

# The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF EVANGELICAL PRINCIPLES  
AND IN DEFENCE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.  
\$2.00 Per Year, Postpaid, to any address. 5c Per Single Copy.

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

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Vol. 18, No. 18

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 7, 1939

Whole Number 908

## THE BRITISH EMPIRE AT WAR

The inevitable has come to pass—we are at war! Unspeakably horrible as it is, we believe it is scarcely more terrible than the tension of the last two or three years. The main thing now is to see that it is properly finished. To this end united and efficient action is necessary in all parts of the Empire. We must be careful, however, to see that efficiency is not sacrificed to anything that is called unity. The progress of events will discover new men in unsuspected places, and no doubt will require the retirement of some men now in high places. All departments of State in these days need to be in the hands of men who know how to make up their minds, and who have courage to face the consequences of their own decisions. A policy of "wait and see" threatened our destruction in the early stages of the Great War, and, to use Lincoln's famous figure, we were forced to "swap horses" even in the middle of the stream. We hope it may not be necessary to repeat that somewhat hazardous action, but it is better to risk "swapping horses" than to accept defeat.

No one is competent to judge of any man's fitness for leadership in such critical hours in advance of circumstances which infallibly reveal men's qualities. In the army, in the navy, in the air, in administrative positions, in the governments of the Dominions, and of Great Britain itself, events will show what is in men.

There seems to be universal satisfaction over the inclusion of Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden in the Cabinet. But the man who has the longest and most successful record of experience in just such an emergency as now faces the world—Mr. David Lloyd George—has not been called to a Cabinet position. He is still much younger than Clemenceau was when he was recalled to the premiership of France, when, in cooperation with Mr. David Lloyd George, he proved to be France's saviour. Before the war is finished we predict Mr. Lloyd George will be called to bear a fairly large share of responsibility for its prosecution.

Be that as it may, inevitably many changes will come, and we may well pray that they may always be for the best. Men qualified for leadership at such times are not men who become wise only after the event, however dexterous they may be in changing their whole policy. In war such after-sight may cost hun-

dreds of thousands of lives. We need men who are able to discern the signs of the times—in short the prudent man who can foresee the evil, and hide himself and others.

### THE ATHENIA TORPEDOED

All the world knows of the torpedoing of the Donaldson Liner *S.S. Athenia*; and, outside of Germany, all the world has been shocked by the news. We need repeat nothing of the horror of it, which has been proclaimed by newspaper and radio to listening millions again and again. We refer to it only to say that Hitler and his aides ought to be indicted for murder, not on account of the *Athenia* only, for they are responsible for thousands of other killings which were just as much murder as the destruction of life in the sinking of the *Athenia*.

We have said it before the war began; we say it again: we earnestly hope that Hitler and his aides will be brought to justice as common criminals, and executed as they deserve.

The sinking of the *Athenia* was as stupid as it was ruthless. News of it has filled the minds of men the world around with feelings of indescribable revulsion and reprobation. Countless millions now feel that killing would be no murder were Hitler the victim of the sword. President Wilson counselled the Americans as individuals to be impartial even in thought in the last war. President Roosevelt has not given such foolish counsel—men cannot be neutral in thought where moral issues are concerned. Notwithstanding President Wilson's counsel, however, the United States was forced into war. And unless the war is finished in a month or two, the United States, in defense of her own citizens, and of her own honour, will be drawn into it. And no power on earth could beat Britain, France, and the United States, combined.

### NEUTRALITY

War always provokes discussions about neutrality. In all such matters we have formed the habit of consulting our supreme Authority—the Bible. It occurred to us, therefore, that it might be useful to see what the Bible has to say about neutrality. It will appear at once that there must be different kinds and different

degrees of neutrality. Here is one from the book of Proverbs: "He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears". That means, we should say, that in a strife which does not belong to one by any link of kinship, material interest, or moral obligation, a wise man will stand apart and not meddle with it. This we should call a justifiable neutrality. Where the cause of strife concerns nobody but those who are directly engaged in it; when, for example there is contention between friends or relatives, between husband and wife, or between any two or more people, over a matter which belongs to the disputants alone, meddling by a third party invariably only adds fuel to the flame, and makes matters worse than ever. Furthermore, the person so meddling is as certain to be bitten as the one who takes a dog by the ears.

There is sometimes a strife over conflicting national interests in which no clearly-defined moral principle is at stake, and where no principle affecting the life of other nations is at issue. It may be a dispute affecting conditions of trade, or other material interests, which no one can settle but the disputants themselves. Wise statesmanship would recognize that such a conflict may best be localized by those not belonging to it refusing to meddle with it.

We have known other situations where declarations of neutrality would have done much to preserve and even to restore peace. If Mrs. Somebody should declare war on all recognized or unrecognizable canons of sartorial harmony by decking herself in a coat of many colours, every one of which is at war with all the rest, what a blessing it would be if Mrs. Next-Door-Neighbour would resolve upon a policy of strict and silent neutrality, and determine sovereignly and irrevocably that it was none of her business what her neighbour wore! Or, when two people elect to enter into a life-partnership which, to all observers but the two people themselves, seems to involve a declaration of war on every principle of natural affinity and suitability, what a blessing it would be if everybody would reverse the proverbial saying, "It is their funeral" and make it to stand, "It is their marriage"; and therefore speak only as neutrals! Of course, if any two such persons expect everybody to be neutral, or, as President Wilson would have put it "impartial even in their thought" they must not themselves violate the rights of neutrals by arranging a wedding in such a way that presents would be expected, for that would necessarily involve the showing of partiality! It would compel a breach of the laws of neutrality, and open the flood-gates for a general war of conflicting opinions.

By extension the principle will be seen to apply to many spheres of strictly individual concern, the boundaries of which careful neutrals will conscientiously refrain from crossing. A neutrality that would compel us all to mind our own business instead of meddling with that of other people, would be most useful. We recommend this consideration to all who are disposed to critical gossip or fault-finding of any sort. It might be well to cultivate the habit of having a rejoinder ready for anyone who would attempt to draw us into any kind of critical warfare, being prepared always to answer on that matter, "I am strictly neutral; and as my neutrality compels my own silence, it equally forces me to refuse to listen to others."

But there is another kind of strife respecting which no one can afford to be neutral, where principles of right and wrong are concerned, where a line is clearly drawn between righteousness and unrighteousness, which may be as thin as a razor's edge, so that one must stand on one side or the other. To that necessity our Lord points when He said: "He that is not with me is against me".

In the beginning of such conflict as that now raging, it is natural for nations not immediately concerned, and in some cases it may be desirable also, to endeavour to maintain a neutral position. But as it progresses the principles at issue have a way of applying themselves to people everywhere so as to compel others to take sides. If a fire starts in a little room of somebody's house where it is easily extinguished by one of the inmates with a pail of water, it is nobody else's business that there has been a fire there at all. But when it spreads to other rooms, and breaks through the roof, and threatens to set every house on the street on fire, and in some cases, perhaps, threatens the destruction of the whole town or city, the fire ceases to be an individual matter, and calls all hands to the pumps to extinguish it.

No one will be better pleased than Britain, France, and Poland, should the present flare-up be quickly extinguished. But if it sets a continent ablaze, and spreads its sparks to the rest of the world it will be everybody's business to help extinguish it, except, of course, the looters who hope to profit by it. But Christian people, where right and wrong is concerned, can never be neutral in thought, for as they are "for" Christ, they must be against everything that is against Him.

### SPECULATIVE MILLENNIALISM

Next to the plague of Modernism itself, perhaps nothing has done greater injury to the cause of Evangelical Christianity than the fifty-seven varieties of speculative Millennialism, which so often assumes the title of Fundamentalism. The biblical teachings respecting the ultimate destiny, both of believers and unbelievers, have been made to give place to speculative discussions about the Millennium: whether Christ is to come before or after the Millennium; whether the saints are to be raptured before or after the great tribulation; and whether the alleged rapture before the tribulation is to include all the saints, or whether it is to be a "selective" rapture; what is to happen during the Millennium; what is Armageddon, and where is it to be fought; the future of the Jews, etc., etc., etc.—in respect to all these matters there are about as many views as the famous advertised fifty-seven varieties.

Nothing could possibly be more confusing, to the minds of young Christians, particularly; or, indeed, to all who love our Lord in sincerity and in truth, and who desire to walk by the authority of the word of God. Nothing we believe has done so much to contribute to this general confusion as the fantastic eschatology of the Scofield Bible—shot through, we are convinced with downright heresies of the gravest sort. We yield to no one in our conviction of the divine inspiration of every word of the original Scriptures, and the supreme authority of the Bible as the Word of God.

(Continued on page 7)

# The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, September 3rd, 1939

(Stenographically Reported)

"The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?"

"The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come."—Isaiah 21:11, 12.

No thoughtful, reflective, man or woman can possibly be without a feeling of deep concern in view of present conditions in the world. I suppose those of us who live under the British flag have been particularly anxious. Many of us have very vivid recollections of the last war; and I have a good deal of sympathy with those who have tried to persuade themselves that such a tragedy could not be repeated within the lifetime of one generation. And yet I believe that those who know anything of the teaching of the Word of God have never been carried away by the plausible prophecies of men that we had emerged from, and passed forever beyond such a "jungle" method of settling disputes as war.

We begin this conflict with some great advantages over the position the Empire occupied at the beginning of the last war. While the issue was clear to many from the beginning even at that time, there were no such facilities then as there are now for acquainting the millions of every detail of the British effort to avert war. Today we are under no necessity of arguing the righteousness of our cause. That must be apparent to every person of moral intelligence throughout the world. If Hitler were to be permitted to work out his own will, or even to continue in life, there could be no logical justification for the maintenance of any judicial system whatsoever. For it is no exaggeration to say that the worst criminal in any penitentiary, even the man in a death-cell awaiting execution, might be considered worthier to be permitted to live than Hitler.

Whatever reservations any of us may have had as to the wisdom of Britain's long patience with Germany, it has at least served this purpose: it has demonstrated to the whole world our pacific intentions. No country could possibly have made greater efforts to avert war. While I have often questioned the wisdom of the course pursued, as those of you who worship here, know, I would like to pay this tribute to the Prime Minister of Great Britain, that it would have been impossible for any mortal man to have made any greater effort for the maintenance of peace than Mr. Chamberlain has done.

It had been hoped for a long time that the malady of Nazi-ism afflicting Germany might yield to some form of medical treatment, or diplomatic massage. It has now become patent to all the world that it is a deadly cancer which will yield only to the knife. Britain has made a wise choice, choosing the surgeon rather than the undertaker. As His Majesty the King said to-day, if this sort of thing were permitted to continue, there could be security and peace to no one in the world. We should all live under the bondage of fear. Better surely to die as free men, than live as anybody's slaves!

We have come to a time when all differences in our

national life should be forgotten or submerged, and freely and entirely subordinated to the cause of national unity. I hope we may ignore all political and racial distinctions, the land of our birth, or the race of our origin, and reckon ourselves to be, all of us, Canadians—or better still, for the purposes of this war, British Canadians.

All the resources of the nation, the human and material resources, and, if I may make the distinction for the sake of clarity, the moral resources of the nation, ought to be mobilized in order to enable this country to make the maximum effort in assisting to win the war. I hope and believe, that the women of this generation will emulate the splendidly heroic example of the women during the last war; and I would beg all women in the interests of righteousness and of world-order, and of human liberty in general, to do nothing to hinder, but everything possible to encourage your men—let me make it personal, *your* men to enlist, even in the most hazardous form of war service.

We in Canada are singularly favoured in that by our geographical position we are at least temporarily immune to the danger which momentarily threatens the peoples of Britain and France, and which the people of Poland are even now suffering. That ought, however, to make us the more courageous in that we have time for thought and for still, fuller preparation.

Canada, with practical unanimity will stand behind the government. I have been listening to news flashes from London and elsewhere. I was gratified by the utterance of Prime Minister Mackenzie King, and of his ministers associated with him in broadcasts late this afternoon. We in Canada, just as much as the people in England, are now at war. There is not the shadow of a doubt as to what the Parliament of Canada will do on Thursday. I am sure that all parties will unite as one man, and that a united House will sanction all proposals which the Government may make, and clothe the Government with all necessary authority for the vigorous and successful prosecution of the war. From this day forward we are all soldiers, whether we wear uniform or not. Every loyal British heart must throb in sympathy with those who keep the gates against the enemy, by sea, and land, and in the air. Canada, in this hour of peril, will do as nobly as she did in the last war.

With the profoundest regret that any such course is now necessary I trust we shall all face forward, that no word of discouragement will ever pass our lips. No matter how long it takes, no matter what the cost, I am sure that Britain, and France, and heroic Poland, will never sheathe the sword until Nazi-ism is annihilated. I repeat what I said last Sunday evening, that in the last months of the last war in late October, or early

November, when the armistice was first mooted, I was supplying in Spurgeon's Tabernacle, and I ventured then to say that Britain, and the world, would rue the day if and when peace terms were discussed anywhere outside of Berlin. I do not believe they will be discussed anywhere else this time. However, we dare not, on the ground of mere human opinion, or human prescience, attempt to predict what a day or an hour may bring forth.

Now let us turn to the Word of the Lord: "The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come."

This, admittedly, is a somewhat obscure passage, and yet I think in principle, it is sufficiently clear to yield us useful instruction and inspiration.

### I.

There is a sense in which THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN OLD TESTAMENT DAYS WITH THEIR PROPHETIC MINISTERS, AND THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN OUR DAY WITH THEIR PROPHETIC MINISTRY, WERE AND ARE AS WATCHMEN SET UPON THE WALLS, WHO SEE THINGS HIDDEN FROM OTHER EYES. But what competence has one man whatever his experience, or training, whatever his natural aptitudes, what competence has he to see more than others see, or to give warnings or words of comfort which may not be given by anyone else? Are ministers endowed with any kind of spiritual clairvoyance, which enables them to penetrate beneath the surface of things, and see things hidden from ordinary eyes? I think not. People come to me sometimes, sometimes they write to me, to tell me of visions they have had. I am never impressed.

A visiting English preacher told me that he heard a noted English preacher shock a very sedate Keswick audience one day not long since, when essaying a certain interpretation of some difficult passage he prefaced his interpretation by saying, "Now I dare say some of you will not agree with what I am about to say." Then with almost a note of impatience, and some of the very sedate people thought almost of irreverence, he said, "If you don't agree with me, for heaven's sake, don't write me." I say "Amen" to that. I have a very efficient secretarial staff, but they number something less than a hundred!

No, no! we speak with authority only as we expound the Word of God, and even then that interpretation will be authoritative to you only as it is certified in your own spiritual intelligence by the Spirit of God. The responsibility rests upon every one of us to know, for ourselves.

Having said that by way of safeguarding my position, let me point out to you that *every principle of the Scripture has in it a prophetic element*. Just as the chemist can analyse certain elements and infallibly predict how they, under certain circumstances, will act and react, singly or in combination; somewhat similarly it is possible for us to examine the principles of God's revealed Word, and see therein certain potentialities which inevitably will produce certain results.

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ"—the "gospel of Christ"! We read of "the word of the truth of the gospel". There is a sense in which that includes the whole Bible, for it is—what? An abstraction? A mental concept? No! It is the dynamite of God. The apostle Paul, as an expert, examining it in the light of the Spirit, said of this gospel with which he was put in

trust, "There is dynamite in it." It is the very word from which we get our word dynamite. The very dynamism of God! The power of God is in it.

So when we look at the principles of Scripture, principles of righteousness, I can tell you what the fruit of it will be. A seedsman who knows a certain seed may say, "If you sow it you will have a harvest of certain fruit." Well, "the work of righteousness shall be peace"; and there can never be peace but where righteousness has been sown; "and the effect of righteousness," the ultimate effect of it is "quietness and assurance for ever."

And so, we may be asked, as watchmen, "What of the night?" And not vainly is the question put to us. Mr. Chamberlain said it; his Majesty the King said it, that these principles of righteousness must prevail. We do not say when, but ultimately, in the long reach of things, he who takes the side of righteousness, takes the winning side.

There is a prophetic element also *in every precept of the gospel, in every command*. Sometimes you and I are required to—I will not say attempt—to essay the apparently impossible. "Speak to the children of Israel, that they go forward." But they cannot; they have no ships; it is impossible. But it is not impossible when God commands it, for implied in the precept is the prophecy that God will make a way. In your private life, in your business affairs, or now in your larger national and international relations, when you find as a Christian that you are required to make strict applications of the principles of your profession, to life and conduct as an individual, in all the relationships of life, even in your relationship to the state, and all the obligations that are implied in that relationship—I say, when any precept of the gospel is involved, you will find wrapped up in it the prophetic promise that God will see you through. Oh, yes, *the promises of God are prophecies too*. I have anticipated that. God always—oh, how shall I put it—wraps up all the qualities of Deity in His Word. God is in His Word. This Book is inbreathed by the Spirit of God, by Him Who said, "Let there be light: and there was light." And He can say it still. Therefore we may, by a study of God's Word, know something of the future. One asks, "*What about the prophecies of Scripture?*" Well, there are some prophecies about the interpretation of which there can, I think, be no two opinions,—for example, the fact that Jesus is coming again. That is a prophecy. If one should ask me whether or not He is coming, I do not need time to consider my answer. I answer, Yes; He is bound to come. There is no question about it. There may be differences of opinion as to how and when He will come, but there can be no question as to the fact. Be as emphatic and dogmatic as you like about the prophecies concerning which there can be no doubt. Be cautious and charitable toward others in respect to those prophecies concerning the ultimate interpretation of which there may legitimately be a difference of opinion. But the point I make is this, that the Word of God does forecast the future. We are not left in darkness: we are filled with light. We have not to go groping into the future like a blind man. "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light"? Very often that passage is, I think, misinterpreted; it is assumed that the man of business, the shrewd financier, the man who is able to take advantage of others, is a very wise man, but that the ordinary Christian is about seven-eighths of a simple-

ton. I do not believe it. The passage should be interpreted as ironical. God did not give us the Word of truth, and the Spirit of truth, and the promise that He would lead us into all the truth, to leave us at last, dull and stupid, in the presence of an event like that which faces us to-day. No, no; I believe the pulpit, and the Church of Christ, to-day should have a voice. I believe every true minister of Christ is a watchman; and he ought to have a message concerning things which he sees through the medium of Scripture.

I shall not say, "I told you so." I shall put another way: God's Word told you so. I know that our Modernistic friends of various types and degrees have been proposing to cure the world's woes by the merging of opposites in various magic unions. But no one with an open Bible would believe that we had reached the end of wars. Why? Watchmen can see things that other people do not see.

How naturally we open our minds, how readily we extend hospitality to something that is welcome to our predilections! You heard to-day that the German liner *Bremen* was captured, did you not? When I heard that, I said, "Good!" Thanks to Uncle Sam for detaining it for thirty-six hours. But alas! the report was contradicted after a while. They said there was no authentic news about it. But if she is not safe home she will be captured yet. I give you that as a prophecy, not as a preacher, but just as a Britisher. If she is captured it will be due to her detention for thirty-six hours in New York. May Uncle Sam continue that brand of neutrality!

But we must be ready to face things that are not palatable to us. The watchman must have courage and faithfulness to declare the whole counsel of God. And let me tell you something as a watchman: we did not provoke the war. We are not to be blamed for bringing it on either in Canada or in Britain. But do not let anyone suppose that this nation or Britain has lived a life that is well-pleasing to God. We have disregarded God's Word. The contempt in which religion has been held for so long, the recent tide of lawlessness everywhere in this land, in yours Doctor Pettingill, and in England, the God Who is a God of truth, and without iniquity, must take account of. And we need not suppose that as a nation we are getting anything more than we have merited. I remember reading a remark in one of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons years ago to this effect, that everything short of hell is mercy for us all.

Oh, that we may learn the lesson in these days, and that we may listen to the voice of God, the testimony of this Holy Book! The last broadcast I heard was at six-thirty. But this Book is more up-to-date than that. The morning papers will be on the street late to-night, but this book is in advance of them.

## II.

Consider a few moments THE CYNICAL ENQUIRY OF THE UNBELIEVING: "He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night?" Seir was involved in the solemn forecasts of the prophet. "Dumah" means "silence", probably a verbal euphemism for the silence of desolation effected by the judgments the prophet predicted.

Hence "He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night?" The prophet assumes that *he hears a voice mockingly inquiring*: "Ha, ha! watchman, what of the night? Do you know anything?" Alas, that that should be the attitude of so many people toward divine

things! that so many should look upon this Word of God, given to us to instruct us, to forewarn us, only with scorn, and approach it in a cynical and unbelieving attitude, almost laughing at its warnings! As though one should say, "Watchman, you profess to know much, now tell us, what of it?"

I remember how my spiritual sensitiveness was shocked years ago when as a young minister I attended a certain ministerial meeting. A certain minister said to his brethren on that occasion, "We learn as we grow older. I remember when I was a young man I had the temerity on one occasion to preach from this text: 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.'" To my astonishment there was a general laugh, and when the merriment had subsided, he said, "I asked the Lord to forgive me, and I promised Him that I would never repeat that mistake." And they seemed to think that that was very clever.

Has not that been true of pulpits of this day in a large measure? Recently there was a man here from England preaching in Toronto, and he began his sermon by saying that a very little while ago it was as much as a minister's position was worth to speak about sin in an English pulpit, but that now people were prepared to listen to it. Why? It is true there has been little rebuke of sin, no preaching of repentance, no honouring of the Lord. The very pulpits have cried in mockery, "Watchman, what of the night?"

But a true watchman can tell you something of the night. Do not mock at the testimony of the Bible.

But there is another class of people who are not cynical; but they have a *mere intellectual interest in the things of the Scripture*. I know some people who try to piece it together very much like a crossword puzzle. I remember a Welsh lawyer's coming to my house some years ago. He had been entertained by a certain minister. I think he was wrong in his judgment, but this is what he said: "Do you know Dr. So-and-So?" I said, "Yes, I think he is a good man, what do you think?" And he went on, "There are some people who collect stamps, and there are some people who assemble flies and bugs, and classify them, and there are people who gather specimens of all sorts of minerals, and of stones. And they are very proud of them." I said, "What has that to do with your preacher?" "Well, Doctor So-and-So does none of those things; but he studies his Bible!"—He meant to say that with the minister in question, Bible study was a mental diversion, a hobby. While I think he was wrong in his estimate of that minister, there are religious hobbyists. I met a man the other day, who in about two sentences told me all about Hitler's place in prophecy! He knew everything about him, on the ground of Scripture. Why my dear friends if you could certainly predict what Hitler will do you could be a multimillionaire. Someone asked me about the war the other day. I said, If I could predict its course I should be worth millions of dollars to the cause of peace. But there are those who presume to speak with authority, allegedly on the ground of an ingenious interpretation of some difficult scripture. Such doctrinaires are fond of asking "Watchman, what of the night?"

"Watchman, what of the night?" Perhaps the idea here may be, "What watch of the night? How has the night progressed? How far are we through it?" Oh, yes: "Remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who

should walk after their own ungodly lusts;" and, again, "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts and saying Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." You have gone through the cemetery and seen an old stone, perhaps put there a hundred years or more ago. You could scarcely decipher the name, and when perhaps, by careful reading, you made out the words "Till he come," you smiled almost contemptuously as you mentally observed "—A hundred years, and still He has not come."

Yes, "Watchman, what of the night?" But do not ask the question lightly. I said to one of the Deacons this morning: "It is a pretty dark day." He said, "Yes; and only the grace of God can sustain us in it." I am sorry for men who do not know Christ, for women who do not know Him. I am sorry for men who will have to do their duty at the front who do not know Christ. It is a dark night. Oh, if the night that knows no morning should come to anyone here, how terrible it would be! Let me conjure you my dear friends if you have not as yet received Jesus Christ as your Saviour, if you have not been born again, if you have not been made a child of the morning, I beg of you to receive Christ into your heart this evening, as the only One Who is the Light of the world. And then you will be able to ask with confidence and with anticipatory gladness, "Watchman, what of the night?" But it will be in a different tone altogether. Then it will be as one who looks toward the morning: "Watchman, tell me, What of the night? Is it nearly past? Is it the last watch of the night?"

### III.

And what is THE WATCHMAN'S ANSWER: "The morning cometh, and also the night." *Anyone could give such an answer.* Morning and night have succeeded each other, with age-long regularity, and will continue to do so: "The morning cometh, and also the night." That is true of universal human experience, day and night alternate. It is true of national experience, true of the church's experience. We have our night-times. I recall the words of Mrs. Cousin, as she put into verse some of Rutherford's sayings:

"The flowers need night's cool darkness,  
The moonlight and the dew,  
So Christ from one who loved it  
His shining oft withdrew;  
"And then for cause of absence,  
My troubled soul I scanned—  
But glory, shadeless, shineth  
In Immanuel's land."

Yes; we must have the night. After all, what a blessing it is that night comes to this old world! God in His mercy sends the night. It comes to you as an individual. It is not all sunshine. Life cannot be one long summer's day, golden, bright, and glad. We have our bright days, and our dark days. Said Job, "What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" War and then victory! We lamented the outbreak of war in 1914, and we celebrated our victory in 1918. The morning came! That is human history through all ages: "The morning cometh, and also the night." No human power can "make the world safe for democracy", nor wage "a war to end war". We welcomed the morning of victory in 1918, and now, once more, cometh the night.

But I think there is more in the text than that. It may suggest *two aspects of the divine government, and two classes of people.* The morning cometh." Of course; *it comes to the believer.* We look always for the morning. Do you remember how it is written in the beginning of the Book when God began to write the history of His dealings with man?—He began with the evening: "The evening and the morning were the first day." God always works from evening to morning. And when we reach the end of the Book we find the story of a city of which it is said: "there shall be no night there."

Those of us who are Christians, can say that whatever comes we discern the first grey streaks of dawn. To us, the morning comes, whatever happens. Oh, if it were legitimate, if there were any real use in attempting the identification of a character like Hitler!—some will attempt it I dare say. You will hear of many sermons on the Antichrist now. Hitler is IT! I do not know whether he is or not, and I do not care. As I said last Sunday, if he is not, as I think he is not, he is a good imitation, and in spirit he is the same. But whether he could be so identified or not what matters it? For us, the morning cometh. There is no doubt about that. But though we shall have the victory, as I am sure we shall, the night cometh too. I am increasingly impressed with the responsibilities resting upon the Christian minister. The longer I live, and the more experience I have, the more I tremble at the idea of standing between God and man until the plague is stayed. What if I should fail in any measure! What if people should mistakenly assume that the morning cometh, and no night? My dear friends, if you do not know Christ, in this conflict, and in all that lies beyond, the night cometh. The day of the Lord is not a day to be desired by wicked men. Indeed, it is written: Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light." I do not wonder that many are filled with fear at the very idea of the coming of Christ. To those who are not His, how terrible it will be when He shall come "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." It will be a terrible night!

The King said, in effect, to-day, "We shall probably have hard things to endure." What did he say? Just that he hoped and believed that right will prevail, that, ultimately, the morning will come! And it will come for the believer. I do not know, really, how people retain their sanity who have no expectation of "the blessed hope". I cannot see any ultimate hope for the world apart from the promise of the Bible that He will come Who is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and will take unto Himself His great power and reign. How glad we ought to be that we have a king who believes that! Someone told me of a lovely picture they had seen somewhere, of the king with his children. He was pointing out to them pictures of different kings, and somewhere in the centre was a picture of the Lord Jesus. His Majesty, pointing to that said, "There is only one real King." I do not know whether the story is literally accurate, but I am sure it is true in principle and spirit. I was ill in bed at the time I heard the Coronation Service by radio, and I confess I wept tears of joy. I thought it was the greatest evangelistic service I had ever heard, when the Archbishop of Canterbury took the Bible and put it into the hands of the king, and said, "Here is wisdom," and when the king promised to maintain the Protestant religion. We have much to be thank-

ful for, that we have a king for whom we can so sincerely pray, "God save our noble king."

I may seem to be wandering a bit, but I want to get at you. Thankful as we are in this present situation that we have such a king, I remind you that while the morning cometh, and also the night, *we may choose either the morning or the night*, we may choose light rather than darkness, life rather than death: we choose the morning when we make choice of Jesus Christ, Who is the Light of all worlds.

#### IV.

"If ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come." What did he mean? I think he meant this, **IF YOU REALLY WANT TO KNOW WHAT OF THE NIGHT, RETURN TO THE LORD; COME; DILIGENTLY INQUIRE.**

That is my word to you to-night. Let us return unto the Lord. Let us sit at His feet like the man out of whom the Lord had cast the legion of devils. Let us be found sitting at the feet of the Lord Jesus, clothed and in our right minds, inquiring, and still again inquiring, "What of the night?" And with this Book before you, and its prophetic ministry in principle, and precept, and prophecy, open to your understanding, with the blessing of the Spirit of God, you shall not be in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief in the night. Others may be surprised, but not those upon whom the Light of the world is shining.

We shall need much fortitude. We shall need grace, and patience, and endurance. On that bronze tablet to my right there are forty-one names. On another tablet there are nearly three hundred who went from this church in the days of the Great War. I well remember when the telegraph boys used to come so frequently. I see a man sitting in the gallery just now whom I visited in the north of Scotland. I remember his telling me that he had tried again and again to get into the army. It is not until he tries to enlist that a man discovers what physical defects he has. I do not know why it was, but I think he tried seven times, and at last he came to me with radiant face and said, "Pastor, I am 'in'". He wanted to get to the front but they kept him in the forestry battalion. And I made a long journey to the north of Scotland to visit him.

Oh, what stories I could tell you of those days! I will tell you only one. I hope we shall see the same spirit to-day that we saw then. We had two brothers, members of this church. Their names were Will and Victor Fradley. By some happy arrangement they found themselves in the same battalion. Will was killed in action. His name is there. Victor was very seriously wounded, and they began the process of amputation, taking a piece of the leg at a time. How many amputations they did I do not know, but at last they reached the thigh. Once when I was in London I arranged for several of the boys to come to have dinner with me at my hotel. Victor was among them. We sat at a table, a group of Jarvis Street men. Victor was the only one of them who had sustained serious injury. But they had all been at the front. Victor said, "One night we were behind the lines, and Will and I went for a walk, and we had a lovely time together, talking about the things of the Lord. We exchanged confidences, and I knew that Will was very happy in the Lord. Then we were ordered to the front. We went into action, and we had a large number of casualties. I saw them carry my brother away on a stretcher. He had gone out. But I knew that he had gone to be with Christ, which is far better." After he said, "A lot of people

express sympathy with me, but Pastor I would not have missed it for anything!" That was the spirit of all those men. They believed they were engaged in a righteous war. Afterward I was able to get a wheel chair for Victor, and I saw him later in England, able to help himself around in his chair, which Jarvis St. friends had provided for him.

It may not be as serious this time, or it may be more serious; who can tell? I may be wrong, but I feel convinced—I am not prophesying, I am just giving you my opinion—that it will not be long. I believe there will be a revolution in Germany. I believe there will be a revolution in Russia. I am glad we are not on Russia's side, nor Russia on ours. We have made many blunders, but the Lord God Almighty intervened to prevent what would have been our greatest folly. If Russia were our Ally, how could we ask God to help us? We could not. But I believe Germany will collapse before very long. Mussolini is not blowing his trumpet so loudly just now as he was. He is like some people I have seen at Baptist Conventions. The motion is moved and seconded, and Mr. Delegate sits on the edge of his seat. He does not know which way to vote. He must wait until he sees on which side the majority is before he musters courage enough to vote. But praise the Lord, we know on which side the Majority fights! We know that we have God on our side, and we are bound to win!

May the Lord give us courage, not merely to see it through, but to see it through happily, with a song in our hearts. It may be that by this storm the air will be cleared; that God will give us peace for a while. But if not, if the night should drop down, well, at last the morning that knows no night will come; and as we believe in the coming of the Lord, we may say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." We shall win in the end. We are bound to win! We are on the winning side: "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

#### SPECULATIVE MILLENNIALISM

(Continued from page 2)

And it is because we believe so profoundly in the authority of these Scriptures written by holy men of God who "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost", that we refuse to recognize the authority of any uninspired man, whether of Scofield, Darby, or anyone else.

Those who claim Scofield as their master, frequently seek to buttress his influence by the claim that men like Spurgeon, Moody, A. J. Gordon, and others, believed the same thing. Nothing could be farther from the truth. We are positive that if Spurgeon and Moody were living to-day they would be the most outspoken opponents of most of present-day premillennialism so-called. In proof of that contention, we quote here a passage from one of Spurgeon's lectures to his students. These words were spoken long ago, but they have value to-day even when we are engaged in war with Hitler. Here is the quotation: "Salvation is the theme for which I would fain list every holy tongue. I am greedy after witnesses for the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Oh that Christ crucified were the universal burden of men of God! Your guess at the number of the beast, your Napoleonic speculations, your conjectures about a personal antichrist—forgive me, I count them but mere bones for dogs; while men are dying and hell is filling, it seems to me the veriest drivel to be mutter-

ing about an Armageddon at Sebastopol or Sadowa or Sedan, and peeping between the folded leaves of destiny to discover the fate of Germany. Blessed are they who read and hear the words of the prophecy of the Revelation, but the blessing has evidently not fallen on those who pretend to expound it, for generation after generation of them have proved to be in error by the mere lapse of time, and the present will follow to the same inglorious sepulchre. I would sooner pluck one single brand from the burning than explain all mysteries. To win a soul from going down into the pit is a more glorious achievement than to be crowned in the arena of theological controversy as Doctor Sufficientissimus; to have faithfully unveiled the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ will in the final judgment be accounted worthier service than to have solved the mysteries of the religious Sphinx or to have cut the Gordian knot of apocalyptic difficulty. Blessed is that ministry of which Christ is all" (*Lectures to My Students*, page 83).

## Bible School Lesson Outline

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Vol. 3 Third Quarter Lesson 38 September 17th, 1939

### THE HOLINESS OF GOD

Lesson Text: Leviticus 10.

Golden Text: "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified."—Lev. 10:3.

For Reading: Leviticus 11-14.

#### I. The Holiness of God Profaned—verses 1-5.

Aaron was the first High Priest of Israel, and with his four sons—Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar—had been consecrated to the holy office. They had commenced their sacred ministry, and God had signified his approval (Lev. 9:24). And yet, very soon Nadab and Abihu betrayed their trust (Lev. 16:1; Num. 3:4; 26:60, 61). It would seem that they sinned the very first day when they emerged from the seclusion of the Tabernacle after their consecration to perform a sin-offering (Lev. 8:35; 9:1; 10:19).

Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire before the Lord. Each priest had his own censer, the vessel of brass used for diffusing the incense (Num. 16:6, 7, 17, 18). Burning coals were placed in the censer, and the powdered incense, which had been made according to the command of God, was thrown upon the fire (Exod. 30:7-9, 34-38). The two sons of Aaron put into their censers strange fire, unauthorized fire, fire of their own kindling. They acted either against or apart from the will of God, not waiting for God's command, or disobeying it, if it had already been given (Lev. 16:12). It was a serious matter for them to act thus in self-will (Col. 2:23). It is possible that they intruded into the holy of holies, and there offered the strange fire (Lev. 16:1). Many people in these days attempt to worship God in their own way, rather than in His appointed way (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

The fire brought by Nadab and Abihu was strange fire in that it was unholy fire. It was man-made fire, and not fire of heavenly origin. They had not waited for the fire from the Lord. There are those who repudiate the supernatural in Christianity, and manufacture their own human systems.

Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire, fire which had not come from the altar of sacrifice (Lev. 6:12, 13). True worship is based upon the atonement provided by Christ. Modernists offer strange fire when they reject the vicarious, expiatory death of Christ but seek to come to God on their own merits.

The punishment meted to Nadab and Abihu was fitting. They were killed by the fire of the Lord, which they had not awaited nor desired. Those who do not believe in eternal punishment for sin, and who thus presume upon the grace of God, should be warned, lest they be destroyed by

the holiness of God, which they would minimize (Rom. 2:3, 4).

The punishment was necessarily severe, for the priests had failed to sanctify God in the minds of the people (Num. 20:12; Ezek. 28:22; John 17:10; 1 Pet. 3:15). Israel was young as a race, and they must realize that their God was a holy God, Who could not tolerate sin (Acts 5:1, 3; 1 Tim. 5:20). His glory was at stake. It was the duty of the priests to represent God by their attitude and actions, but Nadab and Abihu had profaned the name and nature of Jehovah (Lev. 22:32).

#### II. The Holiness of God Protected—verses 6 to 11.

After the death of Nadab and Abihu, their brothers Eleazar and Ithamar were prohibited from engaging in any of the practices associated with mourning for the dead; such as, removing their head-coverings or tearing their garments (Lev. 21:1-6, 10-12; Ezek. 24:15-18; 44:25). They must avoid all contact and association with death and its polluting influences, for physical death is one of the results of moral corruption and is symbolic of spiritual death. The priests must not defile themselves. For them to disobey would bring death to themselves, and would also deprive the people of the possibility of atonement for their sins (Exod. 28:38; Lev. 9:7).

Eleazar and Ithamar must not leave the sanctuary for the funeral ceremonies. They must not make themselves common or unclean (Lev. 21:12). Their cousins Mishael and Elzaphan (Exod. 6:18, 22) were to act as pall-bearers.

The priests must refrain from wine and strong drink; they must not be placed under any such degrading or beclouding influence (Num. 6:3; Ezek. 44:21; Luke 1:15). Wine in Scripture is associated also with carnal pleasure (Psa. 104:15), and the priests were to find their joy in the service of the Lord.

It was the duty of the priests to make known the holiness and the grace of God by example and by precept, hence their increased responsibility (Mal. 2:7; Matt. 5:19). They must teach the difference between the holy and the unholy, a distinction which is largely neglected in modern social life (Lev. 11:47, 20:25; Ezek. 22:26).

#### III. The Holiness of God Portrayed—verses 12 to 20.

The distinctions observed between clean and unclean food were intended to remind the children of Israel that the Lord Whom they worshipped was holy (Lev. 11:44-47). Especially was this the case with the food of the priests. The meal-offerings, and portions of the animals sacrificed as sin-offering, peace-offering, burnt-offering and wave-offering, were considered their due food. It was holy food, to be consumed in a holy place, even beside the altar (Exod. 29:24-28; Lev. 6:26, 29; Num. 18:3-11).

Moses discovered that Eleazar and Ithamar had not reserved for their food, as was lawful, any of the goat sacrificed as a sin-offering that day (Lev. 9:15). The only limitation would be that the flesh of a sacrificial animal must not be eaten if the blood was to be taken into the holy place (Lev. 6:26, 30), but the exception did not apply on the day in question. Moses thought that the surviving sons of Aaron had been guilty of disobedience and disrespect in the matter of the holy things, as had their brothers. Aaron explained the apparent neglect.

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