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

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MASSEY HALL, TORONTO



The Sunday Home of Jarvis Street Baptist Church, for the last eleven months, and until May 7th, and where most of the sermons appearing in this paper are delivered.

AMAZING CREDULITY

Years ago we read a story of a French-Canadian who had buried himself in the woods for such an extended period that he knew nothing at all of what was happening in the outside world. During the period of his isolation Queen Victoria had come to the end of her long reign, and had been succeeded, of course, by Edward VII. When this French-Canadian returned from the wilds, he was curious to know what had happened during his absence. When he learned that the Queen had died, he immediately enquired: "And who has got her job now?" To which enquiry he received the reply, "Her son, Edward; now Edward VII." "My", he said, "what a pull he must have had with Laurier to get that job!"

Some times during recent years we have wished we could find such a place of isolation, or at least a cottage in the wilderness, or "a lodge in a garden of cucumbers" without telephone, or newspaper, or radio. Only in moments of weakness, of course, have we cherished such a wish. But certainly it would enable one to sleep more comfortably at night, and would prevent this writer from wondering what new political folly the Chamberlain Government would serve up to us on the morrow.

We agree with all that is said about the horrors of war, and the desirability of peace. We hate the one, and love the other, as cordially as anybody. At this moment we are lost in amazement at Mr. Chamberlain's credulity. He seems almost to be incapable of believing anybody except the two most conspicuous deceivers of all the centuries: Adolph Hitler, and Benito Mussolini. We do not know that any one has ever charged either of these men with having a thirst for blood for its own sake. We do not suppose either of them wants war, if only they can get what they are determined to have, without it. While bandits, as a class, may have little regard for human life, what they really want is other people's property. And if they can secure it without incurring the risk to their own necks, involved in murder, they prefer to do so.

Hitler's latest deliverance is spoken of as being rather pacific. Formerly, he has spoken as a leader of an armed gang, ready to blow out our brains if we do not let him have what he wants. So far, he has been permitted to take whatever he wanted. He has been told to help himself, and begged not to shoot, and has been given a promise that the police will not be called. Having learned the weakness of his adversaries, he now comes to tell us to please pack up certain things for his possession; that while he has no gun actually in his pocket, has has plenty of them at home. And if he is not given what he considers to be his share of the world's wealth for the asking, he will, in due course, come and take it by force. And Mr. Chamberlain thinks the speech of Hitler was not that of a man determined to force upon the world another crisis!

Reporting the result of his visit to Rome, Chamberlain expressed gratification at Mussolini's assurance that when the Spanish conflict is over, Italy will have nothing to ask from Spain. Then Mr. Chamberlain delivered himself of this gem, a passage surely, from "Innocents Abroad"—"Although Signor Mussolini emphasized that belligerency should be granted to General Franco, he reiterated his willingness to stand by the British non-intervention plan."

Was there ever a more gullible man than Neville Chamberlain? His Government has pursued a hypocritical policy which they have called "non-intervention," for which it is impossible to find any justification in international law. What is called the Loyalist Government, which is the only Government of Spain, elected by the people of Spain—it was, indeed, the only legitimate government in Spain, a government to which the British Government was related in terms of peace and amity—had the right to buy arms wherever it could find them. It had no warlike intentions toward the people of Spain, and therefore, in the nature of the case, could not be prepared for armed conflict. But when the Spanish rebellion began, the British Government adopted a non-intervention policy, and by so doing, rendered it impossible for the legitimately-constituted government of Spain to obtain arms with which to defend itself. And while pursuing that policy, Germany and Italy, with the full knowledge of the British Government, poured men and munitions into Spain. The Loyalist Government has not fought Franco: they have had to fight for two and a half years against Germany and Italy.

Mr. Chamberlain said, "In Rome, Signor Mussolini expressed the view that it was absurd to say that General Franco, who was in possession of three-quarters of Spain, was a rebel."

A murder was committed in Toronto recently by a gang of four men. They killed the owner of the house, and drove all the other members of the family upstairs at the point of a revolver. They were actually in possession of the whole house, but that did not alter their character—they were robbers and murderers. And if Franco is in possession of three-quarters of Spain, it is because the legitimate government has been overwhelmed by Italy and Germany. And Mr. Chamberlain's Government has acquiesced in the outrage.

Mr. Chamberlain naively remarked that "If and when the British plan, which has been adopted by the Non-intervention Committee comes into operation, he (Mussolini) will do his part." But Mussolini will not call off the dogs of war until his bloody deed has been completely finished. That Britain will have to pay a terrible price for permitting Franco to triumph in Spain, there cannot be the shadow of a doubt. How do we know? Simply because a God of justice lives; and that whatsoever a nation sows that shall it also reap.

Mr. Chamberlain also said, speaking of his visit to the Vatican:

"It was a privilege which neither of us will easily forget to hear from the lips of his holiness the expressions of the admiration and affection which he entertained for their majesties and the peoples of the British empire.

"We were deeply moved by the courage and humanity which animated his bearing and outlook. We could not doubt the sincerity and depth of his holiness' preoccupation with the problems troubling, these days, the peace of Europe and the conscience of mankind."

Has any of our readers ever read of a greater exhibition of political hypocrisy than that contained in these two paragraphs, not on the part of Mr. Chamberlain, but by the pope and his counsellors? Mr. Chamberlain "could not doubt the sincerity and depth of his holiness' preoccupation with the problems troubling, these days, the

(Continued on page 9)

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"BLINDNESS IN PART IS HAPPENED TO ISRAEL, UNTIL THE FULNESS OF THE GENTILES BE COME IN"

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

Preached in Massey Hall, Toronto, Sunday Evening, February 5th, 1939.

(Stenographically Reported)

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery lest ye should be wise in your own conceits: that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."—Romans 11:25.

It is well, in the discussion of any subject, to find, first of all, some basis of general agreement, and to proceed from that to the consideration of principles in respect to which opinions may differ. In consonance with that order of discussion, I feel sure we shall be of one mind at this point, that from the day when God specially called Abram from Ur of the Chaldees, and more especially, from the day in which His promise was miraculously fulfilled in the birth of Isaac, the seed of Abraham have maintained a separate and distinct existence. They have never been merged, wholly, in other races, or in other nations. Never have they been so assimilated as to lose their racial identity. It is not difficult to distinguish the seed of Abraham still. Whether in Germany, or Italy, or Palestine, or Russia, or Britain, or America, or in any other country, they still remain what they were, and they cannot be so mixed with other races as to destroy their identity.

Further, whatever opinions we may hold as to the interpretation of the prophecies of the Old Testament, which have to do with Israel's future, I think we shall be agreed that while in many parts of the Old Testament the utter removal and national extinction of some peoples, such as the Moabites, Philistines, Ammonites, and others, is clearly predicted, the people of Israel are promised a continued existence. Whatever may be involved in that, as they have not lost their identity in the past, I think we shall agree that it is promised they will not lose their identity in the future. They are really a separate people.

In the New Testament as in the Old, the Jews are distinguished from all others. During our Lord's ministry they were distinguished from the Gentiles. He, Himself, recognized that distinction, as, for instance, when He dealt with the Syrophenician woman, and said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs". She was a Gentile "dog". But you remember how she answered: "Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." And He said unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Of the faith of the Gentile centurion of Capernaum, also, He said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." He found greater faith without the pale than He had found within. On more than one occasion during the days of His flesh there were given, by His own personal ministry, preintimations of His sovereign purpose to include other than the Jews in the provisions of grace.

There are not a few evangelicals who think of the Jews as having a very distinct and separate place in the prophetic future. As I said to you last Sunday evening, they hold that the Scriptures teach that there is to be a separate earthly Jewish kingdom; that the Lord Jesus is

literally to rule over them in Jerusalem; that the temple is to be rebuilt, that even its sacrifices are to be restored, and that the Jewish people are to be given the supremacy over all other nations.

You are familiar with the saying that the teaching of Scripture in general, its precepts, its prophecies, and its promises, may be resolved into three categories: the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God. We are told that if and as we keep these always separate and distinct from each other, we shall keep ourselves out of trouble. Indeed, that magical interpretative formula is proposed as the solvent of all biblical problems: if you "rightly divide the word of truth" so as to give to the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God, each their own particular portion, you will be a correct interpreter of Scripture. I had an example of that the other day.

A young preacher came to see me. He had been preaching for some years, but for six months he had not preached. He had fallen into great spiritual darkness. And then, through certain portions of Scripture, notably in the epistle to the Hebrews, and the epistle to Romans, and some others, he felt that he had been brought again into the light. Later he read an attempted correction of a so-called "dispensational" treatise in which he learned of the extreme "dispensational" contention that nothing belongs to believers of this dispensation but the prison epistles of Paul. Inasmuch as Hebrews and Romans were not included, the passages upon which he rested his soul for the assurance of salvation, were robbed of their authority. And this young man's mind fairly reeled. He was mentally disturbed. I said to him: "No wonder. That method of 'dividing' the word of truth is enough to put anyone out of his mind; and I think people must be a little bit out of their minds before they adopt it." That cutting and carving of the Word of God, ticketing it, as belonging to this or that dispensation is not "rightly dividing the word of truth": that is mutilating it, for it involves a denial of the complete unity and authority of the Bible as a whole.

Last Sunday evening I hope I made it clear to you that the New Testament is silent as to the setting up of an earthly Jewish kingdom, the return of the Jews as a people to Palestine, the rebuilding of the temple, and the whole millennial programme, as allegedly, prophetically described—that the whole thing is utterly devoid of New Testament authority. It is not to be found, explicitly or implicitly in the teaching of our Lord, or of His apostles. And I venture to assert indeed, that the teaching of the entire New Testament is to the contrary.

And yet, that Israel has a distinctive place in prophecy, and a distinctive place in prophecies which still relate to the future, the text which I have announced conclusively

proves: "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in".

I ask you this evening to give me your careful thought. I am assuming that those who have come here, have come, not for any entertainment, but merely to hear what is said about the Word of the Lord, and to try what I may say to you to see whether it has scriptural support. I believe it will be profitable to view the three chapters of Romans, nine, ten and eleven, together, for they really relate to the same subject.

I.

I begin with this proposition, THAT HISTORICALLY, AND PROPHETICALLY, GOD HAS ALWAYS DEALT WITH ISRAEL, AND WILL CONTINUE TO DEAL WITH ISRAEL ON THE PRINCIPLE OF AN ELECTION OF GRACE; THAT HIS RELATION TO ISRAEL HAS ALWAYS BEEN IN GRACE, AND ALWAYS SPIRITUALLY GROUNDED. If you have your Bibles, kindly turn to them, or hear me as I read a few scriptures. Let me begin in the second chapter of Romans: "For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." You see how Paul insists upon the spiritual nature of this relationship?

Let us go on to chapter three: "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." Nothing is said here of a Jewish kingdom; that they are the special favourites of God by virtue of their race and lineage,—not at all! They had been chosen of God that through them He might communicate His oracles to the world. And so in the same chapter Paul says: "We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin".

In the fourth chapter he returns to the question: "What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory: but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." It was Abraham's faith which justified him, and gave him standing before God. Let us read further: "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed to them also; . . . For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the

faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations)."

That is the line of the promise, not a carnal but a spiritual one.

Now let us look at chapter nine. The apostle Paul speaks of having great heaviness for his kinsmen according to the flesh—a very natural and proper feeling. He was especially concerned for those who were of his race and of his blood, and he recognized that they had certain advantages who were Israelites: "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen." He recognized that peculiar place which was given to the seed of Abraham in the history of the past, culminating in the highest honour, "of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came."

Observe how he sketches the history of Israel. "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: for the children of the promise are counted for the seed." He refers to the birth of Esau and Jacob, sons of the same father and mother, twin sons, of whom Esau was the elder. And yet, it was said: "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said . . . The elder shall serve the younger." Esau is described in Hebrews as a "profane" man, a man who had no place reserved in his life for God—not profane in the sense in which we use that term to-day; but it means that his was wholly a secular life. He built no altars; offered no prayer, presented no sacrifices—he was of the earth, earthy; essentially carnal. But he was just as truly a son of Isaac and Rebekah as was Jacob. But because Jacob believed, and because he chose the birth-right which Esau, in unbelief, "despised", it was through Jacob the promise ran and was fulfilled.

Then he goes further. If you read the entire ninth chapter of Romans you will find that he touches the hill-tops in Israel's history in order to make it clear that God dealt with His people always on exactly the same principle. He raised up Pharaoh that in him He might make His power known. He chose His elect people that they might be vessels unto honour, "that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God." The rest of the chapter is to the same effect.

The ninth chapter of Romans is really a dissertation on the doctrine of the election of grace, of God's sovereign choice of his people, "not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." Many, of course, rebel against the principle of election. They prefer that the creature should elect the Creator, rather than the Creator the

creature. The operation of God's sovereign will is apparent in nature and providence, as well as in grace. Why have you a white skin instead of a black one, or a red one? What had you to do with it? Why is it that you live in Canada to-day instead of in Germany or in Italy? The fact is, God's providential dealings with His people are in harmony always with His purposes respecting the election of grace; and those of us who are Christians here this evening, if we look into the philosophy of our own salvation, will have to ask, as we sometimes sing at our Communion services:

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

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

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

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

Let us not dare to reply against God. I can only praise Him that in the infinitude of His mercy it pleased Him to select me, to make me to know that I was a sinner, and to bring me to the feet of Christ in humble penitence; and to impute, when He taught me to believe, the perfect righteousness of Christ, and to give me therefore standing before Him.

When the apostle Paul comes to the tenth chapter he speaks again of Israel, and he says: "I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." And what is his desire and prayer for Israel? What is uppermost in the heart of this inspired man of God? He says: "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." Notwithstanding their religious zeal, notwithstanding their conformity to the letter of the law, he said: "being ignorant of God's righteousness"—What is "God's righteousness"? Ignorant of Him Who is *Jehovah-Tsidkenu*, the Lord our righteousness—"being ignorant of God's righteousness"—of the whole gospel programme—they have gone about "to establish their own righteousness", and they have "not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." So throughout this chapter the apostle speaks of Israel after the flesh as being in need of salvation, and he leads us up to this climax: "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him." And at the end of the chapter he represents God as saying: "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people."

II.

The text says: "Blindness in part is happened to Israel". I think you will find upon examination that the teaching here is that A JUDICIAL BLINDNESS HAS FALLEN UPON GOD'S COVENANT-PEOPLE. They did not like to retain God in their knowledge. Perhaps I had better read a verse or two from the twenty-first chapter of Matthew, showing how our Lord predicted this same

thing: "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Observe that our Lord Jesus said to the Jews that the kingdom of God which had come nigh unto them, should be taken from them, and given to someone else, "a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

That principle, my friends, operates always. You find it operating in the Old Testament. Those who asked for a lie were given a lie, even as it is said in the New Testament: "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth." It is possible for any one of us so to reject the truth as at last actually to lose the capacity for its reception. A man may believe a lie until he loses capacity for believing anything but a lie. I have often said to you in one way or another, that the penalty a liar pays for his lying at last is not that people do not believe him, but that he finds it impossible to believe anyone else. Judicial blindness may fall upon any man. If you were shut up in darkness long enough you would lose the sight of your eyes. If you refuse to use your arms, your muscles would become atrophied; they would become paralysed. If you refuse for long enough time to use the legs God has given you to walk, by and by you will lose the power to walk. All our powers are retained in full health and vigour only as we use them; and our capacity for the reception of the truth of God will remain with us only as we receive the truth. If, instead of that, one is determined to reject the truth, and to receive a lie, then there will happen to him that which happened to Ahab, when there went forth a lying spirit from the Lord into the mouth of all his prophets. Thus, ultimately the only thing a rejecter of the truth is capable of believing, the only thing to which he can give credence at all is, not the truth, but a lie. Never in the world's history, perhaps, has that principle been so almost universally exemplified and illustrated, as it is to-day.

Historically, the gospel was first preached to the Jews. It was preached to Abraham, if you please. And it proved "the power of God unto salvation" even in Old Testament times. For the New Testament says: "The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." Abraham received the gospel, and Abraham was justified, and saved in exactly the same way in which everyone else has been saved who has been saved. There never has been but one way of salvation, and there never will be. Faith was counted to Abraham for righteousness. Paul's word in the first chapter of Romans about the gospel's being "the power of God unto salvation"—"to the Jew first," since we are expressly told that it was "preached before unto Abraham" may have a farther background reach than to Pentecost, or to the days of the personal ministry of Jesus Christ. At all events the gospel of grace proved its power to "Abram the Hebrew."

In the days of His flesh the Lord Jesus first went to the Jews. He followed His providential programme. He said to His disciples: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." They were given the supreme revelation of God in the Person of Jesus Christ. And when His sovereign hand wrote above the cross: "This is Jesus the King of the Jews" they said, "He is not our King. Write not, The King of the Jews: but that he said, I am King of the Jews". They rejected Him. Notwithstanding, after Pentecost the gospel was preached to the Jews, and to the Jews first it proved to be "the power of God unto salvation." The apostle Paul preached to the Jews. Peter preached to the Jews. And you remember the difficulty Peter had: when at last by a miraculous vision he was constrained to carry the gospel to the Gentiles it almost caused the whole church to split. They had to have a conference about it, and Peter explained how he was just as averse to it as they, but that the Holy Ghost came upon all those who heard the word. And when he explained that "they held their peace, and glorified God; saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

The apostle Paul went first to the Jews. In the thirteenth chapter of The Acts of the Apostles he explained: "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Thereafter the gospel was preached to the Gentiles, and chiefly to the Gentiles. Most of the epistles of the New Testament were written to Gentile churches, Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Corinthians, Thessalonians—they were all Gentiles, not Jews. The epistle to Hebrews was written to Hebrew Christians. James wrote, not to two tribes, I would remind our Anglo-Israelitish friends, but to "the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad".

III.

The gospel therefore was preached to the Gentiles. The branch of the olive tree was broken off. Why was it broken off? What was the reason? WHAT IS THE "OLIVE TREE"? What can it be but a representation of that spiritual movement which is inseparable from Christ Himself, stretching all through the ages; and including within itself all God's elect people? It is a picture of the Church of Christ that is rooted and grounded in Him, a picture of the body of the elect people, of which the Root and the Fatness are Jesus Christ Himself. The Jews were the natural branches in the sense that they were God's first chosen people, partaking of the "root and fatness of the olive tree." And why were they broken off? Because they did not believe. That is what the Scripture says. Just as they had been united to God by His electing grace as individuals, not as a nation, not as a race, but always and only those whose hearts were right toward God, were His elect people. The Church of Jesus Christ is one. I cannot find scriptural warrant for the assumption that the Church is a peculiarly New Testament revelation; that the prophets knew nothing about it, and that you have to distinguish between the Jew and the Gentile and I know not what else. It seems to me that that method of interpretation makes of the Scripture a kind of religious jigsaw puzzle. But there is a revelation of the plain purpose of the

electing grace of God running through the entire Scripture from Adam to the end of the Book. Believers were chosen and made partakers of the "root and fatness of the olive tree". There was always in the past "a remnant according to the election of grace." Repeatedly we come upon that principle. The Holy Spirit through Paul deals with it in the olive tree chapter. Elijah said: "I, even I only, am left." But the Lord said: "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." God always "reserved to Himself" His elect people in all ages, in all dispensations, in all generations, and He always will whether they be Jews or Gentiles.

How were the Gentiles grafted in? By faith. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." When Israel rejected the testimony of God, and it was carried to the Gentiles, there was a sense in which their folly ministered to the riches of the world. When the Jews rejected the gospel the apostolic church was free to go everywhere preaching the Word, and they went everywhere, and it tended to the enrichment of the world. But no Gentile was ever brought in to that "olive tree" on any other than the one ground—faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And the relationship which subsisted between them and the Lord was always a spiritual one.

So then, we are not to boast ourselves, or to think ourselves superior to others. If we continue not in faith we are no better than the Jews. *Even Gentile branches will be broken off, and they have been broken off.* The olive tree has not many branches on it just now. It is sadly bare.

Look back through the centuries and consider the apostasy which culminated in the formation of the Roman Catholic Church, and the period of darkness which has followed since then. The apostle says: "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel". Let me remind you that all are not Christians, who are called Christians. The Roman Catholic Church would be looked upon by many as a great Christian body. The Greek Catholic Church would be called a Christian body. The Anglo-Communion is looked upon as a great Christian body. What we now call Christendom, is represented by great bodies of people who profess and call themselves Christians, Baptists, United Church, Presbyterians, and others. Some would say that they all are part of the "olive tree". But are they? Long ago the Roman Catholic Church was a great branch that was broken off as having nothing to do with Christ—an utterly apostate church.

Why are these men (Mr. Fred H. Leach, and Mr. Williams) here this night to speak to you about the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship? Why the necessity for having groups of men in the universities who will stand for the faith of Christ? Because, as you have heard, our whole educational system has become paganized. It is not Christian, and no greater sinners are there anywhere than in the colleges and universities that were founded by Christian Denominations: Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Anglicans, and all sorts of Christian bodies. Mr. Leach referred to Dr. Stanley Jones. Can anyone say that he remains true to the evangel, to the gospel of the grace of God? One is not a member of the olive tree because he is a member of

the United Church, or the Presbyterian Church, or the Anglican Church, or a Baptist Church, or any other Church. There are hundreds of churches as organizations that have nothing in common with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are living in a day of darkness. I venture to believe that judicial blindness has fallen upon many people to-day, who still "profess and call themselves Christians." They receive not the truth. They do not want to hear it. And just as surely as the Jewish branches were broken off, and blindness happened to Israel, so professing Christian churches as organizations, and professing Christians as individuals, have been broken off, and have nothing in common with New Testament Christianity. We are living in a day of spiritual dearth and barrenness, and all too general apostasy.

What is meant by "blindness in part"? Not that all Israel were partly blind, but that part of Israel were wholly blind. Some of Israel still see. In every age God has had His elect people among the Jews. He has to-day, those who have bowed at the feet of Jesus Christ, and acknowledged Him as Saviour and Lord, to whom the light of the gospel has come: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in (their) hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ", and they have acknowledged Him as Saviour and Lord.

What is meant by "the fulness of the Gentiles"? I will tell you what I think it means. It is always profitable to compare scripture with scripture. Remember we observed last Sunday evening that Abraham's seed were not permitted immediately to possess the land. They had to wait four hundred years for the reason that "the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full." Their lease had not yet run out. The Landlord was going to be just and give them time. Matthew's gospel speaks of the "times of the Gentiles". I believe that God gives to every man his chance. I believe that when the Judgment is set, every mouth shall be stopped, and all the world shall become guilty before God. He "hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us". Israel had their chance. And when the "fulness of the Gentiles" comes in, whatever it is—not necessarily marked by the fall of Jerualem, but something far bigger than that—the God of truth, Who is without iniquity, just and right is He, will say that Gentiles, like the Jews have had their chance, the fulness of opportunity has been given them.

And now *what about Israel?* It does not actually say, necessarily, that immediately Israel will be specially dealt with, but I think it is implied. "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." Then what? "And so all Israel shall be saved". That is a difficult passage, is it not? Someone will say, "The whole nation is going to be saved." Well, let us suppose that for a moment. For the sake of argument I temporarily yield you your point. Do you suppose that God has a special favour for a particular generation? Is there any Scripture to suggest that God is any more a respecter of generations than He is of persons? We read of a "perverse generation", "a wicked and adulterous generation"; of a generation against which earlier generations shall testify at the judgment; but I can recall no scripture which teaches that a generation at

the close of the age shall be favoured beyond all its predecessors by the universal inclusion of all its members, as against the principle of an elect remnant as in all preceding generations.

Millions of Israelites have died in unbelief. And whether they be Jews or Gentiles, the word stands: "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Very well, then, if you understand by "all Israel shall be saved," that, literally, every one of the seed of Abraham through Isaac's line after the flesh shall be saved, you will be driven to believe in some kind of purgatory, where those who have already died, will have a second chance, for beyond all question, countless thousands have died in unbelief. On the other hand, if "all Israel" means only all Israel then living when their blindness shall be ended, it follows that they will be saved on a principle favouring them above all generations of Israelites which have preceded.

What is meant by "Israel"? "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel"; "but the children of the promise are counted for the seed"; "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Could anything be more plainly or more strongly stated than these passages state the case—all of them from this same epistle to the Romans?

I will take a strong stand. *I believe that from among the Jews "all Israel shall be saved", according to the scriptural definition that "he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter."* Undoubtedly God will save His elect people whether they are Jews or Gentiles.

"All Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." Some of our friends tell us that Israel will be saved when Christ comes the second time, and that then, and, apparently, not till then, their blindness will be dissipated. I am convinced the teaching of Scripture is absolutely to the contrary. I think it would not be unkind to say that that is a dangerous heresy.

Consider briefly who constitute the church. I believe the word of God teaches that the Church of Christ in all ages is one and indivisible. Read it in Hebrews: "These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Old Testament saints, believers of all generations are included in the Church of Christ:

"One army of the living God,
At His command we bow:
Part of the host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now."

We are all His: "Christ the firstfruits: afterward they that are Christ's at his coming". The body of Jesus Christ, the church of the firstborn, will be complete at His coming, and Jesus Christ will not come until it is complete. ("Amen!") And when He comes, He will not come to preach the gospel; He will not come to offer Himself as a sacrifice for sin: He will appear without a sin offering unto salvation. He will come to judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ; according to this gospel, not to

save them, but to judge them. Then the day of salvation will be past. When Jesus Christ shall come the second time He will come to take "vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." He will not come to offer the gospel either to Jew or Gentile: He will come at last to perfect His saints in the resurrection, when their bodies shall be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

As I apprehend the matter, the teaching of Scripture is that the day of grace, the world's probation, will forever have ended when Jesus Christ shall come again. There will be no second chance. And the doctrine of the setting up of an earthly kingdom, and of the salvation of millions of people after Christ comes, is as contrary to Scripture as anything could be. "There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer"—that can refer to only One, the Lord Jesus Christ. And where shall He come from?—"Out of Sion".

"There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." That can not mean the second coming of Christ. I will tell you what I believe it means, and I shall try to show you that I have Scripture for it. I believe God has a purpose for His people, the Jews. I do not believe the days of revival are over. The Modernists would persuade us that there is no hope. And some of our pre-millennial friends have unwittingly all but killed what hope there was left. It is assumed we are going faster and faster to the devil all the time; that it were useless to expect anything more until Christ comes and the Millennium is inaugurated during which millions shall be saved! I cannot find a shred of support for that doctrine in the New Testament. I therefore reject it. Surely, God will yet visit Israel.

But when Israel is grafted in, how will it be done? "And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in." It will be observed that throughout this discussion *Paul institutes a comparison between the cutting off of the natural branches and the possible cutting off of the Gentile branches if they abide not in faith; and also between the grafting in of the Gentiles and the predicted grafting in of Israel "if they abide not still in unbelief."* Therefore, here as elsewhere, history is invoked for the interpretation of prophecy.

How were the natural branches broken off? The Jews were left in their blindness; their hearts were hardened as was Pharaoh's, and all but the remnant according to the election of grace found in the gospel of Christ crucified "a stumblingblock," "As it is written, Behold I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."

And is not that precisely how the Gentile branches have been, and are being broken off? Is there not a hardening toward the gospel? Is not the message of Christ crucified a stumblingstone to Gentile as to Jew?

But again *how were the Gentile branches grafted in?* Not by the personal appearance of Christ. I remind you again of the saying of our Lord, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." To what "nation" was it given? To the Gentiles generally in contradistinction to the Jews. But how was it given to the Gentiles? By the opposite of the way in which it was "taken from" Israel, which was "God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not

hear." That is to say, the Gentiles were graciously granted a spiritual awakening, eyes to see and ears to hear. Thus they were "grafted in" to the olive tree of the elect people in Christ and made partakers of the Root and Fatness of the olive tree.

And in like manner, when the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, the spirit of slumber will pass from Israel, they will again have eyes to see and ears to hear, and will awake to righteousness and sin not.

To this agrees the teaching of the fifteenth chapter of John, which may well be pondered with the eleventh of Romans.

But I submit, *there is not a word here about the salvation of Israel as a nation after the flesh.* Not a word about their being gathered to Jerusalem. Not the remotest suggestion of the establishment of a Jewish state, or earthly kingdom. When the kingdom of God was taken from the Jews, and given to the Gentiles, God did not set up a Christian, Gentile, earthly state. It was wholly a spiritual movement; wholly a spiritual kingdom. So will it be when the judicial blindness of the Jews, or Israel shall be ended.

But once more: *The Deliverer shall come out of Sion.* Is this the second coming? Was not the stumblingstone laid in Sion? And was He not a stumblingstone because Israel had no eyes to see. The same Person in the same Sion was no "stumblingstone" or "stumblingblock" to believers, but "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." So when the same spiritual illumination which was granted to the Gentiles, and even now to the

"Chosen seed of Israel's race,
A remnant weak and small,"

shall, by a heaven-sent spiritual revival, be granted Israel, when their blindness shall be ended, the stumbling stone shall become their Deliverer to turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

IV.

I wonder ARE WE NOW APPROACHING "THE FULLNESS OF THE GENTILES"? I was thrilled as I read again this afternoon the second chapter of Hosea, which I read to you this evening and from which the apostle Paul quotes in the ninth chapter of Romans when he has first included both Jews and Gentiles as among the called, "As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people which were not my people; and her beloved which was not beloved." I conjure you to ponder that chapter in Hosea well, and indeed the whole prophecy. Even at the risk of wearying you let me give you these verses again, that you may see how illustrative of and applicable to God's providential discipline of His elect people, they are. May not these principles be seen operating in Israel's experience to-day?

"Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths. And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then *was it better with me than now.* For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, *which they prepared for Baal.* Therefore will I return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax *given to cover her nakedness.* And now will I discover her lewd-

ness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of mine hand. I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts. And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees, whereof she hath said, These *are* my rewards that my lovers have given me: and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them. And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the Lord.

"Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. And it shall be at that day, saith the Lord, *that* thou shalt call me Ishi; and shalt call me no more Baali. For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name. And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and *with* the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely. . . And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord. And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel. And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to *them which were* not my people, Thou *art* my people; and they shall say, *Thou art my God.*"

Is God now providentially hedging up Israel's day with thorns? Is He alluring her, and bringing her into the wilderness to speak to her heart? Is He even now giving her "The valley of Achor (or trouble) for the door of hope"? If He is not doing so, He will yet do so. He will turn her heart back again, so that she shall say "I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now."

A few years ago I was preaching in New York to a congregation of about fifteen hundred people. At the close of the service I gave an invitation and a number responded. There was a Christian Jew who had just returned from Russia, and he said to me at the close of the service: "If you could have addressed an audience of Jews in Russia this evening as you did here, preaching the same gospel, and had given the same invitation, your whole congregation would have moved forward, for to-day"—that was in the early days of the revolution, about twelve years ago—"the Jews in Russia have lost all confidence in earthly governments, all hope of earthly prosperity, and they are just looking heavenward, saying, 'O Messiah, come!'" A few months ago they committed suicide by the hundred in Austria, and the same thing has followed in Germany. Now they are under the harrow in Germany and Italy. It may be that Israel as a nation, or as many of them as are God's elect people will yet say with David: "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word."

I believe this doctrine encourages us to hope for a great spiritual awakening. I believe we ought to be praying constantly for God's Israel, that He may cause the scales to fall from their eyes, and cause them to look upon Him whom they pierced, and mourn as one who mourneth for an only son. I fear the eschatological teaching which has been current the last few years, the putting of these blessings, and promises of the Word into some distant millennial age, instead of teaching us that even now God is among His people, has had a deadening and carnalizing effect upon religious life in general.

And if Israel turned to God, scattered about the world as they are, it is not difficult to see how the receiving of them could be as "life from the dead;" not difficult to see how the whole church of Christ throughout the world might be revived. No wonder, it seems to me, that the apostle taking this long view of things should at last exclaim: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! for who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever, Amen."

O let us look for that day! Let us pray for it, and let us see to it as to ourselves that we abide in Him, and as branches of the true Vine, bring forth fruit to the honour and praise of His great name.

Let us pray:

O Lord, we thank Thee that Thou hast included all under sin that Thou mightest have mercy upon all. We bless Thee that where sin abounded grace did much more abound; and that Thou art able and ready to receive the sinner, be he Jew or Gentile, who will believe on the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sin of the world.

Give us a greater love for Thy Word, a greater desire to know just why Thy Word teaches, that we may yield to its authority, and be guided by its counsel.

Bless us every one, with all the Israel of God, for Thy name's sake, Amen.

AMAZING CREDULITY

(Continued from page 2)

peace of Europe and the conscience of mankind!"

We do not believe there is the shadow of a doubt that the Civil War in Spain was instigated by the Vatican, and largely financed by the Vatican; that it was, in fact, largely a Roman Catholic war waged with a view to the reestablishment of the Roman Catholic Church in Spain. Lord Halifax is a Roman Catholic, so are many of the ambassadors from Britain to foreign courts. Who can doubt that it was the influence of the Roman Catholic Church in the government of Britain that dictated the utterly wicked course in respect to Spain that has been followed throughout the Civil War.

And then at last Mr. Chamberlain says: "What is wanted is willingness to enter into arrangements for, if not disarmament, at least arms limitations."

As an academic principle, everyone will admit that it would be a blessing for humanity if all the world's swords could be beaten into plow-shares, and all its spears into pruning hooks. But a modicum of political sanity would have suggested that this is not the time to initiate a discussion of it in Britain. We have believed,

and have said from the beginning, as Mr. Lloyd George said, that Germany would have been crushed like an egg-shell, had she fought last September. And now the only hope of peace lies in Britain's rearmament. Even to suggest at this time a limitation of arms, seems to us to be extremely unwise.

Mr. Chamberlain seems to have a mentality similar to that of the late Woodrow Wilson, whose superlative egotism made him one of the worst scourges of the country. Mr. Chamberlain has the mind of a Fascist. For example, in Birmingham, he said:

"For I need hardly tell you that the burden which must be carried to-day by the head of the government, who must in the last resort take the responsibility of decision in every major problem, is as great or greater than it ever has been in our history and only a young fellow like myself, with a good conscience and a cast iron digestion, can stand the strain for very long."

We do not agree that "the head of the Government . . . must in the last resort take the responsibility of decision in every major problem." The principle of responsible government, involving cabinet rule, makes the responsibility for major problems a collective one. It seems to us that the debating power in the British House of Commons must be at the lowest ebb in its history, or someone would have torn Mr. Chamberlain's speech into a million shreds.

Mr. Chamberlain declared in the House of Commons, in reply to one of his critics: "Our prestige abroad has never stood higher than it does to-day. There never was a time when our friendship was more greatly desired by other countries. It is untrue that the policy of appeasement has failed. On the contrary, I claim that it is steadily succeeding." We agree: steadily succeeding in giving the dictators everything they ask for; but in no other way. And if British prestige has increased abroad, we are positive it has not increased in the Dominions. We believe that the Chamberlain policies are a greater menace to the integrity of the Empire than all the attacks from without. Hitherto we have found Canadians more enthusiastically loyal to Britain and British institutions than Londoners themselves. But we believe there is a growing feeling in this country that such principles as direct the foreign policy of the present British Government are really not worth fighting for.

If Mr. Chamberlain should initiate a Conference to discuss any measure of disarmament or arms limitation, at this stage of Europe's distemper, his action would justify his being committed to a lunatic asylum during His Majesty's pleasure.

Since it is proverbial that "a fair exchange is no robbery," we suggest that it might serve the general weal of the world, if someone would relieve Mr. Chamberlain of his umbrella, and leave in exchange an old-fashioned stout walking-stick such as John Bull used to carry to defend his interests against the world's rowdies.

"THE JEWS, THE GENTILES, AND THE CHURCH OF GOD"

By Fred H. Leach, M.A.

In his sermon last Sunday evening, Dr. Shields referred to the above phrase as a magical interpretative formula thought by certain people to be the universal solvent of all problems and the exclusive method of making the Bible's meaning clear. And he went on to show that so far from accomplish-

ing this purpose it only resulted in "confusion worse confounded", and, what is worse, that the application of this formula was actually disruptive and destructive of the inner unity of Holy Scripture. With this judgment, I heartily concur. It might be further instructive, however, to point out that this interpretative formula finds no support whatever in the Biblical passage upon which it allegedly rests.

It will be convenient, therefore, to consider what the Bible actually says, convinced that thereby we will be led to discover what the Bible actually means. This is not to suggest that the Bible is to be interpreted with pedantic literalness. It is, rather, to insist that the Bible is its own interpreter, and that we should always resist the temptation to force its meaning into the molds of our pre-conceived opinions. It strikes one as an odd perversion that some passages of Scripture wonderfully profound in their reach and depth of spiritual significance, such as many of the prophecies of the Old Testament, should be subjected by our "dispensationalist" friends to a plodding and painfully literal interpretation, while other passages, such as the one under investigation, whose obvious meaning lies so near the surface should, by these same friends, be made the occasion of giving free rein to their imagination with resultant interpretations which are fanciful in the extreme, and not infrequently grotesque.

The passage itself, 1 Cor. 10:32, need not detain us long, as its meaning is so patently clear. The apostle is exhorting his readers, now as then, to so conduct themselves as to give no offence "to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God." The primary motive underlying this exhortation he had just stated. All life, even the hum-drum duties of every day, is to be directed to the glory of God. In the wider context, however, he had been discussing the problem of the Christian's liberty of conscience. And within this range he had been giving his inspired comment upon both the Jewish ordinances under the old covenant and the idolatrous feasts of the pagan religious cults. As to the former, he reminds us that, though now forever set aside, they are to be regarded as sources of our instruction in spiritual things. Of the latter, he says that, though the materials of sacrifice were without significance in themselves, the sacrifice was made to devils and not to God, and the Christian should be guided accordingly. The meaning of the text with which we began would thus appear to be very plain. The Jews, the apostle says in effect, may be offended by certain things in your conduct, the Gentiles by others, and the Christians, in whom the erstwhile and distinctive racial traits had been or were being dissolved, by still others. In any and every case these things which give offense are to be shunned, to the end that God's glory may be secured and the salvation of souls prospered. I make bold to state that there is not the slightest hint or suggestion in the text itself, or in the context whether immediate or remote, of any interpretative formula by which we are warranted in partitioning off the Scriptures into watertight compartments reserved for these respective classes of men. We would bring this discussion to a close by repeating with Dr. Shields that such a handling of Scripture, so far from "rightly dividing the word of truth," does it serious and irreparable injury.

AN IRISH OPINION

Our discussion of the Lord's return and related events from time to time seems to awaken a great interest. We print below a letter from a brother in Ireland. Unfortunately, we do not see "The Prophetic News" to which he refers, and we do not know whether the article of our which he names, was taken from THE GOSPEL WITNESS, or copied a second time from some other journal. But we think our correspondent has asked some very pertinent questions, questions which will at least stimulate thought.

As the letter was not sent to us for publication, and we have not the permission of our correspondent to publish it, we withhold the name and the precise address. It is enough to say that it comes from County Down, Northern Ireland.

..... County Down, Northern Ireland.
January 25th, 1939

Rev. T. T. Shields, D.D.
Toronto, Canada.

Dear Sir:

I am a reader of the "Prophetic News" (British) in the January issue of which appears an article of yours "What the Return of Christ will mean to Us". I was pleased indeed to read same, and especially the two last paragraphs in which you declare that you have no faith in any doctrine which offers salvation to sinners (Jew or Gentile) after our Lord Jesus Christ "comes down the skies". This was of special interest to me as I had written to the Editor a few weeks before. The essential parts of my letter were as follows:—

1. If, after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and all the plain (figures used to illustrate the result of the Second Advent) any people were left alive there, then we might have some ground for the Millennial "peace-reign" teaching.
2. If the flood spared any of the wicked in Noah's day, there might be reason to believe in Millennial peace among nations.
3. If the field, on which the wheat and tares grew, showed any sign of life surviving the harvest, then the popular doctrine has some support.
4. If the "flaming fire"—the "vengeance on them that know not God"—the "punishing with everlasting destruction"—spares any of the people of the nations, other than those who are caught up to meet their Lord, then the Millennialist may have confidence in his "peace-reign" teaching.
5. If, after the two reapings, described in Revelation 14:14-20, any mention were made of survivors of the "vine of the earth" class,—
6. If, when the fowls of the air are invited to the supper of the great God (Revelation 19:17-21) to feed on the flesh of all men (v. 18), some of this class are spared,—
7. If, when I Thess. 5:3 is fulfilled, some do escape,—then a Millennium on earth, according to the popular notion, is possible.

Now, Dr. Shields, if you have a copy of the January issue beside you, you will find the Editor's reply on page seven at the top of the second column.

In conclusion I may add that Revelation 22:11-12 seems to indicate that *before* our Lord returns, every case has been decided for time and eternity.

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed)

SEMINARY NOTES

I have just read an article in the *News* of a certain Seminary concerning the raising of funds for its large programme. The title is *How to Do It* and the subtitle *Practical Suggestions for Busy Pastors*. Of course, I thought of Toronto Baptist Seminary, which has no present endowment, and its pressing needs for a more modest but, I trust, worthy work. Looking to the great future which must lie before us I am passing on these "suggestion".—(W.G.B.)

"A number of alumni have set the example by taking out a small insurance policy with the Seminary as beneficiary. Others have directed that a portion of their life insurance be paid to the Seminary at their death.

"A pastor discovered two elderly people who were planning a last will and testament for the disposal of an estate valued at \$30,000. He suggested that a tithe of the amount be left to the Seminary. The will was so written.

"A pastor was approached by a widow whose husband had left an insurance policy of \$5,000. She felt impelled to give a tithe of the amount to the cause of Christ. What would be a safe and satisfying place to invest it? Immediately the pastor suggested the Seminary. The check for \$500 was forthwith drawn and mailed.

"A man advanced in years found himself with some cash that came from the calling of a bond. He needed the interest, but did not know what investment to make. The pastor

suggested a Seminary annuity bond. After correspondence the bond was purchased. It will yield him a reasonable income during his life; and at his death the money will go into the Seminary's endowment."

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH—*Rev. J. Scott.* It is the custom at this season of the year for Toronto daily papers to print excerpts from the annual reports of city churches. All of them are "encouraging"—the word occurs with monotonous regularity! But in the report of Forward Baptist Church the word appears to be made good by the fact, and we venture to share with our readers the following excerpt from the *Telegram* offering our hearty congratulations to the Forward Church.

"Rev. J. Scott presided at the annual meeting of Forward Baptist Church. Encouraging reports were received from all departments. Seventy-two new members were added to the roll and a total of \$13,004 was contributed during the year, an increase of twelve per cent. over the previous year. A total of \$3,227 was given to support foreign missionaries of the church."

Friends of Toronto Baptist Seminary will be particularly interested to know that the pastor, Rev. J. Scott, is a recent graduate of the Seminary.

WESTERN CONFERENCE. The usual quarterly Conference of Western Ontario Churches was held on January 26th in the First Baptist Church, Essex, Ontario. The pastor, Rev. J. Fullard, extended a hearty welcome to all visiting friends. Rev. John Clasper of Rochester, Michigan, was the speaker for the day. In the afternoon he spoke on Faith, and in the evening on Naaman the Leper. Between the afternoon and evening sessions a time of fellowship was enjoyed around the supper table. The Essex friends were most generous in their hospitality, and all enjoyed a most interesting and helpful time.

NEWS FROM BRITISH COLUMBIA—From the Treasurer of the British Columbia Convention comes the following news. The Union of Ontario and Quebec rejoices to hear of the greatly improved health of Rev. W. J. Thomson, former president of the British Columbia Convention, while it offers its sympathy to Dr. J. B. Rowell, this year's president, with our very heartiest good wishes and prayers for a complete recovery in order that he may continue his great work:

"Mr. Thomson's health continues to improve, and his church work growing. He is preaching with great power and we have heard from different sources of the blessing his members receive by attending his prayer meetings and Bible Class. We attended yesterday afternoon a baptismal service conducted by Mr. Thomson in Ruth Morton Memorial Baptist Church when he baptised twelve recent converts from his own work at Dunbar Heights. We know you will rejoice with us at this ingathering of souls.

"We are sorry to say that the doctors have ordered our President, Dr. Rowell, a complete rest, and it may be six months before he is back at his work in Victoria with its many responsibilities, as his church supports and supervises home mission work at various points on Vancouver Island. There are many opportunities for home mission work, which we cannot undertake owing to inadequate funds, but we are extending our borders as finances permit."

THIS WEEK'S SERMON

The Editor will agree, in advance, with many of his readers who will probably be found to be of the opinion, that the subject for last Sunday evening's sermon is not the most appropriate one imaginable for popular treatment before a Sunday evening congregation. He will agree with any also who may be of the opinion that the sermon is rather long for such an occasion. Notwithstanding, the sermon treats of an extremely important subject, particularly in days like these, and a subject which could not safely be discussed without some degree of thoroughness. That is his apology both for the subject and the length of the sermon. That it dealt with a matter of great interest, was evidenced by the attention it received from a great congregation, notwithstanding its length, and its rather solid, argumentative, character. The Editor asks only this his readers should give the subject careful study in the light of God's Word.

Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 3 First Quarter Lesson 8 February 19th, 1939

THE OFFERING OF ISAAC

Lesson Text: Genesis 22.

Golden Text: "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."—Genesis 22:8.

For Reading: Genesis 21.

I. The Test of Faith—verses 1-8.

God tests those whom He would use in His service. He does not tempt men in the sense of enticing them to evil (James 1:12, 13), but He tries them as gold is tried. The testing of faith is more valuable and more necessary than the testing of gold. Happy is the man who endures such testing, who has proved to be faithful, and has been approved of God (Job 23:10; Zech. 13:9; 1 Pet. 1:6, 7).

This is the third and greatest test to Abraham's faith. God had called Abraham to leave his land, his kindred and his father's house for a land which God would show him. Abraham went out, not knowing whither he went (Gen. 12:1-3; Heb. 11:8). God told him he should have a son. Again, Abraham believed God, and his faith was counted unto him for righteousness (Gen. 15:6). Now God commanded the patriarch to give up his most precious possession; his only son Isaac, the object of his affections and of his long-deferred hope.

Abraham obeyed promptly and without reluctance. He had been ready at a moment's notice to respond to the call of God with the words "Behold, here I am" (Isa. 6:8). He did not delay the momentous journey, but arose early in the morning, and made all his preparations without a murmur and without a question (Joshua 3:1; Psa. 119:60).

Worship is much more than just the adoration we express with our lips. It involves a life of devotion and obedience. We worship God when we give up ourselves to His service, and walk before Him in holiness and righteousness. Abraham and Isaac climbed up the mountain that they might worship God.

Abraham was confident that he and his son Isaac would return together from their period of worship and sacrifice (verse 5). The honour of the Lord was at stake, for He had promised to Abraham a seed as numberless as the stars and as the sands, and He had specified that the chosen seed would come through Isaac (Gen. 21:12; Rom. 9:7; Heb. 11:18). Isaac was the son of promise (Gal. 4:28), and his life must either be preserved or renewed. Abraham believed that God was able, if need be, to raise his son from the dead (Heb. 11:17-19). That son was restored to him, as though he had actually been raised again, thus illustrating the resurrection of Christ.

Abraham and Isaac held sweet converse with one another as they trudged along toward the summit of Mount Moriah. So did our Saviour walk in unbroken fellowship with His Father on the journey from Bethlehem to Calvary (Luke 9:51; John 8:29).

God did indeed provide Himself a Lamb for a burnt-offering. Had He not made provision for the sins of the world, man would have been forever estranged from Him. Christ was the Lamb of God Who took away the sins of the world (Exod. 12:3; John 1:29).

II. The Fruit of Faith—verses 9-14.

When Abraham actually laid his son upon the altar he displayed the righteousness which is the fruit of faith. He showed beyond all doubt that his confidence was in God alone, and that he was ready to obey the word of God, even though obedience would seem to involve a frustration of the very promise of God. He knew that God would vindicate Himself. By his action Abraham proved that he had faith (James 2:20-24).

God did not command Abraham to slay his son, nor would He permit it, although the patriarch was prepared to go even to that length at the word of the Lord. The practice of offering human sacrifices, current among the heathen nations, was expressly forbidden, so far as the Hebrews were concerned

(Deut. 18:10; 2 Kings 21:6). God did not desire Isaac; He desired the first place in Abraham's affections (Prov. 23:26).

The angel of God intervened to save Isaac; yet God did not spare His only Son, the Son of His love, but freely gave Him up for us all, putting upon Him the guilt of the whole world (Isa. 53:10; John 3:16; Rom. 8:32). God thus illustrated how the whole world was to be blessed through the seed of Abraham.

In later times David sacrificed to God on this mountain, purchasing the ground and instruments from Arnaiah for a price (2 Sam. 24:24). Solomon later built the temple on this mountain (2 Chron. 3:1). It was on one of these mountains outside Jerusalem that Christ became a Sacrifice for us.

Isaac was probably about twenty-five years of age at this time. In his quiet voluntary submission to his father's will he illustrated the meek and lowly Jesus Who laid down His life in accordance with His eternal Father's will (John 10:18; Heb. 10:7).

The sacrifice of Isaac was virtually made, so far as Abraham's obedience was concerned. God accepted and approved the offering, counting it as fully performed.

The truth of the substitutionary aspect of the death of Christ is well illustrated in the ram which was offered up instead of Isaac. The very thicket suggests the thorns which composed the crown placed upon the brow of the Saviour.

The sacred happening on Mount Moriah suggested a new name for God, Jehovah-jireh, "The Lord will see", or "The Lord will provide" (verse 8). Those who prove steadfast in the time of testing will be led into a deeper knowledge of God.

III. The Reward of Faith—verses 15-24.

Blessing comes to the one who fully obeys the Lord. The covenant already made with Abraham was again renewed (Gen. 12:1-3; 15:1-6; 26:3, 4; Psa. 105:8, 9). God bound Himself by oath to keep His pledge (Heb. 6:13).

A new prediction was added to the covenant at this time. The seed of Abraham would possess the gate of his enemies. The gate of an ancient city was usually the strongest part of the wall, and the section most stoutly defended against enemies. For one to possess the gate of the city was equivalent to possessing the city itself.

BUILDING PROGRESS

Work on the new Jarvis Street building these days seems to be somewhat accelerating. We had a meeting in the architect's office on Tuesday of this week with some thirteen or fourteen Contractors engaged on the building in the various trades, with a view to securing, if possible, a still further measure of co-operation, in order that the work may be expedited. This gathering of the heads of various trades, and there were still not a few others whose work will begin later, gave some idea of the dimensions of the project. We hope to be able to report next week that some trades are working a double shift, which will make the working hours from eight in the morning till about midnight. We told the Contractors that their work would have to be finished by March 31st, and the whole building ready for opening on May 14th, even if it involved three shifts for the twenty-four hours.

We announce to all interested that we see no reason why the date agreed upon should be changed, and we ask all our friends who can possibly do so, to endeavour to spend the week beginning May 14th in Toronto.

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