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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

WHAT IF EVEN MOSCOW SHOULD FALL?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, October 12th, 1941

(Stenographically Reported)

"And lo Zadok also, and all the Levites were with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God: and they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up, until all the people had done passing out of the city.

"And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it, and his habitation:

"But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.

"The king said also unto Zadok, the priest, Art not thou a seer? return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar:

"See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me.

"Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they tarried there."—II Samuel 15: 24-29.

Many of you are familiar with the biblical story of Elisha's being besieged in Dothan, and his servant's rising in the morning and seeing the hosts of the Syrians encompassing the city, when he cried to his master, "Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."

That is to say, there were spiritual forces, armies of the Lord of Hosts, encompassing His faithful prophet, which were plainly visible to the eyes of Elisha but were invisible to his servant until the Lord opened his eyes. That is literal history, but it is a parable too. There are spiritual forces encompassing the people of God. There are invisible armies which fight on the side of righteousness, which are not seen by everyone. There are powers which cannot be reckoned up as you count tanks and aeroplanes and guns and millions of men; and yet they are not less potent in the determination of these

great moral issues through all the wars of human history.

I ask the question this evening, "What if even Moscow should fall?" I ask it because, in my view, it is part of the function of the Christian church to afford spiritual comfort to people amid all the distresses of life whatever they may be. We ought to find illumination and inspiration in the house of God. You remember how a psalmist was puzzled about the prosperity of the wicked, and when he sought to know the reason he found it "too painful" for him, until, he says, "I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end." There is Light and an Interpreter in the sanctuary of God by which the mysteries of life can be "understood" as they can be understood nowhere else.

It would be presumptuous for me especially, and I venture to believe for anyone else, to attempt to forecast the issue of the conflict now raging—perhaps the bloodiest battles of all human history. Never before in all probability were so many men, equipped with such destructive weapons, locked in a life-and-death struggle as at this very moment. I suppose those who have access to official and private information, such as the British

Government or the Government at Washington, may have a fairly accurate knowledge of how the tide of battle flows on all sectors of the Russian front. If they have such knowledge, it must of necessity be held in strictest confidence, and so the public at large can know nothing accurately about it. With what information is available, it seems to me it is impossible, on purely material grounds, to form any estimate that is worth the breath it would take to express it, or the ink to write it. I at least shall not be guilty of the folly of presuming to forecast the issue of such a battle.

Yet there are certain rational deductions that may be made for our own comfort. When I have said a word or two about that, I want to bring the whole matter into the light of this piece of history, that we may view it in the light of this inspired record of the philosophy of history. We are such mercurial creatures! We have our ups and downs. We can be lifted almost as readily as we can be cast down, and we are in grave danger of disturbing our peace of mind by allowing ourselves to be too much influenced in either direction.

I once heard a professor-friend of mine say to a company of ministers that it is part of the function of faith to stabilize our emotions, to help us to view things sanely, rationally, so that we might not fly off at a tangent in one direction or another, that we might not be unduly elated on the one hand or despairingly cast down on the other. I remind you that four months ago Russia was still an enigma. I suppose the terrific powers which Germany has since let loose on Russia were in readiness for employment by the High Command against Britain. The millions of men with their thirty thousand tanks—according to Lord Beaverbrook's estimate—were ready to be unleashed against us. What a mercy they were not turned against Britain! At that time we looked for no help from Russia. We were not quite sure on which side she ultimately would throw her weight.

During these fifteen and one-half weeks these two giants have come to grips, and whatever else they have done, they have mauled each other terribly. I am not a military expert, but Germany's vast war-machine cannot be in the same working order, and cannot possibly have the same striking power to-day as when she marched against Russia. Surely that at least must be all to the good.

We have had many surprises from the Russian front. I remember driving with a friend some years ago when Ford cars were fairly common, and when men who had a car of a little higher grade were rather proud of their superiority. As we drove along the road the friend who was driving me made a remark. There was a Ford car in front of us—I forget what its driver did or whether he did anything out of the ordinary—but when we had passed it my friend said with fine scorn, "You never know what a Ford car is going to do." As though drivers lost their identity by a complete change of their disposition when they get into these familiar jalopies!

That might be said of Russia. We had no knowledge of what Russia was going to do—and apparently Germany was as uncertain as we were; with the result that the Nazis have had a terrible pounding. Russia may provide friend and foe with many more surprises. At all events, I am by no means persuaded that there is any immediate likelihood of Moscow's fall.

But what if it did? I think it is always well, while preparing to do our best, frankly to face the possibility of the worst. And what if Moscow should fall? Are

you going to be downhearted? If you should read of some great military disaster on the Eastern front, what of it? I hope it may not be so. And I hope we shall continue ceaselessly to pray that God will exercise His sovereign power even in the use of those who do not know Him. Someone said to me a little while ago, "You do not agree with Stalin, do you?" To which I replied, "No, I do not; but just now with all my heart I thank God for him." This is Thanksgiving Day, and Russia ought to be one of the elements in our thanksgiving. Help has come from an utterly unexpected source. We have had three months of respite in which the democracies have been able to concentrate upon their defensive preparation; and to the overruling Providence Who has given us this breathing spell we ought to be devoutly thankful. As I view it, it seems to me improbable; even if Moscow should fall, that Germany would be able to strike immediately. I rather think that her whole war-machine will have been so damaged that it will be out of gear for some time.

We see Europe as a whole to-day, as in a ferment of rebellion—I only hope some of them will have the prudence not to rebel too soon, not to attempt impossible revolutions. I find myself impatient with some editors and others who here and elsewhere are clamouring for a Western offensive. The time will come when we shall need it. I wish we had another half million thoroughly trained and equipped Canadian soldiers. Many of us did not wait until now to say that, but have been saying it from the beginning. We ought to have had them long ago: we ought to have them now. I wish we had two or three million Americans thoroughly armed and ready to put on ships when the propitious moment shall come to bring order out of the hellish chaos that is bound to come to Europe by and by. The day is not far distant when there will be a hell upon earth in all Europe, when men begin to strive for their freedom.

I think as yet it is too early to attempt such breaking of bands. It seems to me, from a layman's point of view, it would be little better than suicide to embark just now upon any continental offensive. We must maintain the inviolability of Britain's shores. We must not risk that which cannot be speedily replaced. We had better leave matters of that sort upon the shoulders of the men upon whom the responsibility lies. We may make reasonable deductions, however; and we may say to ourselves, If Germany is beginning to be anxious even about France, and Belgium and Holland, and little Denmark, and Norway; and Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, what might would be required to hold in subjection the vast Russian Empire of nearly two hundred millions of people! I feel confident that whether Moscow should fall or not, it would require the utmost exertion on the part of Hitler and his hordes to hold in possession that which they conquer—if indeed they conquer it.

Even on those grounds we have reason for certain mental composure and rest of spirit—not such rest as would make us indifferent to Russia's fate, but that which rather would lead us to do everything possible to help her within the bounds of prudence, and having regard to the whole situation; for it is just as much in the interests of Russia that Britain should remain inviolate and invincible as it is in our interest. We stand or fall together.

I.

But here is AN-INTERESTING STORY. It has been in my mind this week, and I now turn it over for my own com-

fort. Of course these wars recorded in the Old Testament were on a much smaller scale than the wars with which we have become familiar, but the same principles operate in both. This is the story of Absalom's rebellion, when he employed the Fifth Column methods—for that is nothing new. Absalom sent spies through all the tribes of Israel, carefully preparing the ground before he showed his hand, by unsheathing the sword of rebellion against the sovereignty of his father King David. The rebellion spread rapidly like a prairie fire. Prominent men fell in with Absalom. Many betrayed their king, turning their backs upon David. These traitors included Ahithophel, the king's chief adviser, whose word in Israel had been as the oracle of God. So it was decided to change the seat of government. That is no new thing! It happened in France in the last war, when the government was transferred to Bordeaux. The governments of Holland, and Belgium, and Free France, Czechoslovakia, and Norway, are all in England just now. They have left their Jerusalem, as David did. David turned his back upon his capital and went away, a multitude following him and as they went—he wept and they all wept. It was a time of weeping in Israel.

The high priest, Zadok, brought the ark of God out of Jerusalem and the Levites with it, intending that the ark should follow the king. Then said David, "Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it, and his habitation; but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him."

A Seat of Government Which Never Changes

In effect David said, I may change my seat of government, but the ark represents Someone Who is never driven from His city. The ark is a symbol of God's covenant relationship to His people. It is the ark of the Covenant. It is the repository of His law, of His honour, of His purpose in His divine government. Take it back, Zadok; and the Lord will look after His own. As for me, if he should delight in me he will bring me again, and show me both it, and his habitation."

The principle is that in every such conflict of opposites, in every such war between light and darkness, good and evil, God is somewhere to be found—not always identifiable with a visible ark like this, but there is always somewhere at the heart of the conflict a deposit of divine interest, a repository of the divine honour, purpose, and power. God is not driven hither and thither in Europe. He does not leave Russia, or Germany, or France, or any of the occupied territories. He will not be driven from Old London, nor from Washington. Ah yes! even in Russia God has His elect people. He has them in Germany.

In the old building, not long before the war, a man sat at one of our services just in front of me. At the close of the meeting he came up and gripped my hand. I noticed immediately, though he spoke English with fine precision, that he had come from a foreign country. He came to tell me he had been blessed in the service. On inquiry I learned he had come from Germany, from Berlin. I said to him, "You are a Christian rejoicing in the Lord?" "Yes, and there are many of us in Germany." I asked him if he could tell me something of conditions there, but he said, "I must say nothing. But please do not forget to pray for us."

But my point is that everywhere there are people who

know the Lord. There is that which was symbolized by the ark which I have called, for want of a better phrase, a repository of the divine honour and purpose. God is in it, and He will get His own out of it some day.

In these conflicts we shall have our times of weeping. Mr. Churchill said, "I promise you tears and sweat and blood." There have not been as many tears as yet as were shed in the last war, but the time of weeping may come for thousands of parents by and by. We shall have our changes, our ups and downs. The tides of war will ebb and flow, and we shall need the comfort of the Scriptures that we may be able to maintain our poise, our balance, in the time of difficulty.

David in that critical hour said in effect, I have no fear whatever for the ark of God. I have no fear for the plan and purpose of God. I cannot see it; I do not know what the issue will be; but take the ark back to Jerusalem. Remember that God has not abdicated His throne, nor laid His sceptre by. Let the ark go where it belongs, and you who are priests return and minister there. As for me, for the present I must be a wanderer. I must leave my city. The tide of battle has turned against me. But though I cannot see the end, if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord He will bring me back again. If he has delight in me, the victory will be ours."

That must be our supreme concern. But to take the broad and long view, we must be sure that in the end God will have His way. We do not know how to pray particularly just now. I do not know whether I should pray that Germany should be entirely overwhelmed suddenly, whether I should pray that Russia should be completely victorious. There is a good deal of godlessness in both nations. If ever two nations in the world invited the judgment of God, those two nations have asked for it. Surely we must admit that. Thankful as we are that at the moment Russia is on our side, yet, as Mr. Churchill said when he declared that we must help Russia, "I shall not unsay one word that I have said against Communism, with all it means." A terrible thing it has been. Soaked in blood have they all become. Millions have suffered. Millions have been starved to death by deliberate purpose. There must be chastisements coming to Russia.

Germany's Course for a Century

Germany's whole course as a nation for more than one hundred years has been a prayer for judgment. Do you remember the record of the angels coming to Abraham's tent, and the Angel, the Angel of the Covenant—I believe an Old Testament appearance of Jesus Christ Himself—said to Abraham, "Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know." The cry of their unspeakable iniquity disturbed the harmony of heaven, and God heard it and said He would come down to inspect the city, and to see whether they merited fire and brimstone from heaven—and you know the awful sequel.

That cry has been ascending from Germany these many years, and from Russia too. But shall we be pharisaical? I remember in the last war reading a magazine edited by a man of my acquaintance. There is a type of mind which can always account for other people's troubles. They know exactly why our troubles come. This man said at that time that the Great War had come upon

(Continued on page 6)

The Menace of Romanism

A Report of The Fourteenth Annual Convention of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec

As soon as the theme of our Convention was announced it attracted instantaneous notice, and from the first it appeared that this annual gathering would surpass all previous records of attendance. In this we were not disappointed. Even at the afternoon sessions—usually a difficult time to get more than a representative gathering—the great auditorium of Jarvis Street Church was well filled, and at each evening session standing room was at a premium. And the great crowds did not come out of mere curiosity or to seek entertainment; their intense earnestness and serious demeanour were proof that there still exists in this country a strong Protestant conscience that is thoroughly alive to the menace of Romanism and determined that our glorious heritage of freedom and democracy shall not fall to the ground through ignorance or neglect.

Dr. L. H. Lehmann

Our special speaker, Dr. Leo H. Lehmann, made a large contribution to the Convention. As a former Roman Catholic priest he could speak with an authority born of personal knowledge for he was trained by the Jesuits in Ireland and studied in Rome itself where he was also ordained a Roman priest and ministered long enough to see the inner workings of the Papal Court. Dr. Lehmann is a walking encyclopaedia on everything pertaining to the system in which he lived, studied and worked for more than thirty-five years. His language was dispassionate and free from rancour or bitterness, but his deliberately objective presentation of the historic acts and official statements of Romanism were sufficient to demonstrate the menace of that deadly system to all but those who refuse to see. And best

of all, our special speaker is a Protestant in the literal sense of that word and not merely in the sense that he is an anti-Romanist: he did not fail each time he spoke to *protest*, that is to give his testimony for the truth of the Gospel. Having lost all confidence in the magic powers supposedly imparted to him at ordination, he found satisfaction in the sacrifice and ministry of that one Great High Priest who alone is able to save unto the uttermost; and it is now the chief delight of this former priest to exalt the efficacy of the one sacrifice of Calvary and to speak of his personal knowledge of individual salvation. The joyous note of the scripture text, "Once I was blind, but now I see", was the deep undertone of all his messages.

Unlike many who confine their protest against Romanism to the realm of economics, education, and politics, Dr. Lehmann sees clearly that the real strength of this anti-Christian system lies in its powerful hold on the religious nature of men by means of its stupendous claims to give spiritual grace through material sacraments. He emphasized that if we are to deal effectively with this many-headed Hydra we must fight it with spiritual weapons—by the Truth of the Gospel that frees men from bondage to their fellows by bringing them into the liberty wherewith Christ makes free. This is precisely the aim and end of our Convention and of the churches which compose it, and Dr. Lehmann's message found a ready response in our hearts, especially as we thought of three millions and more French-Canadian Roman Catholics in this Dominion.

Nothing short of a verbatim report could give an adequate account of the addresses delivered by Dr. Lehmann, and we shall therefore not mangle them in an attempted resumé. The general opinion of the messages was perhaps best expressed by an old-fashioned Methodist minister of many years standing, who was present at a number of our sessions. In his enthusiasm for the massive information presented by Dr. Lehmann, he ventured to take advantage of our Baptist democracy to make a mo-



PART OF AFTERNOON CONGREGATION

tion that the Convention addresses be printed and published. Our versatile President, who was in the chair, seized the occasion to advertise *The Converted Catholic* of which Dr. Lehmann is editor, by pointing out that the substance of the Convention messages and much more besides, was available in that periodical each month. Earlier in the evening, in response to an appeal launched by Dr. Shields for subscriptions to *The Converted Catholic*, more than seventy persons subscribed for this splendid magazine. No finer testimony than this could be given to the way in which the special speaker won our hearts and minds. And, incidentally, it was a most unusual spectacle to see the editor of one paper appealing for subscribers for another paper. But those who know the large-hearted liberality and unselfish devotion of the editor of THE GOSPEL WITNESS will not be surprised to learn of this further act of generosity.

The programme committee had announced that the president, Dr. Shields, would speak on "The Basic Anti-Christian Principles of Roman Catholicism" and that he would also preside at several other sessions, but the presidential office was exercised with great ingenuity to put others to work and allow the present incumbent to disappear from the programme. Dr. Shields insisted that Dr. Lehmann take the Tuesday evening subject which had been announced as his presidential address.

Mr. L. H. Saunders

The programme of the Convention was an unusual one, not only in the general theme and the particular subjects it announced, but also in that it used a number of our own pastors to discuss various aspects of the Menace of Romanism. Men who are called upon to minister in centres of large Roman Catholic populations do not need to theorize on this subject, and each of these pastors spoke like a veteran warrior. We were proud of them all and are certain that our churches will hear much more along these lines in the future. Mr. L. H. Saunders, editor of *Protestant Action*, was also a welcome visitor to our sessions. His subject was one to which he has

devoted many years of close study: "Public and Separate Schools in Ontario". We wish that every Public School taxpayer in the province could have heard him. Thousands of them do read his paper and we earnestly hope that the number of subscribers may increase by leaps and bounds. We are most grateful to Mr. Saunders for his informative address and we were delighted to note that, though he is not a Baptist, he takes precisely our position on the separation of Church and State. We have difficulty in understanding how anyone who accepts the Bible as the final authority and who believes that salvation is a personal transaction between the soul and God, could ever imagine that the state could be set up as a religious teacher or employ the civil power to decide questions of religion. Mr. Saunders, like the paper he edits, has both Protestantism and Action—two qualities that in our day are all too rarely found in combination.

Our diet for these three high days of fellowship was thus a varied one, and as it is actually harmful to feed the Lord's sheep without giving them proper exercise, we saw to it that this necessity was not lacking. Indeed we found our greatest blessing and inspiration in considering the tasks for which we all share the responsibility. It was thrilling to listen to the fine reports presented by our missionary pastors and to plan for the enlargement of our fields of action during the coming year. As these matters have already been covered in some detail in the twenty-eight page report presented to the Convention, it is not necessary to dwell upon them here, especially as that report may be obtained on request to the Secretary of the Union at 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto. The accounts of blessing from our various fields and the financial statement there given constitute an inspiring story of God's goodness to us as a Union, and we earnestly hope that it will be read by every member of all our churches. As a sample of good things there contained, we take this sentence from the section on Home Missions: "If we stop to consider that of eight of the causes listed as having received Home Mission support during last year, only two were in existence five years ago, the magni-



AT CONVENTION, OCTOBER 8, 1941

tude of our undertaking and of its success becomes more apparent." The financial statement shows a substantial balance in the treasury for the first time in a number of years, while at the same time the Board reports that special grants have been made to the building funds of the churches at Norland, Ontario, and Val d'Or, Quebec, and in addition the Convention voted a further special gift of \$300 to the Alberta Fellowship as a token of our affectionate and prayerful sympathy with the president of that group in his serious accident. It is good to have a balance on hand to use in such emergencies that are bound to arise from time to time, and all who listened to the plans for increased activities in the present year will realize that there will be a most urgent need for a greatly increased income to carry them forward.

How to Increase Missionary Group

One of the most inspiring messages delivered during the three days was that which bore the arresting title: "How we increased our Sunday School giving by more than 800% in one year". Brother A. M. Cooper, the energetic Superintendent of the Long Branch Sunday School did full justice to the subject announced and concluded by expressing the hope that other Sunday Schools would "go and do likewise". Perhaps we have been guilty of neglecting the children of our Churches and Sunday Schools in presenting the needs of missions for it is from them that we must recruit the future pastors and missionaries of tomorrow. We trust, then, that our Bible School workers and the leaders in the W.M.S. and Y.P.'s groups will follow the fine example set before us by the Superintendent and School of the Long Branch Church.

After even this brief account of the Fourteenth Convention, it would be superfluous to add that these days of fellowship were packed with happy and blessed moments. Just as other such times spent together in the house of the Lord have encouraged and inspired our pastors and churches to go on to greater accomplishments in our common cause, so we are confident that the blessed effects of this Convention will be felt throughout the whole Union during the coming twelve months. The Annual Report refers to the fact that as Baptists we are independents but not isolationists, and this gathering of brethren was further proof of the strength and efficiency of the New Testament Church policy as it is exemplified in our group of self-governing churches banded together for the common purpose of holding forth the Word of Life. Our Union has yet much land to be possessed but we go forward to new and greater tasks with unity of faith and purpose, humbly claiming His presence who commissioned us to go and preach the Gospel.

What If Even Moscow Should Fall?

(Continued from page 3)

Britain because of her complicity in the opium traffic in China; it had come upon France because of her atheism; upon Belgium because of Leopold's—not Albert's—cruelty in the Congo; upon Russia for her anti-Semitism. He had an explanation for the woes of all nations involved in the war. When I read it I said to someone, "And can the dear brother tell us—for it was published in the United States—on what ground of righteousness America enjoys her singular immunity?"

We shall not get far with that sort of national pharisaism. The fact is, as Moody used to say, we are all a pretty bad lot. There is enough in Russia, and in Germany, and in Belgium, and in Holland, and in France, and in the central European powers such as Czechoslovakia and Austria, and all the rest of them, to account for many things. But what of ourselves?

"Maddened by Earth's wrong and evil,
'Lord!' I cried in sudden ire,
'From Thy right hand, clothed with thunder,
Shake the bolted fire!"

"Thou, the patient Heaven upbraiding,
Spake a solemn Voice within;
'Weary of our Lord's forbearance,
Art thou free from sin?"

"Know'st thou not all germs of evil
In thy heart await their time?
Not thyself, but God's restraining,
Stays their growth of crime."

"Couldst thou boast, O child of weakness,
O'er the sons of wrong and strife?
Were their fierce temptations planted
In thy path of life?"

"Fearless brow to Him uplifting,
Canst thou for His thunders call
Knowing that to guilt's attraction
Evermore they fall?"

There is evil in Russia, but there is evil in Britain too—and there is plenty in the United States, and Americans of moral discernment will be quick to recognize it. And what about Canada? God help us! If any country needs to repent we do! Let no one suppose that we are so stainless that we deserve no chastisement. We are no better than others, in the sight of God. I do not know how to pray. Shall we ask for ultimate victory? Yes; but what chastisement must first fall? I fall back on the Lord's prayer, and pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven . . . for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." We are on safe ground when thus we pray, and we had better wait, and remember that the ark of God, God's interest in it all, the moral purpose and its issues, are under His guardian care. In ways we cannot understand, God is moving forward to a victory of righteousness and of a just peace.

In the meantime we may well take David's attitude and practically say, "I am under the rod; but if the Lord is favourable to me He will spare me. He will not make a full end. He will bring me back to it and to God, His truth, His presence, and His habitation".

II.

HOW DID THIS CONFLICT ISSUE IN WHICH DAVID WAS CONCERNED?

For a little while everything went in favour of the enemy. Absalom was a brilliant man. There was no discounting him. He was a great leader. He commanded a large following, and there were hosts of people attracted by the glamour of this brilliant leader, who forsook David and those who were with him, and followed after Absalom. For a while it seemed as though David's house were tumbling about his ears, and as though Absalom were going to have it all his own way.

It is often like that in war. It was so in the Great War. It looked as though General French and "his contemptible little army" were going to be swallowed by the enemy as easily as the whale swallowed Jonah. But in the end it was a different story. You and I ought to

draw comfort from the stages of the battle thus far, and praise God that we are not in the position we were a year ago. I shudder when I think of how completely we were then exposed to the fury of the enemy. I cannot help asking, Why was the enemy kept back? I have a shrewd suspicion that the miracle of Dunkirk was only a symbol. If our eyes had been opened we should have seen, not merely that such mountains as there were, were filled with horses and chariots of fire, but we should have read with a new significance that Old Testament triumphant exclamation, "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 was our Ace Aviator then! He is still! He is our great Protector now, and we may well believe that He is on the battlefield:

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

He is there; but I remind you that in this particular conflict *everything seemed to depend upon the magic leadership of one man*. There were others, but the magnetism of this man's personality attracted the people to him. That is why his popularity spread so rapidly.

One man, if he has the power, can do better than a dozen. There is only one will, one mind, one plan. But that has its limitations and disadvantages sometimes too. It is true of Germany. I do not believe our problem would be solved if Hitler were to die—but I think his death would go a long way towards solving it. There are others; but at the same time his removal would effect such a sudden change in the whole world situation that no one could predict what the issue would be. It was so in Absalom's time. If anyone could defeat Absalom victory would be sure, but for too long he seemed to have all his own way.

But you remember the interesting story, how at last in the wood of Ephraim, riding on his mule beneath the branches of an oak, his splendid locks, of which he was so proud and for which he was everywhere distinguished, in the breeze suddenly wrapped themselves around the branches of a tree, and the mule under him went away and left him hanging there. Sometimes we speak of things as "hanging by a hair." The whole weight of Absalom's cause hung by a hair—or by several of them. It was a common, everyday ordinary accident, humanly speaking, that took Absalom out of the battlefield.

You need not expect that Hitler will fall riding at the head of his troops—God has many ways of bringing wicked men to judgment, and we need not weary our imaginations by trying to conjure up some way by which the chief criminal can be eliminated from this conflict. If you read in His Word the philosophy of the wars of the Lord, you will find the Lord has very frequently made victory to hinge upon some seemingly unimportant incident, and has brought help in a most unexpected way. It was thus Absalom was eliminated.

Then Joab blew a trumpet, and all the people ceased from following after the foolish people who had been following Absalom. The war was over virtually when Absalom ceased to be their leader.

If you follow the story through you will see that after this *David's prestige in Israel was higher than it had ever been before*. Unworthy as we are, I dare to believe that God has been pleased to choose these democracies as His instruments—the British Empire as active parti-

cipants in the war at the moment, and the United States inevitably before long; and when the war is over, these two nations with whom, not perfectly but more completely than any other nations on earth, the ark of God and the testimony of His covenant remain—these two nations will stand before the world in that great day with higher honour, and with larger influence, and with vastly increased opportunity for doing good than ever before in their history. What a day that will be!

At last David came back to his city where the ark had remained, and the people vied with each other to see who should excel in his endeavour to bring the king back again. In the long run, at the end of the day, whatever intermediate vicissitudes there may be, the King will come back again; and all the powers of evil will be subdued. In place of the mountain in which the King had wept and others with him, we shall come to another city, a glorious city in which there will be no temple, where there will be no sorrow and no death and no pain, and where even our tears shall be wiped away. Even if Moscow and all other capitals of the Allies should fall—which I do not expect—the Jerusalem which is from above, remaineth, and our God still reigns; therefore the multitude of isles may well rejoice. Cheer up! "Be of good cheer." That is my message to you this evening.

Do you believe, like David that you have found favour in the eyes of the Lord? You may if you believe in Christ and are accepted in the Beloved. Are you on His side? Have you received Jesus Christ for yourself? Is the ark of God with you? Are you in such relationship to God that you can pray, and thus call down heavenly powers to assist in this day of tribute? I trust it may be so with every one of us. May the Lord bless His word for His name's sake, Amen.

"Catholic Church Freer in Canada"

We quote from the daily press the following utterance of Monsieur Gustave Lanctot, the French Canadian Roman Catholic archivist of the Federal Government at Ottawa:

"London, Ont. Oct. 10th—The Roman Catholic Church in Canada has become 'freer, more independent, more active and stronger than under the French kings', according to a paper by Gustave Lanctot, Dominion archivist, presented before the French section of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association here to-day."

The French kings referred to by Monsieur Lanctot were those most Catholic Majesties of *l'ancien régime* in France, who confided the infant colony of New France to the direction of priests and monks for the greater glory of the Roman Catholic Church. It is striking that this Roman Catholic historian who occupies a high position in the Federal Government, should emphasize the freeness and independence of the Roman Church in Canada under a crown which is English and Protestant and a government which is elected by an English and Protestant majority.

The Roman Church in Canada is not only free and independent, but it actually occupies a position of special privilege. In the province of Quebec it is in practice the State Church, and is liberally supported by public funds, while its Canon Law is actually given precedence over British Law.

But what of those countries where the Roman Church is all-powerful? How are Protestants treated there?

Conditions in Spain give the answer, and we do not refer to the Spain of Philip II. but to the modern Spain of Franco in the year 1941. There Protestants have no rights or privileges. In this connection the following quotation from an article appearing in the well-known *British Weekly* will be of special interest. The article is entitled, "Is there a Democratic basis for cooperation with Rome?" The writer says:

"According as one views the character of God, Franco was the saviour of Christianity (so Roman Catholicism), or he was the unfortunate defender of autocratic ecclesiastic privilege in a land where now Protestants are denied freedom to preach."

The following sentences from the same article in this highly respectable and respected journal of British Non-conformism, will show that the spirit of the Reformers has not taken its flight from the shores of old England:

"A Roman Catholic who believes his Church to be the exclusive teacher of Christian truth, and his Church's priests working through the sacraments to be the medium whereby God's grace comes to this world, who believes in the stored-up merit of the saints, has a view of God's character and practical deeds poles apart from that of the evangelical Protestant. The character of God is at stake."

When Romanism Speaks With Only One Voice

When representatives of the Roman Catholic Church discuss the war, while a few, as we have said elsewhere, speak favourably of the British cause, the great majority are against us. But when Rome speaks concerning critics of herself, she always has but one voice. In all the Roman Catholic papers which we receive, the same article featuring Archbishop McGuigan's letter to *The Globe and Mail*, followed by a series of paragraphs abusive of this Editor, appears. *The Catholic Record* of London, in an editorial denouncing the Pastor of Jarvis St., joins with the other "Catholic papers of the Dominion". There is little room for individualism in the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, and it is quite evident that Archbishop McGuigan was speaking for the Hierarchy of the Dominion, and not merely for his own diocese. Newspapers, politicians, and business men are terrorized by the Tiger that has its lair about the jungles on the banks of the Tiber. But every time Rome speaks, she speaks as the enemy of all free men, and free institutions, and free countries. We accept the gauge of battle, and confess ourselves an implacable enemy of Romanism.

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 5 Fourth Quarter Lesson 43 October 26, 1941

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DAVID'S WANDERINGS

Lesson Text: 1 Samuel 21.

Golden Text: "The king's business required haste"—1 Samuel 21:8.

For Reading: 1 Samuel 22, 23.

I. David and Ahimelech—verses 1 to 9.

The two incidents recorded in this chapter are typical of the hard experiences through which David passed in the period between his anointing and his induction as king. And

yet, it was during this time that many of the prayers recorded in the Psalms, prayers which the Holy Spirit has blessed to many a heart, were born (Jas. 1:12).

Saul's antagonism to David had increased until David was warned by Jonathan to flee from the city (1 Sam. 20). Saul sought him day by day, and day by day God delivered him from being captured (1 Sam. 23:14). Satan with his emissaries and agents continually pursues the Christian (Matt. 10:28; 1 Pet. 5:8), but there never is an hour when our Saviour is not watching over us (Psa. 138:6-8; 140:7; 142:3). We are counselled to submit ourselves to God and resist the Devil (Jas. 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:9).

In the course of his journeyings or by direct design David arrived at Nob, the residence of the priest Ahimelech, the son of Ahitub. Ahimelech is also called Ahiab and Abiathar (1 Sam. 14:3, 18; 22:11, 20; 23:6; Mk. 2:26).

David did not disclose the fact that he was a fugitive, possibly because he was not assured at first of Ahimelech's confidence, although the priest proved to be a loyal friend, and lost his life because of his kindness to David (1 Sam. 22:11-19). The servant of the Lord should show ready understanding and sympathy for those who are in trouble (Rom. 12:15; 2 Cor. 1:4; Jas. 2:8). Our Lord would have us be a source of refuge for weary souls (Psa. 142:4; Isa. 32:2).

We shall need spiritual food during our pilgrimage to the Celestial City, just as David required bread for his journey. The Word of God will nourish and strengthen us. It is as milk and meat to our souls (Isa. 55:1, 2; Heb. 5:11-14; 1 Pet. 2:2, 3).

Ahimelech had nothing to offer the travellers except the shewbread, which was doubtless being removed from the table as a new supply was brought (Exod. 25:30; Lev. 24:5-9). The shewbread was a type of Christ, the Sustainer of His people; He is the Bread of life (John 6:32-35, 48-51; 1 Cor. 11:24).

When David made the observation that the shewbread was in a manner common, he probably meant that it might be eaten with impunity. Our Lord mentioned this incident with approval when His disciples were criticized by the Pharisees for plucking and eating corn on the sabbath day (Matt. 12:1-8; Mk. 2:23-28; Lk. 6:1-5). Purity is an inward grace of the heart rather than obedience to outward laws and ceremonies (Matt. 23:25-29). Many people are inclined to make arbitrary distinctions between the secular and the sacred (Acts 10:14, 15; 1 Tim. 4:3-5).

The Lord not merely provides us with food for our nourishment, but He also procures weapons for our protection and for our conquests (Psa. 5:12; 33:20; 84:11; 91:4; Isa. 34:5). The sword of Goliath would be especially valuable to David since it would remind him of the marvellous victory which the Lord had given him over the giant of Gath (1 Sam. 17:51). He is twice armed who is clothed with the power of God (Judges 6:34 Revised Version margin, "The Spirit of Jehovah clothed itself with Gideon"; 1 Sam. 17:45).

The King's business still requires haste. In these days we are learning what can be accomplished on behalf of our Empire when men and women put forth earnest and full-hearted effort. Similarly, it behooves the servants of the King of kings to put all they are and all they have into the work of extending His sway over the hearts of men (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; 2 Tim. 2:2-4).

Doeg the Edomite betrayed the son of Jesse (1 Sam. 22:7-11), nor was he averse to slaying David's protectors (1 Sam. 22:18). Not all our associates will help us in the Christian life; we must expect some of them to oppose us (Psa. 41:9; Lk. 6:26; John 13:18; 15:19; 16:33; 17:14).

II. David and Achish—verses 10 to 15.

David journeyed west to Gath, the city of Goliath, situated in the land of the Philistines (1 Sam. 17:4; Psa. 56, title). He was soon recognized, and King Achish was evidently plotting vengeance against the young champion of the Hebrews who had greatly humiliated the Philistines. David feared for his life. By His death and resurrection our Lord has delivered us from the fear of death at the hands of our enemy Satan (Psa. 34:4; 56:3, 4; Rom. 8:15; Heb. 2:15).

David was compelled to disguise his identity by feigning madness (Psalm 34, title; Matt. 10:16). When dismissed by Achish he fled from Saul once again, but the Lord did not forsake him. During those weary wanderings the future king was trained to be a sympathetic and faithful shepherd over the flock of God (Psa. 78:70-72; Heb. 2:16-18; 5:8).