

# The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF EVANGELICAL PRINCIPLES  
AND IN DEFENCE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.

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

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Whole Number 862

We are indebted to The Evening Telegram, Toronto, for the cut on this page, illustrating the going up of the steeple. Our readers will note the men near the top engaged in rivetting the steel. The steeple in its skeleton form does not look as high as it really is.

Last week we remarked that all the Toronto papers, and the Associated Press of the country even as far south as Texas, carried pictures of the falling tower, but as yet none of them had pictured its rising again. But now The Evening Telegram has done so. We are grateful to that paper for its courtesy in publishing this, and in providing us with a mat for the cut.

The entire corner is now a hive of industry; how many men are employed by all trades, we do not know. The steel workers will soon have the steel for the roof in place; the excavation is being made for the new Sunday School Building; and if the weather holds, the foundations will be ready shortly.

We are particularly thankful for the glori-



RISING FROM THE ASHES

ous weather we have had. November so far has broken all records for temperature and sunshine. It may interest our friends in other lands to know that toward the end of November, some of our bushes still carry their leaves—and yesterday and Sunday people were about without overcoats.

Just here (Tuesday evening) the Editor was called out of the city to inspect some of the material entering into the construction of the building—and has probably learned that no one is on the street in Toronto without an overcoat to-day! However, the change in temperature has had no apparent effect on the work—unless it be that the men have moved a little more quickly! Those on top of the steeple, in the building itself, and engaged in ground work, have had to slap their hands together occasionally, but there is no complaining — and the newscast says, "warmer to-morrow." We trust this may prove to be the case, and that the weather will keep open at least until the roof is in place.

### THE GOD OF EMERGENCIES

The best man who ever lived, whoever he may have been, made but a poor return for the love that God has lavished upon the world. While the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord, Mrs. Eddy's philosophy notwithstanding, it is full also of man's sin. It is an evidence of divine grace, a proof of the incomparable loving kindness of the Lord, that He especially invites us to call upon Him in the day of trouble. We fear there are many who never call upon Him at any other time.

And this is a day of trouble. If the time of Jacob's trouble be future, as some people believe, certainly this is one of the times of Jacob's trouble—and of everyone else's trouble too. It is, however, a hopeful sign that in times of such great perplexity, men are calling upon God. In what is now called the crisis of a few weeks ago, millions prayed. President Roosevelt last week requested that special prayers be offered on Sunday in behalf of the afflicted Jews of Germany.

Such general recognition of the need of divine help as was shown throughout the world a few weeks ago, and as is manifested again in connection with the refugee problem, indicates that men, even the proudest of them, recognize that there are situations in life from which only God, in His mercy, can extricate us. Therefore let us all pray.

### TWO EXTRAVAGANTLY KIND LETTERS

From South Africa

Vryheid, Natal, South Africa,

Nov. 4, 1938

"Dear Dr. Shields:

"At Christmas time last year a relative of mine who lives in Toronto made me a gift of a year's subscription to THE GOSPEL WITNESS; and since the beginning of 1938 the magazine has come to me regularly week by week.

"I now write to thank you very heartily for the many inspiring messages which I have received from its pages. Your fine virile style and your absolute loyalty to the word of the Lord, form a combination of Spurgeon, Talmage, and Parker, at their best. I, myself, am an old preacher, and I cannot think of any finer preparation for their work which young ministers could have, than the study both of your language and of your homiletic methods. May you long be spared to give such magnificent messages to the world.

"Under separate cover I am sending you to-day, copies of two books which have come from my pen: "Heaven's Cure for Earth's Care" and, "The Pearl of Psalms"; please receive them with my brotherly greetings. I trust that you, who have so frequently helped others, will yourself find some words of cheer in their simple pages.

"May a dying Saviour's love, a risen Saviour's power, an ascended Saviour's intercession, and a returning Saviour's glory, be the joy and rejoicing of your heart.

"I am, dear Doctor, yours in the Lord,

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_

P.S.—Let me hear you on the 23rd Psalm, please.—G.H."

From London, England

November 7th, 1938.

"Dear Dr. Shields:

"My copy of THE GOSPEL WITNESS for October 27th has just reached me. What a marvellous message. Outside the Bible nothing in print reaches my heart as does the G. W. If you have many enemies, you must have a multitude of friends, in any case I know one ever since the first copy of THE GOSPEL WITNESS reached me. I was reviewing some

copies I value very much only last week, dated 1927. I have never believed in playing as we say to the gallery; and may God forbid, but I thank God for you daily, and for you often in my prayers.

"You have been a great help to me and I repeat it without hesitation.

"I would like a few copies of October 27 and 13th issues if you have them. I have just sent renewal subscription for 1939 but shall send a little help as my usual course is before the financial year ends in addition. I wish I were rich, I would think of you and Jarvis Street among the very first on the list.

"I wish it were possible to publish in book form a series of sermons on the Second Advent. Your exposure of the Any-moment Secret pre-tribulation rapture theory is very timely. Also of the Scofield Bible; that was the means of leading me into many a fog in early days and not easy to shake off the effects.

"I believe many people will see probably in our day the fallacy of a pre-tribulation coming.

"God bless you abundantly, Dr. Shields, and your wonderful ministry. You said some little time since if you ever had one to whom you were indebted it was C. H. S.

"Let me say in a humble way you have been the one for many years and are still from whom I receive the most.

"Yours in a precious Saviour,

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_ London City Missionary."

### NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

BELLEVILLE—Pastor Alex. Wyse. "Our special meetings came to a close last night. We have indeed had a great time of blessing under the ministry of Mr. Whitehouse. There were eleven accepted Christ on Sunday. At the evening service a woman who had two weeks ago claimed the belief of the fool, 'There is no God', came out for Christ. It has been a hard fight for her, and it is wonderful to see the Lord working. A man who came back to Christ a week ago Friday is already planning how he can build us a church at Sydney. This man was led back by his daughter thirteen years of age who came the previous Sunday. I could continue with story after story of how the Lord has worked in our midst and answered prayer time and again during these two weeks." —A.W.

MR. FREY AMONG THE CHURCHES—Mr. H. W. Frey, student-professor of French at the Seminary, has already visited a number of churches in the interest of our foreign missionary enterprise in France. A week ago last Sunday he visited the Shenstone Memorial Baptist Church at Brantford, speaking to both the Bible School and the church services. The pastor, Rev. A. C. Whitcombe, says, "Mr. Frey won the hearts of the people. His warm-hearted preaching of the gospel is sure to increase interest in the work of the Evangelical Association of French-speaking Baptist churches. We are planning to have him again early in the new year."

Mr. Frey has also visited the Orangeville Church, and last week had the privilege, together with Rev. W. S. Whitcombe and other friends from Toronto, of being present at the anniversary meeting of the Alton Baptist Church.

THE ALBERTA MISSIONARY FELLOWSHIP—From Rev. Morley R. Hall comes the following good word in reply to the official notification that our recent Convention had increased our budget allotment to the West by 3%. "Have you more copies of the Annual Report of the Union which we could procure in order to send one or more to each of the pastors in our Fellowship? We deeply appreciate the interest of our brethren in the East. The financial support has enabled us to open and maintain causes which could not otherwise have been. As to the 3% increase for Western Missions this year we can only say, "Thank you, in the Lord".

"Pastor and Mrs. McGrath arrived safely and are happily settled on their new field. The Lord gave them to see one young man confess his faith in Christ during their first Sunday's ministry. Edmonton presents a great door of opportunity for Regular Baptists and we are expecting to see great things in their ministry there."

# The Jarvis Street Pulpit

## HOW GOD PROVIDES FOR REFUGEES

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

Preached in Massey Hall, Toronto, Sunday Evening, November 20th, 1938

(Stenographically reported)

"For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him."—II. Samuel 14:14.

The heart and conscience of the world have been moved of recent days, as they are seldom moved, by the story of the sufferings of God's ancient people who have had what seems to be the misfortune of having their lot cast within the limits of German authority. There have been few more terrible chapters of history written in the long annals of human crime than that which has been written in our day. It is not surprising that the heads of Governments in the United States, in Britain, and elsewhere, have expressed the universally prevailing indignation which all people must feel at Germany's atrocious treatment of the Jews.

It is a sad illustration of the depravity of human nature, of man's capacity for evil, that such an occurrence should be possible at this late day of the world's progress; but the horrible chapter has been written with Hitler's full authority. And I suppose the sufferings of the Jewish people are augmented and intensified by withholding from them all knowledge of the world's sympathy. I suppose these suffering sons of Abraham know very little of the world's indignation. They no doubt feel that they are a lost people against whom the whole world has turned. It is not to be wondered at that there should be so many suicides among them, people driven utterly to despair, their minds breaking under the tension.

It is easy to say, "I told you so", but I think every protest that we have made from this place against the iniquity of the Munich pact, and against the folly of taking the hand of such a government, has been abundantly justified by subsequent events. We may earnestly hope—and believe—that the great mass of the German people are, in their hearts, as indignant as we are; but until they arise and throw off the yoke, it is very difficult to differentiate between the people and the Government to which they submit. I cannot but believe that we lost a golden opportunity of breaking forever the power of Hitlerism, and saving ourselves from the enormous burdens that now we must carry, by the utter unwisdom, the political and moral blindness of Premier Chamberlain. Surely there is no page in Britain's history of which we have a deeper reason to be ashamed than that which has been written by those who have managed our foreign policy in the last few years.

You will remember that, in the days of His flesh, there were people who came to our Lord and reported to Him two items of news which, had there been newspapers in those days, would almost certainly have been given a place of prominence. One was the account of what would ordinarily be called an accident: when eighteen people were killed by the falling of the tower

of Siloam; and the other of certain Galilaeans, "whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices". When these reports were brought to our Lord, He said, "Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

We ought to observe the events of the day, and learn therefrom whatever may be learned in the light of God's Word. We ought to learn from the movements of providence. We ought to study these great national and international matters; for if what we profess as Christians be true—and we believe it to be true—that He Whom we worship as the Saviour is King of kings and Lord of lords, nothing is occurring throughout this troubled world to-day without His knowledge and permission—not that He causes it, but He "maketh the wrath of man to praise him". He has a way of overruling to His own glory the wicked deeds of men. As I said to you last Sunday evening, He allows Haman to build his own gallows; while supposing it to be for Mordecai, really to prepare an instrument for his own destruction.

I cannot help wondering what the purpose of God is in the sore affliction that is coming upon His ancient people, people who long ago said, "We have no king but Caesar"; who have no government, who have no country, who seem to have few friends, and who are hated by many because of the blood that is in their veins. One does not condone the act of that young Jew in Paris, and yet it is easily understood. When a whole people is driven mad by a sense of injustice, it is not to be wondered at if there should be some reaction, even though it be of a quality that we cannot, in the abstract at least, approve.

It may be—oh, it may be—that God is hedging up His people's way with thorns, and bringing them into the wilderness, that He may speak to their hearts. It may be, if they find there is no earthly king who will guarantee their security, nor save them from the complete impoverishment with which they have been visited by the injustice of the government under which they live—that they will turn their faces upward, and pray that Messiah may come. The day may yet come—will come, indeed—when they shall look on Him Whom they have pierced, and mourn for Him as one mourneth for an only son.

But here is a story of banishment and exile; of how one of David's sons who had lifted his hand against his brother, and had shed his blood, and in anticipation of the king's anger had voluntarily exiled himself and betaken himself to the protection of the king of Geshur.

Then a friend at court interested a wise woman of Tekoah, and sent her to interview the king, and to intercede on behalf of the exile. He put a parable in her mouth, and bade her tell the parable so as to get David to commit himself to the principle. Then she was to make application of it, and request that the king should bring home again his banished. She contrasted the conduct of David, great man as he was, with the gracious attitude of David's God. She dared to say, "The king doth speak this thing as one which is faulty, in that the king doth not fetch home again his banished." Then she added, "For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him."

God finds a way home for the refugee; He provides salvation for those who have been banished from His presence. And perhaps we may find a dual illustration with this historical background for my text, coupled with the present situation in Jewry; and learn something of what is involved in the tremendous saying, "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One."

"There's a wideness in God's mercy  
Like the wideness of the sea;  
There's a kindness in His justice  
That is more than liberty;  
For the love of God is broader  
Than the measure of man's mind,  
And the heart of the Eternal  
Is most wonderfully kind."

He does devise means that His banished be not expelled from Him.

### I.

THERE ARE SOME WHO MAY ACCURATELY BE DESCRIBED AS THE LORD'S BANISHED ONES, men and women who are separated from Him, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenant of promise, "having no hope, and without God in the world", banished from the divine presence, so completely separated from God that they have lost all knowledge of Him, and are without His fear before their eyes. The plight of the Jews is a sad one, in that they have no earthly asylum, but the plight of such as are numbered among the Lord's banished ones is sadder still, for they have no heavenly home. Shall I tell you about them?

They are *banished by legal enactment*. They have violated the law of the kingdom. They are numbered with the transgressors—and "the way of the transgressor is hard."

So was it of Absalom. He had broken the law of his father's kingdom; he had dipped his hands in another's blood, and he knew that the condemnation of the law rested upon him. Therefore he had fled his father's presence and his dominion. So, dear friends, were we all by nature "the children of wrath, even as others". So had we all "sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Read it in the book of Genesis, of how when man sinned, and became conscious of his guilt, he hid himself from the presence of the Lord, among the trees of the garden. Later he was banished: "So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims,

and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." The unsheathed sword of justice stood between the sinner and the paradise from which, because of his transgression, he was expelled. That is the situation now with all who have not been made partakers of divine grace.

In the case before us, *the exile had voluntarily exiled himself*. He did not wait to be pursued by officers of the law. Conscious of his guilt, he sought asylum in another land than that which was subject to his father's law. It is true that men have voluntarily exiled themselves. That perhaps is a large part of the tragedy of it, that men have lost their love for Him, have lost their desire to return. They have put an enormous distance between themselves and God, and are not affected by any spiritual home-sickness. They have not liked to retain God in their knowledge. The great mass of people who are away from God are content to be away—not content, far from being content, but content to be away; with no desire to return, no interest in religion, no care for God.

Germany as a nation is an outstanding example of it. I have been in Jarvis Street pulpit for nearly twenty-nine years. When I came first, I used to protest against Germany's religious exports. I used to protest against the assumption that we must accept a religion "made in Germany". More than twenty-five years ago from Jarvis Street pulpit I predicted this very thing: the utter godlessness and ruin of a nation that was trying to exclude God. I do not know whether you know it or not, but in principle that was the cause of the disruption in Jarvis Street Church—because in season and out of season we protested against the movement that would rob the people of the Word of God.

We had a professor in McMaster University who brought his accursed Germanism to our shores, to instill his religious poisons into the minds of our students. If Jarvis Street stands apart from other churches it is simply because we had said, "We will not have it. We will abide by the revelation of God in Christ." But the great mass of people do not want it. They do not want it in Canada, nor in England. It is that same thing in our English pulpits that prepared the way for the action of Premier Chamberlain. It would have been impossible twenty-five years ago. If there had been any conscience left, it would have been impossible to-day. That is the pity of it, that men are exiled from God and His righteousness of their own choice, and are content to have it so.

I remind you too that *by long exile people accustom themselves to the habits of the country in which they live*; and sometimes, by new ways of living, gradually *unfit themselves ever to come home again*. Born to the English tongue, a man may almost forget the idiom of his native speech, and acquire habits of alien lands until there would be no place in the world in which he would be so little at home as in the land which gave him birth. Thus was the nature of man changed by the sins which he committed.

We used to have discussions on the question of moral depravity. I remember having it out with Professor Marshall when he insisted that there was a bit of the angel in every man, and that the function of religion was to clear away the debris, and discover and restore

it to its pristine beauty. Some may believe there is a bit of the angel in Hitler: I do not. I believe there is a great deal of the devil in him, that he has a capacity for evil that makes one fear for human nature in general. We are a bad lot. There is no one fit to go home, no one fit to dwell again in the divine presence.

There are some who are the Lord's banished. *Their banishment, unless God should intervene, must be permanent, perpetual.* Men do not get better of themselves. My observation is that they get worse. What shall we say of human nature at large? The vast majority of people would elbow God out of His universe if they could. Do you suppose that that kind of human nature could be at home with God?

I read last night of the Nazi attempt to blot out the name of Jehovah—and my heart thrilled as I read it, for I said, They are challenging Someone more than Jewry now—that the German Government has issued a decree that the name of Jehovah is to be obliterated from every place of worship, and so far as possible no Jewish name is to be used in any act of public worship. I thought of the word that is written, "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham; the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." It is said in the New Testament of our great and glorious Saviour, that "he is not ashamed to call them brethren". He is still the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob; and Hitler and his aides may say, "We will blot out the name of Jehovah"—but they will not! They cannot! "Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Then shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." That is His name to-day as truly as then. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is"—that is His name: I AM, forevermore—"and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." God will identify Himself with His stricken people as He has always done, for even though they do not know Him, He knows them. For they were also told to say to Pharaoh, "The God of the Hebrews hath met with us."

But is it not abundantly evident that such natures as we have, apart from divine grace, are wholly unfit for the kingdom of God? I do not believe there is going to be a German heaven—moreover, I do not want to go to heaven if Hitler is going to be there, unless he is changed. If God in the infinitude of His grace could save such a devil as he is, so be it, but who wants to go or be where he is? I do not. I am glad of the prospect of a clear line of demarcation. I am glad, not only of the prospect, but of the absolute certainty that the day will come when God will make the banishment of unregenerate, evil, human nature for ever permanent. "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity." That will be His sentence. It is terribly possible that His banished may be banished for ever. They would be if it were not for this: "Yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him." Oh, the wonder of the gospel, that it is a method by which God will provide for those who can find refuge no other where.

## II.

### WHAT MEANS HAS HE DEVISED FOR THE RESTORATION OF HIS BANISHED?

Let me remind you that *it was He Who devised means*: no one else could do it. The initiative was with God. It always is. That is the significance of grace. Someone told me the other day about his conversion, about coming to this place. He said, "I heard then for the first time that salvation is of grace." Do you know what it means? It means when a man could not find any way to remove the barrier to his return, when all human institutions and organizations and human endeavour of every sort, was utterly helpless, that He, our gracious God, Himself "devised means that his banished be not expelled from him". He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end—and all between. Salvation is of grace, and of grace alone; which means that it is of God, and of God alone:

"Grace first contrived a way  
To save rebellious man;  
And all the steps that grace display  
That drew the wondrous plan."

He has devised means.

First, *the removal of all legal barriers to their return.* How shall a transgressor come home when his record awaits him? How shall he return when the arm of the law is stretched out to find him? He cannot return unless some one shall pay the penalty, unless someone shall blot out the record. Say what you like about that view of the atonement being mechanical: it remains true that that is exactly what Jesus Christ did. "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." He took upon Himself our punishment, stroke for stroke, stripe for stripe. He endured the punishment of all that our sins merited, paid our debt to the uttermost farthing; so that the Law had no longer any legal claim upon us. The record of our transgressions is blotted out from God's book, that there might be no legal barrier to the home-coming of His banished ones.

Have we not seen sin in the large now? We saw it in the days of the Great War. We see the festering sore still. Surely it is true that "the whole world lieth in the wicked one". There is no help, no recourse, for any of us but in God.

How interesting and hopeful and encouraging—and how thankful we ought to be for it, though we are not Jews—to see the nations conferring together to see what can be done for the exiled Jew! How thrilling to read of the President of the United States saying plainly and bluntly and courageously that it would be nothing short of cruel and inhuman to compel defenseless refugees from Germany to return to their own land! What a fearful indictment that is of the German Government! May God support those who would provide a place of refuge for people so terribly oppressed! Do not withhold your sympathy. Do not fear the economic consequences that may follow. We ourselves may need help before long if things continue as they are going now. But God is wiser than all human counsellors. He needed not to call a conference, even of angels or archangels; but He Himself, of His own sovereign will, of His own infinite wisdom, and out of His own gracious nature, devised means that His banished be not expelled from Him.



He not only provided for the removal of the barrier, but *He released a regenerative power that would fit us for rehabilitation, for restoration to fellowship with God and residence among the angels.* That is the wonder of it. You remember Peter's word: "Having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." By virtue of His infinite sacrifice, that regenerative power was released, not only that men should be forgiven, but that their natures might be changed, that they might be made new creatures, born again.

The Jews, I suppose, are not ashamed of their lineage, of the blood that is in them; and yet one can well imagine that sometimes a father, fearing for his wife and children, might wish to conceal his Jewish origin; he might even wish that he could be born again, so that he might not be a Jew, that the hatred of the German Government might not rest upon him. I know this at all events, we have reason to be ashamed of our natures. I am not surprised that it is reported that as Jewish refugees stopped at Quebec last week—men born in Germany, who fought for Germany in the Great War, some wearing decorations upon their breasts, conferred by the German Government for service in behalf of the country in the war—I am not surprised that they should say, "Do not call us Germans. We are ashamed of the country of our origin."

We may well be ashamed of the sin that has alienated us from God. This I know: there is no way by which we may return to the kingdom of our God, and have our citizenship in heaven where Jesus Christ is, and be made fit for the company of God and the angels—there is no way save by being born again, regenerated by the Holy Ghost, made new creatures in Christ, born into the kingdom of God. That is the only way to get in. There are no naturalized citizens in the divine kingdom. You cannot become a Christian by signing papers, and swearing an oath of allegiance to Jesus Christ. By all means, we must be loyal to Him and vow our allegiance to Him; but "ye must be born again". "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not", said the Lord Jesus, almost as though He would gently rebuke us for having no sense. Have you no wisdom? Can you not see the deep necessity of the case?—"marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." We also must be re-born, or we cannot come home. But He has provided for that, and we may be born again.

*He has provided an asylum for us, a place of refuge.* The Jews arriving at Quebec, according to the papers, were not of what are sometimes called the lower classes: they were educated people, most of them professional men—doctors, lawyers, bankers, professors, men who had succeeded, but had been stripped of everything, and allowed four dollars for expenses from Germany to Australia, and allowed to carry nothing else with them.

My Lord Jesus will pay the way home of all His exiles who desire to be repatriated. When those poor people get to Australia or New Zealand, and the other thousands who will leave Germany later, empty-handed, they will have to begin at the bottom again, and work their way up. Our Lord does not return His exiles to poverty. The prodigal was an exile. He talked very much like those Jews who are in need of a job. "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have

sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants." His father drowned his confession with his gracious pronouncement, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." He does not receive us to a meagre, poverty-stricken existence. He invites us to participate in the unsearchable riches of Christ. We "who sometimes were afar off", transgressors, "enemies in our minds by wicked works", have been washed in his blood, changed by the power of His gracious Spirit, and introduced immediately to all the wealth and fulness of the Father's house. Oh what a refuge!

Absalom came back, but David could not wholly forgive him. He said, "He shall not see my face." Absalom came back to Jerusalem and dwelt in his own house, apart from the king, and for a year or more never saw the king's face. Not so does our gracious God receive His banished, but into the arms of love they come. He "ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." Everything was blotted out; he was loved back into life, and into the fulness of life again.

And our God has not only devised such means as that, but *He has issued an amnesty decree*, a decree of amnesty, a proclamation of forgiveness for all rebels, if only they will come home, and lay down their arms. That is the gospel, a part of the means which He has devised. "This is a faithful saying", said the Apostle Paul, "and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." He had been an officer in the enemy's army. He had spent much of his life doing things "contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth", until he learned that He had proclaimed pardon to the sinner, and discovered that even he, the chief of sinners, was welcome to full and complete pardon; restored to the divine favour and fellowship.

There is no story like the gospel. The human mind could never imagine it. Do you know one reason why I am sure that the gospel of the grace of God is of God, and not of man? Because no human mind in all the world's history has ever for a moment imagined anything comparable to it. It so far transcends our utmost thought that no one but God could have planned it: "He doth devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him."

In Germany they have a new thing in the Government: they have a Minister of Propaganda, Gobbels by name. His propaganda means the propagation of untruth. Have you thought of that, of a whole nation, its head, Hitler, laying down a philosophy of lying, and declaring in his book that if you want people to believe you, you must tell a lie; and the bigger the lie, the more likely they are to believe you. Actually announcing that that is his policy. Then they have a Minister of Propaganda, propagating lies. I doubt whether ever in the world's history there has been a nation officially given up to a lying propaganda as Germany is. One of Hitler's first lieutenants given up to the business of propagating falsehoods. And what a colossal prevaricator he is! I sometimes think that even Beelzebub might be willing to resign the presidency in his favour!

Has it occurred to you *that the kingdom of God has a ministry of propaganda?* Consider what the church of Jesus Christ is. It is the divine Ministry of Propaganda. Why are we here? I told you that He had effected reconciliation by the death of His Son. I told you that He had released a power adequate to change the natures of men, that He has provided a place of asylum ready to receive all who will come. But men do not know it. Therefore He established His church. Ere He went home to heaven He said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." He has committed unto us the word of reconciliation. God help us to be faithful! God help us to be true, and to let no poor sinner remain in ignorance of the glorious gospel, of the gospel of the glory of the happy God. Tell everyone about it, that all the barriers to the prodigal's return have been removed, and that God is ready to receive His exiles to His heart.

### III.

And may I tell you now HOW TO MAKE USE OF THE MEANS WHICH GOD HAS DEVISED THAT HIS BANISHED BE NOT EXPELLED FROM HIM? If all that is true, I wonder is there some exile from home here this evening who says in his heart, "That sounds like good news to me, sir. I wish I knew the way home; I wish I knew how to make use of the means devised." Let me tell you. You are to begin by accepting God's estimate of the adequacy of His own provision, accept His estimate of the value of the death of Christ. Some man may say, "I do not understand the atonement, sir." Neither do I. No one has ever understood the atonement. We say it is substitution, and so it is. We say He expiated our crimes on Calvary—and so He did. But it is vastly more than that.

The human mind cannot fully explain it. We are not required to understand it. But even if you cannot understand it, believe it as God's way of saving you. That is what faith means. If you could understand all the ways of God, you would be equal with God. But when He says, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life", you are to believe it. "But, sir, I want that explained to me." I cannot explain it: I only proclaim the simple fact that that is what God says, that if you believe in Him, you will not perish. Believe in Him; leave it with Him; trust God. At least you can give God as much confidence as your doctor. When you consult him, he tells you in Latin what is wrong with you—and you are no wiser; you do not know whether it is in your feet or your-head. He gives you a prescription that is written in Latin, and when you ask him what is in it he says, "Never mind. Take it to the druggist and he will fill it." You take your prescription to the druggist, and he makes it up for you. You say, "I should like to know what the ingredients are, how they work." "It is not my business to tell you, sir; I am here to obey the doctor's orders." "But how does it work?" "The directions say to take it three times a day; that is all." The man has a headache and says, "I will not take it three times a day—or once a day; until I understand it." Poor simpleton! No man in his senses acts after that fashion.

And when God provides for your salvation, when He says, if you believe on the name of His only begotten

Son, you shall be saved, you must trust the infinite God, and leave it there.

Once more: You must believe in the full value of what I have called His amnesty decree: you are to believe the word that says it is so.

Often have I told the story, but I repeat it. When the Lord, by His grace, made the way of salvation plain to me, it was on this wise. I had heard it hundreds of times, but when I heard again that simple promise, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness", I looked at that promise and said, "That is the word of God. It is as true as God is true. That verse says if I will take my place as a sinner, God will take His place as a Saviour; and all my sins will be forgiven." I acknowledged that I was a sinner, I put my hands of faith upon that provision of the divine decree and said, "One of two things must have happened: either I am a Christian, or God is a liar"; and because I knew that God could not lie, I knew that His word to me was true. Without feeling, without emotion, but as a simple business engagement, a simple transaction between my poor soul and God, I passed from death unto life; and I found that what God had said was true. I discovered that as I believed Him, something took place within, and my desires were changed; my ambitions were changed; my whole outlook on life was changed; my tastes were altered; and I found all the way through that God had done exactly as He said He would. And some day I am confident that, by His grace, when the day's work is done, and the evening shadows lengthen, and God shall call, I expect to delight myself in the abundance of peace,

"There from the music roundabout me stealing  
I'll learn to sing the new and holy song;  
And find at last beneath His trees of healing  
The life for which I long."

### SEMINARY NOTES

Last Sunday this scribe was visiting a church where a former student of the Seminary is pastor, and he again rejoiced in the preaching of the gospel. The morning message was on "Willingness", the willingness of Christ to give Himself for us, and our willingness to give ourselves for Him. The evening concerned "Faith as Necessary to Salvation". After the evening service we talked with a young man of our acquaintance whose work prevents him from regular church attendance. He said, "I have only been to church in \_\_\_\_\_ once lately, and then I was disappointed. We had a lesson on the geography of Glasgow." Alas, the contrast!

The Seminary is a convenient, and we trust, good place from which to draw supply preachers. Among those who have recently acted in this capacity are, Mr. C. Leach, at Cannington and Sunderland; Mr. A. McAsh at Oakwood Baptist Church, Toronto; and Mr. F. S. Cook at Baker Hill. The writer was privileged to preach on a recent Sunday evening at Maple Hill Baptist Church, where Mr. McAsh is pastor. Special music rendered by Stouffville Ladies' Double Quartette attracted a capacity congregation, and in the things of the Lord "a good time was had by all."

One of our first-year men who has had considerable experience elsewhere, said the other day of the course of the Seminary that he thought it was the most ambitious of any school. We appreciate the compliment and only hope that we may live up to it.

The father of one of our students recently sent us a substantial contribution for this work. We appreciate the money because we need it, and more with it, but we also value the spirit of the man who appreciates and in this practical way shows his appreciation of what Toronto Baptist Seminary is seeking to do for one of his own.—W.G.B.

## Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 2 Fourth Quarter Lesson 49 December 4th, 1938

### PAUL SAVED FROM SHIPWRECK

Lesson Text: Acts 27.

Golden Text: "For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve."—Acts 27:23.

#### I. Contrary Winds—verses 1-13

For many years Paul had desired to visit Rome, in order to preach the Gospel in the Imperial City (Rom. 1:11-13; 15:23). Moreover, his personal wishes had been reinforced by the Divine revelation that this was the path marked out for him (Act 19:21; 23:11). Now that his case had been referred to the Emperor's court, the Apostle must go to Rome, but as a prisoner.

Paul was accompanied by Luke, the human author of the Book of Acts (Notice the pronoun "we" used throughout the chapter), and by Aristarchus the Macedonian who evidently was a fellow-prisoner for the sake of the Gospel (Acts 19:29; 20:4; Philm. 24; Col. 4:10). The Roman centurion, Julius, the army officer in command of the prisoners, proved to be just and even kind (Matt. 8-5; 27:54; Acts 10:1; 23:17).

The scientific accuracy of the Word of God is demonstrated in this chapter. This document is held to be the most authoritative record we possess of the nautical customs and knowledge of the times. Experts have been able to figure out such details as the course followed, the rate of travel, the construction of the ships, and even the direction of the wind.

As there were no passenger steamers in those days, travelers were compelled to make journeys in merchants' ships which travelled regular trade routes. The group with Paul sailed from Caesarea northward along the coast to Sidon, and after a brief delay, seemingly for Paul's benefit, sailed North East or North under the lee of Cyprus till they reached Myra, on the South coast of Asia Minor.

A large grain ship from Alexandria bound for Rome also reached Myra, brought there perhaps on business or compelled by the same contrary winds. Paul had had considerable experience at sea (2 Cor. 11:26), and enjoyed the confidence of the centurion, so that he felt justified in advising the men to winter in the harbour called "The fair havens." The time of the fast, late September or early October according to our reckoning (Lev. 16:29; 23:27), marked the beginning of the season which was dangerous for sailing. The navigators seem to have been too easily deceived by soft winds.

#### II. The Storm—verses 14-26.

As the vessel neared the Island of Crete a tempestuous wind blew down from the mountains of the island. In those days the merchant vessels did not have an elaborate system of sails, but usually one large mast, strong ropes and one large sail. Hence, in a storm the strain was concentrated on a small portion of the ship, and the danger of foundering or leakage was increased. Ropes were passed around the hull or framework of the ship in times of emergency, in order to support it against the violence of wind and wave. They evidently did not have the advantage of such aids as compasses, and were unable to get their bearings when sun and stars did not shine.

The danger was extreme; the men were helpless in the face of the storm. In similar manner, spiritual danger continually threatens the soul on the voyage of life. A safe journey is assured only for the one who has taken the heavenly Pilot on board. He has power to still the storms of passion, fear, doubt and self-will (Mark 4:39), and provides chart and compass for us in His Word (Psa. 119:105, 133).

In the midst of the horrors of darkness and despair, when all were weak from loss of food, the Apostle stood before passengers and crew, delivering his message of comfort and cheer. He assured them of safety. The angel of God appeared to him in the night, strengthening him (Psa. 46:1,7; 112:14; Isa. 30:29; Acts 18:9). Paul had been praying, not

merely for himself but also for those who travelled with him. It is our privilege to intercede for the salvation of those for whom we are responsible, those with whom we are associated in home, business, school or church.

A Christian is never off duty. Paul did not forget that he belonged to Christ, and was ready to confess Him as the Lord and Master of his life (Rom. 1:9).

Paul's faith inspired the others to new confidence. As Christians we may do much to bring life and light to those who have not hope in Christ as we have (Matt. 5:14-16; Phil. 2:15;16). In the time of stress, even the ungodly will listen to the testimony of a good man.

#### III. The Shipwreck—verses 27-44.

God sometimes tests our faith. Fourteen days passed without any visible sign of the salvation which had been promised. The storm did not subside immediately. Yet Paul believed God and, like Abraham, staggered not through unbelief. (Rom. 4:20).

The character of men and women is revealed in a time of crisis. Some of the sailors, thinking selfishly of their own safety and disregarding the welfare of the others, decided to go to the front of the boat, and under pretence of casting the anchors, to climb into the life-boat and sail away. Paul discovered their ruse and reported the matter to the centurion.

The Apostle displayed a wholesome attitude to life; he was not a fanatic. He urged the people on board to partake of food, reiterating the Lord's promise that every one of the two hundred and seventy-six would be kept safe and unharmed (Luke 21:18). He was not ashamed to give thanks to God before them all, setting an example of using with gratitude the gifts which God had provided (1 Tim. 4:4,5; 6:17).

Humanly speaking, all the people on board that ship owed their lives to the Apostle Paul. Christ is the only One Who can provide salvation for needy men and women (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

God had a purpose in allowing Paul to suffer shipwreck (Romans 8:28).

"God moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants His footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm."

This world in which we dwell displays the power and wisdom of our God (Rom. 1:19,20). They that go down to the sea in ships see the wonders of His majesty (Psa. 107:23-30). The winds and the waves obey our Lord (Mark 4:41).

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