christian Church in Antioch was experiencing unusual blessing and prosperity, another branch of the Church was suffering intense persecution at the hands of Herod Agrippa I, who was Governor of all Palestine. Herod was the grandson of Herod the Great, King of Judaea when Christ was born (Matt. 2:1, 16), and the nephew of Herod Antipas, Governor of Galilee when Christ was crucified (Matt. 14:1; Luke 3:1; 23:7-12). Though a Jew by birth, Herod was a favourite with the Romans. He defended Jewish customs and religion as a part of his policy to retain the good-will of his Jewish compatriots, who naturally looked down upon a Jew who ruled them on behalf of their Roman masters. By nature he was not perhaps as cruel as his more famous, or rather more notorious predecessors of the same name and lineage, and yet he was a frivolous, proud, extravagant and cunning man. He did not hesitate to add to his own popularity at the expense of others, and in catering to the cruel lusts of the Jews, performed brutal deeds.

James the apostle, the brother of John, had been admitted to the inner circle of intimate fellowship with the Saviour (Matt. 17:1; Mark 5:37; 9:2; 14:33). He was the first of the apostles, so far as we know, to lay down his life for Christ. James trusted God, as did Peter, but the Lord had ordained that the one should witness for Him by his life, the other by his death (Heb. 11:35; Phil. 1:20).

Peter was in a desperate condition. Four quaternions of soldiers, four detachments each consisting of four men, guarded him closely. According to the Roman custom, the quaternions would serve in turn. Two soldiers were stationed in the cell, the prisoner's hands being bound by two chains to each of them. The other two soldiers kept guard outside, in this instance some distance from one another, as they are described as "the first and the second ward" (verse 10). The following morning had been set as the time of execution. Yet Peter, whose trust was in Jehovah, was sleeping the sleep of the just (Psa. 3:5, 6), calm in the midst of adverse circumstances. Only the peace of God can give such repose (Phil. 4:7).

"But prayer." The Christians were gathered in the house of John Mark, calling upon God in earnest intercession on

behalf of the imprisoned apostle (Jas. 5:16). While they were yet speaking, God heard them (Isa. 65:24), and sent His angel to deliver Peter (Psa. 34:7; Dan. 3:28; 6:22).

God saved Peter at the most opportune time, not too soon, or too late (2 Chron. 16:9). The angel roused Peter (Gen. 19:16), loosed his chains (Heb. 1:14), caused a deep sleep to descend upon the guards so that they knew nothing of what happened (Matt. 28:4), opened the doors of the prison (Acts 5: 19, 20), and gave him safe conduct into the street. The heavenly visitor departed when his ministry was completed. God can save men who are fettered by the chains of sin (Rom. 6:20-22).

Not until Peter was alone did he realize to the full the marvel of God's intervening power (Psa. 18:2, 48). Amid the varied experiences of life we are not always conscious at the time of God's special guidance and protection, but later we praise Him for the assurance of His loving providential care (Psa. 20:6). He desires that we walk by faith, not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7).

The damsel Rhoda had the simple, unquestioning faith of a child (Matt. 18:3). Her elders thought she was beside herself, and when she maintained strongly and firmly that it was Peter, they thought she must have seen his guardian angel (Matt. 18:10). Possibly they had given up hope that Peter would be saved, and were now praying that he be given courage to witness a good confession on the morrow, as James had done. They may have been expecting that their leader would be formally tried the next day, and possibly acquitted. At any rate, they were slow of heart to believe, and they showed surprise at the way in which their prayers were answered.

Peter exhorted them to explain matters to James, the head of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13; 21:18), and then he withdrew to an unknown place of concealment. God had delivered him from his enemies in a miraculous way, but Peter was expected to use caution. To have remained in the open would have been a mark, not of faith, but of presumption. He would have been flying in the face of providence, and tempting God (Matt. 4: 6, 7). Our Saviour frequently withdrew from his enemies (Matt. 21:15-17; Luke 4:29, 30).

**II. Death Through Pride: the Angel of God Smiting the Ungodly—verses 20-25.**

The Roman confederate cities of Tyre and Sidon in Phoenicia received gain from their commerce with Palestine, and hence they were anxious to remain on friendly terms with the Governor.

On the day of the festival games in honour of the Emperor Claudius, Herod Agrippa, amid great pomp, clad in a garment woven with silver, delivered an oration aimed to secure his popularity with Tyre and Sidon. When the people ascribed divine honours to him, he did not disclaim such tribute as he should have done (Acts 13:26; 14:12-15), but took to himself the glory due to God alone (Isa. 48:11; Dan. 4:33-37). Swift and inexorable judgment fell upon him, and he died a miserable, ignominious death. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil (Psa. 34:15, 16; 1 Pet. 3:12).

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