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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE CHURCHES AND THE WAR

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, October 22nd, 1939

(Stenographically Reported)

"In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?"

"For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.

"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

"The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

"The Lord trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.

"Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.

"For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright."—Psalm 11.

I have read this Psalm, not as a text for exposition, but as setting forth the foundation of the Christian's confidence.

As the war continues, the relation of individuals, of institutions, and of nations, to the war, will become ever more clearly defined; and no institution is in greater need of the clearest possible definition than the Christian church. In these matters, there is a great deal of very superficial and illogical thinking—if indeed in some quarters there be any thinking at all. I should like if possible, in these Sunday evening addresses, to contribute something to public clarity of thought.

Separated, divorced from its origin, from the motives from which it springs, and the aims of its participants, and the issues involved, war itself—the stark, unadorned fact of war—is so indescribably horrible, and appears to be so contrary to everything the Christian church represents, and for which it professes to stand, that one might easily conclude, superficially at least, that the only duty of the Christian church is to bear witness against it.

We ought not, therefore, too hastily or too harshly to pass judgment upon those who say that war is always and only evil, and as futile as it is evil. There appear to be many people who are of that opinion, and it is well that we should think with some charity of those

who entertain such views. It is easy for us to misjudge those who do not immediately see the issues as they appear to some of us.

Surely it must be admitted that every Christian, everyone who really knows the Lord Jesus Christ, must hate war for itself. But it is precisely because he hates some things, that the man of conscience cannot avoid dealing with them. I have yet to meet a housewife who is desperately in love with washday: she regards it as one of the necessary evils to which week by week she addresses herself and her household, not because she loves it, but because her innate love for that which is clean and wholesome leads her to hate having anything about the place that is unclean. Therefore the institution of wash-day. Be careful how you deport yourself in the home on that particular day! It is a day of trial for everyone—and for no one more than those who have to engage in it.

The true surgeon, the man who really knows what it involves, never performs an operation if he can avoid it. He knows better than anyone else what is involved in the shock of it. Yet he operates because he hates disease and death more.

I do not suppose anyone hates war quite so much as a true soldier, for no one can know what it means like the men who have passed through the horrors of it.

We can begin with this at least one common ground, by saying that not only every Christian man, but every man of conscience, of ordinary human feeling, must hate war. But I hope we hate robbery and oppression and slavery and injustice of every kind still more.

The issues of this war, to some of you, at least, are so clearly defined that Christian churches of all names almost without exception have come to recognize that it is their duty to throw the full weight of their moral influence into the scales for the purpose of winning the war. I believe that our participation in this dreadful struggle is not the result of mere blind patriotism. It is well that we should be patriotic, but it is necessary that we should recognize our higher and more important loyalties, to remember that we must be loyal first to principles of righteousness and truth, and to Him Who is the King above all kings. Christian people must sometimes take high ground in matters of conduct, and must be content to be misunderstood by a great many who cannot follow them, or understand their interpretation of spiritual values. But in respect to this war, we are on very common ground, the ground of common, ordinary, every-day, morality; and surely it ought to be possible for every one of us to recognize that we could not even be decent people were we to shirk our responsibilities in this war.

So I believe that the churches generally—not the churches of the denomination to which I belong only, but Christian churches of all names, for the most part, recognize that *neutrality in such a conflict as this would mean the negation, not only of Christianity itself, but of simple morality.* If it be a Christian duty to stand for truth, righteousness, liberty, for common decency in human relationships, surely it must be a Christian duty to support the Allied cause in every possible way.

But when I have said that, I remind you that there are some who are sincerely opposed to the war. Some of you will have read a statement in the press, a statement that is said to bear the signatures of some seventy ministers of the United Church. It is rather alarming when you see a headline like this, "Seventy United Church Pastors Ally Themselves Against the War."

To avoid possible misunderstanding I shall read the statement.

The Press Reports

The letter, signed by 70 pastors, declares, in part:

"We find ourselves, not without pain and regret, unable to approve of this war. We recognize that other ministers and church members, equally sincere, differ from us and feel in duty bound to participate in it. At the same time, we know that we represent a body of conviction characteristic of the earliest Christian church, and of many reform movements through the centuries, and strongly held by many groups in the churches today.

"We take our stand upon the declaration of our own general council in 1938, that 'war is contrary to the mind of Christ' and 'we positively reject war because war rejects love, defies the will of Christ, and denies the worth of man.'

"In brief, some will say, 'Yes, war is sin; therefore . . .'; while others will say, 'Yes, war is sin, but . . . While freely admitting the right of our brethren to choose differently, we confess that the following considerations appear to us to have decisive weight.

"The will of the Kingdom of God must take precedence over the national convenience or policy.

"The nature of modern war is such that it is and must be incompatible with the Christian spirit and aims.

"Beyond the immediate and apparent causes of war we have to take account of the historical causes, and when we do, we find that no nation is black or white, but all share in responsibility for creating the situation which makes war inevitable.

"War Is Futile"

"Apart from religious scruples, and apart even from the specific teachings of Jesus, we agree with men like Baldwin and Chamberlain, who have said in effect that war is futile because incapable of achieving any worthy solution of international disputes, and can only bring general destruction.

"We remember that the churches lost heavily in spiritual authority because of their general surrender to the war spirit in 1914-18. We think it ought to be placed on record now, in view of the further loss of spiritual authority probable if the church sanction this present war that at least some representatives of the Christian churches disapproved and uttered their protest.

"It is generally agreed and confessed that Christendom has, through the centuries, sadly and seriously fallen short in faithfulness to Christ. We are convinced that at no point has Christendom departed so radically from the mind of Christ and its own original faith as in its acceptance of war.

"We affirm that we are not seeking escape from the burden or sacrifice, and we profess our readiness to implement our citizen loyalty in some form of service equally as taxing, difficult, and dangerous as military service, providing it does not contribute directly to the war effort."

The only Toronto signatories to the anti-war declaration were Rev. R. J. Irwin, Rev. J. M. Finlay, Rev. Fred Smith, Rev. Harold Toye, Rev. Gordon Lapp, Rev. Crossley M. Krug, Rev. W. C. Almack and Rev. Harry Peters. The most prominent name among the signatories was that of Rev. Dr. Richard Roberts, former Moderator of the United Church.

It is easy when one reads a thing like that to talk about pro-Naziism and pro-Communism, and to say a great many uncomplimentary things which will serve no purpose but to widen the breach, and to prevent a proper understanding of the issues involved.

For my part, I gladly recognize the *sincerity of these brethren* who have openly declared that they are in opposition to the war. I cannot believe that they would take that position if they were not profoundly sincere; and I should credit what they say, that they do it with great "regret."

It should be recognized too that, superficially, they have something on their side. I remember reading a statement to the effect that it was the peril of the educated man that he found himself able to argue two sides of a question with equal success. At all events, it is of great assistance toward the apprehension of truth when one is able, without prejudice, to view two sides of any disputed question, and thus to be able to take the side of his opponent and to look at the question through his eyes.

One thing you will all agree with: you will acknowledge *the splendid courage of these seventy men.* For my part, I recognize that it was no easy thing, in a time of war, for seventy men occupying a public position, to set their signatures to a statement opposing the action of the Government, and of the people at large. Whether you agree with them or not, you must at least admit that they are men who have the courage of their conviction; and I am always glad to shake hands with a courageous man. There is nothing I despise more than an arrant coward. My criticism of the modern ministry is that there are so few men in the pulpit who seem to have any courage. So, though these seventy ministers are on a side exactly opposite to mine in this matter, I congratulate them on being courageous enough to express themselves on an exceedingly unpopular subject. Whether such expression was as wise as it was courageous is another matter.

I have great admiration for such characters as Jeremiah, Isaiah, and other Old Testament prophets,

who were frequently divinely commissioned to go to the nation, and to deliver messages that ran exactly contrary to the purpose of the authorities, and to the will of the people. They were regarded as cranks; and I have no doubt that a great many harsh things will be said by some people about these seventy men. I do not agree with them, as I shall presently show you, but if we are to make progress with an opponent we must begin by finding if possible some point of agreement, and some element in his position of which we can approve.

These men, I say, therefore, are manifestly sincere; and at first blush, on the surface of things, there is something to be said for their position; and whatever else may be said, they are splendidly courageous, though perhaps unwise.

I have no doubt that they are just as patriotic as we are, just as loyal Canadians. We must recognize, in religious matters at least, the same principles that apply in political conflicts. In the House of Commons, the majority party are called the Government, and the minority, the Opposition; but they are always credited with being "His Majesty's Loyal Opposition". They are just as loyal as those who are charged with the responsibility of government; they only differ from others as to what is the best way to administer the affairs of the country. I can only assume that these men are wholehearted, loyal, patriotic, Canadians.

I think, furthermore, in all probability they would use as many superlatives in defining their abhorrence of Hitlerism as you or I. I do not suppose they are pro-Naziistic or pro-Communist. But, sincere as they are, I believe they are sincerely and profoundly mistaken. They quote Earl Baldwin and Premier Chamberlain as their authority for saying that war is futile. There is a sense in which that is true. We must admit that a man cannot be made righteous by the principle of compulsion. A man cannot be made honest by being hedged about with such restrictions as will make it impossible for him to steal. You can, however, prevent his stealing, though you cannot prevent his wanting to steal.

The Scripture says, "The law made nothing perfect." The principle of compulsion never makes anything perfect. No father or mother, under the necessity of administering chastisement to a child is foolish enough to suppose that any such chastisement can, of itself, effect a reformation. It puts into the child a fear of such chastisement, but unless its mind and heart can be so changed toward the thing which has brought about its chastisement, the child will be no better than before the correction.

Lord Baldwin is a great man in many ways. And when Mr. Baldwin, as he then was, saw the nature of the thing that we should have to oppose, and when he said that the British frontier would be on the Rhine, he recognized that while the first war had at least given us respite from German domination for the intervening years, the work begun in the first war had not been completed, and that a second war should probably have to be fought. But if Lord Baldwin had believed that war was futile in the sense that a man is justified in refusing to have anything to do with it, he would not have led the British nation in rearmament. In quoting Lord Baldwin in that respect, these seventy men were not only greatly in error, but they were manifestly unfair.

Premier Chamberlain is not infallible. I suppose no one in this country has criticized his action at Munich

more roundly than I have, and I believe that events have overwhelmingly justified that criticism. But all honour to a man who, when he sees he is mistaken, has the courage to change front. Someone said, "If Premier Chamberlain prosecutes the war with the same dogged determination with which he pursued the policy of appeasement, then it is all up with the Germans." We honour Mr. Chamberlain for the sentiment which actuated his appeasement policy though we disagreed with his judgment. And certainly to quote Mr. Chamberlain as having said, as a final judgment, that war is futile, and that, therefore, we must have nothing to do with it, is not frank, to say the least of it. For whatever our judgment of the past, Mr. Chamberlain is now splendidly leading the Empire in the prosecution of this dreadful war; and it is an outrageous insult to impugn his sincerity by suggesting that he is endeavouring to mobilize all the forces of the Empire in a cause which he believes to be "futile". The reference of the seventy to Baldwin and Chamberlain merits nothing but condemnation.

They go farther and say that they do not want to escape any difficulty. Let me read a paragraph to you:

"We affirm that we are not seeking escape from the burden or sacrifice, and we profess our readiness to implement our citizen loyalty in some form of service equally as taxing, difficult, and dangerous as military service, providing it does not contribute directly to the war effort."

These seventy men, who will have their followers, dare to say in effect, "So far as we are concerned, we will render no kind of service that will make any contribution to the war effort." That is a very serious position for any public man to take, and I think they are gravely wrong in doing so. The fact is, the war is here; and more is the pity Hitler is here—at least, he may be even in Canada, if we do not stop him. I have no doubt that these men are sincere—and they think they are logical, but I submit that that represents the most illogical position that anyone could possibly take.

What is to happen? How are we to stop Hitler? That is what I want to know. Surely every possible effort has been made to bring him to reason, and it has been demonstrated beyond all possibility of question that the man is not only unreasonable, but unmoral, and will yield to nothing but force. The logic of the position these gentlemen take is that France and Britain and Canada are to stand idly by and to allow Hitler to overrun the world. It is a position, which, if followed, would lead to universal submission to Hitler.

One of the daily papers says that this statement bears the signature of a former Moderator of the United Church of Canada. It bears the name of some sixty-nine other ministers of the United Church of Canada.

But the seventy do not represent the United Church. The United Church, like all the other churches, as a whole, is wholeheartedly with the Government in its determination to prosecute the war to the utmost. I deal only with these seventy. Such pacificism as is here set forth, if allowed to obtain in this country, would make for anarchy. If we allowed Hitler to have his way, we should allow the Red Ryans and their kind to be at large. We should do away with all our penitentiaries, dismiss our police force, and throw wide the doors of all places of detention. The men who wrote that have not learned to think.

I dissent entirely from the position of the seventy. I hope they will come to see things more clearly. I say,

they may be sincere, and their position may do some credit to their sentiments, but it does very little credit to their sense.

There is another kind of opposition reaching us over the air from men like Harry Emerson Fosdick. I do not say it now for the first time: I have said it for years past—and I think Dr. Fosdick knows it. Although he has been welcomed to some pulpits in this city, Dr. Fosdick is not a Christian. He is a pagan; he is anti-Christian; his whole philosophy of life is anti-Christian. There is scarcely an element of Evangelical Christianity that Dr. Fosdick does not deny. I am not surprised that he should take the side of paganism, denouncing Britain and France for their participation in the war.

In our day there are some things that censors cannot control. There are opinions that come over the air that would not be allowed to be put in print in time of war in this country—and properly so—but you cannot censor a United States radio. I do not listen very much, but when I went home from church this morning I turned the dial while waiting for luncheon. I heard an unfamiliar voice, and wondered who had been let loose. Of course he was speaking to the United States as was his right, advocating the continuance of the embargo upon the sale of arms, and against the amendment of the Neutrality Act in the United States. I listened with care, and I do not know that I ever heard such a tissue of false statements and illogic. I wondered who he could be. He denounced British participation in the war, denounced France, in such a way as would be justified if these two democracies were the last word in national deception and unworthiness. I listened, not because I enjoyed it, or because I believed anything he had to say; but to learn who he was: I waited for the end. And when at last he concluded, the announcer said, "You have been listening to Father Coughlin." Surely he is another madman at large who has scarcely a nodding acquaintance with the truth. He and Lindbergh may represent a small section of American opinion. The United States have Lindbergh and Coughlin and we have the seventy and Duplessis. I believe the cause of righteousness as represented by the Allies is nowhere more ably and eloquently advocated than by many representative men in the United States.

When I have said all that to warn you against the influence of things of that sort, *let us recognize that the churches are not without fault.* I know that there are those who are ready enough to find fault with things without their own pale, but it is necessary sometimes that we should recognize our own defects. I agree with what these seventy men say at this point, that it is "generally agreed and confessed that Christendom has, through the centuries, sadly and seriously fallen short in faithfulness to Christ."

But Christendom is not the Christian church. Notwithstanding churches have been faulty; and I think the present situation may be partly explained on the ground of the influence of great Christian organizations called churches. I hope you will not think I am a faddist. I have been here a good while, and have been saying the same thing for a good many years in one way and another, and have endeavoured, not only in war time, but in peace time, to bear witness to the authority of God's holy Word; and we have to admit that, taking the Christian church as a whole—I prefer the word "churches", but I mean, taking the organized bodies of Christianity that bear the name of churches, or denominations—no man

can be true to the Book without frankly acknowledging that the churches, speaking generally, have become woefully apostate. Otherwise, men like Fosdick would never be invited or admitted to a Christian pulpit. The Lord has been wounded in the house of His friends. His Book has been set aside, and the essentials of the Christian faith denied.

That is true of the United Church, of the Baptist churches in this country and elsewhere. We have failed, not only to hold fast the profession of our faith, and earnestly to contend for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints; but the churches have lost, in large measure, their moral influence. And it is well that we should face these things, and bring the war home to ourselves.

I remember the day—and I am not an old man—when you could count on the Methodist Church in Canada one hundred per cent in any matter of moral reform. You had not to ask the question: you knew where every single Methodist minister stood on such matters. The same was true of Baptist churches and ministers. I remember thirty years ago going with an English friend from Vancouver to Victoria, when he said to me, "What proportion of your Baptist ministers in Canada use tobacco? What proportion of them smoke?" I thought a moment and said, "I know them pretty well, and I would not speak positively, but if there is one Baptist minister in the Dominion of Canada who uses tobacco in any form, I do not know him." But I could not say that now.

If the Christian churches of Toronto were standing to-day where they stood when I became Pastor of this church nearly thirty years ago, there would not be eleven beer parlours within two blocks on Jarvis Street. This accursed liquor business could never have grown to the proportions it has if the United Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Anglican Church, and the Baptist churches, had done their duty. We shall have to deal with it. We are talking about the war. Very well. Mr. Lloyd George recognized in the last war that unless something were done with the liquor business, we would lose the war at home; and they had to curtail it. In this country we enacted prohibition in order to save ourselves. And here are churches in this country professing and calling themselves Christians, allowing the liquor business to take nearly one hundred million dollars out of the pockets of Ontario people—in a time of war. There is no use to point to Germany and say, The trouble is all there. There is much of it in Ontario—and the churches must bear their responsibility.

Church assemblies during the last few years have become meeting places to discuss ministers' salaries, the urban problem, the rural problem—everything but that for which the church of Christ exists. It is perhaps not so surprising such a statement as is made by the famous seventy would be made. The majority of the ministers in all the churches have long been saying the same thing in respect to the still greater war between light and darkness. Political pacificism is the legitimate child of religious pacificism. And for a long time now religious pacificists have dominated the churches and have offered no resistance to the forces of antichrist which have despoiled the church of the treasury of the Word with its priceless treasure of the gospel. But the modern church has become indistinguishable from the world about it. It is shot through with worldliness, with its dramatic societies, with its dance, and its what do you call it? Bingo! Can you look abroad on these things to-day without feel-

ing that if the Lord Jesus Christ were to come in person into some of our modern churches, He would again make a whip of cords and say, "Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise."

We can not overcome all this by putting up a sign saying, "This church is open for prayer." True prayer can move the arm of God, but the mere saying of prayers without heart repentance and reformation of life has no value. We need a second Reformation if we are to face the issues of the present hour in the power of God. The modern church has forgotten, or at least ignores, the future. The modern church, for the most part, has no message about heaven or hell: some review the latest book to the utter neglect of *The Book*. The church in many instances spends its time in talking economics. But as with the weather, they do nothing about it. Such discussions may be useful in their place. There are social injustices; there are economic wrongs. But the blood-bought Church of Christ has far weightier business to do than the passing of resolutions on these subjects alone. I have quoted it more than once. Whittier wrote it long ago, and it is more emphatically true to-day than it was then:

"The church, to place and power the door,
Rebukes the sin of the world no more;
Nor sees its Lord in the homeless poor.
Everywhere is the grasping hand,
The eager adding of land to land;
And earth, which seemed to the fathers meant
But as a pilgrim's wayside tent,
A nightly shelter to fold away,
When the Lord should call at the break of day,
Solid and steadfast seems to be;
And time has forgotten eternity."

If the churches are to make their proper contribution to the war, they need to recognize some things that are indispensable to the regaining of the churches' spiritual power. We need a return to the old faith. We need to have our minds cleared of that greatest of all delusions, the evolutionary outlook on life. If there is anything in evolution, and if we really are outgrowing our baser selves, and sluffing off the qualities of the jungle—look at Poland, and Abyssinia, and Spain, and now the border of France, look at China, and Japan, and Red Russia—I say, if there is anything in evolution, then God be praised I did not arrive earlier! Indeed I should like to have postponed my advent until several millenia later so as to have missed this age of hatred and war. But the evolutionary hypothesis is a delusion and a snare, and one of the biggest fallacies ever foisted upon the human intellect, for it is without a scintilla of evidence. And this philosophic folly which has cut the ground from beneath the feet of so many is the prolific mother of modern errors. A veritable mother of harlots. The churches need to return to the old faith, and to the old Book. When the King was crowned, you heard the Archbishop say, when he put a copy of God's holy Word into the hands of the King, "Here is wisdom." So it is, and we had better surrender to its authority. Then we shall be fitted for work.

If we are going to do that, *the churches that have not been standing by the Book need to acknowledge that they have been away from home.* There are many people now who will begin to be very orthodox. Someone said the other day, "This is a hard time for ministers." A minister not very far from here is preaching this evening on "Difficult Texts for To-day—Thou shalt not kill." I do not think that is a difficult text. There are many

people who will go back to the Bible now, I say, and be very orthodox. I at least shall not believe in the genuineness of their orthodoxy unless they openly acknowledge they have been wrong, and that they have now changed their minds.

There is no other way by which a man or an institution can escape the record of the past. I honour a man who has the courage to say, "I was wrong, but now I see my mistake and change my course"; but to climb in through the back door and put on an orthodox dress, without any acknowledgment of having taken the wrong course, will avail little with men and nothing with God. Those who have known what they have been will not believe them until they openly acknowledge, "I once held up the Word of God to contempt; I now see I was all wrong; I come back to the old faith, and to the Book that is the foundation of it all." Then, and not till then, will they regain their standing and power. We need a mourners' bench for preachers right here in this city. They held a great testimony meeting in Maple Leaf Gardens a while ago, "a meeting of witness" I think they called it. I would not spend the energy necessary to walk from here, to be present. Why? Because before the majority of them can have any witness to give, they must get back to God, and admit that the professing church of Christ has, in recent years, done more than any other institution to destroy men's faith in the Word of God. The worship of mere bigness in such carnally worked up assemblies will accomplish nothing. It is written, "Not by might, nor by an army, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

We need to set ourselves against everything within the church that is anti-Christian, so to purge the churches that the Lord can have right-of-way in His own house. Then it will stand before the world as an organization dedicated to the service of God, and to His service only. That would bring a real revival. But we can never have a revival without repentance and confession of sin.

Then what shall we do? We ought then to endeavour to bring every form of national effort within the framework of the principles of the gospel. Let us, in the Red Cross, and everything else, as Christians ought to do, recognize our duty to the state, and render it our utmost service with thoroughness and faithfulness, and cheerfulness.

Let me say a commonplace thing. We ought to recognize our duty to our soldiers and sailors. They are the men who are going to bear the brunt of it. I referred to the list of casualties of *The Royal Oak* this morning—petty officer, able-seaman, ordinary-seaman, deck-hand, or something else. Then in many, many cases just a name and opposite it, "Boy". One of our newspapers had an editorial on it, "So-and-So—Boy." Not a deck-hand, not an able-seaman, not a lieutenant, not a gunner, not a cook, but a boy, only a boy; and he went down! One of our members who has two boys in England, one in the army, and one in the navy, said as she was going out this morning, "Thank you for what you said about the boys."

I need not urge the necessity of service in a physical way; there will, I trust, be the willing offering of such service. But to you who are really Christians I say, we must endeavour to testify of God's saving grace to the soldiers. I remember that during the last war I went to Exhibition Park to preach. The building was

filled with merriment. There were moving pictures, smokes, and I know not what else. In the midst of it all, the chairman said, "Now Mr. Shields is here, and is going to give you ten minutes' talk—bright, snappy"—and I know not what else. I said a few words of apology and sat down; then said to him afterward, "I am not accustomed to bring my Master into any house by the back door. If you insult Him by saying these men will not listen to the gospel without first filling the place with smoke, and then sandwiching a message in, I shall not come again." "We cannot get the men any other way." "Yes, you can." "What do you propose?" "Put out the announcement; and if I have two, I will preach; and if I have two thousand, I will preach. But the responsibility is theirs. But let us not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ, nor preach it in such circumstances as make it appear we are ashamed of it." I went later to Camp Borden, to one of our biggest tents, and had it packed to the doors—what for? Nothing but the gospel.

During that time of war I was called one Saturday and told that a certain man, a celebrated author—he is gone, and I will not mention his name—was to be in town the following day, and asked whether I would like to have him preach for me in the morning. They said he had just returned from France and had a great message, and I said, "Yes; I want my people to have the best."

He came, and preached; and in this pulpit he preached salvation by the sacrifice of the battlefield. He told the congregation that men who laid down their lives in the cause of the country had a sure passport to heaven. He finished his sermon by saying, "I will take my chances on the eternal salvation of a man who dies for his country." When he sat down, I rose. I said, "I am sorry to have to differ from our guest this morning, but I am bound to do so. I am bound to say I do not believe a word of it. 'Once in the end of the age Christ appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself'; and the sacrifice of His infinitely precious blood made every other sacrifice superfluous." I warned the people not to believe what this distinguished preacher and author had said, and then announced the closing hymn,

"There is a Fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

And we shall have the same thing over again, but we who are Christians ought to be supremely concerned to see that everyone of these dear fellows who put on the King's uniform, and who volunteer to go and stand between us and death, receiving perhaps the messenger of death in their own bodies, we should endeavour to see that every one of them shall hear the gospel, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

The supreme duty of the church to-day is to get back to God herself, to be right with God; and then specially to be God's messenger of salvation to people who need the saving grace of God. There is no other way of salvation save through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, where-by we must be saved."

And so preaching it, and witnessing it, we shall be able constantly to pray. Go to church to pray if you can. There is a special promise to concerted prayer: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them;" "If two of you

shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." But it is the privilege of the believer to be so related to God as to call down Heaven's blessing upon our armed forces if they be engaged in the cause of righteousness. We ought to be praying all the time for the success of the war.

Mr. Brown read to you a very solemn passage this evening. I wonder if this second war is the Lord's second stroke upon our backs? I wonder if He permitted it to come before to teach us our need of Him? How we prayed until the war was over—and then this country, and the United States, and England, wandered farther away from God than ever. The great majority of people forgot God, and plunged more deeply into worldly ways. A flood of prosperity came over us and many allowed it to sweep them from their religious moorings. Then He sent us "cleanness of teeth" and hard times as He did in the days of Amos: "I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord." And now He has permitted the sword to come upon us again.

I do not know whether these are the last days, whether Hitler is the beast of Revelation—he is a beast, but whether that particular beast, I do not know. But it is a day when God is abroad, when He is dealing with the nations. If you believe in God, you cannot look at Russia, at Asia, at Africa, and America, and see the state of turmoil everywhere—men's hearts failing them for fear, for looking to the things that are coming on the earth—without believing that God is speaking to the world, dealing with men for some far-reaching purpose. Our only safety is to come to Him, believe on Him, receive Him as our Saviour, as Master and Lord; and thenceforth to endeavour with all there is in us to serve Him with full purpose of heart. Suffer these words of exhortation. May the Lord bless us every one for His name's sake; Amen.

GERMANY AND FUTURE PUNISHMENT

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 14th, 1915

"Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute:

"That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation:

"From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation."—Luke 11:49-51.

One of the indubitable proofs of the Bible's being the very word of God, consists in its universality. It is contemporaneous with every period of human history. Its prophecies of last things are formed of principles that are older than the everlasting hills; its history is a record and an exhibition of the age-long conflict of moral opposites; its poetry is the utterance of the soul's experience of the depths and heights of sorrow and of joy; and the Book as a whole is a revelation of those eternal principles in which the moral order of the universe consists. One of the elements of its universality is its cosmopolitanism; while of Hebrew human authorship, it is essen-

tially unracial and unnational. Since God is the God of all the nations of the earth, this is His word to everybody.

This text is one of the great texts of the Bible; it stretches from the first human death, indeed, in principle, from the first human sin, to the final judgment; and spans all intervening events. It insists upon the unity and continuity of the moral law; and upon the timelessness of moral acts. It teaches that the moral witness of Abel's blood speaks in the blood of all the prophets down to the end of time; and that every offence against that moral order for which it speaks reaches back in its involved purpose to the deed of Cain. It affords us just a glimpse into the meaning of that great saying, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

I am to speak of "Germany and Future Punishment," and to try to answer the question, "Do some crimes deserve hell?" And I shall again try to bring this worldwide tragedy into the light of the word of God for judgment.

I.

My first task this evening must be to try to explain to you THE AGELESS CHARACTER OF GOD'S MORAL WITNESS IN THE WORLD.

The implication of the text is, that in all human history, God has never left himself without a witness to speak for Him in behalf of righteousness and against iniquity.

The proposals of certain peace societies that this day be observed as a day of thanksgiving for a hundred years of peace between Great Britain and the United States is a most admirable one. I am sure the noble sentiment expressed in Toronto last week by ex-President Taft, that all possibility of war between these two nations is at an end, will be received by Britons everywhere with a fervent Amen. We are bound to our American neighbours by so many ties, which we like to think of as indissoluble, that it seems as though the peace of a century may easily be extended indefinitely. But it is just because Britons entertain such a high regard for the United States, and feel that its honour among the nations is scarcely separable from our own, that we have been rather disappointed with Cousin Jonathan lately. I do not know that any of us would desire to see the United States involved in hostilities, unless her participation could insure the speedier termination of the fearful carnage; and that is questionable. We are disappointed only because the United States has uttered no protest against those crimes which have outraged the conscience of the world. We did not want her to go to war: and we are not angry; we are only deeply grieved, and sorely disappointed that she has set forth no moral witness against the unparalleled lawlessness involved in Germany's crime against Belgium. Her recent note to Germany in reply to Germany's announced programme of piracy is couched in a tone of admirable firmness; but it is written solely in her own interest: she is still silent and utters no protest against wrongs inflicted on others than herself. That, of course, is only her official attitude. There is no doubt that the overwhelming majority of the people of the United States are, to the core, true to the noblest ideals of Anglo-Saxon civilization. And that great body of public opinion may yet compel the Administration to purge away the stain from the American national honour involved in her official acquiescence in Belgium's ruin.

But I have referred to this matter because it affords a most striking illustration of the principle I am discussing. God is never neutral with respect to moral issues. He does not always unsheath the sword; but He never fails to protest. That is the great truth of the text: that never in all the world's history has moral evil shown itself but God has registered His protest. No nation, no individual, in all the long range of history, ever has transgressed the moral law, but the King of kings has sent an ambassador to protest against it.

If you ask the names of those ministers plenipotentiary. I reply that Nature is one: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead: so that they are without excuse." Nature bears a moral witness. Natural law protests against its own violation. Read the first chapter of Romans from which I have quoted, and you will see that, in spite of the grossest ignorance, God secures for Himself a moral witness not only against physical immorality, but against intellectual immorality; so that transgressors may "know the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death." We read also that natural men "shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."

Providence also is an ambassador. The riches of the divine goodness, and forbearance, and long suffering; and the fact that God does good, and gives us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, are attributed to the divine purpose to "leave not Himself without witness."

To all this must be added the sum of divine revelation, the voice of all prophets speaking in unison in Him Who was the Word made flesh; and the inspired record which God has here given to us of His Son. And, as an interpretation of this record, you have the voice of Christian experience, the witness of the whole Church of the First-born; as well as the testimony of all those influences, subsidiary to the Gospel, which have helped to change the face of the world, and have dated the world's history from the birth of Christ. Thus all moral influences are but "broken lights" of the one Light, echoes of the one Voice; and that the divine protest against all moral evil.

II.

But look now at THE JUDICIAL PURPOSE IN THESE SUCCESSIVE DIVINE PROTESTS. The doctrine of the text is that God is preparing, and has from the beginning been preparing, for a great day of reckoning. The blood of all the prophets is to be "required"; and the successive divine protests are made with a view to that great judgment. Thus men are held accountable for the weight of moral testimony they have ignored or rejected, in agreement with that which is written, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

Observe then, a nation is given light in preparation for judgment. Every moral light it has extinguished shall be "required" of it. And that does not mean that we shall be judged only for the rejection of distinctively religious knowledge. All truth is of God. And while our Lord here speaks of God's having sent "prophets," He mentions "wise men" and "scribes" too. You must not think of God as a Sunday God, or as being interested solely in what we regard as "religious" matters. Nor

must we in our thoughts limit the operations of the Spirit of God to the purely religious realm. God is in everything, and His hand controls everything; and the "wise men" and "scribes" who really see and write the truth are His providential witnesses. In the judgment of moral issues the "prophets" may be the "expert" witnesses, the "wise men" and "scribes" the lay witnesses; but they all have their places in the divine plan, and are preparing men for the day of reckoning.

Let us get that clearly in our minds. The value of religious testimony is not lessened by the fact that the "wise man" of science and philosophy, and the "scribe" of literature, be he poet or novelist, who light a taper in the world's darkness, are all to be summoned to give evidence at the Great Assize.

And if this be true, and I think it is involved in my text, you will see that while a special and awful importance attaches to the witness of divine and authoritative revelation; whatsoever is pure, and honest, and just, and true, and lovely, in our Christian civilization, is but a ray of that great Light Whose rejection constitutes the condemnation of such as are not saved.

Germany boasts of her "culture"; but her culture is her condemnation. One of her leading men recently said, "Luther, Goethe, and Kant, are our great assets." And he said well. Germany has had much light. She has had many prophets and wise men and scribes; and the blood of their rejection shall be required of this generation.

By her failure to protest against Germany's infamous conduct, the United States has disqualified herself for a place on the judgment-seat when the day of reckoning comes. She ought to have sent her prophets if she would have a hand in making inquisition for blood by and by. That principle is implied in Christ's saying, "The queen of the south shall rise up in judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, a greater than Jonas is here."

But this rule applies to individuals also. It means that every ray of moral and spiritual light which comes to us is either a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death. Every advantage of birth and education, the possession and development of our mental and moral faculties; every good book we read, every worthy example we observe, every moral influence we feel; and, above all, every testimony to the fact of Christ, and the truth of the Gospel which is borne before us; every exemplification of Christian principle we see, every faithful sermon we hear, every accusation of conscience we feel, and every admonition of the Holy Spirit we receive through Scripture, and providence, and experience; all these are sent us as God's witnesses against His day of reckoning. And the blood of every slain prophet will be required of us in that day!

III.

Hence the text proclaims **THE ACCUMULATED GUILT INVOLVED IN THE SHEDDING OF RIGHTEOUS BLOOD**, whether it be the blood of principles or of persons, or of both. This is a terrible word, that the blood of all the prophets shall be required of him who sheds the blood of the last; for his act involves the rejection of the accumulated testimony to righteousness of all history. Some of you

may remember that a year or so ago I told you that when Herod, the murderer of John the Baptist, said of Jesus, "It is John, whom I beheaded, he is risen from the dead," there was a sense in which he was instinctively right. Every prophet of righteousness found a resurrection in Jesus; for He was the sum-total of all that God had said by all other voices to the world. And when Jesus declared that the blood of all the prophets shed from the foundation of the world should be required of His generation, He meant to include His own blood, whose shedding was the climax of human infamy. And, as I said last Sunday, the sin of Cain involved the sin of Caiaphas; and of Annas, and of Judas, and of all the murderers of history; so the deed of these, with Pontius Pilate, approved of all the evil of the world. They filled up the measure of their fathers, and bore witness that they allowed their fathers' deeds, and took upon themselves their accumulated guilt.

Now carry that forward in application to Germany. It was no accident that Nietzsche declared that Christianity was the great curse, the one great spiritual corruption. He was perfectly logical. It gathers up in itself all those principles of truth and righteousness for which the slain prophets of the world have contended. Christ is the great Light, the source of whatever principles of liberty, and equality, and fraternity, have found a place in the civilizations of the world. And the present war is, as has been said, a war between Corsica and Galilee; it is Antichrist against Christ.

It would be easy to relate innumerable instances of German villainy, and thus to stir your emotions. But there is no time for details, and I have no disposition to appeal to passion. Let me rather show you, in the light of this text, something of the heinousness of Germany's offence. What has she done? Ravaged Belgium and shed the blood of tens of thousands of others? That is the least of her offences. Her destruction of the University of Louvain was a symbolic act. With all her boasted culture, she has turned her back upon all the lessons of history, upon all human learning of morals; and, by her attempted conquest of Europe, she has taken upon herself the guilt of the blood of all who have died in the cause of freedom from the foundation of the world; she has entered into league with the spirit of every despot whose ambition ever cursed the earth.

And it was significant that works of art should fall a prey to her destructive power; for she has allied herself with every influence which has marred the handiwork of God, and would banish the beautiful from the earth. Her destruction of places of worship, too, was symbolic; for her conduct is the antithesis of worship, a repudiation of all morality, and a mockery of all those principles for which martyrs have bled and died. The war involves, I say, the repudiation of Christianity, a second crucifixion of Christ, an attempt to banish the principles of which He is the incarnation from the earth. According to my text you must add to the Kaiser's guilt for the shedding of blood to-day, the guilt involved in all the blood which has been shed in the course of civil and religious freedom since the world was made. And that blood will be required at the Kaiser's hands.

IV.

You will see, therefore, that this text prophesies **ONE RULE OF JUDGMENT AT THE GREAT ASSIZE**.

If moral acts have such far-reaching results, if they touch the eternities, does anyone contend that retribu-

tion can be exacted in time? What is involved in expiating the guilt incurred in the shedding of the blood of all the prophets who have died for righteousness' sake? Can you measure the guilt of that purpose which would blot out the record of all human progress, whose science would obliterate Calvary, and blow Sinai into the sea, and undo all the work of righteousness from Abel until now? The bloody fields of Belgium and Poland are witness enough, but when I remember that in that blood Germanism slays afresh all other millions who have died in freedom's cause; and seeks afresh the annihilation of all the earthly results of the death of Christ, I say if there is not a hell there ought to be! I could conceive of no moral order in the universe, if Germany's sin could go unpunished. No; England, and France, and Russia, do as they may, can never punish Germany; but "vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Yes, there will be a day of reckoning; and they who are responsible for this wholesale murder will surely be made to pay. Let us not be foolish or superficial. A moral act is not ephemeral in its reach and influence, but eternal. It reaches forth into the future: either upward into heaven, or downward into hell.

What has this to do with us? We have shed no blood, I hope? Know ye not that Christ is God's last word to men, the last of all that long line of prophets of whom Abel was the first? You are not a very great sinner. You have not sinned in any flagrant way—outwardly at least. That may be, though in some cases it is far otherwise. But in any case the germ of all evil is within. The sin which comprehends all other sins is there. And that is unbelief; that rejects Christ; and with Him all prophets who have gone before, and every voice which ever has spoken for God. Do you see what the rejection of Christ involves? And do you see what must follow? By the principle of this text, all the profit of His blood flows to him who repents of and renounces the sin that slew Him; while on the other hand, he shares the guilt of those who nailed Him there whose unbelief allows their wicked deed. God will require a redeemed soul of the blood of Christ; or He will require the blood of Christ of the soul rejecting its cleansing. "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God." For every one of us, as a just Judge is on His throne, the blood of Christ means heaven, or hell!

FROM THE DARKNESS OF ROMANISM TO THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL

Testimony of Mrs. Richer of Kapuskasing, Ont.

Given at the Convention of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec, Meeting in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Wednesday Morning, October 25th, 1939.

(Stenographically Reported)

I am very happy to be here this morning. I am a little nervous, but happy anyway. I have stood on the promises of God for a year and a half, and He has carried me through so many troublous times that I feel I can trust Him this morning to help me give my testimony.

If anyone had told me two years ago that I should be addressing a Baptist Convention to-day, I believe I should have thought of it as many of my former Roman Catholic friends think of me to-day. However, I am here, and I feel it is wonderful to be saved.

I went to school here in Toronto, to two Catholic schools. I was taught by nuns, and during my school days my main ambition in life was to become a nun. But when I left school and went to work, I heard many things that I had never heard in the Church of Rome. These things led me to doubt my early teaching. I began thinking about them, reasoning about them—and more doubts came. I felt that I was sinning against the faith, and against God. I did not want to do that, and I would resolve that I would be a better Catholic, and would plunge in more earnestly than ever to do my duty. I remember getting up early every morning in order to go to Mass before breakfast. This was during my school days: I felt I should not have any success in the classroom if I did not. However, as I became older I doubted, and this went on through the years, until about two years ago. Then things took a serious turn.

I had a neighbour who had a brother who had left the Roman Catholic Church. This man had given his sister a Bible to read. We were not very intimate, but we were acquainted and we visited each other at times. Things went on for a short while until it came to the ears of the priest. One morning I had a visit from him. I was quite surprised as he had never called on me except his parish visits once a year. He told me that I was to discontinue my friendship with the woman, and the only reason he could give me was that she had a Bible which we read, and an unfaithful brother. We had words—hard words; but I did not give up my friend because I could see no reason for doing so.

After he left, I had a guiltier feeling than I had ever had before. I thought it was my wicked temper, and that perhaps he was right; that I was too stubborn to see it. I resolved to make one more try, a serious one. I went back to church—although I had never really given it up—with a deeper determination to be a really good Catholic. I tried, but every time I went, I came home more disgusted than the last time. Everything they said seemed to disturb and disgust me, and in my disappointment I came home feeling low.

That was about October, two years ago this month. Things went on until February. In February one Sunday I went to Mass, and came home thoroughly disgusted, and said to my husband, "I am not going back." He asked me why, and I told him. He agreed with me—he had up to that time; and this time he told me I was right, and that he was not going back either. He asked me where I was going, and I said, "Nowhere. I am going to stay home. I got fooled once, and will join no other church."

I have two little girls, the eldest was seven at the time. She was to take her first Communion on Easter Sunday, and was attending special Sunday School classes. She said to me, "Mother, do I go to catechism this afternoon?" That was a shock. I had not thought of her side of it. I believed that salvation was in a church, but I was so disappointed with the Church of Rome that I was willing to forfeit that salvation; but I did not want to be responsible for the life of my little girl in the other world. I said, "I do not know whether you should go or not." I did not know how to reach a decision, so told her to stay home that Sunday, and I should have reached a decision before the next week came.

My husband and I talked it over, and suddenly I remembered that the Church claimed to get its laws from Christ, that the Bible is the Word of God and of Christ; and I said to myself, Why cannot I find these things in

the Bible? Then it flashed through my mind, That is sacrilege; you are not good enough to study the Bible; you are not educated enough to study the Bible. But curiosity got the best of me, and I said, I will do it anyway.

The next day I got a Bible. I did not know where to start reading it. I thought a Bible was a continuous story-book, so I started at the front page, and read the Old Testament. I wanted to read the Bible to prove the Church of Rome right or wrong. In the Old Testament I could find very little I was looking for, but when I got into the New Testament it was a different story. The more I read, the more I was convinced that the Church of Rome was wrong. My husband and I read until all hours of the night. He read so much he got inflammation in his eyes, and had to go around with bandages on his eyes for a week. Then I read aloud—and got a sore throat. I neglected my housework: dust was rolling under the beds, the dishes were stacked in the sink, the floor was unswept. My husband went to work in the morning, and I was left alone with the baby. I forgot to eat, and did not know when meal time came except as she told me she was hungry. I read and read and read.

Someone said to me, "But you are reading a Protestant Bible; you will not get the truth from that." I got a Catholic Bible, one that had a whole string of Roman Catholic signatures in the front, with the Pope's ensign on it. My husband read one, and I read the other; and we would compare. They were the same except perhaps in certain places the text and chapter would be different; otherwise, every word was the same.

I had always been told I could not understand the Bible, therefore I should leave it alone. I was therefore not quite sure whether I understood it, and doubts came back. My husband and I thought it might be a good idea if I would go around and visit the ministers in our town. Which ones to go to, I did not know—so I thought I would try them all. One of my neighbours was a Roman Catholic, and she was particularly riled up one day, and the first thing we talked about when I went in was a sermon we had heard a day or so before. There was a woman present who was not a Catholic, and I told them I had not been to the Catholic Church for some time, and that I was not going back. I told them I had a Bible, and was finding things out for myself. The Protestant woman is a very active member of one of the churches in Kapuskasing, and she asked me whether I understood the Bible. I said, "I do not know whether I do or not, but I think I do. I have not much education, and have been told that you must study it years and years. I think I will go around and visit the ministers and get their viewpoint." She said, "If you want to know the truth about the Bible, do not trouble to go to the other ministers. Go to the Baptist preacher; he knows his Bible." I did not know there was a Baptist preacher in town: that is how interested I was in anything outside the Catholic Church.

This woman told me where Mr. Brackstone lived, and I sat down and made a list of twenty-five questions to ask him about the Bible. I knew if I could get satisfactory answers to those questions I should know whether I understood the Bible or not. One Saturday afternoon I went with my twenty-five questions to Mr. Brackstone's home. I introduced myself, and told him what I wanted—and we got busy. I think he had to go from one end of the Bible to the other, to explain some of them—and

I had to stay for tea! I was supposed to go to a birthday party that afternoon, but I forgot all about it.

In all my reading I still had not seen that salvation was through Christ, and through Christ alone. I had not looked for that, for I had never heard of it. When Mr. Brackstone asked me how I thought I was going to get to heaven, I said, "If I am good enough I shall get there." He quoted Ephesians two, verse eight: "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." That was the most unreasonable thing I had ever heard in my life. I could not believe that. I could read it, I could repeat it; but it did not mean a thing to me.

Just imagine! If you were to go into a store to buy something and on one counter it was worth so much, that it would take all your wealth—and even more than you had—to buy it; and then at the next counter you could get it for nothing, would you not look at the free one pretty carefully in case you were getting something hollow or worthless? I was suspicious of it. I thought, if it is free in one place, and cannot be bought, so priceless is it, in another, there is something wrong; that is not reasonable.

I went home and studied again, and that is when my battle began. It was a real struggle. At times I would see glimpses of the light: at other time everything was pitch black. Mr. Brackstone held meetings in our home; he spared no effort. It was now the middle of winter, with bad roads. I live out of town about a mile and a half, but that did not stop Mr. Brackstone from visiting us as often as he possibly could. Every meeting was a gospel meeting—even if there were just the two of us. I could not see that salvation was through faith. It was impossible for me to grasp that. I cannot say just when the light did dawn upon me: it was such a struggle. It dawned at times, and would disappear again. That went on until the latter part of May of the following year. I was attending the Baptist Church regularly by this time, and the priest heard of it.

On Easter Sunday my husband was at home, and two priests called on us. I thought, I must meet them, and how am I going to do so? I wanted to beat them at their own game, and with the Word of God. I was determined they were not going to win. When my husband went to the door, I called my little girl and said, "Jerry, you and I must pray now as we never prayed before. We have to meet the priests now, and I do not know what to tell them." The two of us sat on the wood-box behind the kitchen stove, and offered up an earnest prayer. In five minutes I felt peace surge through me, and I could have met ten priests!

The priests had brought a stack of books, books about the saints. If they had a Bible with them, I did not see it. They asked me why I was taking the position I was taking, and I told them. One of them said, "You had better give up that Bible: it is leading you astray. You will never get any good out of that. You are throwing away a very precious thing, your Roman Catholic faith." He started out in a very tender manner, but by the time he had gotten half through, he was excited—and so was I. I said to him, "To make a long story short, I will give you a chance to prove you are right. Can you find auricular confession in the Bible? If you can find me one text where Christ taught anyone to go to confess to an apostle, or where an apostle confessed anyone, I will give you my Bible; I will go back to your church; and will be the best Roman Catholic

you ever saw." He shook his head and said he could not. I said, "That settles it. If you cannot show me your doctrines in the Bible, they are worthless. You might as well go because you are wasting your time—and mine." He asked, "May I pray for you?" "I will not stop you." He asked me if I was praying, and I told him I had done little else for months; to which he replied that the devil was answering my prayers.

They left, my own priest promising he would send me books, many books—and he sent them. I read them all, and sent them back. I could not see a thing in them that would change my position. He wrote often, and I told him if he did not stop sending books and letters that I would return them unopened.

All this time I felt as though I were being torn to pieces. I would pray and ask God to give me some comfort. I felt as though being torn to shreds, losing my mind; everything was going around in my head, and I knew if I did not get help from God I could not stand it. One said, "Come here", and another said, "Come to us", and I could only fall down and pray.

One morning after I had written the priest saying I would return his letters unopened, as I was doing my morning work, I felt as though I had all the care of the world on my shoulders. I felt as though I would break down and cry. I dressed my little girl and sent her to the post office, for I had to have quiet that I might pray and seek comfort. She went, and I knelt down beside the bed. I did not pray in words: I cried a prayer. When my little girl came back, she had a letter in a plain envelope, typewritten, postmarked, "Cochrane"—about eighty-five miles from Kapuskasing. My mother lives near there, and I thought I had a letter from home.

I opened it, and there was a letter from the priest. He had gone to the trouble of sending his letter to Cochrane so the postmark would deceive me—and it did. I read it—and he cursed me. He cursed me in that letter for daring to speak against the Church, and the priest of God. He called upon God to execute judgment upon me speedily. He said that after much meditation and prayer, he cursed me!

That letter gave me a great deal of peace! I felt fine after that! I thought, You have shown yourself in your true colours. I had thought that perhaps they were not as bad as I had conceived of their being; after that letter came, I thought they are worse than I had ever believed them to be.

The letter came, I think, in the beginning of May; it was not until the end of May that I saw the light. The priest immediately went around to all my friends and neighbours, and told them that I was a heretic, not fit to associate with them; and therefore they should leave me alone. That was a blessing too! The lawn mower, when I needed it, was not in a neighbour's cellar; I could get my housework done—the neighbours did not interrupt. But the peace I had around me could not compare with the peace in my heart, more especially as my husband took his stand for Christ about a month after I did.

One day I went to buy fresh eggs from the woman who used to supply me—and she informed me that the hens had stopped laying! The man who used to plow our garden, would not do it any more—and we did not have a garden that year. We suffered a great deal of persecution. My best friend slammed the door in my face one day, would not let me talk with her. She meets me now on the street, and turns her back. It cut at first, but I said, "God, I am standing on Thy promises,

and I am going to depend upon Thee." I did—and He has never failed.

One day I met a Catholic woman who was not yet afraid of me, and she asked me, "How do you feel?" "Fine." "Are you sure?" "Oh yes." Several times she asked me how I felt, and finally I asked her what she meant. She mustered up courage to tell me that I was supposed to be shrivelling up, that I had only a month to live—but I am still here! And I have not lost a pound! I had not known, but everyone had been watching me, expecting me to collapse. The priest had told them that in two months' time I would not have strength enough to walk to my adopted church. But I am stronger than ever, and enjoying every bit of the work.

My husband, as I have said, came to Christ about a month after, and then my little girl, and they too have had to put up with a great deal of persecution. We were persecuted also by so-called Protestants—I had not expected that. Even when we were Catholics, we had not experienced that. We had been, "Hail, fellow, well met"; but when we became out-and-out for Christ, and bore a real testimony to His saving power, that changed.

We were baptized in August. The sun shone in our faces—I believe it was the last fine Sunday we had that year. Behind me were two or three hundred people, and I felt my back freeze from their cold stares. I knew every Catholic there. We went into the water together, and were not troubled; we knew we were doing the Lord's will.

I try to reach other Catholics, and will continue to do so; but it is a difficult task. The priest has warned them that they must not have anything to do with me. It is seldom I get a chance to speak to any of them about the Lord Jesus Christ. One woman who was going from door to door talked with me a few minutes. When I spoke of my faith, suddenly she stiffened with fear, and seemed eager to leave my home.

We heard from a stranger, a French-Canadian, who was saved in Quebec, and who because of persecution came up north to farm, of some Catholics we might be able to reach. He told Mr. Brackstone of a possibility of our preaching the gospel to them. The first opportunity we had, we went out to their home and held a meeting, and were able to speak to six or seven French-Canadians. They could not speak English, but we could talk to them in their own language. We asked if we could come back the following Sunday, and they said we might. They were very poor people, and they asked if we could possibly get shoes for the children. We are not very rich ourselves, but said we would try.

The following Sunday I had a feeling we should not go, and when I asked my husband about going, he had the same feeling. We consulted Mr. Brackstone, and decided not to go. I cannot explain it, but we all knew we should not go—I mean, apart from God, I cannot explain it. A couple of days later I received a letter from the man who had directed us there, and he said it was well we had not gone that Sunday, that there were priests there with two carloads of henchmen—and they were going to cry us out, or run us out of the place. We determined we would go the following Sunday, and went. The priest was not there that day, but we met another member of the family, a girl of about twenty. She was very bitter. When we gave them the shoes—for which they had asked—she said, "You are trying to buy us into your church with shoes." "Buy you? There is only one church where you can buy everything,

and that is the Catholic Church. We offer only salvation, the free gift of God."

I forgot to tell you that after I was baptized, I was so happy that I gave my rosary to Mr. Brackstone: it was my last link with the Church of Rome. In spite of persecution, we are very happy in Christ, and our home life happier than it has ever been. And this morning I want to thank the Union, and every one of you who, through your missionary offerings, have made it possible for us to have a minister of the gospel in Kapuskasing. At the time I was at the crossroads and needed help, I do not know where I should have turned; I do not know where I should be this morning, if it had not been for Mr. Brackstone's help—rather the Spirit of God through him.

Bible School Lesson Outline

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THE SIN OF MOSES

Lesson Text: Numbers 20.

Golden Text: "Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."—Numbers 20:12.

For Reading: Numbers 15 to 19.

I. The Distress of the People—verses 1 to 6.

Forbidden of the Lord to enter at once into the promised land because of their unbelief and disobedience (Num. 14: 22-24; Heb. 3:7-19), the children of Israel remained for a time in Kadesh. Kadesh was the scene not only of sin, but also of sorrow, for there Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Moses, died (Exod. 15:20; Num. 12:1, 26:59).

As in their earlier journeyings in the wilderness, the Israelites suffered for lack of water (Exod. 17:1). There is no refreshment for the wanderer upon this earth; the backslider in heart will experience spiritual drought so long as he remains separated from God, the Source of living water (Jer. 2:13; John 7:37-39). It is true to human experience that we are frequently called upon to face the same difficulties, problems and trials over and over again. We may think a conquest has been made, but the same enemy must be overcome in the same place time after time (Joshua 7:2-5; 8:3-5). Sometimes we may be "oppressed by new temptations", but more frequently "we seek relief from a long-felt grief".

The Israelites seemingly forgot the Lord's deliverance on the former occasion, and once again they murmured against God and against Moses (Exod. 16:2, 9; 17:2-7). The place must still be called Massah ("Temptation") and Meribah ("Strife"), for, instead of trusting God, they tempted Him, and strove against His dealings with them.

Moses and Aaron took their trouble to the Lord in prayer (Num. 16:22; Isa. 37:14); they poured out their hearts before a loving and powerful Saviour. The Lord will comfort all such who confide in Him (Psa. 33:18; 34:6; 46:1).

II. The Disobedience of the Leader—verses 7 to 13.

God answered the prayer of Moses and Aaron by revealing to them the course of action which would bring relief to the thirsty multitude. Moses was to take the rod which was the symbol of power, gather the people together, and speak to the rock. Water would then flow forth in abundance.

It would seem that Moses went forth too soon from the presence of the Lord. He was not yet prepared in heart to be a channel of divine blessing to the needy people. He should have tarried before the Lord until he was quiet and submissive. As it was, the sight of the people and the sound of their bitter complaints roused the man who was known for his meekness to angry impatience (Psa. 106:32, 33). Forgetting that he was merely God's instrument, Moses exalted himself and shouted: "Must we fetch you water out of this rock?"

Alas, no human hero is faultless (Psa. 14:1, 3; Rom. 3:10-

12, 23; 1 Cor. 10:12). Sin in thought and word soon led to sin in deed. Disregarding God's command, Moses struck the rock to which he had been commanded to speak.

God had pity upon the thirsty wanderers, and the waters gushed forth for their refreshment (Deut. 8:15; Neh. 9:15; Isa. 43:20, 48:21), but the mighty leader had failed God in the hour of crisis. He had dishonoured the name of Jehovah; he had refused to magnify and sanctify the Lord in the eyes of the people (Num. 27:14, Deut. 1:37, 3:26, 4:21, 32:51; Ezek. 36:23). They would think that it was a trifling matter to disregard His commands, nor would they know that He was a just and holy God. Moses had sinned as had the people. He, too, had been unwilling to follow the Lord wholly, and hence he was deemed unworthy to lead them into the land (Num. 14:24, 28-30).

There are several considerations which must be kept in mind if we would understand the seriousness of the offence of Moses. He had had the opportunity of knowing the Lord in an intimate way, for God had manifested Himself to him personally, directly and frequently (Exod. 33:11; Num. 12: 6, 8; Deut. 34:10). His unique privileges carried with them special responsibilities (Luke 12:48).

Moses occupied a position of prominence. Disloyalty or treason on the part of a high official is far more serious than in the case of an ordinary citizen, because of the force of his influence and example. Moses was also fully aware of the sentence which had been passed upon all but Caleb and Joshua of that whole generation for their failure to believe and obey God.

The typical significance of the sin of Moses lies in the fact that the rock represented Christ, and that Rock of Ages, once cleft for sinners, need never again be snitten; the one sacrifice was sufficient (1 Cor. 10:4; Heb. 9:25-28, 10:10-14).

III. The Discourtesy of the Brethren—verses 14 to 21.

The Israelites reached the border of the territory of the Edomites, the descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob or Israel (Gen. 32:28), from whom the Israelites descended (Gen. 36:1, 8, 9; Judges 11:16, 17). The Edomites were hence looked upon as brothers (Deut. 2:4-8, 23:7; Obad. 10:14). And yet, they showed no sympathy with their brother Israelites, refused them assistance and even the right of passage through the land (Num. 21:4; Deut. 2:29; Ezek. 25:12-14, 35:1-5, 15). Possibly they feared that the Israelites would make good the promise of the Lord that the descendants of Esau, the elder brother, should serve the descendants of Jacob, the younger brother (Gen. 27:29, 37-40). The sin of Edom was punished in later years, and the prophetic word was literally fulfilled (1 Sam. 14:47; 2 Sam. 8:14; 2 Kings 8:20).

As Esau is a type of the flesh with its carnal yearnings, Israel is a type of the spirit (Gen. 25:30, 31; Heb. 12:16). The strife between Edom and Israel is symbolic of the continual strife between the flesh and the spirit in the life of the believer (Gal. 5:17).

IV. The Death of the Priest—verses 22 to 29

Aaron shared the punishment as he shared the guilt of Moses. He must be stripped of his priestly robes and see Eleazar his son sanctified as High Priest (Exod. 29:29, 30).

It is fitting that each of these two conspicuous leaders of Israel should die on a mountain (Num. 33:38, 39; Deut. 10:6, 32:50, 34:1-6; Psa. 116:15). The congregation mourned for Aaron thirty days (Gen. 50:3; Deut. 34:8).

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