

The Gospel Witness

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

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EGYPT IN THE NEWS AND IN THE BIBLE

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, October 21st, 1940.

(Stenographically Reported)

"Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!

"Yet he also is wise, and will bring evil, and will not call back his words: but will arise against the house of the evildoers, and against the help of them that work iniquity.

"Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the Lord shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.

"For thus hath the Lord spoken unto me, Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them: so shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof.

"As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it."—Isaiah 31:1-5.

The name of Egypt takes us back to the spring of human history. The history of states begins with Egypt, and that history is found in the book of beginnings. When Abram went into Egypt to escape the famine of Canaan, he found an organized state, with its king and its princes as rulers. From that forward, through the days of Joseph and of Moses, and of Solomon, and through the reigns of all the kings of Judah and of Israel, including the days when the seraphic Isaiah wrote and sang, Israel's history at many points touched the life of Egypt.

In the New Testament Joseph and Mary, by Divine instruction, took the infant Jesus into the land of Egypt where they were hidden to remain until the death of Herod, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son." In the last book of the Bible, Revelation, we read of two witnesses slain by the beast which ascended out of the bottomless pit, whose dead bodies, it is said, shall lie "in the street of the great city, which

spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."

In the last hundred years and more, British history has been closely interwoven with the life of the ancient land of Egypt. For some time Egypt was under British suzerainty, but more recently it has become an independent state. There is now an established kingdom; the monarchy has been restored, and a king now reigns again over the land of the Pharaohs. The Red Sea through which God marvellously made a channel for His people to pass from Egypt on their way to Canaan is now an important highway for the world's commerce; it has been made so, however, by another sort of channel created by human skill and labour, made through the Isthmus of Suez, connecting the Red Sea with the Mediterranean, thus opening a sea-channel of commerce to Asia.

Egypt had a considerable place in Napoleon's history. It has, indeed, been a very important piece of terrain through all the recorded history of the world.

And now Egypt is again coming into the news. Mussolini finds himself in rather an awkward predicament. He has an army in Libya on the south of the Mediterranean, bordering on Egypt. He has not only moved toward Egypt, but has crossed the border, and must now do battle with the desert—another desert, without the help of a miracle-working God to bring water out of the rock or to send manna from the sky. The British Navy seems to have become somewhat of a nuisance to Mussolini as it stands in the way of his sending supplies to his army across the sea. It may seem a bit impertinent if not impudent of the Royal Navy to dispute Mussolini's sovereign right to the sea which he calls his own! But the Royal Navy has long had a way of making itself a nuisance to gangster nations, just as policemen in general are rather a nuisance to dishonest men.

Of course Mussolini has a navy of his own; but it seems to have been built very largely for purposes of parade; and, lest its gold braid should become tarnished, it stays in port, except in fair weather, and when some part of their particular sea is, for the time being, unoccupied.

Hitler has failed to accomplish his purpose—his declared purpose—to have his photograph taken outside Buckingham Palace. It is a known fact that when his personal photographer photographed him before the Eiffel Tower, calling him by name he said, "Take this; the next, in front of Buckingham Palace; and after that, with the skyscrapers as a background." So far, he has failed to keep that appointment with his photographer. Now he seems inclined to move eastward, in an endeavour to help Mussolini. It seems improbable that he would risk an attempt to skirt the north shore of the Black Sea by invading Russian territory. There is a Bear there of whose wholehearted friendship he seems to be not quite sure. His only other way to help Mussolini would be across the Black Sea from Rumania to Turkey; or otherwise, through Bulgaria and the region of the Dardanelles. But all along that route the red lights seem to be against him. Indeed, he seems to be rather an unwelcome guest at anybody's party. But if he could by any means force his way by this route, he would have to go through Syria or Iraq, or a bit of both, to get to the Suez to help his waiting friend Mussolini.

Altogether, it would be rather a precarious and hazardous undertaking. But failing that, what can Italy do on the borders of Egypt? That is the present picture of Egypt in the news, between Libya and Suez.

But others in time past have manoeuvred to make use of Egypt. Judah and Israel, at a time of apostasy, did so of old. Our text tells us the Divine estimate of the value of Egypt's help; by which I believe is intended not only the Egypt of that day. I have reminded you that Revelation speaks of some mysterious, perhaps mystical city, which it calls "the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt." As the war moves toward the cradle of human history, and the names of places frequently mentioned in the holy Book, more and more are named in the daily news, the Christian will read the news with ever-deepening interest and enquiry.

Our text is wholly up-to-date. It is not ancient history only, though it is that. I think indeed it is a prophecy which may rightly be interpreted in the light and by the

application of that sound exegetical principle to which I have referred, which gives some "great city", whatever it may be, a dual name, saying "which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt."

I think our text has particular application to those who exhaust every source of supply, and every means of carnal warfare, in their fight against righteousness and truth. It applies to us also insofar as we may—which God forbid—resort to their methods and rely upon similar bases of hope.

I.

Here is enunciated this everlasting principle, THE WOEFULNESS OF A CARNAL CONFIDENCE THAT IS DEVOID OF ANY DIVINE INGREDIENT. Israel, apostate Israel, having turned its back upon God and refusing to hear the voice of His prophets, having resolutely set herself against the truth of God and asked to be allowed to get on without God entirely, "A rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord: which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits: get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us." Thus eliminating Him from their thought, and from all consideration in their present or future plans, they turn to Egypt for help. They sought an alliance with a great power, and put their trust in horses and chariots because they were many, and in horsemen because they were strong.

It is not said that they were to be blamed for making use of horses and chariots and horsemen: the condemnation that is passed upon them is due to the fact that they trusted in these carnal weapons, not as instruments of the divine power, but to the utter exclusion of any confidence in God. "Woe to them", said the Lord, "that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!"

It was the exclusion of God, the entire secularization of life, the elimination of all spiritual considerations, which brought this prediction of woe to the ears of Israel.

That principle still obtains. Egypt was noted for its chariots. In the days of Moses they are said to have numbered not less than six hundred. At a later date, in the days of Shishak, king of Egypt, we read of his going to battle with twelve hundred chariots; and in the days of Solomon Egypt had so many chariots that they exported them, just as the United States are making planes and tanks for us. Egypt exported chariots to other lands, and the price of them is told us: they cost no less than six hundred shekels each. Egypt was looked upon as a land of great military power; perhaps not quite so powerful at this particular time as she had been, but still a great and mighty nation. Not tanks and planes and guns in those days, but horses and chariots and men of war.

Egypt seemed to offer a special advantage of geographical position. They went down to Egypt for help. They had access to Egypt, and Egypt had access to them; and that without interference on the part of their dreaded enemy, the great Assyrian power. Egypt was their next-door neighbour who could be used for Israel's purpose.

But their strategy was wholly on the horizontal plane; they had no thought of help from Above. "God was not in all their thought"; so completely had they divorced themselves from Him that any consideration of the possibility of His help was absent from all their estimates of probability. They were ready to cast themselves upon another power, for the moment, because of Egypt's geographical advantage.

How closely analogous that is in principle to what we have seen in the last year in Europe; Hitler's attack upon Poland, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and France, forming a partnership with Italy; then moving eastward and southeastward to Rumania, threatening Hungary and Yugoslavia; menacing Turkey and Greece, seeking to lay hold of adjacent territories, expecting to derive from their resources further help in their campaign of conquest. Thus also place and relative location had a large part in Israel's military strategy.

We have seen the same thing in the lives of individuals, as when a man seeks to escape from some enemy threatening his destruction by change of location and environment. I myself have met with scores of men who, defeated in England, have run away to Canada or the United States. They have said, "If I can free myself from my old associates, if I can find a new environment, separate myself from the temptations inherent in my companionships, and find a new land, I shall be able to attack the foe and may rehabilitate myself." But the sinner brought his sin with him; he found that the real tempter was not without but within; he found that geography made no difference, that the devil goes to and fro in the earth, roaming all lands, seeking whom he may devour.

Salvation for the individual is more than a change of venue. It is equally true that the conflict in Europe will not be determined by geographical considerations. We hear of certain territory being yielded to the enemy—he has taken all on the west. But when we heard of his invasion of the Low Countries, then of France, and piece after piece of important terrain was yielded to him, many said, It looks as though he were winning the war. Not at all. Just as surely as the drunkard or the thief or the debauchee, seeking to escape his immediate environment, hopes to conquer new lands by changing his situation, but takes his worst enemy with him; as surely as the seeds of decay and ultimate destruction travel with him on land and sea and in the air, so Hitler and his hordes, by this text, carry with them the instruments of their own destruction. They are just as vulnerable when they have laid nearly all Europe waste as when they were sitting behind the Siegfried Line. Their confidence was reposed in carnal weapons, and nothing else. They had no eyes for anything else, no conception of the reality of spiritual forces.

People become obsessed with certain ideas. One man has a passion for money, and he interprets everything in terms of finance. Another has a passion for land. I have known men as hungry for more land as ever a man was for his dinner. Such men measure everyone's progress by their standard. There are people who define life in terms of the physical, of the material, things that are ponderable, things that can be measured, seen, weighed, and felt. They have no consciousness of a spiritual realm. They are very much like the French, when they were established, as they thought, behind the

Maginot Line, but forgot that there was a way round. There are people who seem to assume that all forces are material, and that if they can but command such material force, they can fight their way to victory.

So thought Israel: "We can dispense with Jehovah and His prophets if we can put in their place the horses and chariots and horsemen of Egypt. We do not need God." I doubt if ever in the world's history, in the darkest of the dark ages, there was ever a conflict in which on the one side, all estimations relating to present plans and future success were more completely devoid of any consideration of spiritual things, or of any recognition of spiritual forces. Said they, "We fight Assyria, and we will get Egypt to help us." Says Hitler, "We fight Britain; she is our great enemy; we have commandeered the resources of a large part of Europe, now we will take Rumania." It looks as though he may be planning either to divert our attention, or actually to attempt to cut a way through to join forces with Mussolini. But in all his reckoning, it is wholly a resort to the carnal and physical; even his psychological weapons are essentially carnal. The Bible says "the carnal mind," the psychic mind, "is enmity against God." He uses the carnal mind, believing he can beat men into submission by means of a lie. Hence the lying propaganda of Berlin. They think to build themselves up by horses and chariots, and if you like, airplanes and tanks, by vast armies of physical force against which no one can stand.

But there is Someone Who says, "Woe to them who think I have forsaken my world, and am a mere spectator of the wickedness of men." Are we ourselves immune to that temptation, we who are British? I do not think we are immune; and I suggest to you that we need constantly to be on our guard lest we should trust too much to horses and chariots, or their modern counterpart, "in reeking tube, and iron shard," rather than on the Lord God of hosts.

There was no condemnation, I repeat, for the use of carnal weapons. We must use them. We must have munitions of war, planes and more planes, tanks and more tanks, armies and greater armies. We must in that sense follow Oliver Cromwell's maxim and, while trusting in God, keep our powder dry.

What they were condemned for was that they depended upon this to the exclusion of any reliance upon the Holy One of Israel. Are we to have a visit with God only occasionally, when the King calls for a day of prayer? Are we then to throng our churches and bow before God in prayer—and on Monday forget all about Him, and glory then in our navy, our army, and our airmen? I will be outdone by no one in my admiration of these things and men; but I insist that we who are Christians will make our greatest contribution to the war if and when, over and above our utmost effort to supply the carnal weapons, we put our trust in God, and daily invoke His blessing upon our arms. Not a passive presumption, but a fighting faith, is here enjoined.

The principle finds conspicuous application to the enemy against which we fight, but I do not think it is true of Britain. I know we are a bad lot, but I do not think we are as bad as Hitler says we are! There is a good deal about our life as Canadians and Britons of which we need to repent, and for which we need to ask the forgiveness of God; but when that is said and done,

it must be admitted that our trust is not, as a nation and an Empire, exclusively in horses and chariots and carnal weapons of war. "Let us trust in God", said the King, "as I do." The little princess said, "God will help us." "Our father and mother have told us about the different parts of the world they have visited, and so we are able to understand something of your life in Canada and the United States and elsewhere", said she; and I am sure that her father and mother had told her also to assure British children across the seas that God was taking care of them.

That is a great thing for a princess to learn from her royal father and mother. Nor have you ever listened to an address by Prime Minister Churchill in which at some point he has not expressed his dependence upon God. Somewhere he has said of the days when he served in the army himself, that never once could he remember going into action when he did not first commit his soul to the safekeeping of his God. A man who marshals the forces of the Empire, yet adds to it a confidence in God, that God will help us.

How many there are who desire salvation of the soul, who depend upon carnal means. Some depend upon the waters of baptism for salvation, or upon the consecrated wafer, or upon the utterances of a mere man, upon going to church and bowing there—thus they depend upon carnal means. There is no salvation there, dear friends. These things, such as are prescribed by the Word of God, kept in their proper place, such as baptism and the Lord's Supper, have their function, not as a means of salvation but as a confession of a spiritual gift already received; for neither the soul of an individual nor the life of a nation can be saved and preserved apart from the help of God Himself. That is the charge of the text.

II.

There is a bit of irony here. They are reproved for THE FOLLY OF IGNORING A WISDOM THAT IS THE EXECUTIVE OF THE MORAL ORDER: "Did you forget that I also am wise, and I will not draw back my words", God says in effect, "This is a universe of law and order of which I am King. I have issued my word, and I live to execute it. In going down to Egypt, you have forgotten me."

What folly it is on the part of the Axis powers—or on our part—to question His wisdom, or ignore it! *The wisdom of God is revealed in this irrevocable Word.* I mean literally—not the paper and ink and covers, but the truth of the Word of God, the royal law. As the Archbishop of Canterbury handed the Bible to the King at his coronation he said to the King of the Empire, "Here is wisdom." Is there any man here who will set his wisdom above the wisdom of the revealed Word of God? Are there men in positions of authority, statesmen and others who say, "We do not need preaching, we do not need the Bible"? They do! They do! God in infinite mercy has arisen for our help, but if Britain had followed the teaching of the Word we would not be where we are now. There never would have been a programme of disarmament, a state of defenselessness such as has characterized us; there never would—or could—have been the shameful Munich if the Bible had been followed. Do not tell me that the policy of pacificism is scriptural and Christian. If we follow the revealed wisdom of the

Book we shall be saved from the folly which is here condemned.

I wonder have you read Hitler's *Mein Kampf*? It is a dreary book, saying the same thing over and over again; but in the main, it outlines Hitler's programme. It is a kind of Bible to the Nazis. But let me tell you that there is another *Mein Kampf*. Someone else has written a Book beside Hitler, and He "will not draw back His words." The things that are written there will be implemented, for He is at once the Legislator and the Executive of the moral order; and His word is pledged to fight against evildoers. "He also is wise, and will bring evil, and will not call back his words: but will arise against the house of the evildoers, and against the help of them that work iniquity."

That is the promise of God's Word. "The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth." He is equally against all who help them, whether "accessories before the fact" or after the fact. He says He is "against the help of them that work iniquity." Hence, no carnal alliance of Germany with Italy, no overrunning of Rumania or other accessory power, no pact with Japan, no considerations of geographical strategic advantage or of access to material supplies,—will affect the ultimate issue, because the Lord has spoken it, and will not withdraw His words, for He lives to see that every word is fulfilled, because He is against evildoers, and against everyone who helps another to do evil.

That means God is against these beerparlours near by, and against Hepburn and his crowd, against everyone who makes it easy for men to do wrong and hard to do right. He will fight against him; He will arise against him, and ultimately destroy him. That is the warning message of the whole Bible.

It applies in the matter of individual salvation. There is no escape from the folly of sin by any kind of human subterfuge. The only escape is through the wisdom of God which is revealed to us through Jesus Christ the Lord.

III.

You see further how GOD PREDICATES HIS PREDICTIONS UPON THE VERY NATURE OF THINGS: "The Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit"—which is another way of saying that the ground of their confidence, in the very nature of the case, is a false one, and ultimately is bound to issue in disaster. After all, the best of men are but flesh, and God declares the inevitable supremacy of the spirit. In the last analysis, it is always so. This is a spiritual war, which will be won by spiritual weapons and by spiritual power.

"When the Lord shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together." That enunciates the principle of the mutual destructionism of confederate evils. Mussolini in his blindness, when he thought it was safe—and not until then apparently—essayed to go to the help of Hitler; and he has got himself in a pretty fix from which he cannot extricate himself. He has an army in Libya cut off from its home base. The British Navy stands between him and all supplies from Italy, with a considerable army in Egypt, a country friendly to Britain—not perhaps numerically as strong as the Italian army, but more than their match. Read the

thirtieth chapter of Isaiah: "One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee." "Woe to them that . . . stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many." "It is nothing with God to save by the many or the few." What He says is, "Do not forget the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. I command the world of the spiritual and all spiritual forces, by whose power victory comes."

How emphatically true is this of the matter of personal salvation! "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." The spiritual must take precedence. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood (or bloods), nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, *but of God.*" If you are a Christian, really saved, you are saved because God, by His mighty power, has made you a new creature in Christ Jesus; for until He does so no one is saved, though he may have been a member of every church in town by turn.

And this is very much to the point: "Thus hath the Lord spoken unto me, Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey." God says, "I am like a lion, a young lion roaring on his prey. The wicked are the legitimate prey of My holy anger." "God is angry with the wicked every day." As long as men continue in their wickedness, He is angry with them. He says when thus the lion roars upon his prey, "a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him." The men who are looking after this flock here, and that flock yonder, all come together to try to frighten the lion away, and He says, "He will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them."

How suggestive it is! What a noisy enemy Hitler is! He has been bellowing not so much like a bull of Bashan, but like the beast out of the bottomless pit must bellow. I do not know whether you can understand German, but if you have heard Hitler speak, though you do not understand a word, you can feel the hot breath of the devil in his speech. Someone wrote me a letter saying she did not understand what I meant by saying I hate Hitler and all his doings; that I ought to hate the doings but not the man. My friends, it is written: "There is a sin unto death: I do not say that (ye) shall pray for it." If Hitler has not committed the sin unto death, and is not a child of perdition, there never has been one since Judas Iscariot. The wickedness of this man and of those associated with him exceeds everything the world has ever known. The long, premeditated, hellish plotting has never found a parallel in all history. I do pray for Hitler: I pray that the Lord in mercy to the rest of the world will utterly and absolutely destroy him—and that with all speed. The Lord says He will roar upon the wicked "like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey." "Call the shepherds of Rumania and Hungary and Turkey and Japan, and let them shout as much as they like, and make what noise they can, I shall pay no attention at all", the Lord might say.

Is not that a suggestive figure? The Bible never uses a metaphor, a figure of speech carelessly; you can always

follow the truth to its utmost logical implications; and when the Lord likens Himself to a lion, and a young lion in all its strength and vigour, fastening upon its prey, He likens Himself to one who is pouring out his anger and exercising his strength upon something that, in the nature of the thing, belongs to him. Every evil man calls down upon himself the condemnation of the holy law of God. When one allies himself with that abominable thing which God hates, instead of becoming the subject of the operation of His grace, he makes himself the natural victim of His justice.

"So shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight for Mount Zion, and for the hill thereof." What folly it is to think to legislate for God! Can you think of any greater folly than for men to expect to change the divine order of things? Say Hitler and Mussolini, "We are going to have a new order in Europe." What is the new order? A new society with God excluded, with Christianity destroyed. Hitler—and Ludendorff before him—named Christianity as the greatest enemy of the German nation, and the greatest hindrance to German progress. They will get rid of God, and have a new order in Europe! And Japan is going to have a "new order" in Asia. Think of it! An ordered world without God—the God Who made it.

In effect the Lord says, "Who said so? I did not. I did not call back my words. Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey. . . so shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight for Mount Zion." You expect me to say that the battle of Armageddon is going to be fought soon in Palestine, that Zion here is literal, geographical Zion; Jerusalem, geographical Jerusalem. I do not say it is not: I do not know. Have it that way if you will. But we can come to an agreement. If Hitler continues in his southeasterly direction to relieve Mussolini, he will have to go through Jerusalem or skirt it at no very great distance. But whether or no, I think it may be taken to represent a condition—it may represent the literal Jerusalem, but intermediately it represents all that Jerusalem and Zion stand for; and we may claim the principle of the promise, that when thus these things are attacked, and when men set themselves to an attempt to eliminate Him from human life, God will defend such as a roaring lion about to spring upon its prey.

"As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem." You expect me to say that is the airplane. People can find motor cars and airplanes in the Bible if they have sufficient imagination. In principle, these things are there. If you like, call them airplanes. God is using planes now. "As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem." I like however, to think of God as being independent of all instrumentalities. I know that He can use them, but I love such scriptures as these: "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky." "He rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind." He does not need an airplane. "If only we had more planes", someone says. I wish we had. But who do you suppose stood in the gap when, by every military rule, we ought to have been overwhelmed? The God Who, when He wills to be so, is independent of airplanes, helped us at Dunkirk.

I do not know how authentic the report that reached us last week of the attempted invasion really is, but

there was a great loss of life on the European Coast. And accompanying it all, over and above the terrible devastation effected on the forces of evil by our airplanes, savage winds swept the Channel and smashed many of the barges without the aid of airplanes. Some day I am going to try to speak to you on clouds in war-time, what the Word of God has to say about clouds, about the weather, the lightnings that cleave the sky. They are all weapons in His armory. If the Lord is pleased to use airplanes, and is pleased to give them to us, praise Him; but if the time should come when at some point, we have neither airplanes or tanks, when there is nothing but God to help us, then it will be still possible for Him to give us the victory.

"As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it." The principles of the text assure us beyond all possibility of doubt of ultimate, overwhelming victory. I am getting ready now for the great thanksgiving service. Not because I study maps, although I do; nor because I read everything I can about the war, though I do; but because I know that over and above it all, there is a holy God upon the throne. You remember the little boy who was in a lifeboat eight days after the sinking of the *City of Benares*? He said he was not afraid for "the Royal Navy will not let us down." That was lovely—nor did it let them down. But when we have sung, "Britannia rules the waves", and, "God save the King", and, "There'll always be an England", what does it amount to? It may be just whistling to keep our courage up. But if your faith is in God above you, and in the promises of His Word, you may be sure that God will "never let us down". "They shall not be ashamed that wait for me." "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." "Turn ye unto him from whom the children of Israel have deeply revolted." Be as unlike these people as you can by trusting Him only—and wholly!

"With force of arms we nothing can,
Full soon were we down-trodden;
But for us fights the proper Man,
Whom God Himself hath bidden.
Ask ye, Who is this same?
Christ Jesus is His name,
The Lord Sabaoth's Son;
He and no other one
Shall conquer in the battle."

THE GOSPEL IN WAR TIME

What is the gospel? In its fullest significance, it is everything that God has spoken to men in Christ Jesus; which, properly understood, means everything that is written in the Old and New Testaments. Had God willed our destruction rather than our salvation, He would not have spoken at all, and His unbroken silence must have issued in the suicide of a sinful world.

His every word of grace is strong
As that which built the skies;
The Voice which rolls the stars along,
Speaks all the promises.

Initially, the gospel is the message of salvation through the blood of Christ, involving, of course, regeneration by the power of the Holy Ghost, or the new birth, and the sinner's justification by faith.

But that is only the first letter of the gospel. The message of the Bible is designed to illumine the past, by the record of God's mercies; to shed Heaven's light upon the present, by all the promises of grace; and to make all the future as a path "which shineth more and more unto the perfect day", by the promise of the ultimate universal recognition of the sovereignty and supremacy of God in Christ.

The message of the gospel, including its promises, its precepts, its principles, and its predictions, is designed savingly to relate a man to God and his neighbour, in the past, the present, and the future. The gospel will teach a little child to trust the Lord, to obey its parents, properly to behave itself in school and at play; but it is designed also to enable one to grow into the full stature of a man in Christ in the office, or the shop, in college or university, as a preacher in the pulpit, or a worshipper in the pew, or a soldier on the battlefield. It is intended to fit a ruler for such a rôle as Joseph's; a prime minister for such a task as Daniel's or Mordecai's; a teacher for such a mission as Paul's; a legislator for such a work as Moses'; a king for such a reign as David's.

The gospel is able to help a bereaved woman like Naomi; to inspire a domestic affection and loyalty like that of Ruth; to comfort the Shunammite when her child lies dead. Indeed, it provides a handkerchief for every mourner. It can help a Rahab to play a worthy part in war time; and implant an heroic spirit in the breasts of all the London Deborahs, enabling them to defy Sisera and all his hosts—and at the same time, to make a song of it!

The gospel will enable those who "go down to the sea in ships, and do business in great waters," to see God's wonders in the deep; and will bring cheer and comfort and the inspiration of hope to captain and crew and passengers of a ship of Alexandria, breaking to pieces in a storm on what Mussolini presumes to call his sea!

The Royal Air Force may yet fly its planes into the stratosphere far beyond the reach or sight of any anti-aircraft gun or gunner; but it will never outfly the reach of the gospel which is the word of Him Who made heaven and earth.

It is a pitifully dwarfed and mean conception of the gospel which sees nothing more in it than a promise of forgiveness of sins, and escape from hell. We rejoice that that is its initial message, and it would be impossible to over-estimate its value and its preciousness even when viewed in that meagre compass; but it embraces everything from forgiveness of sins to an eternity in the immediate presence of God Himself. From the numbering of the hairs of our head, indicating a man's physical security, to the most illustrious crown that can rest upon his brow, with all the million intermediate ramifications of interests and activities of spirit, soul, and body, all human concerns are embraced by the comprehensive sweep of the gospel of grace.

The Apostle Paul was a true representative of the Gospel, and a symbol and prophecy of the universality of its mission and function, when the Lord said of him, "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the nations and kings and children of Israel."

To us, the Bible could not appear to be the word of God if there were any department of human life to which it did not relate, and from which it might be

excluded: but it belongs everywhere. We would therefore preach to the young, and suffer little children to come unto Christ. Still we would count it one of the highest privileges and honours of life to be permitted to lead the youngest child of understanding to the Saviour's feet. But we insist, too, that amid the crash of governments and of nations; the conquering but enslaving march of armies of millions; the crash of the bombs and the thunder of the guns—the gospel can and does make itself heard, bringing instruction and guidance and comfort and inspiration to kings and rulers, statesmen and soldiers and sailors, artisans and artists—and women and little children. It is more than a parochial call to piety: it sweeps all the seas and the continents with its appeal: "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord."

WHY WE PREACH ON THE WAR

The following letters received from some of our readers will answer the above question—Ed. G. W.

From an R.A.F. Subscriber

During my training period—drill, etc., I found great help in remembering your sermon on David in the cave, and his "men who could keep rank"; and your great expositions on the basic principles of the Bible have more than confirmed my own convictions that the present struggle is one no right-thinking man can afford to disregard. For the outspoken way in which you have sponsored the cause, and the help given by so many of your own young men from Toronto, many, many thanks. May you be preserved by God's grace to "continue in well-doing".

From a British Subscriber and Contributor

(Below is an extract from a letter to our Canadian Bank in London, the writer of which with his wife had sent a cheque for twenty pounds to the Bank to be forwarded to us. The letter was a reply to the enquiry of the Foreign Exchange Control as to what the money was for.—Ed. G. W.)

"Dr. Shields has a theological college where men of the highest Christian order are trained, and we find that he is making a tremendous campaign in Canada against fifth column activity against this country. He is such a powerful exponent of the British cause that we consider it a real national asset to support his work when this nation needs real live Christian supporters of British interests abroad to combat the rot that has brought us to our present condition, and I sincerely hope that the Foreign Exchange Control will see their way to permit it to pass as a good national investment.

From an Ulster Subscriber

Dear Dr. Shields:

In enclosing herewith my renewal subscription to the Gospel Witness, I desire to express the appreciation felt by myself and others here in Ulster on your recent fine articles on the war and more particularly on your address on the Pope's fine hand in Petain's treachery. We thank God for the valiant and uncompromising stand taken by you in these dark days for the Cause of God and Truth: and the note of confidence in Britain's ultimate victory expressed in your sermons finds an echo in our own hearts and we feel sure that righteousness will prevail.

The people of Ulster stand wholeheartedly behind the Mother Country, for we are convinced that, under God, the civil and religious liberty enjoyed by us, is due to her, and we cannot but realize that if Hitler were victorious and Ulster was ceded to Eire, then Romanism or Paganism, or both, would put an end to the opportunities as yet still afforded us for the propagation of the glorious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From An English Subscriber

Dear Dr. Shields:

A personal friend of mine has handed me several copies of your splendid paper, "THE GOSPEL WITNESS". It is the best religious paper I have ever read.

It speaks the truth, it affirms the divine truth of the Incarnation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and it penetrates into the internal or spiritual meaning of Holy Scripture.

I enjoy the articles on Canada and the war—the war we are fighting to rid the world of the very demons of hell, and the powers of darkness. Every man and woman in this dark land of ours is determined that Hitler and all he stands for shall be destroyed—and all this with the Lord's help.

I am just about 70 and realize how very near we are to the unseen world—the spiritual world to which we are all travelling.

Your article "Overwhelmed" in the issue dated June 6, appealed to me and caused me to think of the wonderful power of Divine Providence, and how every miracle both in the Old and New Testament has a Divine meaning.

What we do require in most of our churches is a new conception of spiritual order of things—we need to realize that all the Books of the Bible contain a spiritual sense, and that the Lord used history, and miracle to teach us eternal lessons.

May the Lord bless and keep you: and may your excellent work be crowned with success.

From a New York Subscriber

Dear Miss Stoakley:

Thank you for your letter of October 1st concerning the date of expiration of my subscription to THE GOSPEL WITNESS for Rev. _____.

It has been my privilege to send a number of Christian periodicals to Mr. _____, and yet I am sure you will be pleased to know he told me the other day that of all the magazines coming to his home he valued THE GOSPEL WITNESS the most.

From a Meaford, Ont. Subscriber

We would like to renew our subscription to the WITNESS and are enclosing \$15.00 (m.o.) the balance to be applied to the WITNESS Fund.

We feel that we are finding even more comfort, if possible, than ever in Dr. Shields' sermons in these troubled times and pray for God's blessing on him and on you all.

From a Southern U.S. Editor

My dear Brother:—

God bless you and direct you and strengthen you in the courageous and faithful work you are doing. Have just finished reading with tear-dimmed eyes your discourse as reported in the September 26th issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS relating especially to Britain and the United States. Your paper usually reaches me each Monday morning—and this morning when it came I said to myself, "I'm too busy to open and read it," but I did; and when I finished it I picked up my pen and am writing—I felt constrained to encourage you—to say, Amen! Pardon me for taking up your time, and for the \$1 enclosed send me "Russellism" and "The Papacy"—the extra is yours.

Excerpt from a British Letter to a Jarvis St. Member

Thanks ever so much for sending us THE GOSPEL WITNESSES. They came this time just as the siren shrieked for us to run for shelter, so we took two with us, which we read from cover to cover, and believe me, they seemed like a rock of defence. It gives us more courage to know someone in Canada is preaching and praying for us.

From a Veteran Baptist Minister

(Excerpt from a letter to Rev. W. G. Brown)

Thanks, many thanks to you. I have, ever since you so kindly called on us, enjoyed so much reading THE GOSPEL WITNESS. I am going to say something now, Brother Brown, which I hope you will not interpret as any lack of appreciation of the Old Book. Far, far from it! But there have been many times during the past year, and especially since the French debacle, that I have feared for dear old England, and nothing—and I say it reverently, not even the Bible—gave me the feeling of assurance that Dr. Shields' sermons did. To find a conservative, wisely optimistic, Christian man so cocksure, and backing up his every statement with the Bible, made me feel as Annie Rooney says, "glad all over."

Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 4, Fourth Quarter Lesson 44 November 3rd, 1940

DEBORAH THE PROPHETESS

Lesson Text: Judges 4.

Golden Text: "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord; but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might."—Judges 5:31.

For Reading: Judges 5.

I. Deborah and the Word of God—verses 1 to 9.

"The children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord" (Judg. 2:19; 3:12; 6:1; 8:33, 34; 10:6; 13:1). The story of man's folly and failure, and consequent slavery, is a monotonous one; it is repeated over and over again in human history (Gen. 6:5, 6; 18:20, 21). We are so slow to learn the lesson that sin does not pay.

It was only when the Israelites felt themselves to be absolutely helpless against the might of their conquerors that they finally cried unto the Lord for assistance. The nine hundred chariots of iron brought them to their knees (Exod. 2:23-25; Hos. 5:15; Lk. 15:14-17). Like many an individual, they had forgotten Him in the time of their strength (Deut. 8:11-14; 28:47; 32:15; Hos. 13:6). The Christian may live always unto God (1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17, 23), and be spared those painful experiences when the Lord must lay His hand heavily upon His children to recall them from the wayward path.

At this time Deborah the prophetess, a Godly woman, was Israel's judge. Evidently she had been given this position of unusual responsibility and leadership when the times were "out of joint", and God could find no suitable man to represent Him among His people. We are told that the inhabitants of the land were few, and that idolatry was rife (Judg. 5:7, 8). Other prophetesses are mentioned as giving forth the word of God (Exod. 15:20; 2 Kings 22:14; Lk. 2:36; Acts 21:9).

In spite of the prevailing darkness Deborah had maintained unbroken communion with God. God always has His witnesses (Acts 14:17). We must not blame our surroundings if we depart from fellowship with God, since it is ever possible for the earnest soul to reach Him (Rom. 10:5-11).

If human failure is woefully familiar, Divine deliverance is always delightfully fresh (Isa. 43:18, 19; Lam. 3:22, 23). God fulfils Himself in many and in unusual ways (Deut. 29:29; Prov. 25:2; Isa. 45:15; Rom. 11:33-36; Heb. 1:1). If one should examine a list of the names of the judges of Israel, he would see how unlike they were in background, character and achievement. Then the methods of salvation were as various as the agents. The Lord Who created the millions upon millions of leaves, each with its own design, shape and size, has a unique mission for every one of His children (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:4-13).

The message which the Lord had communicated to Deborah consisted of a command, a promise and a prophecy. If the Israelites obeyed His instructions, they would be victorious. It does not do to separate the comforting passages of the Word of God from their accompanying conditions, and expect God to do His part while we neglect to do ours. If we obey, we may safely trust, but faith without submission would be mere presumption and hypocrisy.

Barak was wise in that he recognized that the Lord had spoken through Deborah. His desire that she should accompany the hosts to battle may be interpreted as a desire that the Lord's presence should be their portion. (Exod. 3:12; 33:14, 15).

II. Barak and the Work of God—verses 10 to 24.

It was Deborah's duty to communicate the word of the Lord to Barak, but it was Barak's task to assemble the hosts of Israel and to lead them into battle. He was willing to assume the command, although he knew that the outcome would mean glory for another, rather than for himself. The selfish person will undertake a difficult task if it is likely to bring him reward, but the Lord would have us devote ourselves wholeheartedly to our duty, regardless of conse-

quences and personal loss (Matt. 16:24, 25; Lk. 14: 33).

Barak encountered difficulties, for not all the tribes were willing to come to the help of the Lord against the mighty (Judg. 5:23); some preferred to dwell at ease, and let others fight for them (Amos 6:1). The lack of co-operation on the part of his fellows and followers frequently makes the task of the Christian leader or teacher a discouraging, and at times a heartbreaking one. The very ones whom he is seeking to uplift may be the first to draw back and leave him standing alone to face the odds of battle on their behalf (Isa. 59:14, 15). Modern history will provide many an illustration of this tendency.

Explicit guidance will be given to those who yield implicit obedience to the Lord (Psa. 111:10; John 7:17; 13:17). Once the Israelites embarked upon the expedition against the enemy, the Lord told them when and how to strike (Gen. 24:27).

Notwithstanding Sisera's great resources of men and chariots the Lord discomfited him (Josh. 10:14; 23:3; 2 Chron. 20:29; Psa. 83:9-18). Even the stars in their courses and the river with its floods fought against him (Judg. 5:20, 21). All the resources of heaven and earth are at the disposal of the one who fights on the Lord's side (2 Kings 3:21-23; Isa. 37:33-36). God subdued General Sisera and King Jabin for Israel, and thus another period of servitude was ended.

UNION NEWS

Maple Grove

Maple Grove Baptist Church, where Mr. D. S. Dinnick has been pastor this summer, celebrated its anniversary on September 29th, when the beautifully decorated church was crowded morning and evening. The preacher for the occasion was Rev. W. Gordon Brown. It was a high day.

In the week preceding this and the week following, an evangelistic campaign was conducted by Pastor A. Dallimore, of Orangeville. Attendance was good, interest was high, and on the last night of this special effort twelve made public profession of faith.

Churchill

Following the official recognition of the Churchill Baptist Church, recently reported in THE GOSPEL WITNESS an evangelistic campaign was conducted by the Pilgrims. Ten took a public stand for Christ, among them some for whom prayer had long been offered. Rev. Matthew Doherty is the pastor.

Cannington

Recently a man and wife were baptized by Pastor K. M. Cutler in Cannington Baptist Church. When Rev. Mr. Cutler went to Cannington about a year ago, there were fifteen members; there are now twenty-five—a splendid improvement.

Orangeville

A Thanksgiving rally was held October 14th in the Baptist Church at Orangeville, with people from Maple Grove; Tottenham; Forward Baptist, Toronto; and elsewhere joining the local Baptists. Friends from Forward Baptist Church provided special music, and the pastor, Rev. J. Scott, preached gloriously both afternoon and evening. Between sessions the friends enjoyed the bountiful hospitality of their hosts.—B.

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