

# The Gospel Witness

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AND IN DEFENCE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.  
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"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."—Romans 1:16.

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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

HOW GOD USES THE WEAK TO CONFOUND THE MIGHTY—EXEMPLIFIED BY FINLAND

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, January 14th, 1940

(Stenographically Reported)

"Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.  
"Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it?  
I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.  
"The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: because I give  
waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen."  
—Isaiah 18-20.

No word that God has ever uttered can become obsolete. In the nature of the case, it cannot be. The breath of God is in it; and "whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever."

The earlier revelations of God are not rendered obsolete by later disclosures of His mind; for every word of God is a revelation of His mind, and God is always the same; and as His thoughts cannot change or be rendered obsolescent, so the word of God—every word of God—must abide for ever. Nor is the text itself a contradiction of that principle. To speak broadly and comprehensively, Sinai is involved in Calvary; and the Law is comprehended in the Gospel. The earlier and partial revelations of God in the Old Testament were spectroscopic and elemental, and are all gathered up and comprehensively blended in "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Hence, the Old Testament is a prism, a spectroscope by which the light of the gospel is broken up into its constituents, so that every single element of it may be separately analyzed. Just as all the colours of the spectrum—red, violet, blue, pink, crimson, and all the rest—are included and comprehended in a single sunbeam, so all the colours, if I may so say, the varied colours of the Old Testament are brought together in a glorious harmony in the white light of the New.

My next text admonishes us, "Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old." Does that teach that the old things are outworn, and that it is useless for us to look to the records of the past for lessons for to-day, because God says, "Behold, I will do a new thing"? It is to the exposition and understanding

of the principles of this text we are to give our thought.

I used to have a man in this church who was a book-worm: he read everything—and he believed every book he read, however contradictory they were to each other. His opinions of to-day were a reflection of the last book he read. How little people think, religiously, in our day! How easily people are deceived, and led astray by all the new *isms* which are purveyed for men's delectation! Let us look at this Old Testament text and see whether we can learn something from it, so that we may be a little wiser after our meditation.

I.

I begin by saying that the principle of this text suggests that THE RESOURCES AND OPERATIONS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE ARE PERENNIALY MODERN. In that respect, I am a Modernist, although I hate what is involved in theological Modernism. But I believe that God, in His plans and purposes for the world, is always abreast of the times. There is a subtle danger of men's thinking of Jehovah as though He were one of the gods of the ancients. It is possible for one to conceive of God as though He were an outworn deity. Even believers fall into the error of supposing that the last miracle has been wrought, that the last wonder has stepped from the unknown into the sphere of human knowledge, understanding, and experience. Henceforth life is to be commonplace and monotonous, perfectly understandable; everything in it is to be found within the range of finite reckoning and measurement.

So Israel thought. As they looked back through the vistas of the centuries, they saw in their remote history

the outline of a divine scheme of things, they were able to discern something of the plan and purpose of God in their history. They said, "God was there; God was in our past." But now they were disposed to write all the wonders of His grace in the past tense. When Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees, and went out, "not knowing whither he went", he went under divine leadership and convoy. That was the beginning of Israel's national history. There followed the miraculous birth of Isaac, and later, the miraculous birth of a whole nation, when they were brought out of Egypt, were born from the sea; and miraculously sustained in the wilderness; and by pillar of cloud and of fire, brought into possession of the land of promise. As they looked back at the past they were able to see that God was in their history in the days that were gone. That was to them the "beginning of days"—as well it might be; but in succeeding generations they were tempted to look wistfully to the past, with a feeling that God was altogether behind them.

How many Christians there are like that. They remember a day when they were converted; when they were the subject of the miraculous operation of the divine Spirit; they remember a day when God did something for them which no one else could have done. They are fond of talking of the past, of the revivals of days gone by. There are modern Christians who speak of the days of Luther, and Wesley, and Finney and Moody and Spurgeon. And they say, "But this is a different day, and it is useless to expect any such miracles in our day." Our text is spoken to contradict and correct that very tendency—"Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing."

I say, it is a human tendency to write the miraculous in the past tense. We still think of the period covered by the records of the Old and New Testaments, as representative of a time when God seemed to be nearer to this world and more manifestly present in the lives of men and of nations than He is to-day. We are fond of remembering "the former things", and of considering "the things of old", of living too largely in the past.

I would remind you that *that settled, retrospective attitude of mind involves a misconception of God and of the divine order of things.* God is not a God of the past only, but a God of the present. We are not to think of Him as having exhausted Himself by all the wonders of old. He is never at an end of His resources. "Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering;—for it was without number." That is a faint adumbration of the divine treasury of wisdom and of grace. However full of wonders the record of grace may be, there are other and equal marvels yet to be manifested in the providence of God; and if we are men and women of faith, we shall live in the realization that our God is a "very present help in time of trouble"; that the hand of God is still a factor in the lives of men. And was it ever more necessary that this truth should be fully appreciated and wholly depended upon than it is in our day? Was there ever a day when humanity in general was more manifestly in need of the presence and power of God than the day in which we live?

Jeremiah uttered the same truth as Isaiah: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth, that brought up the Children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven

them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers." Our Lord said the same thing. His was a life of miracle; some new wonder characterized His ministry every day. Many signs did Jesus, manifesting His Messiahship, but He said, "The works that I do, shall ye do also; and greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to my Father." Luke said the same thing. Luke was the author of the Acts of the Apostles. He refers to the Gospel which bears his name, in the opening paragraph of the Acts when he says, "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen." In other words he said, "The Gospel which bears my name was a record of the miracles of Jesus during His incarnation, of all that He began both to do and teach, in the days of His flesh, until the day in which he was taken up. I am now about to write another record of what Jesus, ascended on high and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, is continuing to do."

The wonders of grace did not cease with the conclusion of the canon of Scripture, for *this principle has ever been the promise and pledge of the progress of truth and righteousness in the world:* "Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing." He will show us new wonders in our day. God is always doing some new thing. God did not exhaust Himself even at Pentecost. The history of the Christian church is the fulfilment of the promise of my text; and it is to-morrow's hope for the world—that God will do some new thing.

It is my hope, it is your hope; and though we were just now in an absolutely unique situation, full of direst perils, we could still find promise of enlargement and deliverance in the Word of God. Suppose our present situation were absolutely without precedent? Suppose there were nothing in the history of the past to justify our emergence from our present difficulty, still my text applies, "Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth." Again and again on the page of history God has shown Himself equal to every emergency.

Before I leave this point, let me urge *the permanent value of this promise of perennially new unfoldings of the divine purpose and power.* Can we doubt, for example, that Abraham Lincoln was as truly an instrument of Providence raised up to accomplish the exodus of a race, as Moses? We have no divinely inspired record of the life of Lincoln as we have of Moses; but Lincoln was assuredly one of God's new things. And shall I be misunderstood if I say that since this infallible record of divine Providence which we call the Bible was completed, the world has been blessed with many prophets as truly sent of God as was Elijah the Tishhite, or the apostle Paul, such as Augustine, Savonarola, and Wesley, and Whitfield; and Carey, and Spurgeon, and Finney, and Moody, and hosts of others who, though less conspicuous, were just as truly "sent from God" as John the Baptist. Joshua and Gideon, and David, in their military exploits were divine instruments. But so also were Cromwell, and William of Orange, and Wellington, and Garibaldi, and many others. And God is still doing new things in our day, and will do yet other new things

in our time. Let us not in melancholy retrospect remember the former things, nor consider thus the things of old; but rather in the record of the miraculous mercies of the past find inspiration to believe that God will do a new thing, that now it shall spring forth.

## II.

The text reveals THE GLORY OF DIVINE GRACE BY WHICH ALL PROVIDENTIAL OPERATIONS ARE ACTUATED. God here declares, "The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls." And they are to honour Him because, by the operations of His providence, as He says, "I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen."

What God does, *He does always for the honour of His own name.* "I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake." But He derives His greatest glory from the operations of His grace; and in all that He does in history, whether sacred or profane, He is providing drink for his people, who are His chosen.

We have here *a principle which may be used as a standard for the appraisal of all historical movements.* It is a light by which history may be interpreted, and the hand of God discerned. He is always so moving that He may be glorified in the salvation of His people.

In thus doing *He often employs the most unlikely instrumentalities.* We read this evening that it is His pleasure to use "the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence." But here is an almost staggering statement in the text. He says that "the beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls."

Look abroad over Europe to-day, and think of the wicked men who hold sway in Germany. Think of the godless hordes of Russia, think of Mussolini, and of the doubtful qualities of many who hold rule in the Balkans. Europe is a seething caldron, containing elements that are antagonistic to God; and in view of it, one is disposed to say, What is the world coming to? If I were to ask you to pray, perhaps some of you would ask, "Why pray? What can God do with a man like Hitler, or with men like Stalin or Mussolini? What can He do with these essentially evil elements in Europe's life?"

But we need not go to Europe to find evil. It abounds on this Continent. You can see it in our own national life. It abounds in our own individual histories. But I remind you, that God says, in effect that He is not shut up to pious men for the accomplishment of His purposes. It is not absolutely indispensable that He should have only praying men and praying women. Certainly God's special promises of grace are made to His people, who believe and pray: but He breaks in upon this darkened and almost hopeless world and sovereignly declares, "The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls."

Do you not think that, *that in all probability, is intended to be understood as figurative language?* Are not these things representative of the forces of darkness and evil? Does it not mean that God will get to Himself honour by the use of whomsoever He shall choose to use? And must we not therefore look for His hand in what is called "profane" history, as well as in the history of the

church? What sort of God is yours? A God Who works in church only? A God Who gets honour to Himself only at prayer meetings? A God Who confines His operations wholly to those who bow the knee and worship Him? The revelation of God in the Bible is that He is the God of all the earth, King of kings, and Lord of lords, Who "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

I would yield to none in laying emphasis on the importance of so proclaiming the evangel of grace that poor lost sinners may know that Jesus Christ, the Son of God died for them, and that they may put their trust in Him and be saved. But surely we live in a day when people who are Christians—indeed, all men—need a vision of that wide and universal sweep of things that the Bible comprehends when it represents God as One Who is not confined to one day a week, or to the places of prayer and worship, but as One Who is sovereign over all, of Whom it is said, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." But why is He so called? Because it is first written, "And the government shall be upon his shoulders." This Saviour Whom we preach declared ere He left this earth, "All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations." The Father hath committed all judgment to the Son; and in these days I do not conceive that I have fulfilled my duty as an expositor of the Word of God unless and until I make men to understand that this God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has something to do with every phase and sphere of human life and activity. He is with you in your office or shop; He presides over business affairs, over national movements; over all international interests. The King was right, when in his Christmas message he said that the only safe course for men and nations is to put their hand into the hand of God, and go out into the unknown with absolute confidence, because our God is such a God that nothing is exempt from His sovereign power. So I say, while we read of God in the Bible, which is the supremely authoritative record of God's revelation of Himself, yet God may be discerned in profane history as well as in sacred history.

Indeed, *is not all history of His making?* And, while we listen to the voice of angels, must we not follow the track of the beast of the field, and listen to the sound of the dragon in the night? And even to the screech of the owl in the darkness? For God has said, "These evil things are not beyond my providence. The beast of the field, the dragon, and the owl, shall honour me"—and that includes Stalin, and Hitler, and all evil-doers in the world.

*His sovereign power is always exercised in grace, and where naturally no waters flow, He will bring forth rivers, "to give drink to my people, my chosen".* There is scarcely one of the belligerent countries—if the mail still carries—that we do not touch from this pulpit every week. I received a letter recently from a brother in Holland, who was evidently a man of intelligence, but seemed to think I had not sufficiently emphasized the need of British and Canadian repentance. He had read my sermons on the war, and he said, "What about Canada? What about England? What about the United States? Have they committed no sin?" I replied that

I feared he had been reading to little purpose if he had not recognized my insistence that the Bible declares that we have all sinned. All I have said in respect to these matters has been, that while we have all sinned against God, we have not, nationally, sinned against Germany, that the war was unprovoked.

There are people in Europe in what is now a dark continent, godly people to whom and for whom God must make rivers to flow, to "give drink to (his) people, (his) chosen."

I wonder if you will think I am immodest if I tell you that just a little while before the war a man came into my office to see me. He said, "I am a missionary from Central Europe; my principal sphere of operation has been in Czechoslovakia." He told me he had known the great President Masaryck, intimately, and stated that he was an out-and-out Christian, a Christian in the evangelical sense; born again. He said that when he was buried his funeral service was conducted by an evangelical minister. He said, there is a large group of evangelical missionaries of all denominations operating in Central Europe, or at least there had been such a group before the war. Once a year they meet, sometimes in one country, sometimes in another. They meet to the number of about three hundred. They have a week's conference, with a ministers' institute where they talk about preaching the gospel. It is a kind of seminary class. He said his reason for wanting to meet me was, that for some years now they have been using the sermons in THE GOSPEL WITNESS as their text-book on homiletics!

THE GOSPEL WITNESS goes to all countries in Europe, and I know from that alone that in those countries there are people who love the Lord—and God will not forsake them. I got a letter from a German Pastor in Switzerland a year or so ago, who said he had had a visit from a German preacher from Germany, and that they had had fellowship together in the things of God; that they had sat up all night long reading sermons out of THE GOSPEL WITNESS; and he wrote to ask whether we could send the paper to the German Pastor without charge. It has been going to him and many others ever since, until the war; but now delivery has been suspended.

I know that Europe is dark. All the countries are dark, Bulgaria, Roumania, Yugoslavia. There is a large godly element in Czechoslovakia. Some years ago I had a deputation of Russians come to see me. They represented the Russians of the whole Soviet Republic—the Presidents of the Baptist Unions of Ukraine, of Siberia, of the Archangel district, Baptists who told me that they had two hundred thousand baptized believers in Russia; and that there was another body that they knew of which numbered about fifty thousand evangelicals. In that land that we think of as a godless land, there are still many who believe in God, a "remnant according to the election of grace".

As for Finland, there are hosts of believers there. It is a godly country in comparison with some others. So is Sweden. There are many Christians in Norway, in Denmark, in Belgium, in Holland, in Switzerland, and in France. I know of some in Italy who love the gospel of God's grace. And I know God will not forsake His people in these countries, and as my text says, "I will make rivers to flow." He has done it before,—even in Germany; and He will do it again.

It would be much to my liking to confine the applica-

tion of this scripture to the life of the individual, and try to set forth for your admiration some of the wonders of divine grace. There are certain modern teachers who think it is hopeless to attempt anything in the wilderness, or in the desert. They seem to think that before the gospel can triumph, circumstances must be so ordered by other agencies as to make it possible—as though the gospel were a delicate exotic that must be nursed in some kind of ecclesiastical hothouse, and that cannot stand the rigours of the winters of this world. Here is a mighty argument for missions, whether among the savages of Africa or the savages of the slums: God declares Himself to be equal to such a combination as "the beasts of the field" and "dragons" and "owls;" the "wilderness", the "desert." (How would you like to have a choir made up of beasts and dragons and owls, Mr. Hutchinson?) What a choir! Beasts and dragons and owls!

How shall they praise the Lord? The Lord says, "I will make them." He made a dumb ass speak once upon a time, and to speak wisely. I am always encouraged by that; it gives hope for all of us! If He can do that, there is nothing He cannot do. But He says, "I will use them all, and in the midst of it, flowing through the wilderness, there shall be a river, springing in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen." If He can make the wrath of man to praise Him, He can use beasts, and dragons, and owls.

Are we going to see anything like that in Europe? War is always terrible. There are some people who are concerned about what ought to be done after the war! How can anyone know what conditions will obtain "after the war", when God gets through? How can you know what God is going to do with the beast and the dragon and the owl? How do you know that it is not God's way of opening up rivers in the desert to give drink to His people? God has not exhausted Himself; and in all history that is what God has done. Primarily, He is not interested in governments or political situations; they are only a means to an end. When you see Him subduing the beast of the field, be assured, it is with a view to the good of His people.

### III.

"The Lord will give grace and glory." HOW DOES HE MAKE THESE RIVERS OF GRACE TO FLOW? I have often wished that some people would give a little attention to history. It would give them a new perspective in life.

It is important that we read history that we may know what God has done.

For illustration, I take you back to the sixteenth century, to the great movement in Europe known as the Reformation. The main channel was Luther—and how dark at that time Europe was! Hopeless! And yet Luther was God's instrument for that day. But the Reformation did not begin with Luther any more than the St. Lawrence begins with Lake Ontario. Nor did the Reformation begin with Luther's time. It would be as correct to affirm that the Nile begins in Egypt. Trace that great movement of which Luther was the channel, to its source, and you will find it through the principle of the text; and that God was at work in many places at once.

Before the war broke, we thought the fighting was going to be in Czechoslovakia; that was postponed through Munich. I can sleep more comfortably since the war broke out than I could before. I think if we had had another Munich, the whole world would have become a

madhouse. But how little did anyone know how things were going! Czechoslovakia? No. Well, then, on the Western Front? No. It started in Poland, and Poland was immediately overwhelmed. The world was terrified at what was going to happen in the war. Everyone was. People who know nothing about it, write volumes on matters of that sort, and put terror into the hearts of people.

An expert chemist of the United States Army said in Toronto that all this talk about cities being destroyed by gas is sheer nonsense, that our motor cars in Toronto release the deadliest gas known, and that more is released every day than a swarm of aeroplanes could possibly release upon a city—and yet we live. I know there are heavier gases which cling to the earth. How wise we are! I said to a business man the other day, "I get great comfort every time I go up Yonge Street. When I see that white elephant that the Canadian Pacific Railway put up in the North Toronto Station, only to find it was of no use to them, I say to myself, If the Canadian Pacific directors make mistakes, why should I be greatly troubled if I make mistakes? Similarly, we imagine that statesmen have great wisdom. I wish they had more!

But nobody knew, and while we sat down and waited on the Western Front for operations there, the enemy marched into Poland. Someone said to me a few weeks ago, "Did you get the news this morning? Russia has marched!" Everyone was afraid. A great many Russians have reached the end of their march! A little country of three and a half million, godly people many of them, from the Commander-in-Chief down, stood up against a company of soldiers representing one hundred and eighty-five millions; and so far have beaten them at every turn. "The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls"; and in this instance Finland seems to be God's instrument to make the Russian bear honour Him. Did you ever see the picture of Napoleon, "The Retreat from Moscow"? Snow everywhere, and the great Napoleon riding his horse, with head bowed, beaten, defeated—not by men, but by the forces of nature. The weatherman will tell you that it is perfectly natural. So be it; but God can do things in a natural way, so that people scarcely recognize the supernatural element. But the fact is, there is colder weather in Germany and Russia and most of Europe, than there has been for many a year. I read the other day that even the blockade of Germany was being effected more by ice than by the British Navy. The old Book tells us that "by the breath of God frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened." It is enough that He should breathe upon this old world, and the Niagaras are stilled, and mighty armies are immobilized, and destroyed. Ours is a great God!

We may be in the beginning of a new reformation in Europe. Someone may ask, "Why our immunity here and in England?" Certainly we have forsaken the Lord both here and there. Grievously have we offended against Him by our failure properly to recognize and obey His word. But you must go back to Wyclif and to Wyclif's Bible, and to all the influences which his life and teachings set in motion, to understand the subsequent Reformation in England. So in Luther's own time, movements broke out in many places, and they all helped to swell the tide of the Reformation; they were tributaries, flowing into this mighty river which God Himself had made to flow.

If I had time I would point out to you that *the excesses of the Papacy of that day were used of God*. They were as the mighty call of the dragons and owls which awakened the people of a continent from their slumber, and God used them to honour Himself. In Italy, there was the revival of letters, but all paving the way for the dissemination of the truth of the gospel, simultaneously with a kindling in the hearts of the people of God of a burning thirst for the water of life.

There were corrupting streams that flowed into the main stream and made it muddy; but synchronizing with all that was Tyndale's great translation of the Bible—he was the real author of our Authorized Version—and it was God's way of giving drink to His people, His chosen; by making the word of God available, rivers were opened in the deserts.

That period of history is most interesting. In later history Carey springs up, and with him the great missionary movement, and Wesley and the evangelical revival. Then years after Wesley's death, thirteen years after Carey went to India, there was a man called Joseph Hughes who conceived the idea of giving the Bible without note or comment to all peoples, so that they might have the word of God in their own language for themselves; and thus began the British and Foreign Bible Society. The first grant they made was two hundred and fifty thousand dollars to the Baptist Press of India, to print the Bible. All these movements worked together to make the dragon and the owl to honour God, and to give drink to His people, His chosen.

What God did in that ancient time, He can do again. "Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old."

I do not know what instrument in England God may find, or in France, in the army, in the navy, in the air; the gallant generalissimo of Finland may be one. But I am pointing out to you that when God recruits His army, and providentially selects men for His purposes, He qualifies them for their task. He will find men in our day as statesmen. There may be a long, dark period sometimes, when it seems as though all great things were to be written in the past, and then at last God speaks. He says, "Now it shall spring forth." Someone will arise in legislative halls, in the counsels of state, on the field of battle—and one shall "chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight." It was ever God's way to choose the weak things of the world to confound the mighty. By all means must we prepare, and support every movement which aims at the mobilization of all our resources for the winning of the war; but what I want you to keep always in mind is that over and above it all, God is looking on. He is more than looking on: He is really the Generalissimo. He says so. All through the Old Testament, one of His favourite titles is, "Jehovah of hosts" the Lord of hosts; and in Exodus we read, "The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name."

When He goes forth against the workers of iniquity, the beast of the field, the dragon, and the owls, are made to fulfil His sovereign purposes.

Do you need that? I do. I hope I am not less evangelistic than some others. I would fain win you to Christ, and make you to understand, as individuals, that none but Jesus can do helpless sinners good; and that for our personal salvation there is nothing but faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that will avail. But, believing that, let us remember also that the One Who is our Saviour is

also our King; and that everything is in His hands, and because it is in His hands, in the end of the day we shall find again rivers flowing in the wilderness, and waters springing up in the desert; and God Himself having His way, not only in the lives of individuals, but among the nations of the earth. Let us trust Him, trust Him with all our hearts; and so our hearts shall be garrisoned by the peace of God which passeth all understanding. Thus and so we shall be one of God's new things, just a little tributary to swell this mighty river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. Amen.

### A STORY OF HUNGRY CHILDREN

We confess to an innate reluctance to advertise our own need. We have sometimes almost envied some preachers who seem really to enjoy asking for money. Perhaps they do not, but rather vicariously rejoice in others' giving.

We have seen a great deal of "hilarious" giving. We assume that the readers of THE GOSPEL WITNESS, with few exceptions, are not rich people. They are probably not among those who, of their surplus, cast in unto the offerings of God. The majority will be people whose giving to any religious object involves a positive sacrifice.

Personally, this Editor would always rather give than receive. We have on numerous occasions been entertained by someone else at luncheon or dinner, where our host paid the bill. And for some reason or another, we hardly ever enjoy a dinner under such circumstances; but when we have been permitted to entertain someone else and pay the bill ourselves, it always seemed to us that the meal had some kind of extra relish.

But to come to the point. We are driven, as usual, to appeal for our hungry children. We have known proud parents, who themselves would rather starve than ask for help; but when they saw the need of their children, they pocketed their pride and humbled themselves to solicit food for the family. So when we think of our *Seminary* and GOSPEL WITNESS funds, and remember how hungry they are, we are forced to put our pride aside and to ask our friends to help us this year as they have done in years gone by.

We are in the eighteenth year of publication, and, God willing, expect to complete the eighteenth volume in May. The *Seminary* is in its fourteenth year, and both funds are as needy as ever. We read last night of the death of a man who had devoted himself to the giving away of a hundred million dollars. Most of it had been given to educational and other benevolent institutions such as hospitals and homes. As we read the account, we could not help saying, How we wish some friend could have introduced us to him, so that we might have presented the *Seminary* need.

We know of no institution in the Dominion of Canada doing the class of work that is being done by *Toronto Baptist Seminary*, where young men can go to prepare for the ministry with the assurance that their faith will be helped and not hindered. There are, of course, Bible colleges and institutes which teach the Bible, and for whose ministry we are grateful; but we know of no institution, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, of any denomination, of the same educational standing as the *Seminary*, that is true to the Bible as the word of God.

The men the *Seminary* has turned out, and the work they are doing, are, of course, its greatest credential.

We need money for the *Seminary*—we need a lot of money. We could do with thousands of dollars without extravagance. And we ask the friends of the *Seminary* to send us what they can between now and the 31st of March.

But there are others who have some money which they cannot take with them to heaven, and who have not yet made their will, or if they have made it, have not given a place in it to *Toronto Baptist Seminary*. Will you not put in a clause at once to ensure that some of what you possess will help to preach the gospel after you are gone? Leave it to, "*Toronto Baptist Seminary, connected with Jarvis Street Baptist Church*", so there can be no mistaking the identity of the institution.

Then, for THE GOSPEL WITNESS we plead also. We have had a good year so far. Our readers need not be told what THE WITNESS is. We are sure that if we had space to publish the appreciative letters that reach us from many parts of the world, our supporters would feel that THE GOSPEL WITNESS is a missionary enterprise that is well worth supporting. The WITNESS will close its year March 31st also; and we need funds over and above our regular income, to assure the balancing of our books at the end of the year.

We remind our friends that the last year and ten months have not been easy for us. The bulk of our support for both the *Seminary* and THE GOSPEL WITNESS must come from Jarvis Street Church itself. Since March 4th, 1938, we have been put to enormous extra expense. Of the twenty-three months, we were fifteen months out of our building, with the extra expense of *Massey Hall*. Then we had to raise a very large sum for the Building Fund; and while assuming these extra burdens, we had to try to maintain the *Seminary*, THE GOSPEL WITNESS, and all our missionary interests.

From the time the Pastor returned to duty after four months' illness, in August, 1937, until now, he has never been able to take any kind of holiday; nor has he had any respite from the anxieties which the support of these institutions involves. We are, however, most grateful for the prayers of God's people, and for the answer which God has given, which has made it possible for us to carry on. But we are extremely anxious that the extra effort on account of *Building Fund* should not force us into the red in the *Seminary* and GOSPEL WITNESS Funds.

We appeal to our friends for help for these funds because they have to do with interests which exercise a greater ministry to the people beyond the boundaries of Jarvis Street Church than to the church itself. Will you therefore send us as large a gift as you can for each of these funds between now and the 31st of March. And please do not wait until March 31st. If only we can have such help during this month so as to be able to announce early in March that we could already see our way to balanced books, what a relief it would be! We are grateful for the help given us hitherto, and confidently expect a generous response this year. Let us hear from you as soon as possible.

### SERMON ON RAPTURE AND TRIBULATION

The sermon on above subject published in last week's issue is now in booklet form. See advertisement last page.



### A GOOD STORY

We print below the story of a little girl of seven in the Primary Department of Jarvis Street Bible School. Very often little children have a way of getting to the heart of the matter more quickly than their more sophisticated elders:

A little girl of seven in the Primary Department heard Mr. Frey speak on the French work last Sunday morning in their Department. When Mr. Frey showed the pictures of the boys and girls in France and Switzerland, and told them what had been done for them by their pastors and missionaries, this little girl said, "I have eighty-three cents, and I should like to give it to help those boys and girls. I have it in my bank, and you know, it isn't doing a bit of good in the bank!"

It may be that some of our readers have some money that "isn't doing a bit of good in the bank". We know many places where it could be made to do good. The Seminary Fund, THE GOSPEL WITNESS FUND, the Jarvis Street Building Fund, and, of course, many other needy causes, might be helped by money that "isn't doing a bit of good in the bank". If you happen to have any, perhaps you will remember some of these funds.

### TO OUR BRITISH SUBSCRIBERS

In our issue of December 21st, we called attention to the difficulty some of our subscribers were meeting in sending subscriptions to Canada, on account of the restrictions placed upon sending money out of the country. We have now made arrangements, through our Toronto bank, whereby it will be possible for our Overseas subscribers to deposit their subscriptions with the London branch of the bank, or any contributions they desire to make to any of our varied Jarvis Street interests. The address is: The Canadian Bank of Commerce, 2 Lombard St., London E.C.3, England.

In future, as subscriptions expire, notices will be sent as usual, and our subscribers may remit to The Canadian Bank of Commerce at the above address. It would help us if they would advise us that the subscription had been so paid. Notices of subscription expirations in future, and for the duration of the war, for British subscribers, will contain a slip which will require only a signature to say that the subscription has been sent to The Canadian Bank of Commerce, London.

The same method can be used by any who desire to support our work by definite contributions. They could send their contributions to the Bank of Commerce, London, to the credit of Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto. Even though it should prove to be impossible to have this money forwarded to us here, it would be greatly to the advantage of our funds to have something to our credit in the London bank.

### THE WEEK-END IN JARVIS STREET

Sunday was a good day, with a great congregation both morning and evening. In the evening we were favoured with a great address by Dr. John Wesley Bready, author of, "England Before and After Wesley". Dr. Bready's address was really an epitome of his great book, in which he showed that social movements, effecting the amelioration of the conditions of the masses, the development of democracy itself with all its free institutions—indeed all the things that have contributed to make England great, and to enable her to stand, grew out of the evangelical revival. His contention was that all social progress

grows out of the preaching of the gospel of Christ to the individual, and never the reverse. We wish that churches everywhere could hear Dr. Bready on this subject.

### UNION NEWS

#### FURTHER RESULTS OF OUR GREAT CONVENTION

All those who attended our last great Convention will remember that the discussion of How to Raise More Money for Missions was one of the high times of the Convention that was a feast of good things. The contribution of Rev. Robt. Guthrie, backed home by the hearty amen of one of his deacons, was especially good. Since the Convention we have heard from a number of churches that went home to "do likewise", and when Mr. Guthrie mentioned Briscoe Street's plan in a recent letter we specially requested that he give it to us in more detail that it might serve for the encouragement of all our churches towards the same end of raising more money for missions. Here it is:

"A word about our missionary objective at Briscoe Street for this Convention year. Since the last Convention, Briscoe Street Baptist Church has taken steps to increase its missionary givings. The plans adopted will help to answer the question that was discussed at the last Convention, namely, how to raise money for missions. Our answer is threefold.

"First, with regard to our *Bible School*. The extent of our Bible School givings to missions last year was what came in through our birthday lighthouse, that is, about \$30.00 a year. Since the Convention, the Bible School has adopted a plan that \$1.00 a week go to missions from our Bible School offerings. That will mean an increase in our Bible School missionary offering of \$52.00 a year. This is just a starting point. We hope to be in a position later to double this amount.

"Second, our *Young People's meeting*. Our Young People's meeting is just over two years' old. It is a thriving work, and a spiritual force in the church. Since the Convention our Young People have adopted a plan to give one-quarter of their offerings to missions this year. This is a good start, and we hope will be increased with the growth of our Young People's work.

"Third, the *Church* itself. The Church has planned to hold one missionary prayer meeting each month. Prayer for the missionaries and information regarding their work will play a leading part. Then the church has adopted a plan to increase its missionary givings also. Over and above the weekly missionary income through the envelope system, the church will hold two special missionary Sundays during the year, when a missionary offering with special envelopes will be received. This will increase our missionary givings considerably, as every member of the church will have the opportunity to contribute.

"Because of these three steps taken since the last Convention, Briscoe Street should be able to give a practical demonstration before next Convention as to how to increase our missionary givings."—R.D.G.

### Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 4 First Quarter Lesson 6 February 11th, 1940

#### THE HOUSE BUILT UPON THE ROCK

Lesson Text: Matthew 7.

Golden Text: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."—Matthew 7:21.

I. The Two Judgments—verses 1 to 6.

It is not right for a Christian to set himself up as a judge of his fellows. We seldom know all the factors which influence the life of another, and perfect knowledge as well as perfect love are qualifications of a righteous judge. We must not think ourselves superior to others and condemn them in a spirit of censoriousness (Lk. 6:37, 38; Rom. 14:4, 10-13; 1 Cor. 4:3-5; 10:12; Jas. 4:11, 12). If we do, we must expect others to do the same to us.

Experience illustrates the truth of the Scriptural statement that one who is quick to condemn another may be guilty of the same sin; we hate that sin which may cause our downfall, yet we are brave to fight against it only when it is found in another (Rom. 2:1-3, 21-23).

Let us judge ourselves, before we presume to judge others (John 8:7; 1 Cor. 11:31). Our brother's failings will then seem small beside our own faults; the minute splinter in our brother's eye may be as nothing when compared to the monstrous beam of wood in our own (Lk. 6:41, 42; Gal. 6:1).

On the other hand, it is frequently necessary to make decisions in our minds concerning certain individuals, and we are to use judgment in discerning their attitude. There are some to whom it is not wise to unfold the precious truth, for in so doing we would expose to contempt that which is sacred. Dogs and swine in Scripture represent that which is unclean and unholy (Deut. 14:8; 23:18; Phil. 3:2; Rev. 22:15). Swine might trample upon pearls and dogs might turn and seek to destroy the one offering them something valuable. Sometimes we must be silent lest we give people an opportunity to insult our holy God (Eccles. 3:1, 7; Matt. 27:14).

#### II. The Two Fathers—verses 7 to 12.

Scholars will be interested in discovering the acrostic in verse 7, where the first letters of the key words ask, seek and knock form the word ASK.

Notice the simplicity of the Lord's promise concerning prayer. To ask is to receive; to seek is to find; to knock is to gain admission. The Lord will honour the request which is made in faith in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 21:22; Mk. 11:24; Lk. 11:9, 10; John 15:7; 1 John 5:14, 15).

We may trust also in the sincerity of our Lord. An earthly father deals with the request of his son in an honourable manner. With all his frailties, a Jewish father would not mock his son by giving him a stone in place of the roll of bread which resembled a stone. So also will our heavenly Father deal gently, kindly and sincerely with His children, giving them good gifts (Lk. 11:11-13).

Verse 12, which is called "The Golden Rule", sums up the teaching of one of the great commandments of the Old Testament; namely, the duty of love to one's neighbours (Matt. 22:39, 40; 2 John 5).

#### III. The Two Ways—verses 13 to 20.

This portion of the lesson might well be illustrated by means of pictures, blackboard or pencil drawings. The way of the world is compared to a road which is broad, easy and popular, whereas the way of the Lord is like a road which is narrow, difficult and unpopular. The one road with its wide gate leads to death; the other road with its narrow gate leads to eternal life (Psa. 1; Prov. 14:12). It requires no effort to drift with the crowd (Exod. 23:2; Heb. 2:1-3), but one must strive in order to enter the gate which leads to life. There will be no room for pride, self-sufficiency or sin as we come to Christ, the Door of the fold (Mk. 10:23-27; Lk. 13:23, 24; John 10: 7, 9).

The Lord's prophets lead men in the way of truth, but false prophets lead men in the way of evil (Jer. 23:9-17; 2 Pet. 2: 1, 2). The danger lies on the fact that these false leaders come disguised, as believers, when in reality they are wolves who intend to prey upon the sheep. They think only of their own gain (Isa. 56:11; Ezek. 34:2-4; Col. 2:8, Revised Version).

Since one cannot recognize false teachers by their outward profession, it will be necessary to examine the results of their teachings (Lk. 6:43-45; 1 Tim. 1:3-7; 1 John 4:1).

#### IV. The Two Foundations—verses 21 to 29.

The profession of the lips, to be accepted, must be prompted by a heart filled with genuine love for the Lord (Isa. 29:13; Ezek. 33:31; 2 Tim. 3:5). In some cases wonderful works may be classed as iniquitous works. Our Lord is not deceived by outward appearances, for He knows the heart of man (1 Sam. 16:7; John 2:23-25; Heb. 4:13).

The profession of the lips must be seconded by the action of the hands. If we call Christ our Lord and King, we must obey Him as such (Lk. 6:46-49; 13:25-27; John 13:17; Jas. 4:17).

A man is not saved by merely hearing the word of the Lord, unless he also heeds it. Trust in the Lord includes the submission of the heart and will to His person, as well as the consent of the mind to His teachings. By means of the parable of the two foundations our Lord teaches that the

wise man will have as a foundation for his life the assurance that his faith in Christ is a reality. No storm can shatter his convictions or move him from his steadfastness, for his confidence is in the Lord.

On the other hand, that man is foolish who depends upon a mere profession of Christ. He may have received a theoretical knowledge of the truth of salvation, but he has no experimental knowledge of the Gospel (Matt. 13:19-22). He has not welcomed the truth into his heart; he has not given it hospitality (2 Thess. 2:10-15). His is a spurious faith which may be of good appearance, but which will not stand the test of adversity.

The people had evidently heard at least part of this message to the disciples, for they were astonished at his teaching (Matt. 13:54; 22:33; Mk. 1:22; 6:2; Lk. 4:32). It had the note of authority because the Lord Himself had all authority (Matt. 28:18; John 7:46).

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