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Editor: T. T. SHIELDS

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

Address Correspondence: THE GOSPEL WITNESS, 130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2, Canada.
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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE RUSSO-GERMAN WAR AGAINST GOD—WHO WILL WIN?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, October 15th, 1939

(Stenographically Reported)

"But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.

"Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest."—II. Kings 19:27, 28.

I can tell you nothing about the progress of the war you do not know, and if I could, it would not be my special office to do so. But I can perhaps, with the help of the Lord, bring the events of the war into a light which does not shine upon the secular page; and thus may be of some assistance to you in enabling you to look at these events from a distinctively Christian point of view.

In my view the religion of Christ is more than a Sunday occupation. It is a life that possesses the redeemed soul, and colours his every thought, and determines his view of life. It gives to everything a new perspective, so that things may be seen in their right relation.

I learned a good deal when this building was in process of erection. I visited the factory where this great organ screen was made. Parts of it looked so big on the work-floor that I wondered how they could be placed in the church. It is surprising the difference a few feet make in the perspective of things. I saw men in the factory handling one of those narrow gothics with the three pipes, without the corbel, or the finials, and it taxed the strength of eight strong men to move it. But as you see it there (pointing to it) in its place as one of the smaller members of the screen as a whole, it does not appear to be very large or very heavy. The elevation of thirty feet or so appears to reduce its size and proportion. And there are things which seem very big to us because we are close to them, but the Bible lifts them up and sets them in relation to other events, and to life as a whole, and enables us to view them in a true perspective—indeed in the perspective of eternity; and some of the things that loom so large through the medium of temporal values, when seen as they appear in the sight of God, are relatively insignifi-

cant; while other things which seem but trivial, brought into His light, and seen through the medium of His truth, may be found to have in them the germ of a world-revolution. Yes, even though it may have seemed to us to be but an abstract philosophy discussed by a professor from his professorial chair.

During the Great War, if I am not mistaken, it was in the early part of nineteen-seventeen, the then-President of the United States, Mr. Woodrow Wilson, delivered a speech. We had been more than two years at war at that time. President Wilson astonished the world by saying that no responsible statesman of any nation had yet told us what the war was about! I spoke one Sunday night in that connection from this pulpit on "President Wilson's Impertinence"—for such it was. We were told we were fighting for we knew not what!

A young man hopped over the sea a few years ago, and we all acclaimed his exploit; and, having achieved fame by that then unexampled feat—but frequently repeated since—he had the good judgment to hold his peace, and thus by the world was accounted a wise man. Recently Mr. Lindbergh has spoken: it would have been better for his reputation if he had maintained silence. It does not follow, because a man has once flown the Atlantic solo, great, admittedly, as was that achievement, that he is, therefore, specially qualified to pronounce upon great matters of international policy. No one, I hope, would assume that "wrong-way Corrigan," by his astounding accomplishment, had fitted himself to become professor of history in a university—or of geography either for that matter!

Mr. Lindbergh has told us that the war is not being fought to maintain democratic principles; but rather that on the one hand, Germany is seeking to increase her

power, and on the other hand, England fears lest she should lose what power she has. England has never feared that! I received a telegram today from a friend of mine, a man of prominence in the United States, saying that he is answering Mr. Lindbergh over one of the American networks, and that his address is being published all over the Continent. I am glad to know he disagrees with Lindbergh, but really there is nothing to answer. Mr. Lindbergh only exhibits his own ignorance. He left us to find sanctuary in England for his wife at the birth of his third child, because he could find none in his own beloved country; and now he slanders us, and actually presumes to tell us that we have no right, as Canadians, to fight on Britain's side, or, apparently to "choose the British Crown rather than American independence". A distinguished United States lawyer said to me in the United States that the truest liberty in the world was to be found under the British flag. But Col. Lindbergh may safely be left to his fellow-Americans—they will show him much less mercy than we should do, for I am sure his sentiments will be proved to be as anti-American, as they are anti-British.

It is commonly said that we are fighting in defence of democracy. That would be a worthy cause. Democracy has its defects, but it is perhaps the best form of human government that has yet been devised. President Wilson coined not a few catchy but very mischievous phrases. Phrase-makers are often dangerous men. They say striking things in a "slogan" that will not bear examination. One of his phrases was that the World War was being fought "to make the world safe for democracy". What nonsense! Some of us knew it was nonsense at the time. An equally important consideration is how to make democracy safe for the world. Notwithstanding, with all its defects, I prefer a democratic form of government to any other; for, on the principle of President Lincoln's famous phrase, democracy has at least this advantage, that when government of the people ceases to be for the people, it can always be remedied by the people. We have the remedy in our own hands.

But there is a deeper significance in the war than that. Demos, which means the people collectively, is no more perfect than the individuals of which a nation is composed. And because it has its defects, we must contend one with the other and thus argue the thing out. That is something Germans cannot understand. They cannot understand why Britishers, when they differ from each other, in opinion, and have a hot argument, do not fight. Of course, we are not going to fight. I remember reading in *The British Weekly* the week before the last war of a question being asked of an Irishman. Someone enquired to this effect, "Will the Irish fight?" "Most assuredly they will." "Will the Irish fight the Irish?" "No." "Will they fight the Ulstermen?" "No." "Will they fight the British?" "Oh no." "Then whom will they fight?" "I do not know; but the Lord will provide." And before the next issue of the paper appeared, we were at war—and the Irish fought with the rest of us.

My purpose this evening is to show you that this is a religious war. It would not be quite correct to charge Hitler with an anti-religious attitude, an attitude of opposition to religion, *per se*. That is not the attitude he has assumed. If you study his work, you will find he insists that the Jews were always trying to set religious bodies—"denominations"—he calls them, against each other. He blames the Jews for everything, and he opposes

them on racial rather than on religious grounds. Theoretically, in the beginning, he argued for religious neutrality; he did not want to oppose Catholics or Protestants; and promoted a racial rather than a religious war. Hence his ever-intensifying anti-Semitism.

To understand the present situation, however, one must not assume that Hitler is an unchangeable man. It is true that he has laid out the main lines of his policy in his book, "Mein Kampf", but he has departed from them in many cases. Hitler is an opportunist. He will not run his head against a stone wall if he knows it is stone. He has bumped into so many walls that were painted to imitate stone, only to find they gave way, that he persuaded himself that every barrier on what they now call "the diplomatic front" was only a painted paper wall, but at last he has discovered that one such was the Maginot Line, and another the British and French Navies. He can change his course to suit the exigencies of the moment; and in the outworking of his policies, while he does not, as an abstract theory, set himself up as the opponent of religion, yet in the apodictic aspect of his political philosophy, he has become one of the world's bitterest enemies of religion. He has sought to exploit all religions, to regiment Romanists and Protestants, and bring them under governmental control, and make them a tool of the state. Hence his persecution of Protestants and Catholics alike who refuse to submit; so that in spite of his early respectful attitude toward religion, Hitler has become an anti-religionist—not only is he anti-Christian, but practically anti-religious. Religion, like everything else, must conform to the Hitler will or perish. And by the violation of every principle of revealed religion, by setting at naught the whole moral order, Hitler has shown himself to be the enemy of God.

Turning to Russia, we need to study that country with great care. I had some opportunity some years ago to study it fairly closely, through some of its representatives. There was a time when we had sixty-five Russians in the membership of this church. They were good people, devout Christians, who served the Lord with all their hearts. Conversion, to them, meant a moral and spiritual revolution. They became different men altogether.

Some time later, there was a great Baptist meeting in Toronto, attended by delegates from all over the world; and a good number from the Soviet Republic. I went to Exhibition Park one day where the meetings were held, and was met by a man who said that the Russian delegation had expressed a desire to meet me. We met, and I found they were representative of some two hundred thousand Baptists. There was one central Baptist Union—though Baptist churches are individual, independent units, subject to no central hierarchial authority, but for the purpose of mutual culture and help they had associations and conventions, as we have here. There was one in Siberia, one in the Ukraine, one in the Caucasus, one in Archangel, and I think one or two others. I met all these delegates, and through an interpreter had a happy time of fellowship with them. They were good enough to say they had heard of our stand for the inspiration and authority of the Bible and they wanted me to know that my Russian brethren were standing for the same principles.

Later the President and the Secretary of the General Union, and the Presidents of all the lesser Unions, came to my vestry, and we spent a whole day together from ten in the morning until late in the evening, discussing

affairs in Russia, and religious conditions in the rest of Europe. I found these men most devout and consecrated Christians. The President was an ex-banker, the Secretary had been a lawyer. He was a linguist, familiar with I know not how many European tongues. This President told us of what they had to endure in Russia.

We had a most interesting day together with two interpreters. Eventually they returned to Russia. I heard some time afterward that nearly all of them had faced a firing squad. They had been "liquidated", wiped out.

And I say it must not be thought that the Russian people are irreligious: they are among the most religious people of the world. Nor must we allow ourselves to believe that one hundred and eighty million Russians are Communists. Some who claim to know say there are less than three million Communists in the whole empire. But in Germany and in Russia, this lawless thing—call it Naziism or Communism—that now dominates both countries is the same in essence that I have seen at work in the religious denominations here. Among Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterian—no one claims perfection, but the rank and file love, or a few years ago did love the Bible. Perhaps the majority were converted. I speak now of a few years ago. The essence of this principle working in Germany has wrought in religious denominations on this continent. In what way? Modernism—which is lawlessness, religious Naziism or Facism—forced its way into educational institutions, into editorial chairs, and into presidential positions. Modernists forced themselves into official control of a great body—even when they themselves were only a handful. Then they cracked their whip and terrorized the rank and file into submission.

That is how the Baptist Denomination was sold out to Modernism. I know there are many people in it who still believe the Book, but officially they sold out, and, in a fit of mass hysteria applauded the man who mocked at the Bible and at the precious blood. That is how the Methodist Church was sold out. I talked with a friend about it this morning. Professor George Jackson came to Sherbourne Street and mocked at the Bible's creation story. The great Dr. Carman opposed him. At the Vancouver conference Dr. Jackson was approved. Dr. Jackson was transferred to Victoria College, made a professor, and, of course, he began to reproduce himself, in his students. The rank and file of Methodists did not believe what he taught, but this lawless thing gained control of the government, of the denomination. The same thing happened in the other churches, and by and by they came together in the United Church.

The same process of boring from within has proceeded in all denominations in the United States with the same result, as the case of Dr. Machen and others conclusively proves. The same thing that has come to a head in Germany and Russia politically, in essence has wrought in our own religious institutions.

What have you in Russia? So far as the government is concerned, it is not merely an anti-Christian movement: it is atheistic. It is not only anti-Christian, but anti-God. Russia has raged against God. You all know of the Russian revolution. Many of you have seen copies of the blasphemous cartoon to which I now refer. It appeared after the assassination of the Czar. It was the picture of a ladder set up from earth to heaven, and a Communist ascending the ladder with a great hammer in his hand, saying, "We have destroyed the earthly Czar: now we will do away with the heavenly Czar."

Some of the publications of Russia have been among the most blasphemous the world has ever seen. But it was only carrying a little farther what Germany had sown in her educational institutions and which ultimately blossomed in Hitlerism, which opposes itself to law and order everywhere.

Such movements against God and against His Christ are essentially the same in kind, though differing in degree, whether they assume a political or religious manifestation.

If these multifarious manifestations of lawlessness are carefully analyzed their basic principle will be found to be more than anti-democratic, they are anti-theocratic; not merely against the rule of the people, but against the rule of God: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying"—saying what?—"Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." That is the attitude of every sinner. The precepts and principles of the divine government are irksome to the carnal mind which "is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be."

It would be folly for me to appeal to your British pride and tell you that British brain and brawn will win the war. I believe that Britain and France will be victorious. But I am pointing out that these things are suffered to come to us that we ourselves may learn lessons. Though in our fight with Germany and Russia, we know we are standing for righteousness, yet we must be careful, lest in other matters, we too should be found fighting against God.

A few weeks ago I showed you how the Assyrian Empire was buried out of sight, how God dug an empire's grave and buried it. It is of the Assyrian king that the Lord here speaks when He says, "I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me."

I.

Here is an announcement of GOD'S KNOWLEDGE OF HIS ENEMIES.

I wonder *do we believe in God?* How many of us really believe in God? Any kind of God? Is He a mere abstraction, an impersonal Force, someone who has locked Himself up in this cosmic order, to whom we cannot pray, whose arm is never outstretched to deliver His people? That is the god of the Evolutionist. Or is He Someone Who can speak as He speaks in this verse? He said to this heathen king, Sennacherib, the proud king who described himself as "the great king, the king of Assyria," the greatest power in the world—"Tell him that I do not need a secret service agency. Tell him I know where he lives; I know his going out, and his coming in. Tell him furthermore that I know his rage against me. Tell him that I am not governed by the externals of life, but go to the very heart of things; that I am the God of knowledge by Whom actions are weighed. I know how he is raging. Tell him that I recognize it is not against Judah, nor against Jerusalem, but against the most high God he has declared war."

How busy the several governments were in the last war trying to find out all they could about each other: how many ships put to sea, what ships they were—that each nation might be prepared to meet the other. And that was all necessary. But the King of kings says,

"Give Sennacherib that message, and tell him I know all about him. He never goes out but I see him; he never comes in but I see him. I know where he lives; I know all about his rage against me." Oh that men would awake to the realization that all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do.

The Russian Government and the German Government have come together. Neither will fight the other? Russia calls herself neutral! A friend sent me two cartoons from a Vancouver paper. The first showed Hitler with a broad smile, riding triumphantly on the back of a bear called Russia; the second showed the bear coming home with nobody on his back, but with considerable increase in girth—a broad smile upon *his* face! But Hitler had become invisible. How even the wisest men are fooled! Hitler as well as others. God knows the rage people have against Him. The truth is, the established order of things, the moral order, the moral law, the divine government, is irksome to sinful men. Sometimes human hatred of the divine law manifests itself on a wholesale scale, as we see it now in Germany and in Russia; but you can be sure of this, that in its ultimate analysis it is but a fulfilment of the rebellious saying, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

Can they succeed? The Psalm from which I have quoted asks, "Why do the people rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" And verily they do "imagine a vain thing." It is "a vain thing" always to set one's self in opposition to the nature of things; and the moral order is part of the nature of things. You cannot do violence to the nature of things in your body without paying a price; you cannot violate it in a community without cost; nor can anyone make war against it nationally or internationally without irreparable loss. It is a "vain" thing for men to try to break God's bands. On that ground, we could predict the issue of the war with accuracy. It provokes the ironical laughter of the King of kings. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh." I think Stalin must be laughing at Hitler, but I am still more certain that God laughs at both of them. This rage and tumult comes up before Him.

II.

The question is, WHAT WILL BE HIS RESPONSE?

What is God's response to the lawlessness of the human heart? *There comes a time when God ceases to reason with men.* You have known perhaps a man with whom you have endeavored reasonably to discuss some matter in dispute, only to discover he was not amenable to reason; but raged around in circles like a madman. Though a question were proved up to the hilt, he would remain unconvinced. Though a given contention was factually demonstrated to a mathematical certainty it made no difference. At last you concluded he was as insensible to logic as a dead man is to the living touch, and you therefore ceased to reason with him further.

And it is even so that the God Who says so graciously, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool", may at last cease to treat men as rational beings.

Look at *the figure of the text.* The Lord says, "I will put my hook in thy nose." What does that mean? It is the hook, the ring that is put into the nose of a bull or of some other animal that has no understanding. "I

will put my hook in thy nose, and will make you do my will. I will not reason with you any longer; I will deal with you henceforth as a natural brute beast made to be taken and destroyed."

I read the second chapter of Peter's second epistle just now because of the bearing of its teaching upon this principle. Said Peter: There were angels that sinned, whom the Lord cast down to hell. There were people in Noah's day who would not respond to righteousness, and the Lord sent the Flood. There were evildoers in Lot's day, who were or became insensible to moral sanctions and the Lord sent upon them a deluge of fire from heaven. That is what God is able to do, and will do. "But chiefly", said Peter, "them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government"; those who become in their very nature, lawless, and will not submit to the law of God, but attempt to break His bands asunder and cast away His cords from them. Such he describes as "natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed."

That is the New Testament, not the Old. God says that men can become so unreasonable, and so reject all the overtures of divine grace, that at last, they cease to be men of understanding. They are abandoned, reprobate; they become worse than immoral, they become *unmoral* and as "natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed." So was it with Assyria. No religious prophet, much less political negotiator, could influence him. Hence Jehovah saith, "I will put my hook in thy nose, and lead thee as a man leadeth a beast to the slaughter." To whom was it said? To the Assyrian king, to the proudest monarch of earth. As the soldiers would say, his number was up; his time had come. God had said His last word. Now He will deal with him as a beast to be destroyed rather than as a man: "I will put my hook in thy nose, and lead thee to the slaughterhouse."

God has done it many times. The pages of history are replete with records of God's intervention in the affairs of men. But how terrible, that God should forcibly have to control men with a hook as natural brute beasts to be taken and destroyed! But does not the parallel hold in the case of Germany and Russia? How can Hitler be controlled but by a hook in his nose?

But there is another figure: "And my bridle in thy lips." That is a very significant word, rather an unusual word. It simply means a curb-bit. In the thirty-second Psalm God says, "Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee." When men cease to have understanding, nothing can be done but to hold their mouths with bit and bridle. Hence the Lord said to this proud king of Assyria, "Thou hast lost thy reason, thou hast no understanding, therefore I will put My bridle in thy lips. I will put a curb-bit in thy mouth, and compel thee to do My will." That is always His way. That man on the ladder will never bring down the heavenly Czar. While we are shocked at the rage of Hitler, shocked at such a story as that of his diabolical treatment of the former Chancellor of Austria, if the report be true, it can be only the beginning of the end, when God will show whose will is to be done on earth.

Sennacherib boasted of what he had done; but the Lord said "I know all about that. You boast of what you have done to the nations, and you do not know that you were used to further my purposes; but I did. I did it: you

did not do it. I used you as a flail to thresh the wheat, but your time has come, and I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest."

I do not know much about bronco-breaking, but I understand there are wild horses which are hard to break. But when the Lord God Almighty puts His bridle in the lips, of a man, or a nation, be assured He knows how to drive them. That is what He did with Sennacherib: He sent him back home.

I am not so much concerned about Hitler myself. I think the divine Surgeon is operating on the sick man of Europe, and I am sure that that useless appendage called Hitler will be successfully excised—but there may be some serious complications after the operation; which may be more serious than the operation itself. Russia and the other neutral nations may all become infected with the virus of lawlessness. But the same Surgeon will see the patient through.

That word "tumult" is an interesting word had we time to analyze it. Perhaps we should not be far wrong if we regard it as descriptive of the bellowing of a raging animal. Did you ever hear Hitler speak? There was rage! The rage of a mad man. And that utter contempt for God on the part of Germany and Russia, like that of Assyria, has come up into God's ears. He will talk no more but with hook and bridle.

III.

HOW DOES GOD FASHION HIS HOOK AND BRIDLE? He has often employed *the forces of nature*. He did so in the great Deluge. How He visited Sodom and Gomorrah with fire, I do not know, but He did. He overwhelmed the Egyptians with the sea. Pharaoh's horsemen lost the wheels from their chariots so that "they drove them heavily." The reins were in the hands of the divine Driver. It is said that a few drops of rain on the day of Waterloo had much to do with determining the issue of that battle. "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?" "By the breath of God frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened." There are many weapons in His armoury. He is at no loss to find material for the fashioning of a hook for the nose of a bull of Bashan like Hitler.

The hearts of men are in His hand. I was amused when I read of the report in Berlin that an armistice had been signed. They cheered, they went wild with enthusiasm—as you did in Canada when you received premature news of the Armistice. I was in England at the time, and there was no celebration until the Armistice had actually been signed. But the reception of that report in Berlin indicated what Germany desires. Evidently Germany wants peace; but when Prime Minister Chamberlain said there would be no peace with unrighteousness, he was cheered in the House of Commons—where they are sparing in their applause—as they have not cheered since the day that Mr. Lloyd George announced the Armistice. Why the difference?

They do not know who started that rumour, but the Bible has something to say even of rumours. There was a famine in Samaria, and the people were reduced to cannibalism. But Elisha said, by divine commandment, "To-morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour

be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria. Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof." The city had been shut up until the women were eating their own children, but four lepers starving at the gate, said "Why sit we here until we die? If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die. And they rose up in the twilight to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there. For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us."

And they ran! That day before the sun was high, everybody in Samaria had plenty to eat—and not an arrow had been shot from the bow! Why? Because the Lord had made them to hear a great noise!

What about Sennacherib? The Lord said to Hezekiah, "I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land." He heard the rumour, and he ran for home—as Hitler will be running for home before long. Sennacherib was defeated, not on the frontier between Judah and himself, but in his own city, slain by his own sons.

If you read the history of this Book, again and again you will find the Lord saying to His people, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." And then every man's sword is turned against his fellow. I shall be surprised if the hook for Hitler's nose, and the bridle for his lips, are not "made in Germany"—even though fashioned by the hand of a just God.

I do not know how He will do it, but He has plenty of munitions, plenty of instruments of war; and I am confident that in His own way, and in His own time, He will turn the modern Sennacherib back by the way he came. He will put His hook in Stalin's nose. Hitler cannot do that—nor can he put a curb-bit in Stalin's lips. But the Lord will sovereignly dispose of both of them in the execution of His holy purposes.

My reason for thus speaking to you this evening is to remind you who are Christians that the greatest forces of the world are not material, but moral; and that the greatest of all warriors is the Lord Himself. He calls Himself a Man of War. And that truth is in the New Testament as well as in the Old, the Modernist to the contrary notwithstanding. We may have a long-drawn-out conflict, I do not know; but I am sure of the ultimate issue. As God is on His throne, there can be nothing but victory ultimately for righteousness.

But remember, it is as vain, and as surely ultimately fatal, to fight against God in Canada as in Europe. He is as invincible here as there. Have you laid the sword of rebellion at His feet? Have you surrendered to Christ, as your Conqueror? Have you received the amnesty procured for you by the Cross? Has the blood shed at

the battle of Calvary where the prince of this world was cast out, effected an everlasting covenant of peace between you and the King of Heaven? If so, you well may sing,

"Then let my soul arise,
And tread the tempter down;
My Captain leads me forth
To conquest and a crown.
The feeblest saint shall win the day,
Though death and hell obstruct the way.

"Should all the hosts of death
And powers of hell unknown,
Put their most dreadful forms
Of rage and mischief on,
I shall be safe; for Christ displays
Superior power and guardian grace."

BELGIUM AND EXPIATION

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

(From "Revelations of the War" published in 1915)

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto,
Sunday Evening, February 7th, 1915.

"Then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe."—Exodus 21:23-25.

"For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."—Leviticus 17:11.

"Without shedding of blood is no remission."—Hebrew 9:22.

The first of these texts may be described as a state law: it does not authorize private vengeance. It is a law which imposes upon the state the obligation to take cognizance of evil-doing, and to visit upon the wrongdoer a punishment exactly proportioned to the offence. It must, I think, be admitted that this ancient statute involves the principle of retribution. It implies much more than reparation. Literally, the loss of one eye cannot be made good by the loss of another, nor can one life be restored by the taking of another. This statute therefore assumes a moral order, a moral balance which is disturbed by wrong-doing, and which can be appeased, or restored, only by a punishment which is its moral equivalent.

I am quite aware that such a conception of the relation of penalty and offence to the moral law, can scarcely be called modern. The humanitarian philosophies of the last century or less, and the conception of still more recent humanistic schools, all have tended to minimize, if not utterly to reject the principle of the necessity for retribution in human government. In this view, "The man who breaks the law is himself a product of social evolution, and cannot be regarded as solely responsible for his disposition to transgress."

Hence, there is a disposition to regard punishment as justifiable only as it exercises a deterrent or reformatory influence; and it is implicitly denied that a universal, sensitive, perfectly-balanced, moral order, through its witness in the public conscience, demands or should be afforded, satisfaction through retribution. That a deterring or reforming effect may be part of the function of punishment no one, surely, would be disposed to deny; but the principle of exact proportion and equivalent

insisted upon in this statute, most certainly involves the idea of satisfaction, retribution, or expiation.

But now look at the second text. This was a religious ordinance. It has to do with the central fact of the divinely revealed plan by which sinful man was permitted to come into the presence of the Holy One and live. Atonement was to be effected by blood, and the reason assigned for this is, that "the life of the flesh is in the blood." The blood was the life in solution, and the offering of the blood was the offering of life. Atonement was accomplished on the ground of expiation, because satisfaction was thus rendered the outraged law. The principle, therefore, of an eye for an eye, and a life for a life, was recognized in this Old Testament ritual of atonement.

And throughout the New Testament, redemption through the blood of Christ, as being the Antitype of the Old Testament types, is everywhere assumed or explicitly taught. The teaching of the New Testament with respect to the atonement is summed up in our third text, "Without shedding of blood is no remission."

But granted that in some way the blood of Christ is necessary to atonement, and the forgiveness of sins, how am I to regard the death of Christ? How does the Cross minister salvation to sinners? Has it any objective value? Does it do something for me that I could not do for myself, and quite apart from myself? Does the Cross, may I reverently enquire, do anything for God? Does it minister anything to His own moral nature? Or is the effect of the Cross wholly subjective? Does it minister something to me, and accomplish something in me? And does it do nothing more?

Is it surprising that the humanitarian philosophies to which already I have referred, should have some effect upon our theology? Do not misunderstand. The various views of the atonement to which I shall refer are not new; but the modern glorification of "humanity" has served specially to accentuate them.

The view of Grotius that Christ died, not to satisfy the outraged moral nature of God, but in the interests of the divine government—"the governmental theory"—is nearly equivalent to the view that punishment must be inflicted only as a deterrent. The teaching that lays stress upon the Incarnation rather than upon the death of Christ, and which views the atonement as effected by the Incarnation, by the identification of the divine with the human, and which regards the death of Christ as being only incidental to the Incarnation, is a doctrine which has been widely held. But in that alone you have no room for expiation, or the principle of retribution. The element of suffering represented in the Cross, in so far as it is penal, is regarded as reformatory rather than retributive.

And there is the further theory, that the life and death of Christ together constitute an example; exhibiting the blessings of obedience to the will of God; displaying the moral heroism of unselfish devotion to others, and, above all, revealing the love of God for men, has found wide acceptance; and the Cross of Christ has been preached for the moral influence it exerts, rather than as a substitutionary or expiatory sacrifice for sin.

I think it must be admitted that all these views of the atonement have elements of truth in them. Surely the divine government is not unaffected by the death of Christ. And it is true also that the atonement is made

possible by the Incarnation; and that the life and death of Christ exert the mightiest moral influence the world has ever felt. But when all this has been said and nothing more, the whole case has not been stated.

All these theories, especially the last two, may be accepted as so many aspects of the truth of the atonement, without contradiction of our much-vaunted human advancement. Retribution implies a criminal: not a fault, but a felony; not infirmity, but iniquity; not the respectable legitimacy of evolution, but the lawlessness of revolution. Retribution implies not leniency, but inexorability; not pity, but punishment; not effeminate sentimentalism, but truth, and righteousness, and justice.

The implication of the necessity for retribution, for expiation, in our relation to God and His laws, and they are one, is utterly opposed to the whole theory of evolutionary development; and, we may as well frankly admit, is decidedly uncomplimentary to human nature. This principle of salvation through the shedding of blood does not put human nature on a throne of ivory and crown it with laurels; it puts it in the prisoner's dock, and passes sentence of death upon it. Therefore has the offence of the Cross not ceased.

But what has all this to do with "Revelations of the War"? I have tried to show you that human nature does not improve of itself; but, unregenerated, is as depraved as ever. Then, next, I sought to show you that the evolutionary hypothesis, so far as it was supposed to apply to the moral realm, is forever disproved by the war. The world has never witnessed such a colossal exhibition of immorality as it is witnessing to-day. The utmost human "culture" has produced a national specimen more akin to devils than to angels. And last Sunday I endeavoured to show you that there is a time to hate as well as to love; and that the Cross is an exhibition of divine hate as well as of divine love.

With all that I have said this evening in your mind, you will see my purpose if now I try to bring it into the light of the lurid glare of Belgium's fires.

I.

Will anybody now contend that there is no need for retribution in the divine government of men, no need for expiation as a condition of salvation?

It is interesting to observe that public opinion upon many things has undergone a great change during the last six months. In the light of this fearful conflagration, to living men and women, life can never again be as it once was. Normal Angell is scarcely regarded as an authority; and few would now contend that nothing is ever settled by war. On the contrary, we feel that some things can be settled by war—and must be settled by this war.

And I have noticed that the light of the war has illumined many an editorial mind. Influential journals which, a year ago or less, insisted that punishment must be inflicted solely with a view to its deterrent and reformative effects, sound a different note when Belgium is under review. The theory of punishment to which I have referred relates to the present and the future, it does not touch the past. It does not make up the deficit of yesterday; it does not make amends for injury inflicted. It assumes that the moral loss involved in evil-doing is permanent, and aims only at preventing its repetition.

But is no one to pay for Belgium's anguish? Are we

content so to deal with Germany as merely to make it impossible for her to repeat the offence, and to deter all others from making similar attempts? These things we must insure, of course: but we must do more. You may call me what you will, but it appears to me that Germany's sin against Belgium and Poland and Galicia, against civilization, must be expiated. Such a crime cries out for retribution. If you do not feel this to be so, frankly, I cannot compliment you on your moral sensibilities.

But I believe that is the general view. It is one of the revelations of the war. But why did we need it? Are we morally near-sighted? Do ordinary violations of moral principle appear small and insignificant to us? Is the focus of our moral vision such that sin can ordinarily be discerned, as certain deadly bacteria are discovered and identified, only through a powerful microscope? Can the nature of sin be understood by us only when it is exhibited on a large scale? Are our moral sensibilities, even in those of the finest mold, so dulled and benumbed, that we are like deaf people who are unconscious of such vibrations as are audible to the acute ear, and are aroused only by some terrific thunderclap; or, like those so dull of vision that ordinary light waves, falling on the eye, make no impression, and are conscious of the approach of light only under the direct rays of the sun?

If so, the shock and illumination occasioned by the horrors of this war may help us to understand how sin, even the least sin, outrages the moral sensibilities of Deity. And if now our moral natures demand that this world-outrage be punished, we may dimly understand why righteousness, and justice, and truth, as elements of divine holiness, decree, "Without shedding of blood is no remission."

II.

The war may also help us to understand the enormity of potential evil, and the necessity for anticipatory expiation.

We demand expiation now, when the evil appears in all the hideousness of its full development. Has it occurred to you that this exhibition of human depravity finds God unsurprised? He knew the heart of that arch-blasphemer, the Kaiser, long ago, knew it better than the Kaiser did.

Writers of all nationalities have endeavoured to place the responsibility for this horror. Nietzsche the philosopher, and Treitschke the historian, have been made to bear a large share. But no one can stop there. Many go back to Frederick the Great, and say that he was the author of this movement, now devastating the world. He was evil enough, it is true. But he has been dead for one hundred and twenty-nine years. Is it possible that evil issuing from his mind is bearing this bitter fruit more than a century and a quarter later?

Do you remember that when the ten tribes revolted under Rehoboam's despotic rule, and made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king, to avoid the necessity of their going up to Jerusalem to worship, Jeroboam set up calves in Bethel and Dan, saying, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt"? And you recall how every succeeding king followed in Jeroboam's footsteps; so that all down through Israel's subsequent history the melancholy record persists, "He walked in the ways of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who did sin, and who made Israel to sin." And when at last, more

than two hundred and fifty years later, the nation was utterly ruined, and the ten tribes carried away captive into Assyria. God explained their ruin, saying, "Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off." Jeroboam's "great sin" did not fully ripen until two hundred and fifty years after. But God saw the full fruit of it in the germ. He saw the present war in Nietzschean philosophy. He saw it potentially in the ambition of Frederick the Great.

Do you understand then why Jesus said there is adultery in a look, and murder in an unforgiving heart? Do you understand why our dreams of conquest, our ambitions, our selfish aims, may, in the sight of God, be as heinous as what we now call Prussianism? We do not see, but God sees their potentiality; He sees that they are the germ of an evil which may not only curse the earth, but extend its fatal influence into the eternal future.

Do you understand therefore why God put His brand upon the brow of Cain? The sin of Cain had the sin of the Kaiser, of Napoleon, of Frederick the Great, of Attila the Hun, and of every public and private murderer of history, involved in it. And go back farther still and understand what this meaneth, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

And understanding that, know too why from the beginning it was decreed, "Without shedding of blood (was) no remission"; and why the smoke of sacrifice ascended in pledge of that great expiatory Sacrifice on Calvary. And know too that inasmuch as all the sins of the race were known by God to be potentially involved in the first transgression, the world owes its continuance, and believing souls their salvation, to the promise of a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

III.

To a promise, did I say? To what is all the horror of this war to be attributed? To a broken promise. And all the sorrow of the world is due to the same cause, "Which my covenant they brake." In view of the indescribable hell which may be involved in the breaking of a pledge, do you wonder that the sin of all sin is to charge God with being untrue to His word? "He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." Do you wonder that unbelief is the damning sin? If the faithlessness of an earthly ruler can work such woe upon earth, the very thought of divine unfaithfulness is the most horrible blasphemy—then would the earth reel beneath us, and the heavens fall, and the stars and all the myriad worlds would leave their courses, and plunge into universal war, leading to everlasting chaos, and eternal night!

Oh, we must believe in God, and in His Son Jesus Christ! There is nothing left to us. To expiate our awful guilt, potentially involved in Adam's sin, "He was foreordained before the foundation of the world, and was manifest in these last days for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God."

O unsaved man, be afraid of sin and flee to Jesus Christ, and find redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins! And as for you who are Christians, and who come to the table of the Lord to-night, let us come with a new understanding of the solemn words, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." "Without shedding of blood is no remission."

THE WAR AND THE OLD TESTAMENT

Writers in many periodicals which come to our desk, in this time of war are turning to the Old Testament for inspiration, and indeed, for comfort. But in many instances they do so apologetically, as though they were half ashamed to be found reading the Old Testament scriptures. They assume the attitude of a man in a civilized community, among law-abiding people, and so remote from the tooth and claw of the jungle, and indeed from anyone likely to be guilty of any untoward action, as to be under no necessity for providing any means of protection or defence for himself and his family; but whose smugly self-complacent sense of security is suddenly disturbed by the rapacious growl of a man-eating tiger—and who thereupon discovers, among some rubbish in his basement, a blunderbuss or other obsolete weapon of defence, upon which he lays hold and then apologizes to his neighbours for being found armed before the devourer. Thereafter he apologizes for his weapon, and speaks almost as though it were some sort of disgrace to have discovered in himself an unwillingness to be eaten up.

It seems to us that some of our writers feel that under ordinary circumstances, the Old Testament is not much needed; that its stern requirements find no necessary place in the lives even of decent people, to say nothing of those who profess and call themselves Christians. The truth is, of course, that this so-called civilization, this hypothetical moral preserve whose happy denizens are theoretically free from all moral hazards, has no existence save in the supposedly culturally evolved human imagination. But neither the world as a whole, nor the nation, nor even the individual, has outgrown the Old Testament. Some of us have always known that, and have believed that a true appraisal of the significance and authority of the Old Testament is as indispensable to a proper understanding of the New as a like appraisal of the New Testament is necessary to an understanding of the Old. The truth of neither one nor the other can be circumstantially altered. Being true, they are always true, whether we are at war or in peace.

It is, however, a fact that great events often bring certain aspects of Biblical truth into bold relief. We do not use all the "exceeding great and precious promises" in one day, though we believe them all to be true. They speak to us, and apply themselves to our condition, as we find ourselves in such circumstances as they were designed to meet. If one may venture to quote himself, in the sermon on "Belgium and Expiation" preached twenty-four years ago, and reprinted this week, we expounded the principle of the emphasis which great world-movements place upon the scriptures which, under ordinary circumstances, would be unobserved. The truth is, the Bible, both the Old and the New Testaments, is "like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men."

The Lord is more than a fair-weather friend: He is a Bridegroom Whom we take "for better or for worse". And while Hé does lead us in green pastures and beside the still waters, He is the "Stronger" than the strong man armed; and therefore His Word, from Genesis to Revelation, contains both implements of peace and weapons of war. Let us believe the Book as a whole, and stand upon it without apology and without fear, as upon the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture.

A SPECIAL APPEAL FROM THE PASTOR TO ALL MEMBERS OF JARVIS ST. CHURCH

From Tuesday to Thursday of next week, October 24th to 26th, the Twelfth Annual Convention of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec will be held in Jarvis Street Church. We are expecting an unusually large delegation; and I write this note to appeal to every member of Jarvis Street to consider himself or herself host or hostess to the Convention. I hope that all who can possibly do so will attend both morning and afternoon sessions. Of course, many will find it impossible to do so, but I suggest to all who can command their time, that they set aside those days for attendance at all sessions just as they would do were they delegates of Jarvis Street to a Convention meeting elsewhere than in Toronto. I suggest that every Jarvis Street member, seeing a delegate with a badge, should greet him or her, and bid them welcome to our new home. We hope every member will endeavour to attend each evening session. It sometimes happens on Convention occasions that the members of the entertaining church feel no special responsibility to support the services. Please let it not be so in this case. We should like to see the church crowded on every occasion.

Our special speaker will be Professor W. H. Wrighton, of the University of Georgia. Dr. Wrighton is a former Jarvis Street member, who entered the ministry from Jarvis Street. I had the pleasure of preaching his ordination sermon in nineteen-thirteen. Notwithstanding his academic distinctions, Dr. Wrighton is as soundly evangelical as he ever was.

The Pastor asks, as a special favour, that every member of the church will rally at all services they can possibly attend, to the support of this Convention.—T.T.S.

A MESSAGE TO ALL UNION CHURCHES

Last year Jarvis Street had to entertain the Convention in a neighbour's house. It was a splendid house, belonging to delightful neighbours, and together we had a most happy three days of fellowship. This year, however, we are back in our own home again, and, like anybody who has a nice new home, we are anxious to have our friends see it, and eager to entertain them.

The Jarvis Street building is better equipped for convention purposes than was the old one, and we are sure that all who come will find the building supplies all necessary accommodation. We hope every church will send its full complement of delegates, and that there will be a large number of visitors.

We direct special attention to Mr. Whitcombe's suggestion that the churches should send their delegates with a Convention collection. Nearly all other religious bodies, by the terms of their constitution, require some financial contribution to convention funds. The Union Constitution makes no such provision. In many cases—perhaps in the majority of cases—delegates pay their own expenses. It would be only fair therefore that the members of the churches who remain at home should put some contribution in their delegates' hands for Convention expenses. If every church in the Union next Sunday, October 22nd, were to take up a retiring collection—that is, a second collection after the regular collection has been received—toward Convention expenses—in the aggregate, it might amount to a good deal.

And above all, we suggest that those who cannot come, remember the Convention sessions earnestly in prayer;

and that those who come should come in a spirit of prayer, so that we may all experience a great spiritual uplift.

For any who do not know the location of Jarvis Street Church, it may be said that it is on the corner of Jarvis and Gerrard Streets.

PROGRAMME

Twelfth Annual Convention

Of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec

October 24th, 25th, 26th

IN THE NEW JARVIS STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

Special Speaker

PROFESSOR W. H. WRIGHTON

Of the University of Georgia

PLAN NOW TO COME

What Will You Get Out of It?

Next week the Twelfth Annual Convention of the Union will be held in the reconstructed Jarvis Street Church. A fine programme has been prepared, one that our friends will not want to miss. Last year opinion was unanimous that we had a really great Convention. This year we look for even greater things as we think of past blessing and the great opportunities and demands before us. Dr. Wrighton, professor of philosophy in the oldest university on the continent, and a warm evangelical, is to be the special speaker. A most encouraging report will be placed in our hands telling of progress in the work at home and abroad, in Ontario and Quebec, in Alberta, in British Columbia, in France, Switzerland and Belgium.

We suggest that every one who comes to the Convention endeavour to put as much of themselves as possible into the Convention, for then they will get all the more out of it. The point we intend is not merely "concerning the collection" for the principle applies in spiritual things: "He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." We earnestly pray that each one who attends the Convention session may come prepared in spirit to "lose" and to "find" in the sense of this verse. If this is so, then our Convention minutes as written in the angels' books will record a "great" Convention.

We mention also two practical details that stand in the closest relation to the spiritual principle enunciated above. The first concerns the meetings for prayer and praise. Please note carefully the times given in the programme, and resolve to be there at the beginning of these services, so that we may all begin our services in an atmosphere of praise and worship.

The second practical detail we have already mentioned in a previous article. It is, in scriptural phrase, "concerning the collection", a matter that was touched upon by the great apostle, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Great expenses are involved in a Convention like ours. Again we urge our delegates and friends to come "abounding in this grace also . . . I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love." And this we say now, in order that little need be said about it at the Convention. We venture to suggest that next Sunday, before the delegates leave for the Convention, those who are not able to come, perhaps the whole church, could have their share in our Convention by forwarding an offering with the representatives of their church. To meet all Convention expenses and provide a "war chest" for future calls would give us all fresh courage to carry on, the battle. Greater calls than ever before and ever enlarging needs certainly lie ahead of us in these trying days; let us show ourselves worthy of the great trust which is committed to us.—W.S.W.

ORILLIA

A fine congregation in the morning and a still larger one in the evening greeted Rev. W. Gordon Brown, of the Baptist Seminary, when he supplied the pulpit of the Bethel Baptist Church, Orillia, last Sunday in the enforced absence of its pastor, the Rev. John Byers, through illness. On the two preceding Sunday evenings it had been necessary to bring in numbers of chairs to accommodate the people. On each of these occasions a large baptismal service was held by the pastor. May he be granted a speedy recovery to continue his fine work.—W.G.B.

SEMINARY NOTES

Convocation

Toronto Baptist Seminary reports to its public in its Fall Convocation, at the Union Convention and with the yearly Graduation. These reports are always received with enthusiasm.

Last Thursday was no exception. A fine and representative attendance joined in the service of worship, led by some members of the Faculty; witnessed the signing by the Trustees and Faculty of the Statement of Faith which binds them to have taught and to teach only those things which accord with Biblical Christianity; and listened to a stirring address by Dr. T. T. Shields. In this presidential address Dr. Shields reviewed the denominational history which called forth the Seminary, and showed the necessity for such a Baptist school, which stands firmly for the faith which Baptists have long held dear and maintains it in opposition to the lax religious views too popular to-day. He then went on to recount his experiences of the week before in Timmins, where he had been speaker at the conference of our northern churches. Every pastor of this group of churches is a graduate of the Seminary, and a finer group it would be hard to find as Christian brethren and ministers of the New Covenant. They alone, even without the many others who have been thrust out into the work, justify the labours of Toronto Baptist Seminary.

Enrolment

The group of students now in attendance at the Seminary is smaller than it would otherwise have been if war had not been declared. Even then, however, had the Seminary lowered its standards and accepted all who presented themselves, more would have come; but the Faculty demand character, ability and purpose in all who apply. It is not yet too late for others to join us. Only to-day a fine young man, convinced he must preach, made application. Students may regularly enter at the beginning of any quarter.

Memorial

This writer represented our school at the memorial service in Forward Baptist Church last Friday, when a tablet was unveiled in memory of the late "Tommy" Devers, who gave his life in the service of Christ at the close of the Italian war on Abyssinia. Rev. J. Scott, another of our men, is Pastor of a large and fine congregation in this east Toronto church.

Preaching

Mr. H. Charlton reports a good summer in Avoca, Quebec. We have more than once been told that his occasional preaching in Kitchener Park Baptist Mission is much appreciated. Mr. H. C. Wilkins also reports encouragingly concerning the Maple Hill field. He is carrying on there week-ends during this month.

Mr. F. S. Cook, soon to sail to South America, gave a worthy address at Chapel recently. His advice, helpfully developed in a fine spirit, was from the text: "Preach the word", and the points were: Preach and pray and plug away, but above all, "preach the word".

Vegetables

Students of the Seminary received to-day a careful of fresh vegetables from the harvest home services of Kitchener Park Baptist Mission, Scarborough, for which indeed they, in the usual poverty of ministerial students, are very thankful.

Alumni

Former students of Toronto Baptist Seminary will hold their usual banquet on the Monday evening preceding the Convention. It is a family gathering and will this year be of exceptional interest. Further announcement will be made in a few days.—W.G.B.

RECOGNITION AND ORDINATION AT SUDBURY.

On Thanksgiving Day, Monday, October 9th, a council of delegates representing a number of Union churches gathered in the new Black Lake building to consider the advisability of officially recognizing the Berean Church of Sudbury and setting aside its pastor John R. Boyd to the gospel ministry. It was truly most appropriate that such a gathering should have been held on a day set aside for Thanksgiving. "Truly this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes," was a verse in the hearts, if not upon the lips, of the delegates representing Union churches from the Windsor Border to the Ottawa Valley.

Mr. Boyd gave a brief account of the commencement of the work at the first service held in the new Black Lake building. Three and a half years ago he came to Sudbury at the close of the Seminary year, a total stranger in a great mining city of 33,000 people, except to a faithful family from Jarvis Street Church, who offered him a room in their home. The writer will never forget the words Mr. Boyd used on the road coming up to Sudbury on that first trip: "It may be a wild goose chase, attempting a new work, unknown and without funds, but I believe the Lord wants me there, and I am putting myself at His disposal." From the very first it was evident that the hand of God was in it. On the street corner, from door to door, privately and in rented halls, John Boyd ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ. A great Sunday School was brought together in the Oddfellows' Hall in Sudbury. The Lord raised up consecrated teachers, many of them converted or restored under Brother Boyd's ministry. A suburb of Sudbury, named Black Lake, offered another open door—John Boyd alone could have seen it—and under almost insurmountable obstacles he carried on an aggressive, evangelistic work. Sometimes they met in the schoolhouse, sometimes on the steps of the schoolhouse, sometimes in an empty garage, and on other occasions Mr. Boyd spoke in the open air, to an audience seated on the running boards of a few motor cars grouped together. In the face of such difficulties a number were saved, both children and adults, but unfortunately many of them moved away just when they were becoming most serviceable to the new work. Nevertheless a fine Sunday School was built up at Black Lake. And here let me say the name is a misnomer; the lake is a beautiful, bright little body of water nestling in the rocks around which the rapidly growing community is built, a mile or so out from the main city of Sudbury.

A few months ago circumstances made it clear to Mr. Boyd and his consecrated band of workers at Black Lake that they must have a building of their own or give up the work. Urged on by an overwhelming burden for this unevangelized district, a lot—the finest location possible—was purchased. The men of the church offered their services for the work of construction. When the concrete was to be poured the young men determined to do the job in one day, and thus economize on the rental of the mixing machine. A number of them came off the "graveyard" shift in the mine, after working from midnight till early morning, and went to work on the church till eleven o'clock at night, when they resumed duty at the mine. Some of the men came back next morning after their shift at the mine to complete the job. And all the workers are unanimous in bearing testimony that their pastor did as much work as the best of them.

Just at a critical moment when their funds were completely exhausted and everything was at a standstill, a telegram from Jarvis Street Church was received telling of a great special offering for Kapuskasing and Sudbury. Then the other Union churches responded, and once again the work proceeded in answer to the definite, believing cry of God's children.

I marvelled at the fine building that had been erected for about \$2,500.00. Almost all of this, of course, was spent on materials, and the voluntary labour of the men of the church accounts for the splendid results attained. In more ways than one, the building is like a city set upon a hill, and certainly it cannot be hid. It is, moreover, founded upon a rock, and this, too, speaking both literally and metaphorically. We wish that this building could be seen by every donor who responded to the special appeals printed in The Gospel Witness last summer. Realizing that Sudbury is too far away for most of them we have given this brief description here. Continue to pray for the Sudbury and

Black Lake work; they still owe \$1,000 on the new building, and are already looking forward to the day when they will be free to erect a place of meeting for their main work in Sudbury itself.

This is a fitting place to mention some of the facts concerning the field into which Brother Boyd entered alone three and a half years ago, and into which he is now leading a fine band of consecrated young people, for this is a young people's church in a young man's country. The city of Sudbury proper has a population of 33,000, with perhaps 10,000 more in the immediate vicinity—Copper Cliff, Gatchell and Black Lake. Sixteen per cent of this population is Catholic, and includes a large proportion of the many foreigners. There is also a good percentage of French-Canadians in the district. Mr. Boyd told the recognition council that fifteen to twenty per cent of his Sunday School children came from foreign homes. And yet some well-meaning, though short-sighted persons, persist in making a difference between "home" and "foreign" missions! Last Sunday there were 225 in attendance at the Sudbury Sunday School—not including Black Lake. Outside Sudbury are other towns and villages to which the Sudbury church ministers. A number have been converted in these places, and they offer much encouragement for the heavy expenditure of time and money. "Wherever we go there are new prospects", said Mr. Boyd, "a tremendous need, a crying need." These words breathe a truly apostolic spirit.

Mr. Boyd was recently told of another new community and felt that he could not refuse, and so added it to the other sixteen meetings for which he is responsible each week. Only a man of the indomitable courage and consecrated strength of John Boyd could bear such a burden, and his example of sacrificial spending and being spent has inspired his entire church membership with the same spirit. No one can go near this man without being set to work, as the writer discovered last Sunday when he preached four times!

As the ordination council met on Monday I fervently wished for sufficient facility in shorthand to take down a stenographic report of the candidate's statement of his conversion, call to the ministry and doctrine. Without a note, even without preparation, due to the time spent on the new building, Mr. Boyd gave his statement. There was no striving for effect, but simply, solemnly, this brother bared his heart and a reverent hush fell upon the gathering. The council enjoyed a blessed time rejoicing in God's call to this young man and his evident fruitfulness in the ministry. As this former student of the Seminary told how God led him to that school, and how he was blessed there, my heart, if not my eyes, overflowed with gratitude to God for the privilege of having had some part in the work carried on in this school of the prophets. If Toronto Baptist Seminary never graduated another man but John Boyd, its investment would be more than justified. But there are many others, not only in the North, but in the South, and to the uttermost parts of the earth—thank God for them and for the Seminary!

In all my experience of ordination councils, I have never heard a more effective statement of a call to the ministry than that given by Mr. Boyd. He told how, after a long struggle against the sovereign claims of Christ on his life, he finally surrendered and soon found that this meant that he must "tell all around what a dear Saviour he had found." He continued to tell the story of what Jesus meant to him to those round about him, often with stammering, trembling lips. And as he went on telling the story, he found ever increasing joy in it and prayed, "God give me more of that." His prayer was answered. On the farm, then in the shop, at Sunday School, in Church, on the street corner God gave him more of it. The way was finally opened up for him to come to the Seminary, and there, too, his prayer for more was abundantly answered. "I have continued to witness as God has enabled me," Mr. Boyd said. "And the need has showed the way. Here and here and here is your work, and God has given constant calls each step of the way."

After the candidate retired, two members of the church told how they first met their present pastor. One, a young man, told how he heard Mr. Boyd on the street corner a few months after he first came to Sudbury. Though this young man was then a backslider he recognized the true ring in Mr. Boyd's preaching, and spoke to him at the close of the meeting. He is now one of the pillars of the work. Another member of the church, the father of a fine family of young people, also told how he, too, first heard John Boyd on the street corner, and said to himself, "That's what I have been

looking for in Sudbury for years. I will stand behind that man in the work of preaching the gospel." And he has and is now clerk of the church, while his sons are among the finest workers in Sunday School and Church.

It is needless to add that the council unanimously decided to fellowship Brother Boyd's statements and proceed to ordination and recognition of the church. Rev. J. H. Watt, St. Catharines, the Moderator of the council, offered the ordination prayer and Rev. W. S. Whitcombe preached the ordination sermon. The Clerk of the council was Mr. Wilfred Morrison of Dalesville, Quebec, whose wife was Mr. Boyd's first Sunday School teacher, and who was instrumental in bringing him face to face with the claims of Christ upon him. We are confident that the world will hear great things of John Boyd in the years to come and from this fine body of believers at Sudbury that God has given him.

—W.S.W.

Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 3 Third Quarter Lesson 44 October 29th, 1939

THE REPORT OF THE SPIES

Lesson Text: Numbers 14.

Golden Text: "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord."—Numbers 14:21.

For Reading: Deuteronomy 1.

I. The Land Despised—verses 1 to 10.

In journeying from Egypt to Canaan the people had reached Kadesh-Barnea, which was not far from the borders of the land. Because of their unbelief they were compelled to turn back and to wander in the wilderness for forty years before again coming to Kadesh (Deut. 1:3; 2:1, 7). The use of a map would serve to illustrate the effect of the disobedience of Israel.

By whose command were the spies sent into Canaan? Numbers 13:1-3; 14:36 and Deut. 1:19-24 are supplementary accounts of what transpired. It was God's directive will that the people should go immediately into the land of Canaan and possess it, but they desired first to search out the land. God would have searched it out for them (Num. 10:33; Deut. 1:33), but they preferred to walk by sight, rather than by faith (2 Cor. 5:7). Moses listened to their suggestion, and when they insisted, God permitted them to send spies, and specified whom they should send (Num. 22:18-35; Psa. 106:15). God has a second best for those who refuse His best (Jer. 18:4).

People are ever more ready to believe bad news than good news, to believe the majority rather than the minority, and to believe what they desire to believe, whether it be the truth or not. The ten spies with their tale of a poor land inhabited by giants had more influence than the two spies who emphasized the goodness of the land and the strength of Israel in the Lord (Num. 13:27-33).

Once more the people murmured against Moses and Aaron (Num. 11:1). Aaron, who had recently complained against his brother, now received similar treatment at the hands of the Israelites (Num. 12:1; Prov. 26:27; 28:10). The people threatened to appoint their own leader, and to return to Egypt (Num. 11:5; Deut. 17:16; Acts 7:39). They had become utterly discouraged through keeping their eyes upon their circumstances, rather than upon the Lord (Matt. 14:30). They would not take the Lord at His word and follow Him wholly (1 Cor. 10:1-5, 9, 10). Caleb and Joshua sought in vain to persuade them to enter the land at once. The people despised the pleasant land, and believed not the word of the Lord (Deut. 1:32; Psa. 106:24-26). Their disobedience should be a warning to all not to turn back from following the Lord through having an evil heart of unbelief (Heb. 3:12).

II. The Lord Displeased—verses 11 to 19.

It was not through lack of evidence of God's power and His love that the Israelites refused to trust Him. They acted like children, intent upon having their own way, no matter what the result might be.

The Lord tested Moses when He proposed to set aside the house of Israel, and to make of Moses a mighty people

(Exod. 32:10). But Moses stood the test, since he had no desire to glorify himself, but only to glorify the Lord. The repudiation of Israel as a peculiar people would cause the neighbouring people to cast reproach upon the name of Jehovah, and to charge that the Lord had not power to perform His word (Joshua 7:3, 9; Ezek. 20:14).

Once more Moses stood in the breach, and, pleading the great power of the Lord, His wondrous grace and His perfect holiness, he besought the Lord to forgive those who had sinned (Exod. 32:11-13, 30-32; Psa. 106: 23, 27).

III. The Sentence Declared—verses 20 to 38.

Forgiveness was granted to those who had sinned for the sake of Moses (Eph. 1:7), and his vicarious faith brought blessing to the people (Matt. 9:2). They had failed to honour the Lord, but the time would come when the Lord should no more be dishonoured, for the earth would be filled with His glory (Psa. 72:19; Isa. 66:18, 19; Hab. 2:14).

Sin, although forgiven, may bring disastrous results. None of the children of Israel who had reached the years of responsibility at that time would be permitted to see the promised land, except Caleb and Joshua (Deut. 1:34-40; Psa. 95: 7-11; Heb. 3:7-19; 4:1, 2). The people had expressed a wish to perish in the wilderness (verse 2), and their rash desire would be literally fulfilled. They had refused to enter the land, and now they would be forbidden to do so. The worst possible punishment was for them thus to have their own way. Divine justice is appropriate.

The Israelites had failed to keep their part of the covenant, and they had experienced the breach of the Lord's promise (Exod. 19:3-9). A new and better covenant, established upon better promises, would one day be ratified between God the Father and God the Son on man's behalf (Heb. 8:6-13).

The ten spies who had been responsible for leading the whole congregation astray died by the plague before the Lord. The greater the knowledge, the greater the responsibility, and the greater the condemnation if the trust be betrayed (Matt. 11:20-24; Luke 12:48; Jas. 3:1).

IV. The Sinners Defeated—verses 39 to 45.

Tears of sorrow and remorse greeted Moses as he announced the Divine judgment. The people saw their mistake and regretted their unbelief, which was really disobedience, but their repentance came too late (Heb. 12:17); the door of opportunity had been closed.

To go up the mountain yesterday would have been to obey the commandment of the Lord; to go up to-day was to transgress His decree. Yesterday the Lord would have gone before them, but to-day His presence was far from them. Yesterday they would have experienced victory over their enemies, but to-day they would taste defeat. To advance yesterday would have been an act of faith: to advance to-day was a sin of presumption. Nevertheless, in their own strength and at their own risk the Israelites went forward (Deut. 1:41-46). Their journey was not blessed, and they were discomfited by their foes (Joshua 7:11, 12).

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