

# 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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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

IS THE MARK OF THE BEAST APPARENT IN THE WORLD TO-DAY?

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

Preached in Massey Hall, Toronto, Sunday Evening, October 9th, 1938

(Stenographically reported)

"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

"And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

"Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred three score and six."—Rev. 13:16-17.

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

"The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

"And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."—Rev. 14:9-12.

"And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God."—Rev. 15:2.

"And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image."—Rev. 16:2.

"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone."—Rev. 19:20.

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given upon them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."—Rev. 20:4.

These are the passages contained in the Book of Revelation which speak of the mark of the beast. Will you allow me this brief introductory word of explanation. I hope you will not think there is ought of egotism in it. For now nearly seventeen years the messages of the Jarvis Street pulpit have been stenographically reported, and at least one each week has been published as delivered. They were first published to meet a local demand, but the paper which carries them has spread itself over the world, so that it is our privilege every Sunday to minister to people in between fifty and sixty different

countries of the earth, many of them speaking languages other than the English tongue. We have subscribers in practically every country in Europe, including Germany and Italy. I have not learned that the papers have been confiscated or censored, but we have subscribers even in those countries. I do not know how many we have now, but before the depression set in, our ministerial readers alone, of all denominations, could not find accommodation in this hall. It was this preacher's privilege to preach to more than three thousand ministers every week.

I do not mean to suggest that my ministerial readers

either expect or follow my directions; but they are my brethren who are interested in an exchange of views. They do not all agree with my interpretations, and I receive many friendly letters, some approving, some occasionally dissenting, and some write me letters of enquiry, especially in these troublous times. It occurs to me that possibly some of the enquiries, as well as the words of approval or dissent may represent the opinions of hearers as well as readers, and if so while I speak to you, I may answer many of these questions at once, for we reach every week, with this evening message, many times the nearly three thousand capacity of this hall.

In these troublous times people are asking questions, and there are many who eagerly devour any sort of interpretation of Scripture which seems to furnish a plausible forecast of the future. There has seldom been a time when it was easier for a preacher to command the interest of men and women who would venture, in a dogmatic fashion, to forecast the future while claiming to interpret the prophecies of Scripture. I have a definite object in view in discussing the question as to whether there is discernable anywhere on earth to-day the mark of the beast of which we have read in the Scriptures before us this evening; and in doing so, I ask you to follow me very carefully. I shall not attempt so much to preach to you as to offer you some words of guidance, with a view to guarding against fanciful and extravagant interpretations of the Word of God.

I shall remark on certain principles which relate to the interpretation of the prophecies of Scripture, and in doing so shall point out some of the difficulties and dangers which inhere even in the most cautious attempt to interpret those scriptures which relate to last things. In order that there may be no misunderstanding, I shall state my own conviction once again, that it is my personal belief that the Bible is the inspired, infallible, and supremely authoritative word of God. I believe in the integrity of Scripture. I believe that every part of the Bible is the word of God, and is therefore supremely authoritative in all matters of faith; and indeed in everything of which it speaks.

Such a conviction puts upon all who entertain it a certain responsibility. We must refrain from any attempt to handle the Word of God deceitfully. If I set out to interpret a will in which I am favourably mentioned, I shall be very careful to ascertain the exact meaning of the terms of that will, and shall not deceive myself by reading into it something that I should like to have there. It would be of no use for me to try to make out that the will leaves me one hundred thousand dollars if it leaves me only ten thousand. Of course, I have not the will leaving me even ten thousand to interpret yet! But if I had such a happy task, I should be careful to weigh every single word at its true value.

On the other hand, if a judgment had been pronounced against me in some court case in which I was a litigant, I should be anxious to interpret every syllable of that judgment, to know what it included and what it excluded. I could not afford to play fast and loose with such authoritative language. If the Bible were other than the word of God, I can see how one might be careless in his interpretations. If it were nothing but a collection of legends, of folklore, if much of it is obsolete, one might do as he likes with it; but whoever believes it to be the very word of God, must bear the responsibility of ascertaining exactly what the Word says, and

exclude from his thought anything that it does not say. I believe that any man does grave injury to the faith of others who dogmatically asserts what certain prophetic scriptures mean when there may be at least a reasonable doubt as to the accuracy of his interpretation; for if, by the passage of time, and the unfolding of events, his interpretation is proved to be false, someone who depended upon it may fail to distinguish between the Scripture and his interpretation of it, and may charge the Scripture with the failure that properly belongs only to the interpreter.

We must be jealous of the integrity and authority of Holy Scripture. I mean, by the integrity of the Scripture that there is a unity in the Book; that it is one; that one cannot take a penknife and cut out a part of it and say, "I do not like that." We must be jealous for the whole Book, and refrain from any possible misrepresentation of any part of Scripture.

That makes it necessary that we should be especially careful in our attempt to interpret and apply the highly figurative and symbolical portions of Scripture. By that I mean such a book as Daniel's prophecy, or Ezekiel's prophecy, or the prophecy of Zechariah, the parables of our Lord, and, very especially, the Book of Revelation; since all such scriptures are largely written in symbolic and pregnant speech. It will occur to any thoughtful man that such scriptures afford a sphere in which a vivid imagination may very easily run riot, and do great damage.

In respect to the scriptures, with which we are concerned this evening, there are two main schools of interpretation. The principles of their interpretation apply to the Book of Revelation, and in part at least; they may be said to apply to the prophecy of Daniel, and other prophetic Scriptures. One is called the *preterist* view. That is to say, those who believe that the prophecies here recorded have already been fulfilled, and that for their fulfilment we must turn back the pages of history and identify the events that are forecast in the prophetic scriptures. There is another school of interpretation which is called the *futurist* school. That is to say, people who believe that the Book of Revelation specifically relates to the future, that most of the tremendous events there predicted have yet to come to pass.

Talking to a lady some years ago, she said that the key to the Book of Revelation is to recognize the bride of Christ is in heaven after the fourth chapter. That settled everything as far as she was concerned; and I must confess that is rather a comfortable way of disposing of some rather intricate problems. Very excellent people, and very intelligent people, are found in both schools. Between these two extremes there are many who believe that Revelation is partly historical and partly future, part has already been fulfilled, part of it has yet to come to pass. We must be careful not to offend the susceptibilities of good people who are convinced that they have arrived at the one and only possible interpretation.

There are difficulties and dangers in both directions. I think it was only last week that someone approached me with a complete explanation of all that Hitler was doing. In his mind there was no doubt about it. He was completely identified, Hitler had fulfilled certain scriptures exactly. A few questions served to convince me that while I have no doubt the man was sincere, like Israel of old, he was actuated by a zeal of God that was not wholly according to knowledge.

You have all read the newspapers of recent weeks. I will give you a little up-to-date news, to show certain parallels from Daniel's prophecy. You may judge as to whether it is in any measure a true description of anything of which you have recently read:

"And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant. And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully; for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people."

Did you ever read anything like that?—

"he shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province"—

I dare say some of you could identify that as Austria or Czechoslovakia—

"and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers"—

it is easy to see that someone has outKaisered the Kaiser—

"he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: yea, and he shall forecast his devices against the strongholds, even for a time"—

he shall tell in advance what he is going to do. Someone may say, "That is Hitler's book"—

"and he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army"—

that is mobilization—

"and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army"—

that is another mobilization—

"but he shall not stand"—

that is the pact at Munich—

"for they shall forecast devices against him. Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain. And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table"—

how easy it would be to say, "I have it. That is Hitler and Mussolini"—

"but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be at the time appointed. Then shall he return into his and with great riches"—

that is Hitler's return to Berlin after Vienna, and perhaps after Praha a little later—

"and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land."

You can readily see how easily one can find in certain portions of scripture parallels to present-day happenings. Turn the pages of history, and you can say, "That fits that, and that fits that, and that fits that." On the other hand, give your imagination free play, and you could project yourself into the future and write history in advance by your interpretation.

Consider the chapter from which I have read. A Grecian scholar in ante-New Testament times, *before* Christ, interpreted these chapters as finding their exemplification in the doings of Antiochus Epiphanes, and doubtless many parallelisms could be established. You remember that our Lord refers to "the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place." Many expositors have said that was fulfilled by Titus when Jerusalem was encompassed with armies, and that the unparalleled tribulation began at that time—when ever it may end. But others have thought they had found it in later periods. Some saw Antichrist in Nero;

some thought they discerned his features in Napoleon. The great Dr. Henry Grattan-Guinness saw some appalling significance in the Franco-Prussian War; others in the Great War; and now many more are seeking prophetic identifications. Nor, I would have you understand, am I disposed to criticize those who constantly are on the watch for the manifest unfolding of the divine purposes. These facts, however, should at least teach us the necessity for a holy caution in the interpretation of these scriptures. When so many good, sincere, able men differ from each other, they cannot all be right. When "Peter stood with the eleven" and said, "This is that which is written," not one of the eleven contradicted him!

Someone will say, "If it is in the Word of God, it must be fulfilled at some time, and when it is fulfilled, its fulfilment will be recognized." With that I cordially agree. I do not believe there is a prophetic word in Holy Scripture that will not be fulfilled, to the honour of God, and for the confirmation of the faith of His elect. But I point out to you this danger: the assumption that everything in the Scripture may—and must—be understood here and now, will drive one to an attempt to invent an interpretation if he cannot otherwise find one that fits.

How many books have been written in an attempt to fit the events of the time into the outlines of prophecy, saying, "Now this prophecy is fulfilled." Even such a man as Grattan-Guinness could see nothing beyond nineteen hundred and thirty-four. Many others have presumed to set dates at least for the near approach of the Second Advent. Then by the mere passage of time their forecasts have been proved to be wrong. This certainly ought to warn us that it is hazardous for one to attempt it.

If there are some passages of Scripture you do not understand, be honest enough when anyone asks you what it means, to say you do not know. There is a very large part of the Bible that the most erudite person does not understand. We ought to be honest enough, when we do not know, to say so. It is no reflection upon your spiritual discernment for you to say of the ultimate meaning of some portions of Scripture, "I do not know," but rather a tribute to your honesty. But someone may say, "Does not that commit one to futurism? If it must be fulfilled, and if it will be recognized when it is fulfilled, and it is not yet recognized, that must mean that it is all to be dated in the future." Not necessarily. The Apostle Paul, as Saul of Tarsus, before his conversion, was well instructed in the Old Testament scriptures. He was not ignorant of the fifty-third of Isaiah, of the second Psalm, or of any of the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. Like all the Jews, he was looking for the Messiah to come, and knew the scriptures which predicted His coming. Yet when he heard of Jesus Christ he did not recognize that these scriptures were fulfilled. He sought to destroy all that called upon His name. But there came a time when he was given a special illumination from Heaven, when he met Christ; and it is said, "Straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God." If you had asked Paul before his conversion whether he believed in the historical fulfilment of Scripture, or whether he looked for a future fulfilment, he would have said, "I believe in a future fulfilment." "Do you believe that the Messiah has come?" "No, I do not believe He has. Those scriptures are not yet fulfilled." But when he saw Christ, he learned that a very large part of the Old

Testament scriptures had already been fulfilled in Him. But he was not wholly a preterist: he looked forward to other scriptures that were yet to be fulfilled. He was neither one nor the other, but a little of both.

It seems to me possible that the time may come when events will so order themselves by the providence of God, that there will be no mistake as to the complete fulfilment of all that is written. When a photographic plate is exposed, it may not immediately be developed. Later it is put in a developing fluid. As it is shaken about in the tray, gradually the picture to which it was exposed, takes form, until the development is complete. The purposes of God are here recorded, and when He providentially unfolds the history of the race, and that unfolding is completed, the day will come when God's people will be able to say, as Peter said on the day of Pentecost in respect to a certain scripture, "This is that which is written."

In the meantime, there may be many partial and anticipatory fulfilments. Indeed, there is scarcely any great event of Scripture that has not had its forerunner. You remember how Moses said, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me." There is a sense in which every prophet who succeeded him was a forerunner of Christ. Then came John the Baptist. When he was asked who he was, "he confessed, and denied not: but confessed, I am not the Christ. . . . I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esais." And the pen of inspiration in Hebrews says, "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." As Christ had many forerunners culminating in the forerunner, John the Baptist, so Antichrist has many forerunners. John said in his day, "There are many Antichrists." Paul said, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work." Antichrist, in principle and spirit, has always been in the world. The mystery of lawlessness has always been here, but it will gather up at last into one great climax before the Lord shall come.

I believe there is nothing that will confirm our faith in the Scriptures, and therefore prepare for every eventuality of life, like observing how the principles of Scripture—the principles of the historical and prophetic scriptures—fit into the experiences of our time, so that we are able to say, partially though not completely, "This is that which was written."

There is a sense in which Antichrist and the mark of Antichrist may now be recognized among us, and I shall mention several main features, that we may see whether we can identify Antichrist anywhere.

#### I.

What is the outstanding feature of this Antichrist? IT IS THAT HE IS A MAN, THE NUMBER OF A MAN. Antichrist may be a system perhaps, but a system flowering at last into a great human personality. It is a system which, throughout, magnifies man, and the importance of man, over against God. It is an anti-Christian system. It is shot through with anti-Christian principles. God as manifest in Christ is opposed, and man is magnified in His place. Go back to the beginning of human history: The devil said, "Ye shall be as gods." Man has set himself up as a rival of Deity from the beginning, but that tendency seems to be accelerated and accentuated in our time.

It is true of every branch and every sphere of human knowledge. The Bible says of man, "They did not like to retain God in their knowledge". Thus in the pursuit of knowledge, men have ever tried to crowd God out of their thought, and to find out things for themselves, being unwilling that God should tell them anything. They would exalt themselves above God.

How true that is of nearly every branch of knowledge which is falsely called science! Someone has said that it is the function of science to push the Great First Cause back as far as possible. It is true that men do not like to recognize God. They would rather magnify the human intellect, and the power of human achievement, rather than give glory to God.

You find the divine economy everywhere superseded by a human economy. There are many people talking about economics nowadays. I have a conviction that there is not a sphere of human life that will not find its truest guide in the Bible. If you want a true cosmogony, a history of the universe and how it came to be, accept God's statement of it; you will find it in the Bible. But men say, "I will not have it; I will turn up the rocks and find out for myself." They would eliminate God, and wrench the truth from its divine concealment. If you would have a system of economics, you have it set out in the Bible. Read the twenty-fifth chapter of the Book of Leviticus; read many of the neglected sections of Scripture, every one written for the judgment day, so that God can say to us, "I told you how to live, how to behave yourselves toward each other, and toward Me."

You will find no better system of hygiene than is written in the Bible. Nor can man improve upon God's balance in nature. How simple a text!—Said the Lord, "The Lord thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once"—why?—"lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee." There is a balance in nature. There is an economy here which God providentially ordered, and all is well until men attempt to interfere with it. There was someone who went to Australia, and could not see any reason why they should not have rabbits there. He must have been an Englishman! He imported a pair; they did not belong there; they were not native to the country; it disturbed the balance, and they bred by the billion until they became one of the greatest plagues of the land. Whoever interferes with God's economy, will always get into trouble.

What have we seen in our day? Men have discussed the production and distribution of food-stuffs, and all the rest of it. In the United States a few years ago they said, "The fact of the matter is, we have too much; our trouble is over-production." The wise professors persuaded the American Government to pay men to plow under their cotton, leave their land idle, kill their hogs by the million—actually paid them to leave their land uncultivated, lest they should provide too much wheat. In less than two years that same Government had to pay those same farmers money to keep them alive, because they had played with God's law. Their system was anti-Christian, anti-God, an insult to the Divine Economist.

They discussed the same thing in Canada a few years ago. I remember reading that an honourable member had risen in the House at Ottawa and asked the Government—I think Mr. Bennett was Prime Minister—if they proposed to take any measures to limit the area of wheat-production in the West. The Prime Minister replied

that the grasshopper plague in the West had made it unnecessary that the Government should take any action! I remember saying at the time, that we ought to elect the grasshoppers to Parliament!

So have men cut down the trees and changed the face of the earth, with the result that there have been floods, and hurricanes, and dust-storms—one peril or pestilence after the other has come to speak for God, and to bid men let God have His way in His world. But the spirit of Antichrist, and the folly of it is everywhere apparent.

That is especially true in the religious realm. What have you in religion to-day? What do you find to be the tendency in churches, in colleges, among religious leaders? To magnify man, and minimize God. As for the Bible, it is a Divine and human Book. Everyone admits it is human: it was not written by angels; but God is in it. The critic does not take man out of it, but God; and says, "It is man's book; it is not God's book." If they recognize Jesus Christ at all, instead of worshipping Him, they would pay Him compliments as a man. I read a book the other day written by a man whom I knew years ago, now a professor in Chicago University, on, Humanism as the religion of the future. In that book the author says that the religion of the future will have no God in it: it will simply be a religion that will set forth a philosophy of human relationships, wholly on the human plane; and that the only thing that matters is that a man should get along with himself, and with his neighbour, and blot from his mind all thought of God. It is the old story. Said Lucifer, "I will exalt myself above the stars of God; I will be like the Most High." That is the principle; it always has been, and always will be until it finds its culmination in the coming of the Lawless One.

## II.

Another outstanding feature of the Antichrist will be THE UNIVERSALITY OF HIS INFLUENCE. Power will be given him over all kingdoms, and his name shall be upon men's foreheads. Everyone is to be included. His is to be a universal empire. Do you see any tendency in that direction to-day? The tendency to the regimentation of human life has never been more pronounced in all history than to-day. It is so *in labour*. There was a day when, if a man was a good carpenter or bricklayer, if he was able to do more than others, he was paid more money. But the labour unions have brought all to a common level, so that individualism is suppressed in the labour market to-day; and collectivism is to the fore. You find newspapers and everyone else talking about "the inherent right of collective bargaining". I am not criticizing labour unions: but only pointing out a tendency.

The same is true of *capital*. There was a time when a man was able to open a store on a corner, and do business. He cannot do so to-day. If he does, a great chain store will open across the street and drive him out of business. There is combine upon combine until at last the man who has tried to stand on his feet and do something, throws up his hands and says, "It is too much for me; I must submit to this authority or go out of business. I have not the capital to stand against it."

It is international in scope. There is no labour union that has not its international affiliations; and the same is true of commercial and financial concerns. They have their ramifications everywhere, so that it is almost impossible to find to-day an independent labourer or an independent

business man. Neither the employer nor the employee is his own master. They are all subject to something that they call the collective will. Labour and capital are regimented and controlled, so that they move like a great army.

The same tendency may be observed politically. The League of Nations has failed, but there are other leagues. The dictators get together, and the democracies try to get together—and what do you see in that? In the "land of the brave and the free" you find that tendency is winning, and varied forms of collective authority are on the increase. The same is true of Canada, in Ontario, Quebec, and the other provinces throughout this Dominion. We are like all other countries in that respect. Things are accepted in this Province to-day, are looked upon as inevitable, that would not have been tolerated twenty-five years ago, because this system of political regimentation is being advanced.

I came upon a statement in Mr. Chamberlain's speech in the House of Commons that rather chilled me. I supposed that in the "Mother of Parliaments," if anywhere in the world, the will of the people was still registered; but when Mr. Chamberlain was explaining and defending what he had done in Munich, he said:

"Nobody who has been through what I had to go through day after day, face to face with the thought that it would be I alone who had to give a Yes or No, which would decide the fate of millions of my fellow countrymen."

Actually the Prime Minister, standing in his place, said, "I alone had to say Yes or No!" I venture to say that in all British history no other Prime Minister ever dared say it. What becomes of the principle of responsible government, if a whole nation has handed itself over to the will of one man, so that he may go, and without consultation with his colleagues, definitely surrender an empire to the course Mr. Chamberlain pursued? But it is all one with the general tendency.

That tendency of regimentation and unification applies *religiously*. You have heard many things about Jarvis Street Church: I will tell you what is distinctive about Jarvis Street: we are a congregation of people who have refused to receive the mark of the beast. We have said, "We will stand for the Bible; we will not be regimented; we will not be controlled; we will be answerable to God, and to God alone." What have you to-day? Union of all sorts of opposites are proposed: the Greek Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Anglican Church—every other church. Put them all together into one great union, one great organization.

That is not new. It has long obtained in the Roman Catholic Church. A great many of these so-called Protestant churches seem to be at the poles from Roman Catholicism. So did Pilate and Herod seem to be at disagreement one with the other! The religious world generally is being regimented. We have a union of churches in this country, and every little while a man brings a great cheer when he says that it will not be very long before there will be only one church in Canada.

I attended the meetings of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches—their General Assembly and Conference—when the question of Union was under discussion; and I heard the man who presented the report to the Toronto Conference of the Union Committee, when he was asked about the "United Church of Canada". Someone said, "I should like to ask Dr. So-and-So, through the chairman, if that is not rather presumptuous, for three

churches to come together and call themselves, 'The United Church of Canada', when so many other denominations are not in the Union?" He replied, "This will be the United Church of Canada, and the rest of the churches may come in when they get grace enough." God grant that we may never get grace enough to go in on that ground. I do not criticize the United Church, but remark only on the principle that is operative here, and in England, and everywhere else.

As these unions are effected, the spiritual purpose is almost invariably subordinated to the material. It becomes a great organization to effect certain material and temporal ends. At some church conferences the discussions are mainly about various aspects of social service, ministers' salaries, and I know not what else; but very little about God, or about the salvation that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. All these things are moving in one direction, and are symptomatic of a general condition.

Have you noticed *how science is becoming the hand- maiden of collectivism?* In the arts you need only one artist to-day where you might have needed a thousand a few years ago. The same truth is apparent in the realm of music. Someone said the other day, "I have a piano which I would sell for one hundred and twenty-five dollars." Another answered, "You can buy one anywhere for twenty-five dollars to-day." The piano business is dead. I hope the manufacturers will not sue me for saying that! Why do you not need a piano? One man can play a piano for ten million. He can supply his canned music for the multitude; it becomes possible for one brain in any sphere to dominate the masses. The same is true in journalism. I could come downtown tomorrow evening after the papers are out, and pick up ten different men and ask them a question about some current matter, "What is your opinion?"—and I could tell you what paper those men had read. In nine cases out of ten they are echoes; they do not think.

Modern politicians do not want people to think—nor do they think. Did you notice that the Antichrist is given unto him "a tongue speaking great things"? When the thirtieth anniversary of Marconi's success in wireless was celebrated, a man spoke from Poland, in English. He said that while the radio might be a great blessing, he could conceive of its being the greatest menace to the world's peace now in existence. He asked, "What if one man, determined upon war, should be able to inflame the passions of millions? What would be the result?" Did you listen to the bellowings of Hitler, to his loud swelling words? Before the days of radio Hitler or Mussolini would have been an impossibility. It is because, by means of the radio, they are able to bring the impact of their personality upon the minds of the millions that they are able to sway them to their side, and subjugate them to their wills.

Did you notice when the late King George died the sorrow the whole empire felt? Why did you feel you had lost a friend, and almost a father? Why did we feel that we had been brought into intimate relationship with the King, that he was no longer far off? I was thrilled that last Christmas morning when I heard him say, "Children, the King is speaking to you." His voice came into every home of the Empire, and because we heard his voice we felt he belonged to us. That was on the good side; but oh, on the evil side! The radio is controlled in Germany. Hitler speaks in a certain place in Berlin, and everybody is commanded to listen; either by turning on his own

radio, or going to a public place. I do not say that he is Antichrist, but the principle of Antichrist is in operation, and through the radio it becomes possible for one evil-disposed man in five minutes to do more damage in the world than the greatest genius could have accomplished in many years before radio was discovered. So Antichrist will be a man of much speech. In every sphere the principles of Antichrist repudiate the supremacy, the sovereignty of the divine, and magnify man against his Maker. Thus in every strata of human life, among all peoples and nations and tongues, it would seem that these principles are at work, perhaps preparing the way for their more universal application.

### III.

WHAT IS THE MARK OF THE BEAST? What do you call it, the swastika? Is it the salute of Nazi-ism or Fascism? No! I do not know what the particular mark may be, but in principle it involves submission to an anti-Christian authority. They wear the mark of the beast who set God aside, and yield themselves to an authority that is contrary to God, wherever it is done. Wherever you do it, man—when you do wrong in business, when you do not put conscience into your work at the bench, when you are not careful of your books, when you are careless of your speech—wherever you violate the divine law, and substitute for the authority of God, an authority that is opposite to God, at that point you surrender to an anti-Christian authority, and yield yourself, in principle at least, to the mark of the beast.

### IV.

WHAT IS THE REWARD? "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Thus are they named, in contradistinction to those who yield not to this anti-Christian authority, and their certain doom is predicted. That is the teaching of the old Book.

*What is it to be lost?* "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because" he is a murderer, a drunkard, a libertine? No!—"he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." The sin that shuts the gates of heaven and opens the gates of hell to any soul, that dooms him to everlasting damnation from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power, is the rejection of Christ, and the acceptance of some form of Antichrist, whether now or in the days to come.

*What of those who receive not his mark?* I am glad there is another mark. There is Another: not Antichrist. And for those who follow Him, there shall be no more sickness, "no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former

things are passed away." They shall sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, because they have overcome the beast; and it is said that they have refused to worship his image; they have refused his mark of servitude, and said, "We will not", but have received the mark of the Other! John said of all the redeemed, "They shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads." The sheep, the redeemed flock of the Good Shepherd Who gave His life for the sheep, has put His brand upon them, His mark; and when He comes to divide the sheep from the goats, there will be no mistakes of identification. Those who have received Him, who trust Him, and who love His appearing, at last will pass into the glory. The others shall be consumed with the spirit of His mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of His coming. Some day Antichrist will be revealed. That is what the Word says: he will be revealed. I do not know when, I do not know who he will be, but he will be developed out of the midst. When he is thus revealed, then the Lord shall be revealed also from heaven "with all his holy angels with him". The final battle between Christ and Antichrist will be fought, and the "kingdoms of this world shall become"—there is a better rendering—"the sovereignty of this world shall become the sovereignty of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."

*On which side will you be?* On which side will you be? For myself, I would rather be esteemed as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things, if only I may be sure that all is well between my soul and God. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life"; "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." May God save us all by His great mercy, for His name's sake, Amen!

### THE CONVENTION AND THE SEMINARY

This paper last week carried notice of our forthcoming Union Convention to be held in Cooke's Presbyterian Church, Toronto, October 25, 26, 27, and in that notice mentioned our Seminary programme. We here give in more detail the way in which the work of the Seminary will be presented in a series of addresses:—

- I. The Appeal of the Seminary:
  1. Why I came to the Seminary—Mr. C. H. Wilkins, first year.
  2. How I find the Seminary—Mr. A. Hewson, third year, "Assistant" at Victoria Park Mission, Toronto.
  3. What I will do for the Seminary—Mr. W. R. Slade, fourth year.
- II. The Work of the Seminary:
  1. The Seminary and the Man—Mr. E. A. McAsh, fourth year, pastor of Maple Hill Baptist Church.
  3. The Seminary and the Pastor—Mr. J. E. Greening, fourth year, pastor of Scotch Line Baptist Church.
  4. The Seminary and the Missionary—Mr. F. S. Cook, fourth year, prospective missionary to South America.
- III. The Frontiers of the Seminary (Illustrated):
 

Rev. A. C. Whitcombe, Instructor of Hebrew, and pastor of Shenstone Memorial Baptist Church, Brantford.—W. G. B.

### REV. ROBERT DUBARRY IN FRANCE

With deep emotion we left America on the 13th of July, after a most enjoyable and inspiring tour of six months. Fine brotherly welcomes, a good understanding of our case, an utter absence of cares and trouble, the very best health, and other innumerable divine providences have left very fragrant traces in my thankful memory.

Our sailing home was quite worthy of these privileges. In the pleasant company of Fritz Buhler and Mrs. Paul Bauman, of Switzerland and Toronto, we again enjoyed on the wonder-

ful "Normandie" first class facilities with our third class ticket, thanks to admirable divine leadings. Besides these favors, the Atlantic was even more beautiful and quieter than on any of our eleven previous crossings.

At Le Havre, we had the glad surprise of a welcome from a dear crippled sister of our Nimes church, who, at the cost of incredible fatigue, came to the dock from her far distant holiday place.

In Paris a host of kind friends took good care of our personal and cumbersome luggage. And within one hour we were in the hospitable Colombes home of our good Guedj-Raynaud friends. In that convenient place, the former residence of La Maréchale Booth-Clibborn, and a spot sanctified for decades by the faithful work of our pastors and their help-mates, I was to spend over five weeks in the much longed for company of the unselfish and loving one who, at the cost of great sacrifice and health trial, had had to part for so long from her wandering husband. During that Colombes term, we were fortunate in securing the fellowship and help of one of our best Nimes gems, Miss Martha Lamouroux, who is getting a Christian training in a Welsh Bible School.

Brother Guedj and his family were thus enabled to take a well-earned and much-needed rest in the country, and I was left in charge of his two live churches, one in Colombes and the other in Paris. Though it was the height of the heat and of the vacation season, the audiences at both places were indeed rather considerable, and the fervency remained very warm, no special effort being attempted, however, beyond the discharge of ordinary pastoral duties.

The past of these two Paris fields reads indeed like a romance which I shall be glad to introduce some day to our American readers, along with many other fine tales of the Lord's doings through the worthy friends of our third Paris church.

To speak only of the Colombes people who minister to a community of about one hundred thousand, I must begin by referring to the variety and quality of the membership. French, Swiss, Belgian, English, Irish, Spanish, Italian, Czech, Hungarian, Yougo-Slavian, Russian, American, Israelite and other friends mingle there in wonderful harmony. Former Protestants, Roman Catholics, Greek Orthodox, pagans and unbelievers of all sorts are now fellowshiping in the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Cultured and undeveloped people, employers and workers meet there happily. Some are of very recent faith and others are veterans. Not of one kind of temper, as it is too often the case elsewhere, but all kinds of temperaments supply the variegated membership needed to constitute a real healthy body.

Among those met there are two Roman-Catholic ladies who, for about a decade, had been indifferent neighbours of the chapel, but are now entirely won to the Lord. A Roman Catholic employer of some fifty people has been gloriously won through the testimony of his young wife. A Roman Catholic pair, the wife at the head of a Government school, are serving the Lord most heartily. One of the leading helpers of the church, a brother from Prague, has been brought to the light through a Bible text posted at the door of the meeting-house. An Italian, saved under unusual circumstances, has already secured in a short time an extraordinary record of service. Young ladies and young men are very numerous and full of earnestness, and young homes are also many. Old friends remain there too, some with over forty years of Christian consistency lived under our own delighted eyes.

What a fellowship! And also what a spirit of sacrifice! These dear friends can hardly be beaten along that revealing line. Having faced last year the heavy cost of enlarging rather considerably their own chapel, they have now already provided most of the expense of an extra plot of land and of a beautiful prayer and Sunday School building made necessary by the continual growth of the work.

Of course, our Colombes friends are provoking by their endeavours the hatred of Satan, and even during our short stay, we had full opportunity for measuring their need of watchfulness and fortitude. But the Lord is undoubtedly with them as a Victor, and we have no shadow of a doubt that one of the finest pieces of real work in the world is being shaped in that elect and influential suburb of huge and beautiful Paris.

It was rather hard to part from these good friends. But after seven months of mutual longing, what a comfort we

experienced at last in our first contact with our own beloved Nîmes church! We are now beginning to enjoy there to the full the happy co-operation of thirty-seven years with that wonderful people.

In the meanwhile, we are living in days of appalling political danger and economic crisis, a solemn call for us to raise the very best possible quality of Christians. That we cannot do alone. Nor can we face alone our heavy missionary responsibilities toward our many millions of unhappy and unsaved neighbours. But was it not for that that our Franco-American fellowship was divinely appointed? We therefore continue to crave the prayerful and practical sympathy of all our dear friends of the new continent.

## Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 2 Fourth Quarter Lesson 43 October 23rd, 1938

### PAUL SEIZED IN JERUSALEM

Lesson Text: Acts 21.

Golden Text: "And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done."—Acts 21:14.

#### I. The Journey to Jerusalem: the Warnings to Paul

—verses 1-14.

Luke the historian, still following his method of scientific research (Luke 1:1-4), gives such an accurate account of the journeyings of the Apostle Paul from Miletus to Jerusalem that it is possible, with the aid of a map, to chart out the exact course he followed. The island of Cos, or Coos, famous for its commerce and for the medical school situated there, was the first place visited. The ship passed by Rhodes, the sunny island of roses, and then stopped at Patara, at that time a seaport of prominence in southern Asia Minor, although now it is in ruins. On the way across the Mediterranean Sea to Tyre, they saw the island of Cyprus in the distance.

Paul and his companions made good use of the delay of seven days at Tyre, a delay caused by the time necessary for unloading and loading the boat. Perhaps, also, the captain was waiting for favourable winds. Paul sought out the disciples of Christ residing in that city. It would be well for Christian people, when moving to a strange city, or when sojourning for a shorter or longer period in an unfamiliar place, to search out a Church where there are Christians with whom they may have fellowship. Lot made the mistake of pitching his tent toward Sodom (Gen. 13:12). On the other hand, Daniel guarded himself from the pollutions of the royal court in a foreign land by praying, "his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem" (Dan. 6:10).

There are those who think that Paul was either disobedient or mistaken when he did not follow the instructions of the disciples at Tyre who said that he should not go up to Jerusalem (verse 4; Acts 22:17, 18); that when he "purposed in the spirit" to visit the city, and to take the gifts to the poor saints there (Rom. 15:25-28), the plan was one formed in his own mind, and not God's first choice for him. Others regard the message of the Spirit, not as a prohibition, but as a test, to try his faith.

It is clear that the Holy Spirit had imparted to the Christians at Tyre the knowledge that suffering and imprisonment awaited Paul at Jerusalem. In their affectionate regard for him, they endeavored to dissuade him from his purpose. The Holy Spirit had imparted this same knowledge to Paul himself (Acts 20:22-24), but it would seem that Paul interpreted it differently. He foresaw the danger, but was determined to allow nothing to stand in the way of what he considered to be his holy duty (Luke 9:51).

Philip the evangelist, one of the first deacons (Acts 6:5), had conducted a successful preaching tour in Samaria, in the uninhabited land between Jerusalem and Gaza, in Azotus, and in the cities on the way to Caesarea (Acts 8:5-8, 26-40). He was now residing in Caesarea with his four daughters who were prophetesses (Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 2:17, 18; 19:6; 1 Cor. 14:24). While the New Testament prophets usually predicted future events, the word 'prophecy' designated 'forth-telling' as well as 'fore-telling', and this ministry, unlike the office of authoritative teacher in the church, was evidently one in which women might share (1 Cor. 11:5; 1 Tim. 2:12).

The prophet Agabus from Judaea is probably the same Agabus who predicted the famine in the Roman Empire (Acts 11:28). By a symbolic act (Compare Isa. 20:2-4; Jer. 13:1; Ezek. 5:1), he foretold in a realistic manner the dangers which awaited the Apostle. Once more the friends of Paul sought to prevent him from going farther, but he did not waver. His courage and determination did not fail, even though his heart was breaking. How difficult at times, yet how necessary, to walk in absolute obedience to the will of God!

Emphasize the Scripture teaching of the responsibility of each individual to God alone (Rom. 14:12; 1 Tim. 2:5). We should listen to the advice of wise Christian friends, but we dare not regard their decisions for us as final. The sovereignty of the human will is a solemn and momentous fact.

#### II. The Church in Jerusalem: the Vow and Paul—verses 15-26.

The Christians at Jerusalem welcomed Paul to their midst, and so also did the Council which assembled under the presidency of James on the following day (Acts 15:13, 19). But many of the Jews at Jerusalem, Christian and non-Christian, were prejudiced against him. When he preached the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, apart from the ceremonies of Judaism, they erroneously thought that he was making a hostile attack upon the law of Moses (Rom. 3:28, 31; Gal. 2:16; Matt. 5:17). To conciliate these zealous but mistaken Jews, and to prevent a violent outbreak, the Council suggested that Paul accompany the four men who were completing the requirements of the Nazarite vow which they had taken previously (Num. 6:13-21).

At first thought, Paul's consent to the proposal of the Council, involving as it did a Jewish sacrifice, seems like a perversion of his teaching (Gal. 3:24, 25; Phil. 3:3-9). However, we must remember that these were days of transition. The Jewish sacrifices and ceremonies were no longer necessary, since they had been superseded by the one great sacrifice of Christ (Heb. 9:12-14; 25-28), but they had not yet entirely ceased to be performed. Paul was willing to become a Jew to gain the Jews (1 Cor. 9:19, 20; Compare Acts 16:3); as far as he was concerned, ceremony was nothing, but faith was everything (Gal. 5:6; 6:15). Compare his attitude to slavery. Slavery, though the antithesis of the liberty which the Gospel declares, was not abolished all at once, and, in the meantime, Paul admonished the Christian slaves to be obedient to their masters.

#### III. The Peril in Jerusalem: the Arrest of Paul—verses 27-40.

The false charge laid against Paul, that he taught all men "against the people, and the law and this place" reminds us of the charge against Stephen (Acts 6:13).

So angry were the mob that they intended to kill him, but God used the discipline and strength of the Roman Government to protect him. The garrison was stationed in the Tower of Antonia, a fortress which adjoined the Temple area. Nearby was the residence of the Roman Governor. Steps led from the Temple Court to the Tower.

The prophecy of Agabus (verse 11) was fulfilled literally, for, although it was the Romans who actually bound the Apostle, they did so at the instigation of the Jews.

God can use every talent and power we possess, and for His sake, it is incumbent upon us to train our minds as our hearts, for His service. The Apostle Paul was an educated man; he was equally at home when speaking Greek or Hebrew. He was a University man from a University town, Tarsus (Acts 22:3; Compare Acts 7:22).

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