

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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FOUR ANNIVERSARIES IN MAY!

WITH this issue THE GOSPEL WITNESS begins its nineteenth year of publication. The whole number is "Nine hundred and thirty-eight". During that time, it has always carried one sermon a week, and if the Seminary sessions were put together, for some years, at least two a week.

We need not review our history. When we began we had little thought of making it more than a local paper, carrying the weekly sermon. But THE WITNESS has spread itself over the English-speaking world, and into many foreign lands—about sixty countries in all. We are grateful for the many testimonies that have reached us through the years, of the Lord's blessing on the printed word to saint and sinner; and, we humbly and gratefully record, to not a few prominent Christian leaders.

We have long regarded THE GOSPEL WITNESS as a missionary enterprise, and we could tell of many it has put into the ministry, of many new churches it has established, and of missionary causes it has sponsored. We must be content with recording that we begin with this issue our nineteenth year.

Toronto Baptist Seminary Anniversary

The Seminary has just concluded its thirteenth year of service. During the years, many have come to us, as to other institutions, who began well, but "were soon hindered". Some have completed one of our courses, and returned to their churches to render, as we hope, more efficient service in unofficial positions. But we have now one hundred and ten of our students engaged in full-time religious service, most of them—nearly all of them, in fact—either pastors at home or missionaries abroad.

Some of these have revived apparently dying churches; others are rendering fine service in churches well established and healthy; and a good number of others have begun new churches, and continue to serve them. Twenty-one of the hundred and ten are missionaries abroad.

When it is considered that the Seminary was begun without a cent of capital, and that the period of its ministry included the severest depression within the memory of living men, the Seminary will be looked upon as a monument to the enabling grace of God.

The Lord, in His mercy, has laid it upon the hearts of not a few people from time to time, to give the Seminary a place in their wills; and its continuance has been made possible, in no small measure, by such bequests. But

they have never been large, nor sufficiently substantial to make them the nucleus of an endowment fund. They have come to us for the maintenance of our regular work. We hope many others have already given the Seminary a place in their wills.

But we are grateful also, and especially, to those who have seen the need of providing for the Seminary's necessities month by month, and as they have been able, have sent us their contributions. We still look to many of them with confidence for a continuance of their generous gifts.

Opening of Our New Building May 28th, 1939

A third anniversary falls within this month, and that will be the first anniversary of our entering into our new building. The new church was opened May 28th, 1939. Since that time, we have enjoyed much blessing, and have found our more commodious working-quarters most useful.

Thirtieth Anniversary of the Present Pastor

A fourth anniversary, by the day of the month, will fall on the fifteenth of May. That day will mark the completion by the Pastor of thirty years in the pastorate of Jarvis Street Church. Looking back over the years, from some points of view, it does not seem very long; viewed from some other angles, it seems almost an eternity.

We came to Jarvis Street four years before the beginning of the Great War, and for four years the blessing of the Lord was upon us. In June of that year, we began an addition to the church which was estimated to cost about sixty thousand dollars. The full amount had been subscribed; but before the foundation had been completed the war broke out in August, nineteen-fourteen, and all work was stopped. We put a roof over the basement the next Spring, and then gave all attention to the war. Three hundred men went from Jarvis Street Church, and forty-one paid the full price of their devotion.

In September, nineteen hundred and nineteen, the denominational war broke out, when we had to stand against those who were disposed to treat the Word of God—or parts of it—as though it were little more than another "scrap of paper". In less than two years, April, nineteen hundred and twenty-one, the conflict broke out

in Jarvis Street—for the enemy had wormed his way in, as the Germans did into Norway. (We know all about the difficulties of the Norwegian campaign!)

We did not retreat, however, either from Narvik or Trondheim, but fought on until victory was complete. Having made the Jarvis Street fortress secure, the denominational conflict continued until in nineteen hundred and twenty-seven a new convention was formed. Since then, we have known the vicissitudes of Spring and Summer and Autumn, but God in His mercy has given us great spiritual harvests.

On March fourth, nineteen-thirty-eight, a disastrous fire took place, which was undoubtedly of incendiary origin. Our loss was estimated at about three hundred thousand dollars, for which we received insurance of two hundred and ten thousand dollars. The building was reconstructed at a total cost of three hundred and eighty-seven thousand dollars.

We are grateful to the membership of Jarvis Street Church, and to friends outside the church, who have provided a very large part of the difference between that received from insurance and the total cost; but we still need many thousands of dollars before we can be free of debt.

We have thus briefly reviewed these thirty years, that our readers may see that for this Editor they have been rather strenuous years. For many years now Jarvis Street Church has enjoyed the blessing within itself of undisturbed peace. In this we rejoice, and for it we are profoundly grateful to God.

Help Us Celebrate

Having said all this, greatly daring, we make an appeal to all our friends. From the ends of the earth the Lord has given us proof of His blessing upon the ministry of the Word in Jarvis Street Pulpit extended through the printed page. Countless thousands, too, have been blessed through the ministry of our Seminary students.

May 24th in the Pastor's Vestry

The Pastor proposes to spend May twenty-fourth in his vestry from morning until evening; and he invites as many friends as can possibly do so, in the church and outside of it, *to come and visit him on that anniversary day; and to bring an offering for the Building Fund.*

How Many Times Thirty?

Perhaps the thirty years of his pastorate might serve as a standard of measurement. The children in the Sunday School will, we are sure, help to celebrate. Some may bring only a cent a year; some may be able to bring five cents a year; the older ones may make it more than that. Some members of the church might, by a great effort, strive to make their contribution a dollar a year as a minimum—thirty dollars for the Building Fund. Of course, there will be some who cannot do that, but they may make it half that amount; but *we trust there will be many, many—the vast majority of the membership—who will endeavour to make up the dollar a year.* Others might be able to give two dollars a year—sixty dollars for the Building Fund. Or perhaps five dollars—a hundred and fifty dollars for the Building Fund. Or even ten dollars—three hundred dollars. And some, perhaps twenty or twenty-five dollars a year for the thirty years. But whatever it be, we appeal to our friends to do the best possible.

The Pastor will mail an envelope to all the members of the church, and envelopes will be available in the pews for all who will use them, every Sunday between now and May twenty-fourth. Hosts of friends come to Jarvis Street more or less regularly, who are not members. Perhaps they will help us with the Building Fund. Envelopes will be given also to all members of the Sunday School, and we hope as many as possible will bring those envelopes personally on the twenty-fourth of May.

The Adding Machine Will Be at Hand

The Pastor will have help. The adding machine will be on hand, so the offering can be counted as it comes in. A place will be provided on the envelope where friends can mark the amount contained in the envelope, so that the offering can be counted without opening the envelope.

This word will go to many who are beyond the reach of Toronto. Many a GOSPEL WITNESS reader has received blessing from Jarvis Street Church through the message contained in its pages—for THE GOSPEL WITNESS would be impossible apart from Jarvis Street. So perhaps our GOSPEL WITNESS friends, near and far, will cooperate in sending us an anniversary offering for the JARVIS STREET BUILDING FUND. *What a splendid thing it would be if the total offering could amount to thirty thousand dollars—a thousand a year! If everybody would do his or her best, we do not think this is beyond the bounds of possibility in a large church like Jarvis Street.*

We make this appeal most earnestly in the hope that those who have so long had fellowship with us in the gospel will once more generously respond.

"SHEEP FOR THE SLAUGHTER"

A passage in the eighth chapter of Romans is rather forbidding: "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

What makes Christian people to be as sheep for the slaughter? Have they less intelligence than others? Are they less in love with life than others? Have they no desire to live, no will to defend themselves, no power to fight? Why should they be herded and slaughtered as sheep?

Is not one of the distinguishing characteristics of a sheep, that it is utterly defenseless? It is like a human infant, that must perish unless it is protected by a power not its own. "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves", our Lord said to His disciples. Sheep have neither fangs nor claws, and few of them have horns.

The Christian is as a sheep for the slaughter because, in certain circumstances, his very principles render him defenseless. If he plays, he must obey the rules of the game; and cannot possibly win against a cheat. In business, he must be honest; and cannot succeed against the competitor who cleverly conceals his short weights and measures. If the Christian fights—as fight he must—he must fight with clean hands and a pure conscience; and in all that he does, he must keep himself strictly within the boundaries of truth and righteousness. All such limitations put him at a great disadvantage before his enemy.

The same principle applies, in lesser measure, to any man or nation who seeks to work righteousness. At present we are at war with lawlessness. It would have

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, May 5th, 1940

(Stenographically Reported)

"For such a time as this."—Esther 4:14.

It frequently falls to the lot of men charged with public responsibilities to be misunderstood by the public they serve, and sometimes unjustly to be blamed. The war news of the day does not make good newspaper copy. Unfortunately, there are comparatively few people who do their own thinking on such matters, but allow themselves to be subject to the direction of others. There are, of course, many sanely reserved writers who endeavour to persuade people to exercise but cautious judgments on matters concerning which it is impossible that they should be perfectly informed. On the other hand, there are editors who are nothing better than echoes of the news of the day. There are also supposed military experts, as well as the special modern nuisance, radio news-commentators. In this last class, to be fair, it must be said there are some like the first class of editors to whom we have referred, but the majority of radio news-commentators are nothing but exaggerators of the most sensational newspaper headlines.

Unfortunately, it is too generally assumed that such editorial and radio news-commentators are especially well informed. But here, as in other spheres, everything depends upon a man's ability to make proper mental use of the information at hand. I make no claim to the possession of any information not open to all, nor do I presume to be more competent than others to render a verdict on the evidence before us; but I have ever felt it to be a duty, in such times of stress as the present, to try to exercise some moderating influence which would enable us to reserve judgment, and meanwhile to go on with our work.

I venture therefore to enquire, What could have been gained by making further sacrifices in Southern and Central Norway? The present grim business in which we are engaged is not a hockey match or a baseball game; but I fear many allow themselves to be too much influenced by the natural desire to hear that our side has won or is winning the game. The war is much more than a game, and we can better afford to suffer the temporary loss of applause than to sacrifice our ultimate interests.

We may perhaps have suffered a slight loss of prestige among neutrals, but that need not give us great anxiety. We have lost control, from the landward side, of the Norwegian Coast—but at what cost could we have established complete mastery there? Certainly at the cost of the destruction of much of Norway; and if Norway can be saved, and her freedom restored without unnecessary wastage of those things which centuries of time have created, it will be all to Norway's advantage. It would have cost us also thousands of precious lives. I cannot see that such an expenditure of our resources of blood and treasure would have obtained for us any very great advantage.

On the other hand, what have we gained so far by the Norwegian campaign? Certainly, control of the Narvik area, and without doubt our gains there will be consolidated, and an impregnable line guarding that part of Norway established. There may be some danger that Germany will obtain supplies of ore from Sweden by the Baltic—and that is to be regretted. On the other hand, it is quite possible that operations in southeastern Europe will do as much to influence Sweden's neutrality as the complete conquest of Norway.

The Norwegian campaign has also effected the obliteration of that passage through neutral waters which Mr. Winston Churchill called "a covered way", on the Norwegian Coast. We have to our credit also the destruction, we are assured, of a third of the Nazi fleet, of perhaps between thirty and forty ships in all. And there have been added to the Allies' merchant fleet, available for Allied service, perhaps some four million tons of Norwegian shipping.

All that has had the effect of freeing a very large part of the very powerful North Sea Naval Force, for service in the Mediterranean; and I feel sure that for any loss of influence with neutrals we have suffered by withdrawal from Norway we shall be more than compensated by the appearance of the Allied Naval Power in the Eastern Mediterranean. All that by the way.

In all such matters we must take a long view. Inevitably there will be real reverses—and there will be some things which will only seem to be reverses, from which we shall suffer no permanent disadvantage. Personally, I am hoping that Italy will abandon her neutrality. I am aware that efforts are being made to prevent such abandonment of neutrality, but again we must look to the future; and if at the end of the war there is to be a real peace of righteousness, some wrongs must be righted. The rape of Abyssinia is one of them. Should Italian neutrality be continued until the end of the war, it might be difficult to reopen that question; but if Italy should take Germany's side, she would almost certainly lose her so-called colonial empire in a very short time; and perhaps Selassie would thus find his kingdom restored.

But beside that, it is surely necessary to the world's peace that the Italian dictatorship should be broken. Indeed, such judgment upon Mussolini, it seems to me, is as necessary as the destruction of Hitler himself. It is well to keep in mind the principle that dictators help to keep each other in order, and that one dictator might be more dangerous than three! It is my earnest hope that before the war is over, the free peoples of the world will have succeeded in destroying all three of them.

To ensure Mussolini's defeat, I believe, the Allies have left Southern Norway to its fate for a while. It may do

Norway good. I am not at all sure that she is deserving of too much sympathy. She was willing that Finland's freedom should be sacrificed to her neutrality; and there must have been a large element of German sympathizers in Norway, or such German secret penetration of that country would not have been possible. Much of the Norwegian Coast is almost inaccessible from the sea, and Germany adopted the method of the burglar, of avoiding the double-barred doors of Norway, and climbing in through the coal-chute. The blockade of Germany by the Skagerrak would seem now to be almost complete, and the Norwegian coastal waters will be subject to the ceaseless patrol of the British Navy.

The Naval might of Britain and France will effectively control the Mediterranean. The ordering of Allied merchant ships out of the Mediterranean is merely the throwing of a police cordon around that area of battle, so as to give the Allied Naval Force complete freedom of action. Perhaps the necessity which neutrals will find, of making detour around South Africa will serve to impress them more deeply with the world-nuisance involved in the European dictatorships.

We have been rather amused by the offer, through the President of the Carnegie Institute, of a million dollars for Hitler's arrest "alive, unwounded, and unhurt". Hitler's victims in the concentration camps and prisons of Germany, and the relatives of his many victims murdered by his order, may be excused if they cynically wonder why such care should be enjoined for the delivery of this delicate piece of Dresden china! We have not heard whether Hitler is to be delivered in a crate marked, "Right side up", or not. If so, perhaps it would be difficult to determine which would be the right side!

Even Canada, with only eleven millions' population is not merely offering, but actually paying, more than a million dollars a day for Hitler's arrest—dead or alive. Britain has recently adopted a budget of twelve billions. To these must be added the billions that are being spent by France; and to that, the cost of the war to India, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, and all the colonial governments, to say nothing of the cost to Poland and Norway—and indeed, to neutral nations. If anyone could secure Hitler's arrest at the cost of a billion or so, it would be very cheap.

This evening I shall try to tell you of one who promised to pay the equivalent of ten million dollars for the privilege of doing just what Hitler has already done. The book of Esther, if we look beneath the surface to the principles operating in its story, is a pre-written history of the present war, nearly twenty-five hundred years old. In principle, all the details are here, and the inevitable result of the conflict is foretold.

It is known to you all that the book of Esther does not contain the name of God. It is really the record of what God does *incognito*; for there was one who spoke of a certain person's having come to the kingdom "for such a time as this". Obviously, he who thus spake discerned an overruling Providence in the affairs of his day; and Esther, to whom that word was addressed, requested, "Fast ye, and pray for me." She also evidently believed there was Someone to Whom prayer could be offered, that would not be offered in vain. I have a conviction that if only our eyes are opened, we may be enabled to read the war news of the day just as we read the Book

of Esther, so that while the name of God is not mentioned, the spiritually enlightened will have no difficulty in discerning the hand of God.

What, then, can be said of "such a time as this"?

I.

It was a time WHEN WHOLESALÉ, RUTHLESS, MURDER HAD BEEN WANTONLY PLANNED. It was not an ordinary war that threatened the lives of thousands of people, but really a pogrom, a programme of wanton destruction and death when "young and old, women and children" were to be caused to perish.

There have been wars in which some principle of value has been at issue, when it was not easy to determine on which side of the dispute righteousness was to be found. It was not so in the time to which our text refers. Nor is it so to-day. The present war, from one side, is a campaign of deliberately devised terror and torture and destruction, with no worthy end in view. Hitler has repeatedly declared for a "total war". By which he means war against everybody, neutrals and all. No "Jack the Ripper" of London, or "butcher of Kingsbury Run" in the United States did ever go about his work more wantonly. Hitler declares that in war-time there can be no neutrality, and no international law.

In the historical case before us, all this was merely to gratify the ambition of one man. Haman not only wanted a place in which there would be room to live: he wanted the *only* place. It cannot be allowed, by the conscience of the world, that the ambition of one man shall inflict such tortures on mankind. No matter what the cost in blood and treasure, no matter how long it takes, Hitler must be brought down.

Furthermore, this murderous plan was conceived as an expression of the insensate hate of one man. Haman's distinctive quality was his capacity for hatred. We have read of many who displayed occasional outbursts of hatred against men or nations, but the majority of such men have shown some human qualities. Hitler is all hatred. He is an incarnation of hatred. He loves no one. He has never loved anyone. He seems to be an embodiment of the venom of hell itself. As truly as Haman was the "Jews' enemy", Hitler has pledged himself to be the implacable enemy of the same race. But he is more: he is everybody's enemy, the enemy of the well-being of all mankind, of the world's weal, and the world's peace. If all loathsome diseases, and all devastating plagues, and all mental tortures, and all moral distempers, and all the abominations of every sort ever known to man, if all that earth has ever known or experienced of satanic hate and destruction, could be rolled into one immeasurable and intolerable aggregation and given a name, it would then be inadequate to express the concentrated hatred of all virtue that resides in the personality of Hitler.

If such a time as Mordecai's was a day of darkness, what can be said of "such a time as this" in which such an one as Hitler breathes our air?

II.

Notwithstanding, however, this great darkness, THERE WAS AN OVERRULING PROVIDENCE AT "SUCH A TIME AS THIS". I repeat, though God is unnamed in the book of Esther, He is conspicuously present, as Mordecai and Esther both knew.

"Thrice blest is he to whom is given
The instinct that can tell
That God is on the field, when He
Is most invisible."

Many a page of human history is like the book of Esther. Many a page of your individual history reads like a chapter from this book; and many of us have been able to say,—

"I see Thee not, I hear Thee not,
Yet art Thou oft with me;
And earth has ne'er so dear a spot
As where I meet with Thee."

Why does God permit Haman, and Hitler and Stalin and Mussolini to live? Can you find an answer? Read the book of Esther. Why did He permit Haman to live and prosper? That has always been a question. The Bible contains many stories of righteous men who have been troubled, as we are, with that great question. Sometimes we see it on a large scale, as in the present war; sometimes in some obscure corner of the earth, where an individual fights out his battle with that problem alone.

Jeremiah enquired, "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?" To which God answered, "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" By which He meant to say, "If you find the initial lesson in your moral kindergarten to be difficult, how will you do when you have to face the innumerable problems of a maturer experience?" If we cannot patiently, and with calm spirits, read of the Allies' withdrawal from Central Norway, how shall we do when the lion comes up from the swelling of Jordan, and when we shall have to face still greater reverses which may all be indispensable to our ultimate success?

Let us see if we can find some answers to these questions in the background of this story, supplied by the life and record of the king of the Medo-Persian empire. It is not a nice story at all. Life is full of stories that are not nice. We all have the profoundest sympathy with Vashti. We should unanimously commend her for refusing to comply with the king's outrageous demand. There is a saying, colloquial and proverbial, "What are you going to do about it?" That question may be asked of a thousand things in life.

But against this background, there is another (there always is!) a man called Mordecai, of whom it is said, "He brought up Hadassah." Only four words, but they tell a story of something that was to affect the lives of a great multitude. Long before Haman had perfected his plan, God had perfected His. Von Ribbentrop last week treated the world to another German fabrication—but his statement was believed by no one outside of Germany. Let us never forget that "such a time as this" is related to some earlier, unmarked, and inconspicuous time, when God prepared His plan. Mordecai little knew what he was doing, and Hadassah knew less; but "known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."

Britain, it is said, was unprepared for the present war—as she was for the last one. That was probably true. It is always hard for the police to anticipate all the details of a burglar's plan. But against that, let us set this principle which, had we the necessary under-

standing, we should see to be axiomatic: *no war did ever break upon the world for which God was unprepared.* He is always ready for every emergency of life. We read of "the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men." But what secret weapon, what unknown instrumentalities, God has laid up in His armouries "for such a time as this", no one now knows. *God can make even the ugly story of Ahasuerus to work out to His praise.* Can we believe that the ugliness of the world, represented by such names as Haman, and Hitler, and Mussolini, and Stalin, is mere accident; that these men represent something that is beyond divine control? If that were so, life would not be worth living. War is horrible enough, but even war has its uses. And God can—and does—make the wrath of man to praise Him.

An ideal world doubtless would have progressed beyond a state where human affairs must be determined by force; but we have always had a quarrel with those who have insisted that every aspect of war is essentially evil, and that war settles nothing. Men who thus speak must surely be incapable of logical conviction, and be without capacity for logical processes of thought.

To go no farther back, Waterloo settled something. So did the American War of Independence. So did the American-Canadian War of eighteen hundred and twelve. So also did the Civil War in the United States. And while the Great War did not settle anything permanently, the freedom of France and Belgium and Britain and Canada and the United States, and of other lands, for more than twenty years was secured.

In the case before us, the fate of multitudes of people was providentially committed to the hands of a beautiful woman. Esther came to the kingdom "for such a time as this". We have heard many demands for the conscription of wealth and of man power during the war, to none of which have we felt disposed to offer any objection. But let us remember that *God conscripts everything in the universe.* Who knows what God is doing just now *incognito*? Secret agents of all the warring powers doubtless are operating in the countries engaged; but the issue of the war will be determined by the Secret Agent with Whose movements no power on earth can interfere—and who can tell what His instruments will be before the war is over?

III.

I may leave that for the moment, to remind you that "in such a time as this" SACKCLOTH AND ASHES BECAME SOMEONE'S APPROPRIATE CLOTHING. Mordecai was a symbol of a race in mourning. Surely there was enough to make him mourn. But we have become accustomed to horrors. We have lost our capacity for being shocked. The heart of humanity has gradually become calloused to wrong, to evil of all sorts, to sorrow and tears and cries, to suffering and death.

Do you remember how the world shuddered when the *Titanic* went down, wrecked by an iceberg? During the Great War, we became accustomed to hearing of marine losses equalling many *Titanics*, day after day, until at last we heard such news without a tremor. The world's tear-fount seems to have run dry. But there are many reasons for wearing sackcloth in our day. What I now say is neither popular nor agreeable, I am aware. Some time ago a WITNESS subscriber wrote me from Holland, who had read one of my sermons, asking if Britain and

Canada and the United States had nothing of which they ought to repent. We are none of us disposed to assume that the population of these countries is composed of so many millions of saints—though we insist we have done no wrong to Germany, even as the Jews had done no wrong to Haman. But who of us, individually or nationally, can boast of a conscience void of offence toward God? What terrible *offences against God* we have committed! How many of the professed people of God, by their attitude toward His Word, either explicitly or implicitly, have called God a liar! How many have insulted the Majesty of heaven by their attitude toward His Son! And how grievously have all offended by their treatment of His day! What a godless world this is!

And what *offences against men* have we committed! I am no Socialist, though I am not blind to the wrongs which breed Socialism. What covetousness we have displayed! Canada and the United States could easily have put a stop to Japan's aggression against China. Canada herself could have done much by stopping the export of nickel to Japan. But alas! there are still to be found in these countries men who have such a passion for money that they are willing to get rich at the expense of others' blood. Yes; sackcloth ought to become fashionable under the British flag in all lands—and it may be that God will make it so before we have done.

Only last week I read a letter from one of our young girls who is in England, and who expects shortly to return. She said she had attended a great church in which she had found a congregation of nine people, and yet the theatres have long queues of people waiting for the doors to open. She said a young man returned one evening to the boarding-house where she lives, greatly disappointed because he had vainly tried to get into three theatres—which were so crowded that the doors were closed. Is it not significant that in so many places churches should be empty, and theatres crowded?

I am not discussing the merits of the theatre for the moment. We heard a little while ago that the British Government had adopted a foreign policy of "realism". I suppose they meant that they were going to face the facts of the case. Where shall we find "realism"? In the church, or in the theatre? Alas! too often it is true it cannot be found in either place; for God has been all but crowded out of many churches. But there is realism in the book of Esther, and that which is most real in it all is neither Ahasuerus, nor Mordecai, nor Esther, nor the Jews generally, but GOD. It may be that God will make sackcloth and ashes very "real" to us in order that He Himself may become real.

IV.

And yet "in such a time as this" WICKED MEN SEEM TO BE ALLOWED TO WAX WORSE AND WORSE. Is not this a time for divine action? How ready we are to call God to account, even as the British press seem determined to call the British Government to account in the House of Commons next Tuesday. But the fact was, "such a time as this" was a *time of divine action—though not everyone could see it*. For just then something happened in the palace. You are familiar with the story; I need not repeat it. Esther approached the king unbidden, and he held out to her the golden sceptre saying, "What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the

kingdom." And for the moment it looked as though Esther made but poor use of her privileges, for she announced the preparation of a banquet, at which she desired the presence of the king and Haman! It was arranged, and it seemed as though the day was lost. The superficial observer would have supposed that Haman had managed to establish himself in the favour of the queen.

At the same time, other women began plotting. Yes; there are women in Germany who seem to display as great a capacity for evil as the men. Haman's wife seemed to be as bad as Haman. We may be thankful perhaps that Hitler has not a wife the counterpart of himself! One is enough! So the case grew worse and worse in Shushan the palace. What a horrible prospect! Did anyone enquire, Shall we tear down the gallows which, at the instigation of Zeresh, Haman has built for Mordecai? That would have been poor advice. It would be a pity to waste the labour spent on the building of a gallows. Let it stand! It will serve a useful purpose some day!

"No God," you say? "An absentee God"? And for proof of it, will you cry, "Behold the gallows prepared for Mordecai"? Wait a while! Wait a while! Let Hitler's headman, with his elaborate dress; keep the edge of his axe finely sharpened. I say a horrible thing when I remark that it may yet be pressed into useful, and righteous, if dreadful service.

V.

Let us see WHAT "THIS TIME" MY TEXT REFERS TO IS IN GOD'S CALENDAR. What a great deal we have heard about Hitler's birthdays, and other special days! But God has His set times, even a set time to favour Zion. Look at Haman's to-morrow. Mordecai is to die to-morrow! Israel's hope is to be extinguished to-morrow!

Do not be too sure. Whatever may be said of the British Government, try to remember that *God is never too late*. Look at the next chapter: "On that night." What was "that" night? It was the night before Haman's to-morrow. Have you ever underlined this passage in your Bible: "At which time Moses was born", written as viewed perspective in the New Testament? Or have you ever underlined this, also from the New Testament: "The same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him"? Ah yes; I know it sometimes seems as though God were moving very slowly—if moving at all. You have heard the story perhaps of the man standing within view of Greenwich Observatory, watching the ball above the dome that falls exactly at the tick of noon. The man was from this side of the sea, and the story says he held a Waterbury watch in his hand, of which he was proud. As the hand approached the hour of noon, he looked at the ball above the dome and said, "She will have to drop soon or she will be late"! So do we try to measure the progress of the sun and the irresistible march of the divine purpose, by our little watches!

On the particular night under review, *God kept the king awake*. Here is another element entering into the story. I have never read of any man who deliberately set himself to torture the minds of men as Hitler has done. He is not without some mentality himself. We

have all read stories of Hitler's alleged sleeplessness, of the wild nights he is said occasionally to spend, when he sends for his aides—not to talk to him, but to listen to him talk.

Have you considered what God can do with the minds of men? Will the war be won by men and guns and ships and aeroplanes? Who disposed Ahasuerus to hold out the golden sceptre?—Who kept the king awake "on that night" before Haman's to-morrow? Oh, what wonders God can do in the night watches! "He giveth his beloved sleep", our version has it; but it might be rendered, "He giveth to his beloved in sleep." So He does! He gives us more while we are asleep than when we are awake. Our mind and body are refreshed in sleep; and how the grass and the trees and the flowers, and all the fruits of the earth, are brought to perfection even while we sleep.

I suggest to you that that is an interesting line of study which I can only name. Of some one whom I shall not presume to try to identify it is prophesied: "Thus saith the Lord God; It shall come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind." Do you remember the story of Pharaoh's butler and baker in Egypt, and what happened while they slept and dreamed? Remember too how Pharaoh dreamed; how the Midianite dreamed for Gideon's instruction; how Nebuchadnezzar dreamed; how Belshazzar dreamed. I do not sit up late at night to listen to the radio: I know that we are five hours behind Greenwich time, and before midnight we get all the news of anything that can be reported, except that which happens during the night. But no one can report what God will do during the night.

Hitler has but little power over the minds of men, but the power of God is unlimited. And what God can do with the minds of men at "such a time as this"—"on that night"—no one can foretell.

But here is another element. It was "on that night" *the king read the book of records*. Von Ribbentrop professed to have found certain records in Oslo. Who knows what archives God may open? And how and where God will find His man, or men, the deliverers of His appointment in this great war? It may not be the men who are now in control whom God will use at last to win the war. I am not disposed to criticize any of them. I have had enough experience in my little sphere of public life to know how often a public man must bear the blame for things for which he is not responsible because he may not speak in self-defense. It may be God will see us through with the men we have; but if not, perhaps He will find some other men, unknown at present, and unseen, and whose names may be found in some book of records. Something he has said or done somewhere may bring a man, *The man*, to the place of authority.

God has done it often in time past. The leader of the first war of liberation was not a soldier: but Abraham. Neither Gideon nor Shamgar, nor David, was a professional soldier—but each was God's man "for such a time as this". Cromwell and others in Britain's history were found when crises required men of courage and of action, and how many political leaders has God raised up in the same way. Joseph in Egypt. Moses, the greatest of all legislators. Daniel, who became prime minister in a country in which he had been an exile. Lincoln in the United States, one of the greatest men of all times. And, I venture to add another name. I know nothing of America's domestic politics, but I express the opinion

that no American statesman of recent years has manifested such consciousness of world-responsibility as has the present President of the United States.

Be that as it may, let us rest assured that somewhere, somehow, in every crisis of this war, God will find His instruments "for such a time as this".

Observe also that *Haman's own machinations brought to authority the one man competent to undo Haman's wicked work, and secure the fruits of victory*. I am not so anxious about our war-leadership as I am that strong men shall be available for the making of the peace. It will require strength and resolution to insist on such stern measures as will be necessary to the establishment of a righteous peace.

VI.

And now at long last A NEMESIS ARISES. *Haman's vicious rage prepares the gallows*. The Bible is full of that principle. I received last week a letter from the Editor of *The British Weekly*, Dr. Hutton, in which he said, "I am quite conceited over my exegesis of one of the sayings of our blessed Lord: 'They that take the sword shall perish by the sword.' True, God be praised! For it follows that they that take to bombings, to magnetic mines, to double-crossing, shall by bombs, and magnetic mines, and double-crossing, perish." I have no doubt whatever that Dr. Hutton is right. "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

So we may rest assured that Hitler is even now preparing for his own destruction. *Haman's superlative egotism prescribed the steps for his enemy's exaltation*. One is tempted to linger upon such a story, but you are familiar with it. His vanity was his undoing. Of course, there could be no one else whom the king would delight to honor! What retribution fell upon the head of this wicked Haman when, having prescribed honors for himself, the king said, "Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken."

And *the suggestion for his execution came from one who doubtless had previously obsequiously served him*. The chamberlain said, "Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman." Then said the king, "Hang him thereon"—"So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai."

There is really no love-lost between Hitler and his immediate aides, and as soon as the tide turns, there will be plenty of people in Germany to assist in the punishment of Hitler. So we may leave that part of the story. I have brought it before you in the hope that it will afford you some comfort who really believe in God; and that it may help us to possess our souls in patience in the cloudy and dark day, if such days should come to us.

VII.

But THE WHOLE STORY IS ILLUSTRATIVE OF A GREATER THAN MORDECAI. Who can read the last verse of this book without seeing a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself?—"Mordecai the Jew was next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his

people, and speaking peace to all his seed." It is because he has been exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour; it is because all authority has been given to Him in heaven and on earth, that we have hope. Verily He is great among His people, having a name that is above every name; and though He be the sovereign Ruler of the skies, yet is He also accepted of the multitude of His brethren; and, having ascended on high and received gifts for men, like Mordecai, He seeks the wealth of His people, and speaks peace to all His seed.

This, I declare, is both history and prophecy: "The government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

"For lo, the days are hastening on
By prophet-bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Her ancient splendours fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing."

"SHEEP FOR THE SLAUGHTER"

(Continued from page 2)

been easy to stop Germany in her march into Austria, or Czechoslovakia, or Poland, or Norway, if we could have allowed ourselves to use Germany's methods. We could have violated the neutrality of other nations, and have done it first; but our very principles forbade our doing so. We could not play the game of the recently hackneyed "Trojan horse" in Norway. We had to abide by our principles, and suffer the consequences.

Germany, with the connivance, beyond doubt, of a multitude of Norwegian traitors, established herself in Norway, unopposed. There appears now to be a diversity of opinions as to the practicability of driving the Germans out. We are not much disturbed by the strictures of arm-chair reviewers and critics, but it is difficult to be wholly unmoved by the criticism of such a man as Admiral Sir Roger Keyes, than whom perhaps there is no naval expert in the world more competent to pronounce judgment on such a situation as that which now obtains in Norway. But until all the facts of the case are known, it would be unwise and unfair to judge. "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him." So that our principle still holds. We are the victims of our own moral restraints: and we are such of necessity.

Notwithstanding, we must be of good cheer; for the further principle also still holds: "In all these things, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." The man who does right, may often seem to suffer an initial reverse; but in the end of the day it will always be found that it is righteousness—and righteousness alone—which "exalteth a nation". Hence, the charge that is laid against the British Government, that they are always "too late," may not be wholly justifiable. Few have criticized Mr. Chamberlain, Sir John Simon, or Sir Samuel Hoare, more severely in the past than we have. We never did—and do not now—understand or approve the attempt to "appease" a man-eating tiger whose jaws are dripping with blood. That is in the past, however, and until it is clearly demonstrated to the contrary, we shall dare to believe that John Bull's managers are prose-

cuting the war with the utmost vigour, and with such wisdom as will ultimately prove itself.

Meanwhile, we must not blame the sheep because it has been torn by the wolves.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM

(Continued)

By Rev. W. Gordon Brown, M.A.

Of Toronto Baptist Seminary

Chapter III.

THE MORTALITY OF MAN

Incidentally, it is interesting to note that Adventists, because of their teaching, "do not eat hog meat" (C. P. Bollman, pamphlet on *Why I Am a Seventh-Day Adventist*, p. 20), (c.f. Mark 7:19 R.V., "This he said, making all meats clean"; Acts 10:10-17; Romans 14:14; Titus 1:15; Hebrews 13:9), that they practise foot-washing at their quarterly meetings, and that their ministry is open to both men and women (*Census Report*, pp. 27f.), that they baptize by immersion, and that their church government is presbyterial in form. But these things are insignificant in comparison with what they claim to be "a God-sent message to all the world," containing "new light on the Sabbath question, the nature of man, the state of the dead, the reward of the righteous, the fate of the wicked, and the millennium" (C. B. Haynes, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, 1928, p. 124). Their theory of the millennium we have already mentioned. We shall presently consider the question, Should Christians keep the Sabbath? We come now to this other important question, Has man an ever-existing soul?

Adventists proclaim the mortality of man. They say, No, MAN IS NOT NATURALLY IMMORTAL. "We believe that God alone has immortality, that man may have immortality, only as a gift from God through Christ; that upon conversion, the Christian receives eternal life by faith in the promises of God; that immortality will be conferred upon the righteous at the second coming of Christ, and the first resurrection" (A. L. Baker, pamphlet on *What Do Seventh-Day Adventists Believe?* p. 5). Natural immortality, as these teachers observe, involves consciousness in death. Hence belief in the mortality of man is fundamental to much of their teaching.

It may be admitted that "immortality" in its etymological sense of "deathlessness" "is not a natural endowment" (J. J. Barlow, *Endless Being or Man Made for Eternity*, no date, p. 29). God has "deathlessness" (*athanasia*, 1 Timothy 6:16; Ecclesiastes 51:9 may refer to "the deathless One"). All men die (Hebrews 9:27), hence men are not literally "deathless". Believers, however, will be given "deathlessness" at the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:53f. Foregoing are all the uses of *athanasia*, "deathlessness", in the New Testament). To put it another way, God alone has incorruption, for He is "the King of the ages incorruptible" (*aphthartos*, 1 Timothy 1:17; Romans 1:23; cf. 1 Peter 1:23). But Christ's Gospel has shed light on life and incorruption (2 Timothy 1:1), so that believers seek it from Him (Romans 2:7) and will have it in the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:42, 50, 53f. The foregoing, with Ephesians 6:24 are all the uses of *aphthartos* in the New Testament).

The Scriptures we have quoted are the ones on which the Adventists rely for their statement that man is not

naturally immortal. But do these passages mean that man has not endless existence? By no means. It must be remembered that our English word "immortal", as well as the corresponding terms in the Greek New Testament, has more than one meaning. Passages outside Holy Scripture make this abundantly clear. Again and again the Wisdom of Solomon (1st century B.C.), for example, uses *athanasia*, "immortality" of those who have departed this life (3:4; 4:1; 8:13, 17; 15:3; so *aphtharsia*, "incorruption", is used in 6:18f. Compare Josephus *Wars of the Jews* 3.8.5 [372]).

Much light has been shed on the meaning of words in the New Testament by the study of the common Greek of its age. Here is an example: tombstones frequently assert that *oudeis atharnatos*. This has been shown by Sir William Ramsay to mean, not that "no one is immortal", but that "no one is free from death" (quoted in Moulton and Milligan, *Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament*, 1914, p. 11). It may be true, if we must press words into their literal meaning, that "an immortal soul is a soul in no sense subject to death. All souls here are subject to death—saint as well as sinner" (Barlow, *op. cit.*, p. 148), but the word "immortal", besides meaning "deathless", also means "imperishable", "perpetual", "enduring", "eternal". One of the earliest post-apostolic Christian documents declares that believers are sharers *en toi thanatoi*, "in that which is immortal" (*The Teaching of the Twelve* 4:8, dated by Dr. Philip Schaff between 90 and 100 A.D., by Dr. J. Armitage Robinson between 140 and 160, by Dr. F. E. Vokes about the close of the second century), and it enjoins believers to give thanks for "the knowledge, faith and immortality" made known through Christ (10:2). The second century *Epistle to Diognetus* 6:8 says: "Immortal the soul in a mortal tabernacle has its home; and Christians sojourn among corruptible things, expecting incorruption in heaven." If man was made in the divine image (Genesis 1:26f.; James 3:9), then God has set eternity in his heart (Ecclesiastes 3:11 R.V.).

But what we have said is only by way of preparation for the full refutation of the Adventist position which here follows. If man have not endless existence, that will be shown in death. Accordingly Seventh-Day ADVENTISTS, like Russellites, HOLD THAT THE DEAD ARE UNCONSCIOUS. "We believe that when a man dies, he enters a state of silence, inactivity, and entire unconsciousness; that he remains 'asleep', altogether oblivious to the passing of time or events, until the first resurrection if he is accounted righteous, or until the second resurrection if he is numbered among the wicked" (A. L. Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 5). So "hell, as . . . a place of torment, does not now exist (*The present Truth*, VI., 20). Of the dead, then, it may be said that their's is

"But vacancy absorbing space,
But fixedness—without a place;
There (are) no stars—no earth—no time—
No check—no change—no good—no crime— . . .
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute and motionless"—

—To misuse Lord Byron's *The Prisoner of Chillon!*

In this unscriptural position Adventists contradict even those dim glimmerings of truth, which the heathen have. For instance, the ancient Egyptian word *anchiu*, which literally means the 'living', is in innumerable places used emphatically for the 'departed', who are en-

joying everlasting life". The Jews call a cemetery *beth hachayyim*, "house of the living"! These moderns contradict also what Christian believers have ever held. The converted lawyer, Tertullian (c. 150-c. 230 A.D.) asks: "Shall we sleep between death and the judgment? Why souls do not sleep even when men are alive. It is the province of bodies to sleep." The Anglican Church has thirty-nine *Article of Religion*, but originally there were forty-two, and the fortieth said: "They which say that the souls of those who depart hence to sleep being without all sense, feeling or perceiving till the Day of Judgment . . . do utterly dissent from the right belief declared to us in Holy Scripture." We might even quote William Miller, to whom the Adventists look back with such undeserved reverence, for he said that in hell "there can be no respite, no cessation, no deliverance, no hope!" (*Second Coming of Christ*, 1842, p. 174, cf. p. 298).

But we are little concerned with the opinions of men when we have the Word of God. This the Adventists wrest to their own destruction. When the question of immortality was placed before Christ by the Sadducees, with whom in this respect Seventh-Day Adventists agree, our Lord told them that the patriarchs were still alive (Matthew 22:32; cf. Luke 9:30f.; 16:29), and He added these significant words, "For all to Him are alive" (Luke 20:38). That is straight denial of Seventh-Day Adventism. Jesus on the cross promised the thief that he should be with Him that day (Luke 23:43; cf. Acts 7:59; 1 Thessalonians 5:10 with 4:13f.), in the heavenly Jerusalem are "the spirits of just men made perfect" (Hebrews 12:22f.), and John in the Revelation "saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain on account of the Word of God and on account of the testimony which they held", and he heard them cry aloud (6:9f.). For the righteous death means to be with Christ (Philippians 1:23; cf. 2 Corinthians 5:1-9); for the wicked to die is to suffer consciously and fearfully (Luke 16:22-28; etc.)

But further, and as a logical sequence of the positions above refuted, SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS TEACH THAT THE WICKED, after the resurrection WILL BE ANNIHILATED. "We believe that 'the wages of sin is death'; that the punishment meted out to sinners will be eternal death, total extinction by fire, after they are adjudged guilty before the judgment bar of God" (A. L. Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 5). Mrs. White declared: "But those who have not, through repentance and faith, secured pardon, must receive the penalty of transgression—'the wages of sin'. They suffer punishment varying in duration and intensity, 'according to their works', but finally ending in the second death" (*The Present Truth*, L., 9).

Alas, this cult is not alone in such a doctrine. The late Dr. Chas. Gore said: "Final moral ruin may involve, I cannot but think, such a dissolution of personality as carries with it the cessation of personal consciousness (*The Religion of the Church*, American Edition, 1917, p. 84).

If such could be proved from Scripture, what comfort would come to the Christ-rejector! but whether we like it or no, the Lord Jesus taught the contrary. According to the New Testament the wicked go after judgment into everlasting punishing (Matthew 25: 41, 46; cf. Hebrews 6:2) in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:14f., cf. v. 10), there to lament (Matthew 8:12) in the eternal fire (18: 8), forever (Mark 9:48; cf. 3:29 R.V.).

RECOGNITION AND ORDINATION AT SARNIA

On the beautiful afternoon of Tuesday, April 23rd, a splendid company of pastors and members from the Union of Regular Baptist Churches, met in Sarnia, Ontario, in response to an invitation from the Temple Baptist Church, Sarnia, to form a council for the two-fold purpose, of first, recognizing the said church as a Regular Baptist Church, and secondly, to consider the Ordination of the Pastor, Mr. W. Hal MacBain. The weather was ideal, actually being the first bright warm day of the spring. This was an added incentive to many to journey to Sarnia, and the result was a full Church in the afternoon, and a packed church in the evening.

It was moved by Rev. H. G. Hindry, and seconded by Rev. Robert D. Guthrie, that Rev. Gordon Brown, of the Toronto Baptist Seminary, act as Moderator, and moved by Rev. F. Dyson, and seconded by H. G. Hindry, that Rev. Robert D. Guthrie, of London, be Clerk. Both of these motions carried.

The Moderator called upon the Clerk of Temple Baptist Church to read the minutes of the Church calling the council together. This was followed by a roll call of the Churches invited to make up the council. The response showed that representatives were present from: Chatham, Courtland, Courtwright, Essex, Forward, Toronto; Hespeler, London, Briscoe; Shedden, St. Catharines, Jarvis St., Toronto; Wilkesport, Windsor, Sarnia, New Toronto, Snowden, Montreal.

In all, there were 15 Churches, and 40 messengers. After a number of visitors were added, it was moved by Mr. Manning, and seconded by Mr. Marsh, both of Temple Baptist Church, that the church accept this as the council for the business mentioned.

Statement of the Church

Pastor MacBain then gave the statement for the church. This he divided into three parts.

The Church's History. The Church came into existence because of a desire on the part of the Courtwright and Wilkesport Churches to reach out with the Gospel of Christ. Following this desire, was a vision of the need in the town of Sarnia for the Gospel. This made a wonderful combination. A desire, a need. What a story there is to tell to-day, because of this zeal, and this vision. Then, there was leadership and activity. This was exercised by Pastor Jack Watt, of Courtwright, and Brother Hal MacBain. They held tent meetings in Sarnia during the summer of 1937. These meetings lasted two months, and were very successful, in that souls were saved, and a number of Christians became interested. Desire, vision, activity, were followed by hard work, and the Y.M.C.A. was engaged in the fall, and the good work continued. Brother MacBain carried on the work, and soon a lot was purchased, and a building placed on the lot. The building was located some six miles from the lot, but a mover was engaged, and the building was moved to its present location. The first meetings were held in the building in the fall of 1937, and the Temple Baptist Church was organized in January 1938. There were 8 charter members, and Mr. MacBain was called as Pastor. The work has been under way two years and a half, and the record of progress is a splendid one. To-day they have a total of 40 members. A Bible School room was erected in 1939, and also a baptistery installed. By way of further extension, the fine corner lot was bought by the church.

The Bible School meets at 10 a.m. each Sunday morning, with an average attendance of 35 to 40. Small for the present, but promising. Morning service meets at 11 a.m. with an average attendance of 35 to 40. The evening service at 7 p.m. with an attendance of 65 to 70. The highlight of the week is the prayer meeting each Wednesday evening. Friday evening a children's meeting is held when some 40 children assemble for a spiritual programme.

The Church's Finances. The original building cost the church \$1,323.97. This is all paid for. This was made possible by a grant from the Union for one year and a half of \$30.00 per month. Also by financial help from the Courtwright and Wilkesport Churches, and further, by the splendid co-operation and sacrificial giving of the members of the church. Because of buying the corner lot, building the Bible School room, and installing the baptistery, the church has a small building fund debt of less than \$400.00. This is really a wonderful accomplishment, especially during years of depression. An account of the past and present financial position was given in

detail, which showed that the church uses the free will offering envelope system, and that the church contributes to the missionary interests of the Union. During the last three months the church has increased its givings by one quarter. From 1938 to 1939 the church increased its missionary givings almost three-fold.

The Church's Prospects. Sarnia is a city of 20,000 population. There is some gospel in the town, but Temple Baptist is located in a good section of the town, being in the South East part, one block from the main highway. Also, the Brigden Baptist Church has given Mr. MacBain a call to preach there each Sunday afternoon, which he has accepted. There is also a good opportunity at Brigden.

The Statement of Faith of the Temple Baptist Church was read by Deacon Marsh. Following this it was moved by H. G. Hindry and seconded by Rev. E. C. Wood, that the council proceed to recognize the Temple Baptist Church as a regular Baptist Church. This motion was carried. It was so declared by the Moderator, Rev. Gordon Brown.

The Ordination of the Pastor

Mr. MacBain was introduced by Mr. Knight, a deacon of Temple Baptist Church. He then gave us a three-fold statement.

His Conversion to Christ. Mr. MacBain was born and raised in a Christian home. The Bible was read and prayer was offered daily at the family altar. From his earliest age he can remember the Bible stories read to him by his mother. (Mrs. MacBain, the pastor's mother, who is a member of Jarvis St. Baptist Church, Toronto, was in the congregation, and was a member of the council. God bless her, and increase the number of such mothers in the land to-day.) Mr. MacBain came face to face with his need of Christ when very young, and at the age of seven years, definitely accepted Christ as his Saviour. Here Mr. MacBain produced a New Testament, in which he showed his personal decision recorded. As he grew older, his more developed mind also accepted what his heart had accepted when he was seven years of age.

His Call to the Ministry. Mr. MacBain could not recall hearing a voice or seeing a vision calling him to the ministry. He had a vision of the need, and an inward urge to preach the gospel. At the age of 18 he preached in the Maritime Provinces in different churches, and in two months some 54 souls professed conversion. He came home from the East, and entered the Toronto Baptist Seminary to prepare for the gospel ministry. There he spent four years in hard study. He grew in grace, and in a knowledge of the Word of God. During his course he took one year out, and went to Courtwright and Wilkesport to assist Rev. Jack Watt. He preached here, there and everywhere. From that centre, the Temple Baptist Church was brought into being. "I am its first and only pastor, and purpose to remain preaching the Word, believing I have been so called of God."

His Statement of Doctrine. Mr. MacBain's statement was clear, brief, and sound. He covered the field of Christian doctrine in splendid fashion. This was followed by many questions, which Mr. MacBain answered to the satisfaction of the council. Questions were asked by Revs. Wood, Shields, Hindry, Guthrie, Mr. Old, Dyson, Shields, and others. Dr. Shields then spoke a word of appreciation of Mr. MacBain's statement, and moved that we proceed with his ordination. This motion was seconded by Rev. F. Dyson, and carried unanimously.

Several other members of the council expressed words of appreciation, and the wonderful afternoon session was dismissed. It was moved by Rev. Jack Armstrong of Hespeler, and seconded by Rev. H. G. Hindry of Courtwright, that the Moderator, the Clerk, and Pastor MacBain form a committee to arrange for the ordination programmed in the evening. Carried.

Tea was served in the church by the ladies of Temple Baptist Church, assisted, we believe, by the ladies of the Courtwright and Wilkesport Churches. They did a splendid job. Temple Baptist Church is hospitable as well as spiritual.

The Evening Service. After a song service led by the Moderator, the Clerk read the minutes as to the events of the afternoon, and the ordination service proceeded immediately. The charge to the Church was given by Rev. Jack Watt, of St. Catharines. The charge to the candidate by Rev. H. G. Hindry. The ordination prayer was offered by Rev. John Armstrong of Hespeler, Ontario. A word of welcome was

extended to the church by Rev. E. C. Wood, of Chatham, the hand of fellowship to the Pastor by Rev. Jack Scott of Forward Baptist Church, Toronto. At this point, Mrs. MacBain, the Pastor's mother, was called to the platform, and was presented with beautiful flowers from the ladies of the Temple Baptist Church. This was followed by a solo, "Fear Not Little Flock," by Mr. Hume Wilkins, a cousin of Pastor MacBain, and the Pastor of the baby church of the Union, Snowden, Montreal. An offering was received for the Building Fund of Temple Baptist Church. To climax this great day in the house of God, Dr. T. T. Shields, pastor of Jarvis St. Baptist Church, Toronto, and the President of Toronto Baptist Seminary, preached the ordination sermon. His text was Eph. 4:7-16. Dr. Shields was at his best, and we never heard a better ordination sermon. The benediction was pronounced by Rev. W. Hal MacBain, and a great day in the things of God was brought to a close.—ROBERT D. GUTHRIE.

JARVIS STREET MEN IN THE ARMED FORCES

As yet, the number of Jarvis Street men in the armed forces is not large—nothing like the number we had in the same time during the last war. We have a few letters before us, from which we make some extracts. As the men go overseas, we have been glad to give them letters of introduction to certain ministers in England, in different places, not knowing of course just where they will be.

We publish these extracts from letters received by the Pastor, merely to show that our men are bearing witness for Christ. One of them was able to find lodging when on leave at a home recommended by Rev. J. Wilmot of Highgate Road, to whom we had introduced him. He speaks with the greatest enthusiasm of the hospitality shown him by everybody in England, and of the welcome he received by the ministers to whom he was introduced.

Here are a few extracts. He says that in his barracks twelve or thirteen sleep in one house, and one man said to him, "George, how do you manage to live as a Christian among so many who are not?" He answered him, "When a person has Jesus Christ as Saviour, He rules within, and you have a new life. One does not look to himself for salvation or strength; and joy comes only when living in His service." To this the soldier-companion replied, "I see you kneel and pray, and before kneeling you put up the blind and open the window. That, I suppose, was to let the light of God's love in, and then to speak to God as it were in the open?" He said, "I thanked him, but told him it was really to make us fresh in the morning, and also to have the light for getting up. Then the men asked for a hymn, and we sang, all of us."

In another letter he says:

"I have not enjoyed my Christian convictions as much since I was first saved; and in my own way, living the life, I am sure is more than half the battle. The boys say 'Sh, sh, here's Parfitt'—and swearing is cut down. I had to rebuke one man because he could not utter a phrase without violently cursing. He answered, 'Do I have to be told what to do? Who are you, a minister's son?' To this I said, 'No; but I do not like that language. It may be some day that you will have to give an account of what you say.' Two days afterward he came to me smiling, and not swearing, and we had a nice chat together."

This young man tells of his training, and then of attending the nearest Baptist Church to his barracks. Of this he says:

"The man spoke of the divine spark, of the little good in everyone which only needs a little encouragement, and so on. I went only once."

He later found a mission where his soul was fed, and where he found much fellowship. He tells then of inducing other soldiers to go to the services with him, of how he found other Christian soldiers, and how they testified together at the meetings.

Then this Jarvis Street lad speaks of the necessity of bearing witness against things that are offensive to a Christian spirit, and says: "I am sure if one does not condemn the evil, the evil will become a part of him, and the fight will be a losing one." He tells of his battle with a conscientious objector, who was in the army, but who said he would not bear arms. The scriptural argument which he

employed to meet the objector's objections, seems to us to be a sound one. He tells of having a pile of GOSPEL WITNESSES, and of the use he makes of them among the soldiers, getting them to read them.

Our soldier did not like the late winter in England, and says he was never so cold in his life! But when the beautiful English spring came along, he changed his mind entirely about the English climate. He says the English people are "a delightful people, who will do anything for you." He has been in many of their homes, and is most grateful for the hospitality extended to him. He refers to a sermon in THE WITNESS on "keeping rank", printed about a month ago, and tells of some of the troops who have not yet learned to do that.

George Parfitt's letters are full of inspiration to his Pastor, and show that the scriptural principles expounded to him have become part of his moral fibre, and that he is standing up under all the stress of army life.

The other letter is from Norman Penney. It has just come to hand, and we publish it in full. Norman is a wireless operator in the navy. From time to time we shall give extracts from other letters as they are received; but these give an insight into the sort of life our men are living.

May 4, 1940.

Dear Pastor:

Well, pastor, The Lord certainly has been very gracious indeed to me since leaving Toronto. He has led me into closer touch with Himself, and although temptations are many, it has only tended to drive me closer to Christ. You know I landed here in Halifax not knowing a soul, and after three days of spiritual loneliness, was feeling rather "down". However, the Lord knows just how much we can bear, and at the right time, He introduced me to two fine Christian chaps. I overheard them talking around our mess table, and catching a few key words, such as "Saviour" and "trusting the Lord" etc., said to myself, "That's my language all right" and immediately joined in their conversation. Our joy knew no bounds when we discovered that we all knew Christ, and were all trusting in the same atoning Blood.

Since that time I have come to know several others in barracks here, who also are saved. You will be interested to learn of several interesting experiences I've had. These two fellows I mentioned are really zealous for Christ and are interested in singing hymns like myself. On one occasion, just after having supper, we brought our hymn books out of our lockers, and the three of us started praising the Lord in song, in a corner of our mess room. We had several taunting and sarcastic remarks thrown at us, but unabashed we carried on. A few minutes later another chap came over and proceeded to follow the music, looking over our shoulders. The next verse I heard him humming and the following verse, was singing away to his heart's content. Well it wasn't long before we had a dozen or fifteen fellows singing with us. It surprised me greatly to hear some of the toughest "old salts" request some of the most tender hymns. We began with some misgiving (to our shame) but finished feeling real swell within. We had a similar experience in the Salvation Army Active Service Centre from where I now write. We commandeered the piano and began singing. Some of the men didn't like it, and started a talking machine going. They had to pay five cents for every record they played, and after spending fifty cents or so on their noisy trash, trying to shut us up or drown us out, they found us still singing away and not costing us a cent either.

I have met several other Christian men and have enjoyed their fellowship. Only to-day I met a real saint in the Lord, just off the "Revenge" on leave. He is a converted "Anglo-Catholic" and has been serving the Lord in a most remarkable manner aboard his ship. He and another chap are holding nightly prayer and Bible reading meetings, and have been the direct human hand in the conversion of fifteen men since the war began. He and his little group have had much opposition, of course, aboard ship, and not the least has come from the chaplain of the ship himself. Oh what some of these chaplains will have to account for at the judgment day; all the opportunities they have wasted, and their unfaithfulness to their commission. I really don't believe half of them are really saved.

I have been fortunate in finding a church home here. I'm sure God led me to find it for I can see his hand clearly in the way I found this place. It is West End Baptist Church.

The minister is a faithful preacher of God's Word. He is fearless in his exposition, and is a sound, deep, evangelical preacher, besides being a charming personality. The church is smaller, of course, than ours, but is nice and comfortable, it holds about 500 or 600 in the main auditorium. Of course, this matters little, for when I entered the place for the first time, I knew God was there. I could just feel His presence, and when I heard Mr. Vincent preach, I knew I had found the right place. He is a good singer, and he and I sang "Lead me to Calvary" (a duet) at their mid-week prayer and preaching service. I met several there who knew Jarvis St., and among others a cousin of Harold and Russel Slade. She has been to Jarvis St. several times and knows it quite well. Her name is Miss G. Thompson. Mrs. Vincent asked me to dinner on Sunday so you see I'm doing all right, eh!

Well, Pastor, I am just bubbling over with praise to Jesus Christ and am ashamed to confess that it has really surprised me the way He has undertaken for me at every turn. I am very unworthy of all His goodness and I pray daily that He will make me more worthy of Him and that I may serve Him more and better every day. I sure appreciate the prayers from Jarvis St. on my behalf and I just know they are being answered hourly.

Lots of love and best Christian regards.

NORMAN PENNEY.

N. C. Penney, O/Tel
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Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 4 Second Quarter Lesson 20 May 19th, 1940

WORLDLY AMBITION REBUKED

Lesson Text: Matthew 20.

Golden Text: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."—Matt. 20:28.

I. The Last Shall Be First—verses 1 to 16.

The parable of the labourers in the vineyard was spoken by our Lord to illustrate the folly of seeking precedence in the Kingdom (verse 16; Matt. 19:30), and can be properly understood only when studied in its setting. Peter thought that if riches were a hindrance to spiritual advancement, poverty must be an advantage which the disciples might rightly claim (Matt. 19:23-30).

The Roman denarius, translated "penny" in verse two, was considered fair wages for a day's work. It would be about seventeen cents in our money.

Time was reckoned in hours between sunrise at about six o'clock and sunset, which came about six o'clock in the evening. The master of the estate sent out men at various times of the day. Some began their work early; others at nine o'clock; others at twelve o'clock noon, and still others at five o'clock in the afternoon.

The Lord is in need of labourers to gather in His harvest (Psa. 126:6; Matt. 9:38; John 4:35). He gives us the privilege of engaging in service with Him (1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor. 6:1). The work of the Lord is not easy; we must be prepared to toil and suffer, to bear the burden and heat of the day (2 Cor. 4:7-10; 11:21-30).

At the end of the day the Lord will surely reward His servants for what they have done in His name (1 Pet. 5:2-4). He is faithful Who has promised (1 Thess. 5:24; 2 Tim. 4:7, 8; Heb. 10:23; 11:11).

The Lord as a faithful and just Judge will reward each man as he deserves (Matt. 16:27; Rom. 2:6; 1 Cor. 3:14; 4:5; Rev. 22:12). This parable does not teach that all men will be rewarded alike, but that all receive what has been promised, and some more than they expect.

The Lord is sovereign in all His action and decisions. He can do what He will with His own, and He is not accountable to any human individual (Rom. 3:4; 9:19-21; 11:32-36). Peter made the mistake of supposing that because he and

the other disciples were among the first to follow the Lord they would have a more liberal reward. Our Lord warns him to beware lest others who should be called later win higher honour; many that are last shall be first.

Thus our Lord rebuked Peter's selfishness which had led to the question "What shall we have?" He ought rather to have asked "What shall He have?" Let us ever seek to advance the glory of the Lord, rather than our own praise (2 Cor. 10:17; Gal. 6:14; 1 Pet. 4:11).

II. The Least Shall Be Greatest—verses 17 to 28. Read also Mk. 10:32-45; Lk. 18:31-34; 22:24-30.

The death of Christ is the standard by which all consecration is to be judged (Rom. 12:1; Phil. 3:8-11; Heb. 12:3, 4). This was at least the third occasion on which our Lord had spoken of His coming death, but the disciples continued to misunderstand or to disregard His prediction (Matt. 16:21; 17:22).

The disciples James and John spoke to Christ through their mother (Matt. 4:21). Like Peter they longed for prominence in the Lord's Kingdom (Matt. 18:1; 19:27), and their mother encouraged their selfish ambition. Prayer may sometimes be self-centred, and may consist in the desire to advance one's own interests regardless of the good of others, or the glory of the Lord (Psa. 78:39, 40; 106:15; Jas. 4:3).

The sons of Zebedee knew not what they asked, for in requesting glory they virtually requested suffering, which is its inevitable prelude. It costs to reign with Christ (Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 3:21). The disciples would indeed be plunged into the waters of sorrow and distress (Acts 12:1-3; Rev. 1:9), but the Saviour would not permit them to bargain with Him for the places of distinction in His Kingdom. God the Father has kept all these matters in His own hand (Acts 1:7; 15:18).

In the political world the great are those who exercise dominion and authority over their fellows, but in the spiritual world the great are those who are humble, and the powerful are those who serve (Prov. 15:33; Matt. 18:4; Mk. 9:35). Christ our Saviour came to this earth that He might minister to men, and give His life as a ransom for their sin (Matt. 18:11; 1 Tim. 1:15; John 2:2). He is our great Example in the grace of lowliness (Lk. 22:27; Acts 10:38; Phil 2:5-11).

III. The Blind Shall See—verses 30 to 34. Read also Mk. 10:46-52; Lk. 18:35-43.

It is somewhat difficult to know the exact relationship of the accounts of the healing of the blind in the different Gospels. Possibly we are to understand that as the Lord departed from Jericho he was met by two blind men, of whom Bartimaeus was the chief one, and the spokesman (Mk. 10:46), and that on the way into Jericho Christ had performed a similar miracle for another man (Lk. 18:35).

The Lord answers the cry of faith, but in sovereign grace and power, He sometimes waits for us to ask Him for healing (verse 32; verse 21; John 5:6).

Physical blindness is an illustration of the spiritual blindness which has come upon men through the machinations of Satan (2 Cor. 4:3-6). All of us should continually pray that our eyes might be opened to see the Lord, and to understand His Word (Psa. 119:18; Acts 16:14).

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