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## A TERRIBLY ACCURATE INDICTMENT OF THE PRESENT BRITISH GOVERNMENT

WE have given consideration to such factual information of domestic affairs in Britain as it was possible to obtain at this distance, combined with a fairly diligent study of reports of Britain's foreign relations. At times we have almost boiled over. We wanted to write much. Now we have before us an article that surpasses anything we could possibly have produced. It is a great relief to find someone else saying what one has wanted to say himself, and to find it better said.

We print below an article from *Our Outlook*, published by the Highgate Road Baptist Church, London. The Editor is the Pastor, Rev. John Wilmot, who, we expect, will be in Toronto some time next week. But without waiting for his arrival we publish below his truly deadly analysis of the misgovernment of the Attlee Administration. We ask our readers to give it careful study:

### **The Crisis, The Weather, The Government, And The Bible**

By REV. JOHN WILMOT

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The following is our outlook upon the calamity which has befallen our country. "The Lord hath done that which He had devised: He hath fulfilled His Word that He commanded in the days of old."—(Lam. 2:17.) The situation could have been avoided, however, had the country still been blessed, as during the war, with a far-seeing, prudent leader, experienced in statecraft. The calamity is the outcome of the people's rash choice at the general election. Divine mercies not appreciated are sometimes withdrawn, and nations are left to reap the fruit of their own ways.

This was so in Israel when the democratic choice, ill-made, changed the leadership to the nation's undoing. God had intervened for their deliverance many times and had raised up unto them a leader specially prepared and qualified in the time of their distress. Samuel had been the appointed judge and deliverer. But the people unwisely insisted upon a change after the pattern of other nations. "And God gave them their request and sent leanness into their souls", even as He had done before, for they were obstinate scholars in the school of discipline. "Hearken unto the voice of the people", He commanded Samuel, who also gave them a true though unwelcome forecast of the fruits of their folly in electing to be governed like the nations round about. The analogy is not strained. The "swing to the Left", as it is called, is in imitation of other nations whose political theories were admired and proclaimed by men now in power. The prudent, far-seeing, matured, profitable God-given leadership, with which our nation was favoured in her affliction of war, was exchanged by the electorate for a government somewhat like Israel's new régime, heady, headstrong, imprudent, shortsighted, given to self-aggrandizement, largely inexperienced in State

polity. But the country was warned by the same voice of sound judgment whose earlier admonitions, though then unheeded, the war years proved to be well-founded; and these will prove to be no less accurate. Neither can it be without interest that the displeasure of Almighty God with Israel was demonstrated by an exceptional harnessing of the elements. (1 Samuel 8-12.)

"In this Parliament," says the *English Review*, "the great wartime leader is like an aged but magnificent lion who has strayed by chance into a menagerie of performing animals. They do their performing tricks, and he growls with a mixture of rage and bewilderment. But gratitude is not to be looked for in politics."

#### **Who Is to Blame?**

The economic crisis, it is officially claimed, is occasioned by the blitz-invasion of General Winter. Far more justly is it to be attributed to the ineptitude of our wanton government. With some gravity and gaiety in Parliament and the Press (from which our quotations are taken) the causes have been diagnosed to the obvious discredit of responsible ministers, notwithstanding allowances made for conditions beyond human control. His Majesty's Opposition were not alone in attaching blame; the Government's own supporters shared in utterances of censure.

In the Upper House one member remarked that a Joseph would have made provision against the lean years, and likened the government to the foolish virgins. The criticism is not inapt. The prudent planned for requirements ahead. The foolish laid by no stock of fuel and at the time of crisis improvisation failed; they were too late and the door was shut. It may, of course, be reasoned that Joseph was divinely appraised of the

future emergency. But suppose Joseph, having been thus forewarned, had neglected to forearm, and instead, presumptuously despised the caution and denied the approaching crisis!

Admittedly no human calculation of even the near future can be infallible. Nevertheless the government was duly forewarned by M.P.s and officials with experience that the months ahead would find the country in a critical muddle if stocks were not prudently built up in advance. These forecasts were given from examination of the existing conditions and in expectation of but a normal English winter and without prognostication of excessive wintry severity. Doubtless those who ventured the advice had a heart for the wellbeing of their country, yet they were repulsed by the responsible minister as political propagandists in such style of egoistic self-confidence as the following:

"Talk of rationing electricity this winter is a lot of nonsense. I happen to be minister and I should know" (September 13th, 1946). "Perhaps the critics had better hold their breath until the end of the winter" (September 29th, 1946). "There is not going to be a crisis in coal if by crisis you mean that industrial organization is going to be seriously dislocated and that hundreds of factories are to be closed down" (October 24th, 1946).

The language of denial could scarcely have been more definite, nor could the stubborn facts have been more accurately forecast.

In a Christian country which acknowledges Almighty God as revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ, a nation whose constitution recognizes the Bible as the Word of God wherein He Who is Governor among the nations legislates for the conduct of human governments, it is certainly a matter of serious moment that ministers can be reported to have justified policy or covered incompetence by "equivocal replies to questions", "evasions and half-truths and optimistic boasts alternating with vague admissions of danger"; by statements "which could not be more deliberately inaccurate", and "most unfortunate and misleading"; "something quite indefensible"; by "employing familiar gifts of casuistry", "totally unworthy of a serious occasion"—so serious indeed as to paralyse industry, throw millions out of employment, and inflict unprecedented domestic discomfort under heavy penalties by a defence of the realm imposition, in order to maintain utility and essential services only, in the attempt to overcome the effects of their own mismanagement.

#### Governmental Inanity

Under any former government, we suggest, ministers blameworthy in the face of poignant realities would have acknowledged their incompetence and failure and received an honourable discharge. But, it is truly said, "a national calamity has never been more easily avoidable, more profoundly obscured, or more weakly excused by national leaders". Again "the government's impenitence about its direct responsibility is surely amazing. From the Prime Minister's speeches one might even detect a deliberate policy of trying to make us forget how the situation arose and of showing instead with what masterly vigour it is putting things right!" "The country from the economic standpoint," he remarked, "is like a man severely wounded in the world war . . . but he is still in the convalescent stage", and thereupon he averred, "we are going ahead with our programme (of Socialization)" and "are sure we can carry it through." A programme, indeed, of major operations and amputations

upon a convalescent man! Was ever proposal more inane! At least build up the patient's strength first. But it is just this unwise and unskilful state quackery whose shock has paralysed the patient. The immediate need was to build up strength, not to operate on the weakened constitution.

Weather severities, of course, present great risks to a patient in convalescence, but let not men blame God's weather for the sins which are their own, A reliable contributor to the discussion (J. C. Johnstone, *Daily Telegraph*, February 20th, 1947) whose facts and figures comparatively given are without gainsaying, writing on the coal famine, gives these conclusions: "The present semi-paralysis is the composite product of feckless complacency on the part of the would-be planners and of social indiscipline on the part of the producers . . . The disease of voluntary absenteeism is spread over the great bulk of the men engaged in the industry . . . The real rot coincided with the advent of the Socialist government and the prospects of nationalization . . . The present fuel crisis is the direct consequence of developments during the past two or more strictly, 1½ years . . . Ministers and trade union leaders must bear a large part of the responsibility for systematically omitting to put these unpalatable facts (concerning absenteeism) plainly before the miners and the nation."

In proof of this drain of absenteeism it may be noted that the chairman of the West Midlands Divisional Coal Board, a Socialist, is reported to have refused the application of miners to work on Sundays during the crisis, not from respect for Sabbath observance, but because miners take advantage of Sunday labour to absent themselves during the week, absenteeism thus reaching a high percentage. "If the men work every day of the week," he said, "there would be no need for Sunday work."

#### "Stormy Wind Fulfilling His Word"

It would seem that Almighty God Who in every place beholdeth the evil and the good; Who, in His common grace, keeps seasonal covenant with the earth which He hath given to the children of men, sending rain upon the just and unjust and causing His sun to shine upon the evil and the good; and Who, withal, in disciplinary mercy to the nations withdraws or imposes His restraining power—it would seem that God would compel the presumptuous to admit their impotence by His employment of forces and elements alone within His Own control and summoned by His prerogative. Government ministers now describe such visitations as the vagaries of Nature, for instance, the drought which defeated India's harvest, and now the snow blizzards which aggravate the country's inexcusable fuel shortage.

"There have been 13 winters during the present century when snowstorms famous or sinister in meteorology have occurred. The last 10 years appear to have registered a deterioration for meteorologists record five unusually severe snowfalls in Great Britain since 1937. Since 1878 out of 18 outstandingly heavy snowfalls, four occurred in January, three in February, seven in March and two in April." The Prime Minister in casting off the blame upon the weather has declared that his minister is not its clerk. Yet even the weather could refer the government to its record for a lesson in wisdom and say, "You have been warned".

It is God, however, and not Nature, from Whom "the snow cometh down from heaven" like unto which in its purpose and accomplishment is "the Word which goeth

forth out of His mouth", if men would but heed it; for "He sendeth forth His commandment upon the earth: His Word runneth very swiftly. He giveth snow like wool: He scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes . . . hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind fulfilling His Word" (Ps. 147, 148). And this He does not only as a normal seasonal and tempered providence, but as an exceptional visitation of merited chastisement upon a people with a view to which He holds formidable elements in reserve. "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow, which I have reserved against the time of trouble?" that is, straightness or distress. (Job 38; 22, 23). Oh that men would hearken unto the voice of God in Nature's severity, and that His Word of grace might accomplish His pleasure (Isa. 55; 10, 11); concerning which we may say, "Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God!"

### The Moral Aspect

Serious as the economic situation may be it is the ethical aspect of governmental accountability which, judged by Biblical standards, imparts the greater seriousness to the condition of our nation. The criticisms quoted above are but symptomatic. Is there any fear of God before their eyes? It is not to be lightly regarded that the sanctity of the Lord's Day is habitually outraged by government and party spokesmen for political and propaganda purposes. The demand by members on both sides of the Commons that the government should take appropriate action against the alarmingly increasing menace of football pool gambling—"maintaining between 300,000 and 400,000 economic parasites" in a time of severe labour shortage, was rejected with the excuse that they had no entitlement to impose their moral views on other citizens. Yet, according to the Bible, it is just this maintenance of moral principles and conduct for which the ruling powers are ordained of God. The government was rebuked "for lacking that moral courage to tackle the pools evil, being afraid to do what is right because of losing cheap votes", for does not the government already in other ways interfere with the moral conduct of citizens? It might well be asked, "with such absence of moral fibre in our leaders, what hope is here for the nation? An earlier rejection of the government's intention to licence civic restaurants for the sale of intoxicating liquor, thus removing this blemish from their parliamentary bill, has now been reversed by "methods which savour of the grossest political dishonesty" and "bare-faced shameful political jobbing" (i.e. by excluding Scotland from the bill to secure the required majority), it was stated in the debate; the government, it was protested, appearing to have no concern for the serious moral effects of this decision upon young people who frequent communal centres. And when, to augment our supplies of food and aid the requirements of industry the government was urged more profitably to utilize the American loan by reducing the importation of films and tobacco, the suggestion was met with levity, notwithstanding it is officially declared that unwholesome films are responsible for much juvenile crime, and cigarette smoking has become a veritable curse to our womenfolk and youth.

### Feathering Their Own Nests

Despite the nation's impoverishment and critical financial position as the aftermath of war, the government and its supporters lost no time feathering their own nests by raising the salaries of members to £1,000

per year; and although "the government's assurance that there will be no financial crisis may prove as false as the visions of plenty of a few months ago"; and the already over-burdened taxpayers can have no relief, the Prime Minister with a salary of £10,000 for the first time in British history is relieved of income tax on £4,000, which, with additional privileges, it is worked out, in gross salary paying income tax and surtax accordingly, is equal, we were amazed to read, to "a rise of £130,000 a year during the middle of the nation's most grave economic crisis"! Contrast this with the action of Nehemiah appointed to lead an impoverished nation in the work of reconstruction following war and captivity and desolation: "The former governors that had been before me were chargeable unto (made themselves heavy upon) the people and had taken of them bread and wine, beside forty shekels of silver; yea, even their servants bear rule over the people; but so did not I, because of the fear of God." (Neh. 5; 15.)

"The stark truth is that the Country is cursed with a gambling government—gambling with non-existent money which cannot at present be obtained within the fabric of the nation's resources. It is a truism that a gambling government begets a gambling people."

### Disquieting Prospects Abroad

The prospects abroad are very disquieting. In the providence of Him Who is "Governor among the nations", Britain has been favoured with a place of leadership and under her banner the peoples of the Empire have enjoyed a liberty unknown among others while oppressors and tyrants and men of ill-will have been forcibly suppressed. This is according to Biblical polity. Admittedly, in common with all, her administration has not been infallible or without flaw, but let the nation without such sin cast the first stone! It is God Who disposes the status and habitation of the nations. Accompanying the privileges there are responsibilities, and behind all is divine purpose.

This year will bring the fiftieth anniversary of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, who declared, when handing a copy of the Bible to an African subject, that this Book, the Holy Scriptures, was the secret of Britain's greatness. Some intellectual and religious infidels smile at the suggestion. But shall their unbelief make the Truth of none affect? The pre-eminent place among the nations granted of God to a Bible revering Britain was His providential key to open doors in lands the world over for the ambassadors of Christ and the Christian evangel. Now, however, under the much-abused "self-determination", Gospel liberty is relegated to a very secondary place, or confused with some civilizing or social object, if not eclipsed entirely by a false political freedom. In the end we are sure the warning of 2 Peter 2, 19 will prove true: "While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage."

Moreover, Self-determination is not a Bible principle. Nor is it the will of God that all nations should have equal status. He has determined that some should remain inferior, and for moral reasons. (Gen. 9; 25) and Himself has determined the bounds of their habitation (Deut. 32; 8; Acts, 17; 28).

It was Mr. Churchill who declared when Prime Minister that he would not be party to the liquidation of the British Empire. He said it for other reasons than national pride. His words make it clear that he

had respect unto our Country's high calling. The withdrawal from Egypt and from India will be found seriously to jeopardize Christian missionary service. "By a sudden stroke of the pen", said a member of the Upper House, "and without any previous consultation with the Opposition, the transfer is now to be carried out without the three conditions being maintained"—conditions to which the Government agreed in order to maintain an united front on the matter of Indian self-government. Thus does the Government lightly esteem its own pledges, and retreat from the solemn obligation which it undertook. In regard to Palestine the Foreign Secretary boldly but riskily boasted to the House of Commons that he staked his political future on effecting a settlement. Now he admits failure, blames America and then tells Parliament, "We for our part shall not allow any wedge to be driven between our two countries to disturb our friendship", when he himself had already given the wedge a heavy drive! The Bible has something to say about Palestine and the Jewish problem, and he who would seek to solve it would be wise to heed the warning, "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off".

#### An Ominous Reflection

"At the end of eighteen months", says an American newspaper, "Britain has made less recovery than any other of the victorious countries, less even than some that were overrun." This is surely an ominous reflection. The government is constantly telling the nation that we must produce and export more or perish and expire. Yet, added to the high percentage of voluntary absenteeism, there has been a succession of strikes in vital industries and essential services, strikes which indeed the government, upon its accession to power, seemed almost to invite by its untimely repeal of the Trade Disputes Act passed after the general strike of twenty-one years ago. Some of these strikes have been entirely unofficial, in defiance of respective Union authority, and careless of perishable foodstuffs and the public good. Trade unionists have been known to squander their employers' time—even in the Civil Service—endeavouring to persuade conscientious non-unionists to join up. Eventually this persistence may be officially crowned with the "closed shop" enforcement! Men have been a law to themselves and the spirit of lawlessness has energized and characterized their collective action. More money, fewer hours, less production: treasure, leisure, pleasure—this seems to sum up the modern demand. Individual disciplinary action is denied to employers by mass resistance. "Manufacturers no longer control in industry. It is the workmen who decide how many hours they should work, what they should be paid, and how much work they should do. The Bible is clear that when servants rule, the nation has become degenerate. "The child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable . . . because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord," i.e. opposed to the divine order. (Isa. 3: Neh. 5: Lam. 5.)

The demands of God upon men individually, and upon governments, who, although fallen from grace, are still accountable to Him, are opposed to such lawlessness. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" was the judgment and "six days shalt thou labour" was based upon the Creator's week at the beginning. The Christian principle is similar: "That if any would not work, neither should he eat." Sinners under the divine judgment have no rights, no claims. Heaven's good gifts

are sent in mercy and grace. Moreover, the Bible is a balanced book. Like its Author, it is a habitation of righteousness. The employer, for example, must treat his employees with justice and equity, which would comprehend not only wages but terms and working conditions and hours; and employees must be subject to their masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle but also to the forward; and both masters and servants possess individual choice and decision to enter upon terms of engagement, which, when covenanted should be kept. Principles of this nature are of course addressed in particular to Christian believers, who are forewarned concerning, and should therefore be forearmed against, oncoming conditions of lawless apostasy of which, if our understanding of Scripture admonitions be correct, the tendencies noted in this article may be symptomatic. It is not the divinely-intentioned function of the State to become a huge employer of labour. When she does she becomes a totalitarian despot. In this connection Mr. Churchill's reminders once and again of those "safeguards which are the breath of our nostrils, which sustain the lives and freedom of the individual against all forms of tyranny no matter what liveries they wear or slogans they mouth", and his election warning about an ultimate "Gestapo" under godless socialism and anti-god communism, as under Nazism or Fascism, or Bolshevism, were well warranted, for the shadow already appears in our land under State bureaucracy. "Despicable snooping" is what he called it in Parliament. God exposes sin by righteousness, but these officials employed by the government invite others to sin with a view to their exposure to penalty. According to the Bible the tempting to sin is itself sin. In a recent action a High Court judge pronounced judgment in favour of certain citizens against the Government whose minister "had not considered objections with an open mind and that had involved a denial of natural justice"—which had been provided for in the bill, though the Government's Attorney General lightly explained it away as being intended to allow objectors simply to "let off steam!"

#### State Righteousness or State Control

Where now is that "righteousness which exalteth a nation"? The function of government ordained of God is to rule in equity, "for the punishment of evil doers and the praise of them that do well", including employers and employed, and all classes of citizens. But State lawlessness, that is, apostasy from the law of God, will be consummated in a masterpiece of deception and ingenuity and ability with attractiveness, whom God, "Who looketh upon the heart" calls "the Beast", but whom the world, "which looketh on the outward appearance", and finding, though short-lived, the treasure and leisure and pleasure which its godless heart dotes upon, "wonder after" or admire, and challenging say: "Who is like unto the beast and who is able to make war with him?" Yet "he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast or the number of his name". Does not this forecast Nationalization or Bureaucracy, or State Control or State Management or Totalitarianism, call it what we will? And those refusing the mark will then be Christian believers, called and chosen and faithful. "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."

It would seem that the word might be applied, the

Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath He covered. And the vision is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed" (Isa. 29; 10, 11). We need not only men who fear God, of experience and ability and qualification for state-craft, but above all we need a prophet, charged by the Spirit of God, courageous, bold, invincible, to lift up the voice like a trumpet and show the rulers and the people their sins!

We devoutly agree with Mr. Churchill's remarks, that "should the present crisis result in the expulsion from power of our present rulers, it would indeed be a merciful deliverance". And we may note with thankfulness that in consideration of the country's constitution and the maintenance of its traditions, when stating the policy of His Majesty's Opposition he named as a first concern the duty to maintain the Christian Religion in our land and to resist all attacks made upon it. Alas, for a country when it can be declared that agnostics and atheists are among her administrators.

The ruler "after God's Own heart", in his last words testified: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue. He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away." (2 Sam. 23.)

#### "GREAT SWELLING WORDS"

"That man of sin . . . who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."—II Thessalonians 2:3-4.

**T**HE Epistle of Jude thus describes certain men who had crept in among the early believers to trouble their fellowship: "These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts: and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage." A column in a certain daily paper makes us think of these words each time we see it. That daily paper is *L'Osservatore Romano*, published each day under the pope's authority in Vatican City, Italy. The column is headed "Our Information" and almost invariably begins with the following sentence:

"The Holiness of Our Lord received in private Audience."

Could blasphemy go to greater lengths than the spiritually arrogant pride expressed in such a title as "The Holiness of Our Lord" (*La Santità di Nostro Signore*)? The divine attribute of holiness, so the title implies, has come down to dwell on earth and is incarnate in a mere man who takes the title to himself, and that man, according to papal teaching, is the pope. The very thought of the presumption of a poor, sinful human being preempting such a name to himself is both horrifying and disgusting in the extreme. No other comment is quite as fitting or quite as strong in its rebuke as the verse we have quoted from Paul's Epistle to the Thessalonians. Could anything describe the pope's title and the claim implied in it more accurately than these words: "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

#### An American Ambassador to "His Holiness"

Americans will be surprised to learn that they have an Ambassador to this political prelate who blasphemously ventures to style himself "The Holiness of Our Lord"! In the issue of *L'Osservatore Romano* for January 27-28 last, the following name occurs among the list of persons received by the pope under the above title:

"The Holiness of Our Lord received in private Audience."

His Excellency (l'Ill.mo, Signore) Franklin C. Gowen, First Diplomatic Secretary, Assistant to His Eminence Ambassador Myron C. Taylor, Representative of the President of the United States to the Sovereign Pontiff."

We call special attention to the title given to Mr. Myron C. Taylor: "Ambassador Myron C. Taylor". The appointment of Mr. Taylor has never been ratified by the United States Congress and we understood that his position was that of personal representative of the President. But the pope gives Mr. Taylor the benefit of the doubt, he names him simply "Ambassador."

#### On Which Assumption Was "Ambassador" Taylor Sent to the Pope?

Only two views are possible of the stupendous claims made by the pope and in particular that which dares to name him "The Holiness of Our Lord". One of those views is that the claim is fully justified and that in very truth the pope has, as Canon Law states, (Canon 218):

"... not only the primacy of honour, but the supreme and full power of jurisdiction in the universal Church; both in matters of faith and morals, and in those things which pertain to the discipline and government of the Church throughout the whole world.

This power is truly episcopal, ordinary, and immediate, both over all and singular churches, and over all and singular pastors and faithful, being independent of any human authority.

Now, on the assumption that all these stupendous claims are true and that the pope is God on earth, there is only one thing for Mr. Myron C. Taylor to do when he arrives at Vatican Hill fresh from the White House. And that is to kiss the ring which the pope holds out to him and then to listen to the infallibly authoritative instructions of this supposed god on earth and transmit them forthwith to the President in Washington for immediate obedience. There is no room for argument with a personage such as the pope claims to be. If he is all the Roman Church solemnly affirms him to be, then the President of the United States should send Congress packing and demote himself to the level of the pope's office boy as soon as he can after having made over to him the title-deed of the United States.

On the other hand, if the pope is not what his outrageous titles suggest, if his extravagant claims are false, then he is the greatest fraud that the world has ever seen and as such no decent or self-respecting land should recognize him except to frustrate his efforts to gain political control of the world.

We have written of this matter, because there was a determined campaign launched in Canada only a few months ago to have Mr. Mackenzie King send a representative to the Vatican. We may expect to hear more of it later on, and to be forewarned is to be forearmed. Canadians should make sure that they are not involved in any official recognition of a foreign prince which exalts one church at the expense of all others.

—W.S.W.

## BEHIND CONVENT WALLS

**D**URING the war Dr. Shields wrote an article in THE GOSPEL WITNESS in which he discussed a cache of arms and ammunition that had been found in some European convent. In his article he asked what might be found if the many convents and monasteries of Quebec could also be searched. Promptly one of the Jesuit publicists of Quebec wrote a front page editorial in a well-known "Catholic Action" daily completely disavowing Dr. Shields' suggestion of the possibility of such a thing and offering to conduct him on a thorough tour of all the Romanist institutions of Montreal if he cared to accept the invitation. The futility of such a proceeding was too evident for discussion. If there were anything in the great stone buildings which the clergy did not wish Dr. Shields to see, it would be a very simple matter to move it before he arrived or to make sure that he saw only what his ecclesiastical guides wished him to see. Government inspection from top to bottom of these great monastic edifices is the only answer to the repeated suspicions that are voiced as to what goes on behind the high stone walls and the iron bars.

In France a number of such great church buildings were recently subjected to just such a thorough search by government officials. No doubt the French priests will take this as an occasion to cry that the Roman Catholic Church is being persecuted by the French Republic. But the story of what was revealed by that search will make very interesting reading for all who have looked at the outside of those vast, dreary ecclesiastical prisons and wondered what their walls contained that could not be disclosed to the people at large. We therefore print the following account of "The Hunt for Bormann—Clerical Underground Plot Is Charged," as taken from *The Montreal Daily Star*.

## CLERICAL UNDERGROUND PLOT IS CHARGED

By Geoffrey Fraser

Paris: Recent French raids which uncovered secret caches of arms and weapons and led searchers into a series of convents in the Paris region were inspired by a search for Martin Bormann. I learned exclusively today that Hitler's missing deputy, who is believed to head the German underground, was being sought by the French security service when they uncovered a rightist plot. This link between Bormann and the clergy is considered by Minister of the Interior Edouard Depreux to be one of the most serious aspects of a nebulous plot against the Republic.

The minister disclosed to the press last night a general picture of a clerical underground, financed by stolen Krupp millions, guilty of hiding French traitors and organizing the escape of German POW's from French and English authorities.

The story of the search by French Security Police reads like the scenario for a Hollywood spy-thriller.

Two weeks ago, private information from a British source led to the suspicion that Martin Bormann was or recently had been hiding in Paris. Trace of the mystery man believed to be Bormann was lost after it was ascertained that he made a brief stay in fashionable Neuilly, a Paris suburb, but clues led to the neighboring Benedictine convent at Clamart. This convent is headed by Father Salomon, on whom the Security Service has had its eye for some time.

So far Bormann is unbound, but 14 wanted French traitors, including one sentenced to death, have been found by tracking down clues that continued to run in a thin thread

through a series of clerical organizations, spreading as far as Italy, Spain, Chile and Venezuela.

A total of 33 persons have been arrested, including superiors of five convents and the president of the French Catholic Youth Union. I understand that further arrests are pending, including those of well-known society women, doctors and public officials. The police net is being spread over all the provinces.

Attention was first drawn to Father Salomon during a search for 60,000,000 francs (approximately \$500,000) belonging to the Krupp family, German armament manufacturers. A former director of Krupp's Paris office, a Russian-born German named Stein, who is said to have lived in Toronto for some years, had the money at war's end. He shed his uniform, and, thanks to his St. Petersburg birth certificate, transformed himself into a White Russian.

Afraid of being robbed of the Krupp millions, Stein, it is said, entrusted them to Father Salomon, making him a gift of 5,000,000 francs for his religious organization. But when Stein tried to recover the remaining 55,000,000 francs in 1945, he was blackmailed by Father Salomon, police say. Caught between the devil and the deep blue sea, Stein compromised and left 40,000,000 to the priest, planning to clear out with his family for Chile on the remaining 15,000,000 francs.

Stein's family, incidentally, includes a pretty daughter. She is the girl friend of an American officer and this officer got her a secretarial job in the American Counter-Intelligence Corps at Frankfurt. She recently resigned. Stein now is in France, and will be prevented from leaving the country.

French Security investigators today flew to Rome because of evidence that the clerical underground, stymied by strict French control of the Franco-Spanish border, has been sending its most important runaways to Rome. A clerk named Bournique, attached to the French consulate in Rome, then supplied passports to Spain or for South America.

The committee which handled these runaways, and gave them each 1,000 lire daily, is suspected of including members of the French embassy and officials of the International Red Cross.

Another factor leading the French Security Police to Rome is their suspicion that important French traitors are being hidden in Italian convents. They particularly are on the lookout for party leader Marcel Deat, former Vichy Ministers Cathala and Raphael Alibert, and Adm. Paul Auphan. The French government will probably ask Italian co-operation for a search of suspected convents.

—North American Newspaper Alliance.

**REV. PERRY F. ROCKWOOD**

in

**Jarvis Street**

**Next Sunday**

**April 20**

**at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.**

and also

**Monday Evening**

under the auspices of

**The Canadian Protestant League**

Subject:

**"Protestants Awake"**

**Come and hear for yourself why this young minister has been the centre of nation-wide interest.**

## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

# What is "The Faith Once For All Delivered Unto The Saints"?

Is It Roman Catholic, or Protestant? Or Is It Monopolized by Any Denomination or Sect?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, April 13th, 1947

(Stenographically Reported)

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints."—Jude 3.

### Prayer Before the Sermon

We rejoice, O Lord, that we have not to go into the heavens to bring Thee down from above, nor into the depths to bring Thee up again from the grave, for Thou art with us, and the word of faith is in our hearts and mouths. We know at this hour that the gate into Thy presence is open, and that no one is debarred. Put Thine arms about us graciously, O Lord, and make everybody in this building to be sure that God is in this place. We need nothing but Thy presence, for in Thy presence is fulness of joy, and at Thy right hand there are pleasures for ever more. Therefore, we pray that by the goings of God upon our own spirits we may know that we have been brought, of Thy grace, where Thou art.

We bring to Thee, O Lord, our tribute of praise, and of adoration. We desire to worship Thee in Thy glorious sanctuary, even in Him Who, in His own proper Person, fulfilled all that was symbolized in the Temple in the days before His coming. Now in Him we worship Thee, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We have learned that it is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to call upon His name.

Thou hast commanded us to make our supplications known unto Thee always with thanksgiving; therefore we would not be unmindful of Thy multiplied mercies, and of Thine innumerable bounties. Were we to endeavour to count them, we should find them more in number than the stars. We can only acknowledge that we are the recipients of Thy bounty every day, and every hour. Indeed, in Thee we live, and move, and have our being.

Now look upon us in our need. Lead us, we pray Thee, into a further understanding of Thy truth, and a fuller experience of its power.

We commend to Thee the interests of Thy blood-bought church throughout the world, and of Thy ministers whom Thou hast ordained to proclaim the gospel. We pray for all Christian workers, for all who witness to the truth of Christ in any way, and in any place. May their word, we pray Thee, be in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power.

Then for the whole household of faith we make our supplication for those upon whom Thou hast lavished Thy bounties; for those who seem to have received but little in this present evil world; for the young, and the old, the wise and the unlearned; for those who are in high places, and for those who are obscure. We thank Thee that no one of Thy redeemed children escapes Thine attention. And so, of the riches of Thy grace, wherever they may be, enrich every one. Tenderly minister to the sick. Bind up the broken-hearted. Be gracious to those who are bereaved.

And in this service this evening, may the Spirit of Truth, by whose operations Thy Holy Book was inspired, be present this evening to interpret it to us. Be graciously pleased to open our understandings that we may understand the Scriptures.

So make this service to be one of spiritual profit to us all, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

WHAT is this "faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints"?

We must, of course, distinguish between the verb, and the substantive. The word "faith" here does not refer primarily to the act of believing: but to the thing which must be believed. There are many passages in Scripture which speak of "the faith." "When the Son of man cometh shall he find the faith on the earth?" Many, it is said, in the Acts of the Apostles, were obedient to "the faith." They not only believed, but they obeyed the principles and precepts contained in the sum total of "the faith." We read that Elymas, the sorcerer, endeavoured to turn away the deputy, Sergius Paulus from "the faith"; tried to dissuade him from the acceptance of "the faith."

### I.

WHAT IS THAT BODY OF TRUTH WHICH THE SCRIPTURE DEFINES AS "THE FAITH"? That, you will readily apprehend, is a very large subject, but my text speaks of this faith, whatever it is, as "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints." Which does not mean that it was delivered at one time to the saints, as the book of Mormon is alleged to have been discovered, in completed form; nor was it delivered at one time as the Christian Science text book, "Science and Health—the Key to the Scriptures." The sum of "the faith" of Christ was delivered progressively. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." There is no disagreement, no contradiction between the revelation of God in the Old Testament, and in the New. If once you postulate the divine inspiration of the Bible, and the immutability of its divine Author, then in the nature of the case, you must expect to find perfect agreement between all its component parts, and a divine unity manifested in the whole. Hence it is said that the gospel was preached to Abraham. In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews there is a long list of heroes of the faith, of whom it is said "these all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

The Old Testament saints in some way, by the illumination of the Spirit, understood that Messiah was yet to

come; and they believed in Him as the coming One, even as we now believe in Him as One Who has already come. "The faith once for all delivered unto the saints" was thus delivered during the Old Testament times, and right on to New Testament times. In the passage I have quoted you will have observed that the Word of God in Him Who is the Incarnate Word, was the climax, and compliment of divine revelation. Having spoken unto the fathers by the prophets at "sundry times, and in divers manners" in these last days, God has spoken to us in His Son.

The Apostle Paul, addressing the Corinthians, said: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve." Then follows the elaborate argument of the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians in support of the historical fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

So then the revelation of God in respect to the salvation of men, reached its climax in the Incarnation, in the life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and all those things which were written in the law and the prophets, and the Psalms concerning Him, were fulfilled, and the sum total of it all is embodied in this divinely inspired record which God has given to us of His Son. In that record "the faith," the only "faith" is "once for all delivered unto the saints." We need no addition. We can accept no deletions. We accept it in its entirety. Men have contended against it, and have sought to discredit portions of the Bible, and of the Bible as a whole. Amid all the confusion resulting from these multiplied assaults upon what Gladstone called "the impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture" the Bible stands as it has always stood, not a book omitted, nothing added. Each book of the Bible, it seems to me, addresses the critics, as Paul and Silas addressed the jailor and his associates in the Philippian jail, saying, "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." It is one and the same, as it has always been, the Rock of Holy Scripture, as representing "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints." And the sum of it all is from Genesis to Revelation, as Paul says, that "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures". And He was seen of a multitude of witnesses. The fact of the resurrection was indisputably established. He ascended into heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us. That, it seems to me, in brief, is "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints."

## II.

That means, of course, that THIS FAITH IS NOT "THE FAITH," FOR EXAMPLE OF ROMAN CATHOLICISM. There are elements of biblical truth in the tenets, the doctrines of Rome; but also very much that is of human origin, and without divine authority. The Roman Church claims to be the custodian of "the faith." And "the faith," faith with the definite article, is a very common phrase on the lips of Roman Catholics. It is assumed that "the faith," the only true faith, is with the "Church" and that anyone who opposes that which the "Church" teaches is opposing "the faith," denying "the faith."

But the sum of Roman Catholic doctrine was not "once for all delivered." It is not even yet completed. The various councils have decreed certain things. The popes

in their encyclicals have defined certain Roman tenets, and these are part of the Roman Canon Law, which all "the faithful" are required to believe.

Not to go back into ancient history, I may remind you of several new doctrines—new at least as to their definition and promulgation—which belonged to the past century. I do not mean the nineteenth century, but let us say from 1854 when a Roman Council defined and promulgated the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. There are many people who don't understand what that means. They imagine it has some reference to the Conception of Christ: that He was born without sin. But it has no reference to His Conception. The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception is the theory that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was sinlessly conceived, and that Jesus was born of a sinless woman. There is not a word of that in the scriptures. Yet in 1854 a Roman Catholic Council defined that as a doctrine of the church. Then it was promulgated, and enjoined upon all "the faithful" as a doctrine, belief in which was indispensable to salvation. It was an addition which even the Roman Catholic Church knew nothing about in earlier centuries.

The doctrine of papal infallibility also was often assumed by Roman Catholic theologians, and sometimes explicitly taught. But it had never been defined by the church officially and authoritatively until the Council of 1870. A storm of controversy broke out throughout the world, over the matter. It was adopted at last by the Council, but not by any means unanimously. But from that forward, the pope was said to be infallible when speaking on matters of faith and morals, when speaking, that is, *ex cathedra*. Whatever he said was to be accepted, and never denied or even questioned. That, too, was an addition to "the faith."

In our day the doctrine of "the Assumption" of Mary is before the "Church" for official definition and authoritative proclamation. You know what is meant by the Assumption of Mary? It is that the body of Mary was assumed up into heaven; that the physical body of Mary does not await the resurrection of the just, as do the bodies of the saints in general, but that, like her divine Son, Mary was "assumed" up into heaven. That has been taught; and is now taught. As yet, however, it has never been officially defined by the church, and proclaimed as a doctrine indispensable to faith. Indeed, the one and only Canadian Cardinal McGuigan has advocated the definition and promulgation of this doctrine as a doctrine of "the faith." I suppose the Marian Congress in Ottawa, which is to be one of the greatest shows on earth, surpassing anything that Barnum and Bailey ever produced—I suppose that is a preparation for the further consideration of this matter. Even the Dionne quintuplets are to be a feature of the Marian Congress. They are to be put on exhibition.

I have said this merely to show you that that which the Roman Catholic Church calls "the faith" has been delivered on the installment plan, and is still in process of enlargement. It is not yet completed. It has not been "once for all delivered unto the saints."

## III.

WHAT ABOUT PROTESTANT CHURCHES? Have they "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints"?

If we go a little farther afield than Canada, we shall find in the United States that the name "Methodism" is not yet extinct. There are a few Methodists extant—still in existence. But the Methodist Church, north and



south, has been shot through with Modernism, involving the denial of the basic principles of "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." Bodies of Methodists have had to break away from the parent denomination in the United States, both in the north and in the south, in order that they might still bear witness to "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints."

In the Presbyterian Church in the United States there was, a few years ago, a great schism, and a great number withdrew from the Presbyterian Church for the simple reason that Presbyterians in the United States had become hopelessly infected with Modernism. Men like our friend Rev. Carl McIntire, Dr. Machen, the great Greek scholar of Princeton, and Dr. Dick Wilson, also of Princeton, with many others, withdrew from the Presbyterian Church because they said, "There is something more important than Presbyterianism: 'the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints'. If we cannot bear witness to that, and exclusively to that, then we leave it, and go 'without the camp'."

The same is true of Episcopalianism in the States. Very much of it has become modernized, and not a little of it has become Romanized.

What shall we say of the millions of Baptists over there? They grow in the south like thistles in Canada. If you go into any southern state, and look for the largest church, be it in a city or a small town, you will invariably find that it is a Baptist Church. But the Baptists in the south, in very large part—while there are many true saints among them, as in all Denominations—are devoted to their Denomination, even more than to the Denomination's Lord. Some of our southern Baptists will forgive you anything so long as you don't criticize the Denomination. But if you criticize the Denomination, you are anathematized at once, even though in doing so you are but being true to "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints."

In the Northern Baptist Convention, while there are still many believing men in it, yet in its organization, in its various theological colleges, it is almost Unitarian. There is scarcely a doctrine of the Bible which is not denied in the Baptist theological colleges, both in the North and, to a lesser extent, in the South. Once of a day Baptists professed to stand for the things of the Bible. But you must now define what you mean by "Baptist." There is something vastly more important than a Denominational name.

Go to England and you will find that there are hundreds of churches of the national establishment there that, though calling themselves the Church of England, are really Roman Catholic Churches. It is said that no less than three thousand of the clergymen of the Church of England in England have received ecumenical ordination, and are really ordained priests of the Roman Catholic Church. Yet while that is true, some of the most noble of men are found in England among the clergy of the Anglican Church. Some of the most outstanding defenders of the faith are Anglicans, and among the membership of the church there are multitudes of devout saints who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. I don't understand their ecclesiology, but I recognize that many of them are devoted primarily to the doctrines, the truths of the gospel of salvation by grace.

The same deterioration has fallen upon the Baptist Denomination in England, and the Methodists, and the Presbyterians. As Denominations they have all been infected with this Modernistic plague.

I think the Baptists of Northern Ireland are perhaps truer to the word of God as a body, than any company of Baptists anywhere in the Old Country. Although there are many individual churches and ministers who stand steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

I hope two weeks from to-night we may have as our visitor from England, Rev. John Wilmoth of Highgate Road Baptist Church, London. He comes by the special invitation of the Seminary to deliver the Convocation Address in May. I hope he will be with us in advance of that date. But he is typical of many Baptist ministers who have virtually withdrawn from all official connection with the Denomination because they will not allow themselves to be involved in the denial of "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints."

*What have we in Canada?* Do the Presbyterians monopolize "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints"? I gladly bear witness that there are a great many Presbyterians sound in the faith, like our good friend, Dr. Andrew Murray, of Sydney, N.S., and a great many others, like Rev. Wm. Thomas who used to be at Cooke's Church, and like his successor, Mr. McRoberts. By the way, the other day at some meeting a resolution was passed commending Mr. Rockwood for his stand, and that resolution was seconded by the Pastor of Cooke's Presbyterian Church, Mr. McRoberts. Some gentleman by the name of Kerr in the Toronto Presbytery moved a resolution condemning, censuring, Mr. McRoberts for daring to second a resolution approving of Mr. Rockwood's stand. I do not think that that is really Presbyterianism. I hope it is not, to any large extent. And indeed amongst the thousands who have written to us there are great numbers of ministers, elders, and officials of the Presbyterian Church, who say, "We entirely disapprove of the action of the Halifax-Lunenburg Presbytery." I rejoice to believe that in the Presbyterian Church, as in other denominations, there is still "a remnant according to the election of grace." The remnant may have to come out ultimately, as Mr. Rockwood has done.

What about the United Church? Are they all right? Some of them are. Our friend, Dr. Pescott, for instance, and not a few others, old-fashioned believers in an old-fashioned gospel, and an old-fashioned salvation, standing as they have always stood for "the faith." Some of them may have a fairly difficult time. But there are, I fear, some, who do not stand for "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." You have only to read the Toronto newspapers, and read the effusions of at least one of these gentlemen, a very agreeable man I dare say, but one who seems to know little about theology, and apparently little about the word of God. But you have only to read such things to know that there are people in the United Church who are anything but old-fashioned believers.

Are the Anglicans all true? Some of them are glorious Christian men. I love to think of my friend, Rev. J. H. Barnes, of St. Peter's Church. I have heard him say, on more than one occasion, "I never take the Book of Common Prayer in my hand without reflecting that every man who had anything to do with the compilation of that book, paid for it with his life, at the stake."

Ah, there were Anglicans who believed something in those days; and, thank God, there are many still who believe. I have never heard Mr. Barnes speak when he did not in the clearest tones enunciate the great doctrine

of the atonement, and of the new birth, and all that is involved in "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." I name him, not because he is singular, but because I know him perhaps a little more intimately than others in this city, who belong to the same category, and stand for "the faith." But the Anglican Church does not monopolize it. There are a few, perhaps, who would be more at home in the Roman Catholic Church, and who certainly do not preach the doctrine of regeneration.

*What about the Baptists in Canada?* I think they are the worst of all sinners. I happen to be a Baptist, and I have not changed my name, but I do not think any body of people have gone farther astray than the people called Baptists, in Canada. You have only to read what Professor Kirkconnell of McMaster has to say. He is far more at home with the Knights of Columbus, or with some Roman Catholic order down in Ottawa, commended by all of them, and magnified by *The Canadian Register*, as being the very embodiment of toleration.

Baptists, I say, in many ways, in Ontario, in Quebec, in the West, and notably in the Maritime Provinces, have gone very far astray. They no longer stand for the inspiration and authority of scripture, and the great essentials of evangelical faith. You must not assume that when you go to a church called "Baptist" you are going to hear a discussion on "the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." Thank God there are exceptions even in the Old Convention. There are still men who believe the truth, and who proclaim it.

What I have tried to do is to show you that "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" can never, in our day, be identified with any Denominational name. Whatever you may be, Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, or United Churchman, or anything else, you cannot say, "My church is all right." Not one of them is all right. There are spots in their fests. There are those who deny the faith, as there are some who stand for it.

#### IV.

What I have been arguing is this, that IT BECOMES THE DUTY OF EVERY ONE OF US TO CONTEND EARNESTLY FOR "THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS."

Once in the Old Convention, at a great discussion in Ottawa, I said, "I am a Baptist in the sense that I believe in that body of truth historically held by the people called Baptists. But if you empty the name 'Baptist' of its historical and biblical content, and leave me nothing but a shell, which means something other than 'the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints', then you may take the name, and I will retain the principles. I don't care what you call me, whether a Baptist or anything else." We here still stand on the foundation upon which this church was built, at its inception, more than a hundred years ago. We have not varied from that declaration; because we believe it was biblical, and still is biblical, and so we defend it. But Baptists, Presbyterians, United Church people, and Anglicans, and members of other religious bodies not so conspicuous, perhaps, as these larger Denominations—I say this to you: the all-important consideration is, Do you know Christ? Have you, for yourself, received "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints"? Do you know that Christ died for (your) sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures"; and that He ascended into heaven, and is now your Mediator, and

some day He will come again to receive you unto Himself? If you believe that, if you have what a dear old saint, who used to attend our prayer meeting—he is gone to glory now—if you have what he called "an experiential knowledge of the truth," if you have experienced the truth of "the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints," then let that faith be more important than your relationship to a particular religious organization, whether it be a church or a Denomination.

I do not know how long I may be here. I do not know when the Lord will call me away. But I hope that as long as this church remains true to the gospel, and as long as this pulpit proclaims "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" the membership of the church will be constant, and loyal, and support it. But if, which God forbid, the time should come when you hear a false note from this pulpit in respect to the inspiration of scripture, the Deity of Christ, His atonement, and all other related doctrines—if ever you hear any one of these things denied by anyone occupying this pulpit, even though he be Pastor of the church of that day, I hope you will recognize that your primary loyalty is to Jesus Christ. Be loyal to your church and to your Denomination just so long as the church and Denomination is loyal to Christ. But as soon as a church or Denomination becomes unfaithful to Him, I hope you will consider it your bounden duty to protest, first of all, and if you cannot correct the error, then have no part nor lot with it.

I think that should be the attitude of Presbyterians, United Churchmen, and Anglicans, and all others. By all means, be loyal to your church, and to your Denomination, and to your minister, just so long as they are loyal to the truth of the Word of God, and to the gospel of His salvation. By your prayer and presence support it in every way. Stand by the minister of the church who preaches the gospel. But just as soon as they fail, I beg of you to recognize that you have a higher loyalty than to your church or your Denomination, and that you had better "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing". If the people in the various Denominations who are wasting their sweetness on the desert air, and whose testimony in many cases goes for nought, because they are overwhelmed by a majority—if those people would somewhere unite, and given a united testimony for Christ, they would accomplish something. But in an atmosphere of unbelief, and worldliness, your testimony will be stifled, smothered.

My only exhortation to you this evening is that you would resolve to put Jesus Christ, and His gospel, first of all, no matter what it may cost you—the severance of ecclesiastical connections, the severance of personal friendships, and associations—no matter what it may involve, be true to Jesus Christ. If there is no other way but to go "without the camp" unto Him, "bearing His reproach", then do it. But go with Him, and see that you keep company with Him.

In order that that may be, we are "earnestly to contend for the faith". You say, "I don't believe in contention." I do, and so do you—on some matters I don't believe in contentiousness; I abhor it. I want nothing to do with the man who is innately a quarrelsome man. It has fallen to me on many occasions to stand for the defence of the gospel, but I hate war. For many years I thought I could never engage in it, but I had to, or surrender everything. Because I could

not surrender the gospel, I had to contend earnestly for the faith.

What I call your attention to is this: *that that principle of contention for the truth can never be evaded.* It does not belong, merely, to the religious sphere. In the realm of science, any department of science,—physics, chemistry, zoology, biology, all the rest of it, in any department of science, you have to contend for the truth. No textbook on any one of these subjects ten years old is of much value to-day, for the simple reason that the truth of science has not been once for all delivered. It is a progressive, human discovery, and one generation of scientists are chiefly engaged in telling their contemporaries what fools their predecessors were. It is only by discussion and contention that the truth is arrived at. What if it were said of political life, "Now we must have no contention. We must all be agreed"? Why, there must be contention. There must be discussion; men must contend for the things they believe to be true, otherwise the truth will not long remain with us. We have arrived at this stage of human progress by means of contention. In all departments of human knowledge the discoveries of the human mind have had to be subject to inspection, and further investigation, and where they are disproved other theories are accepted in their place. No one objects to discussion in the realm of education or politics. Only in the field of religion do they object, and that, because in the view of a great many it is least important of all.

I have known many ministers who have said, "I don't believe in contending for the faith. I don't believe in controversy at all." "Where the name of Christ is involved, where the integrity of holy Scripture is involved, you don't believe in controversy?" "No; I don't believe in controversy." But just say to that man, "Well I think you are a bit of a simpleton. I don't think your head is put on right." Then see whether he believes in controversy or not! He will fight then. I have said to some of these men, "You won't fight for the honour of your Lord. You won't contend for the integrity of His Word, but you will fight like a tiger for your wretched little reputation which does not amount to anything after all." Fight for themselves! But not for Christ or for the truth of His Word!

Your reputation and mine, your name and mine, are not important. I think we are not of much service to anyone until we have lost our reputations.

A friend of mine in the United States once discussing that principle, describing—as I could not have done—a dog fight, and a dog going around in circles protecting his tail, always afraid of losing a part of his caudal appendage, said, "A dog with a flourishing tail has no chance with a bob-tailed dog. That dog has no reputation to look after, and so he faces front, and fights. And so," he continued, "I do not think a preacher is of much use until he has lost his reputation. When they have said everything that can be said against a man, he will say, 'Very well, I can go to work now. They cannot do me any more harm.'"

Have you ever seen a man trying to adjust his car with a good suit of clothes on? Presently he gets a big smear of mud on his trousers, then by and by a little more. Finally he looks at himself, and says, "Now what is the use? I have nothing to save now. So I will get this machine going." It is sometimes an advantage to

be freed of all our impedimenta, so that we may get on with the Lord's work.

May God give us grace to receive "the faith", to be so sure that we have it, that it is more than life to us. And when we have it, and we know, and are persuaded that "he is able to keep that which (we) have committed unto him against that day", then with a good will, and as kindly as God may help us to do so, but still firmly, and sometimes it will be necessary even to do it fiercely, but let us "earnestly" at all events "contend for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints". Here is finality. Our Lord is the Alpha and the Omega, since He has come we no longer look for another.

Let us pray:

We thank Thee, O Lord, for the revelation of Thy grace toward us, and its communication to our impoverished souls by the ministry of the Holy Ghost: Help us that we may value more highly than ever our privileges in Christ Jesus. We ask it in His name, Amen.

We shall sing one of James Russell Lowell's hymns:

"Once to every man and nation  
Comes the moment to decide,  
In the strife of truth with falsehood,  
For the good or evil side;  
Some great cause, God's new messiah,  
Offering each the bloom or blight;  
And the choice goes by for ever  
'Twixt that darkness and that light.

"Then to side with truth is noble,  
When we share her wretched crust,  
Ere her cause bring fame and profit,  
And 'tis prosperous to be just;  
Then it is the brave man chooses,  
While the coward stands aside,  
Till the multitude make virtue  
Of the faith they had denied.

"By the light of burning martyrs,  
Christ, Thy bleeding feet we track,  
Toiling up new Calvaries ever  
With the Cross that turns not back.  
New occasions teach new duties;  
Time makes ancient good uncouth;  
They must upward still and onward  
Who would keep abreast of truth.

"Though the cause of evil prosper,  
Yet 'tis truth alone is strong;  
Though her portion be the scaffold,  
And upon the throne be wrong,—  
Yet that scaffold sways the future,  
And, behind the dim unknown  
Standeth God within the shadow,  
Keeping watch above His own."

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## "THE STORY OF THE FAITH"

A Book by Dr. W. A. Gifford

Reviewed by W. D. Reid, Westmount, P.Q.

I READ very carefully and with considerable sadness "The Story of the Faith." It certainly is a monumental historical work, involving wonderful study and patience. While all this is true, it is very disappointing to a believer in the "faith once delivered to the saints." Dr. Gifford's views on the Old Testament are those of Professors Driver, and Cheyne, of Oxford; and Toy, of Harvard; etc., all of whom I once sat under for lectures.

Dr. Gifford's *Tattered Old Testament* views are those of the extreme Higher Critics: Moses was probably not even a Monotheist. (p. 15). The Pentateuch, commonly called the Five Books of Moses, was written during the Exile, hundreds of years after the death of Moses. I wish Dr. Gifford would read Dr. Allis' book on the *Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch*. Nothing in the Old Testament, not even the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, refers to Christ. Christ all through his life claimed the Old Testament did, but Dr. Gifford dares to think otherwise. The Book of Daniel was written by some unknown person, about the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, not very long before the birth of Christ, and the name of Daniel forged to it. And so the Old Testament is left in rags and tatters as far as any authority is concerned.

### No Virgin Birth

Turning to the New Testament, the author takes up the history of Jesus. He begins the biography by saying that "His parents were Joseph and Mary." This, of course, rules out the doctrine of the "Virgin birth", brings Christ down to the level of any ordinary human being and denudes Him of all claim to deity or divinity. By way of explanation Dr. Gifford says, "The Virgin Birth appears now to have been the best explanation that simple folk could give long after the event of the origin of one who seemed to be more than human" (p. 61 for.).

As to the miracles Dr. Gifford is very non-committal. He admits there were certain forms of insanity prevalent in Jesus' day, which were attributed to demon possession. Upon these the calm, quiet, assuring character of Jesus had a most quieting effect and it seemed to cure them of their hysteria (p. 68). One miracle he almost admits, that of the man with the withered arm (p. 69). But the other great miracles, such as calming the storm on Galilee, opening blind eyes, cleansing lepers, raising the dead, he passes over in silence. With regard to the raising of Lazarus he says: "It is either a legend that grew up in 70 or 80 years before the fourth Gospel was written, or it is a misunderstood parable" (p. 68). Of course, he does not believe the Apostle John had anything to do with the writing of the Fourth Gospel, as it was written by some unknown man in the second century, who forged John's name to it. He does not even mention the raising of Jairus' daughter nor of the son of the widow of Nain.

### Did Christ Rise?

As to Christ's Resurrection, after remarking that the accounts differ, he says: "All that we can confidently conclude from the Gospels is that after the burial of Jesus the tomb was found empty, and the disciples for some days had appearances which satisfied them that Jesus was alive" (p. 86).

As to Pentecost he says, "As they waited and prayed there came a profound emotional experience not un-

common in many religious revivals." He never mentions the cloven tongues resting on the disciples nor their going forth to speak many languages, which astonished the crowds that had come from foreign countries.

Concerning Saul's conversion, he describes the conflict which went on in Saul's mind between his former training and his present observations. "On the Damascus road, that was settled, the latter winning out—and Saul, shaken and dazed, was led by his companions into Damascus." He never even mentions that Paul claimed that Christ there met him and gave him his great commission to carry the gospel to the Gentiles.

### Miracles Denied

From the foregoing it seems to me that Dr. Gifford does not believe at all in miracles of any kind. He does not believe that the supernatural, at any time or in any place, can interfere with what we call the ordinary laws of nature. It seems to me he is an out-and-out but reverent Modernist.

### What Is Left?

When we thus strip Christ of His Deity, His miracles, His resurrection from the dead, His ascension to His Father, and most of His wonderful teaching, as Dr. Gifford claims he plagiarized it from the ancients, what have we left? Nothing but what Dr. Gifford calls "His ineffable goodness" and "part of the Sermon on the Mount". If the apostles had had only that to preach, Christianity would have faded from the earth in the first century.

After the stupendous experiences of Pentecost, the Apostles went out with a flaming zeal and a wonderful enthusiasm, and spread the gospel to the farthest ends of Europe and Asia and in three hundred years it had climbed to the throne of the Caesars in Rome.

### The Real Gospel

But it was not Dr. Gifford's gospel of the "ineffable goodness of Christ" and the Sermon on the Mount that produced this amazing result. Their gospel was that Jesus Christ was God manifest in the flesh; that He "died for our sins according to the scriptures"; that He made an atonement and gave His life a ransom for many, that He arose from the dead, that He ascended into Heaven and is now at God's right hand, a Prince and a Saviour, there to intercede for His people, and that some day He is coming back to this world, and that ultimately He will be the great Judge of all mankind,—that was the Gospel that won such tremendous victories everywhere, and it will still do the same thing wherever it is preached.

As far as we have any record of Apostolic preaching, little was said of the "ineffable goodness of Jesus" or the Sermon on the Mount, the whole stress of their preaching was on the death and resurrection and mediatorship of Jesus and His coming again, which was called "the blessed hope" of the Church.

### The Old Gospel Works

I have spent fifty years preaching the gospel. At first I tried for a time Dr. Gifford's gospel, but I found it would not work. When brought face to face with a dying man, with a dark life behind him and sorely troubled about his sins and his hereafter, I found it but little use telling him to think about the "ineffable goodness" of Jesus and the Sermon on the Mount. I got nowhere with him. But when I told him that Jesus died for him and

had made an atonement for his sins, and that, if he truly repented of his sins and put his trust in Christ as his Saviour, his sins would be blotted out and he could die in peace, even as did the dying thief on the cross, I have seen a dying man grasp at that doctrine, as a drowning man would grasp at a straw, and pass into the other world contented and happy, with a smile upon his face.

There is an old scientific dictum that "whosoever produces the best results is most likely to be nearest the truth", and I believe it. If so, then the Old Gospel is the one that produces results. It works, while Modernism does not.

During my fifty years preaching I have received into the Christian Church over 4,000 people, mostly on profession of faith, by preaching this old gospel, many of them down-and-out when they accepted Christ.

Dr. Gifford writes very beautifully and plausibly, and I have a great regard for him, but I am afraid that if his classes imbibe the doctrines that are in that book, they will go out without any real saving message to their congregations, and they will have only a barren ministry, and they will accomplish but little in the way of saving souls and leading men and women to the Saviour.

(*The Story of the Faith* is the textbook by a professor who teaches students of Presbyterian Theological College, Montreal, to which Rev. P. Rockwood took strong exception, as reported in this paper.—B.)

## ROMANISTS CLIMB ON THE PUBLIC BUS

ROME'S successful attack on the United States Constitution has already been noted in these pages. (See "Rome Cracks the U.S. Constitution", March 20, 1947.) The opinion handed down by the Supreme Court on February 10 last upheld the constitutionality of a New Jersey state law permitting a local school district to reimburse parents from tax-raised funds for the amount which they have expended to transport students to and from parochial schools on the public transportation system. If this decision did not make a breach in the wall of separation between church and state as erected by the First Amendment to the American Constitution, then no other encroachment of Rome ever will, even though church and state in America should be wedded as closely as they now are in Spain or in Italy. Providing for the cost of transportation to and from parochial schools as truly gives aid to the Romanist school system as would a direct grant to the priests and nuns who control it.

In the above-mentioned article we have noted that seventeen states of the Union already have legislation on their books permitting aid to parochial Roman Catholic schools similar to that provided for in the New Jersey statute. Protestants in the United States of America surely need to wake up and to take speedy action if the sinister schemes of the Roman Catholic Church for domination of the entire government are to be thwarted. A Romanist paper published in the west reports that still another state legislature has allowed the ever-watchful and scheming agents of Rome to slip through another like piece of legislation. This time it is the State of Iowa. We reprint the following from *The (R.C.) Register* of Denver, Colorado:

### IOWA SENATE GETS BILL FOR CATHOLIC BUS RIDES

Des Moines, Ia.—(INS)—A measure to permit public school busses to transport parochial school teachers and pupils, provided they live on established school bus

routes, was introduced in the Iowa Senate by Senator Arthur Jacobson of Waukon. The measure also provides for reimbursement to the school district hauling parochial teachers and students.

It is passing strange that in a land whose Constitution specifically enacts that a state "shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion," one religion out of many, and that a religion which acknowledges the supreme authority of a foreign prince, should be singled out from all the others to be endowed with rich grants of the public's money for the furtherance of its own peculiar tenets. American Protestants ought to read some of the pages of their own history, to rediscover the reasons the freedom-loving colonials had for fearing and distrusting a state-supported church. The First Amendment was added to the American Constitution to do away with the religious persecutions from which the early colonies suffered. And Protestants of British connections ought to know far better than they do the glorious pages of their English history which detail the bloody struggle for religious freedom. They ought to know the reasons why their forefathers were compelled out of sheer self-protection to stipulate that no Romanist should ever sit upon the throne of England. It was no fine spun theory either of government or of religion that compelled Englishmen to make this provision, but bitter experiences written in their own blood and wrought upon the bodies of hapless victims of Roman intolerance. We in this day and generation may neglect the warnings of history if we are foolish enough, but we shall do so at our own peril and at the peril of succeeding generations.—W.S.W.

## GOVERNMENT GIVES \$100,000 TO SEMINARY

THE government in question is that of Quebec, and it therefore goes without saying that the Seminary in question is NOT the Toronto Baptist Seminary. Our readers will not be so unkind as to accuse us of suggesting that the grapes were sour, if we assure them that the Toronto Baptist Seminary does not wish and would not accept a grant from either the Province of Quebec or from any other governmental body. We are sincerely convinced of the doctrine of the separation of the church and the state: we do not wish to compel others to pay for the support of our religious beliefs nor are we willing to pay for the propagation of those we regard as erroneous. And that, we believe with all our hearts, is both Scripture and common sense as well as good-neighbourliness. But to return to the topic suggested by the heading of this article, we translate herewith a news item appearing in the French-language press of Montreal under date of April 9 last:

By a Bill of Mr. Antonio Barette, Minister of Labour and member for Joliette, the Duplessis government recommends to the Legislature that a grant of \$100,000 be made to the Seminary at Joliette, \$50,000 in the course of the present financial year 1947-48, and \$10,000 in each one of the five following years "as a contribution of the government of the province to the centenary subscription commemorating the foundation of this institution."

The preamble of the bill states that: "This institution plans to enlarge its buildings and to make considerable improvements which have been rendered necessary for the expansion of its work."

The very words of this preamble could be applied to the situation in which Toronto Baptist Seminary finds itself.

The place wherein we dwell is become too straight for us by reason of our greatly increased family of students. If it were not for the ample facilities of the great Jarvis Street Church building that are so willingly, even gladly, placed at our disposal by pastor and people, it would be a physical impossibility for us to carry on our work. But the government of Quebec has completely passed us by, as has the sister-government in our own province though this latter expends some \$60,000 each year for the maintenance of a French-language Roman Catholic normal school in Ottawa under the superintendence of a French-Canadian monk with a staff of nuns. But we do not complain that we have been passed by—that is as it should be; we do complain and protest with righteous indignation at being compelled to pay for the training of Roman Catholic teachers who will proselytize little children in the tax-supported schools of this province of ours.

Does the government of Quebec not know that the students in Toronto Baptist Seminary are required to study French? Does it not know that we sing in French, read the Bible in French, preach in French, lecture in French, talk in French? But then we have no minister of the crown to plead our cause in the legislature of *la belle province*. If we are not mistaken, the gentleman responsible for introducing the bill is the minister who a few years ago visited the pope in Rome and assured him that the labour code and social legislation of Quebec was guided by the inspiration of his pontifical encyclicals on social matters. Poor Quebec! No, we cannot expect that Toronto Baptist Seminary will receive any such special consideration at the hands of Mr. Duplessis and his faithful followers as will the *Séminaire de Joliette*. And we repeat, we neither ask nor wish it. But we do ask the liberal support of those who believe as we do and who approve our programme for the preparation of young men and women to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ in two languages in Canada and unto the uttermost parts of the world.—W.S.W.

## Notes and Comments

By W. S. Whitcombe

### Rome's Influence in Belgian Politics

**R**OMAN CATHOLICISM loves to parade its allegedly exclusively spiritual interests when it speaks for Protestant ears, but in its own press this is the kind of news it delights to serve up to its readers. We take the following paragraph from the local Romanist organ in Toronto, *The Canadian Register*, which dispatch it apparently received from the Roman Catholic news-gathering agency:

Mr. Spaak's new Cabinet (in Belgium) is made up of eight Catholics of the Parti social Chrétien, the strongest political body in Belgium, and seven Socialists.

Religious interests appear safe with this new government. Anticlericalism seems to have quieted down, and such reforms as "Comité d'entreprise" may do much to repress the Communist rise in Belgium.

It is to be noted that a phrase such as "religious interests" in a Romanist paper does not include the religious interests of Protestants or of any other group of persons except the priests of the Roman Church and their obedient followers. Rome's long finger is thrust into the politics of almost every country in the world, there to look out for its own selfish interests.

### Another Price Goes Up—But Not the Price of This Paper

The daily newspapers recently carried an item informing the public that the price of newsprint had increased

for the fourth time in the past year. That was not news to THE GOSPEL WITNESS—our printer keeps us fully informed of such delectable tidbits of news as this, even before they come to pass. And after the increase has taken place he adds it to our bill for printing and publishing. But as our readers are probably not informed of these matters, we copy the newspaper report for their benefit:

Montreal, March 21 (CP).—Increase of \$6 a ton in the price of newsprint was announced today by Canadian International Paper Sales Company, and there were indications tonight other companies would likely follow suit.

Current price in Montreal and Toronto, considered the yardstick for Canada, is \$80 a ton. Elsewhere in Canada freight charges and contractual obligations figure in the price.

The cost of newsprint in Toronto is now almost double what it was nine years ago. Following are the changes in price during the past decade:

1938, \$44; 1940, \$45; 1941, \$46; May, 1943, \$50; September, 1943, \$54; May, 1946, \$63; July, 1946 (following dollar parity), \$70; October, 1946, \$80; March, 1947, \$86.

Do we need to add that during the period in which paper has doubled in price, the cost of THE GOSPEL WITNESS to its subscribers has not increased by one cent. This is possible because a great host of our readers regard this paper as a missionary enterprise in which they wish to have a share, and from time to time they send us gifts over and above their regular subscription rate. We warmly appreciate their fellowship in the work of the Gospel and assure them that without their help it would not be possible for us to continue in it.

### British Immigration

A Reuter's dispatch appearing in *The Globe and Mail* of Toronto, reports that seven million persons would leave the United Kingdom at once if shipping space were available. Three million of them wish to come to Canada, it is said. We wonder what the Canadian government is doing to see that suitable immigrants are being brought to this country. The present King administration has loaded down Canadian finance and Canadian income taxes, with hundreds of millions for "baby bonuses", which is a euphemistic way of saying that they have done what the priests have asked them to do in order to foster a rapid increase of French-Canadian Roman Catholics. Why should not a hundred million dollars—a mere fraction of the amounts to be expended on the "baby bonus"—be set aside to bring out the right type of British immigrants and make it possible for them to integrate themselves into Canadian life?

### The Italians In Ethiopia

Two former Seminary students, Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Phoenix, have just arrived in Ethiopia to take up teaching work. In a letter they report that the flying time from New York to Ethiopia is only 43 hours. However, delays at various airports lengthened the actual travelling time to a much longer period. The natives are not in love with the Italians. According to what they tell Mr. and Mrs. Phoenix, the conquerors, who brought black robed priests with them and drove out Protestant missionaries, killed off the best educated Ethiopians, in some cases by pushing them out of a high-flying plane. Their friends were afraid to say what had happened to them for fear of reprisals and reported that the missing

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natives had been taken to Rome. Perhaps the explanation was not so far wrong for Rome destroys those upon whom she lays her hands. The Phoenixes are now at Jimma, and we hope to hear more of their work later on.

### THIS IS GOOD NEWS

Ex-Padre, Truro Baptist, Defends Rockwood Right  
*Special to The Star*

TRURO, N.S., April 15—Truro, the central starting point of one of the greatest religious controversies in many years, was stirred again on the subject of modernism in the "church" which was the basis of a sermon preached by Rev. D. S. Calkin Sunday night at the Immanuel Baptist church. Rev. D. S. Calkin, former R.C.A.F. padre, wholeheartedly supported Rev. Perry F. Rockwood's great stand for freedom to speak from the pulpit.

Mr. Calkin said it is the prerogative of the prophet of God, as he stands behind the sacred desk, to fearlessly attack modernism and decadence in the church today.

Rev. Mr. Calkin said that he fully agreed with Rev. Perry Rockwood and was behind him in his glorious witness of the great fundamental truths of the Christian faith. "With modernism rife in our churches today we need preachers of conviction to declare the whole council of God," he stated.

Mr. Calkin said he stood upon the Book. He said the Bible does not merely contain the Word of God; it is the Word of God.

Under the heading, "I Stand Beside the Risen Lord," Mr. Calkin confessed his belief in the New Testament account of the virgin birth of Christ, the Lord's many miracles, Christ's sacrificial atoning death, His glorious physical bodily resurrection from the dead and His return to earth some day.

The Immanuel minister said that he stood for a regenerated, baptized, spiritual church. "Too often," it is impossible to distinguish a church member from a

worldling. There ought to be a difference in the life lived by the professing Christ.

Modernism, he pointed out, denies the verbal inspiration of God's Word, rejects the virgin birth, the Saviour's miraculous ministry, sacrificial death and bodily resurrection, and says that one may be saved by good works without a dependence upon Christ's atonement, and mixes the things of the world with the things of Christ's church. "This ought not to be," said former Padre Calkin.

### IS IT HONEST?

WHEN I hear men speaking about the 'Incarnation' but who in private deny the 'Virgin Birth': when I hear men speak with reservations about the 'Resurrection' because they really mean only the 'Perpetuation of Influence'; when I hear the juggling of words which is involved in the statement, 'I believe that the Bible contains the word of God', and know that they also mean, 'I believe that Tennyson contains the word of God', IT MAKES ME SICK AT HEART AND ANGRY. In my haste I am tempted to say, 'All men are liars'. So greatly have I been exercised at times that, were it not for the fact that one day I met God in the person of Jesus Christ, and trusted Him as my Saviour, I would have turned my back upon it all and would say as one of the 'Jehovah's Witness' slogans used to read, 'All religion is a delusion and a snare.'

—Rev. J. R. Armstrong, Snowdon Baptist Church, Montreal, in a recent sermon dealing with "Jehovah's Witnesses."

### Losses in Bible Schools

In the past 10 years, losses in (U. S.) Sunday school membership are registered as follows: Northern Baptists, 14%; Disciples, 12%; Episcopalians, 19%; Lutherans, 9%; Methodists, 13%; Presbyterians, 19%; and Congregationalists, 20%.

(From *The Watchman-Examiner*.)

## Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 11 Second Quarter Lesson 17 April 27, 1947

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

### THE NEED FOR WATCHFULNESS

Lesson Text: Mark 13:24-37.

Golden Text: "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is."—Mark 13:33.

Supplementary Reading: Matt. 24:29—25:30; Luke 21:20-36.

#### INTRODUCTION

In the Olivet Discourse, as this message is called, our Lord answered the two questions of the disciples; the one concerning the time of the destruction of the temple and of the end of the age, and the other concerning the character of that time (Mk. 13:4). The record of our Lord's answer to the first question is given only by Luke (Lk. 21:20-24), but His answer to the second question is recorded by all three evangelists.

After warning His people of the dangers of deception, speculation and panic (verses 5-7), our Lord described the conditions—political, economic and religious—which would suggest the nearness of His approach (verse 8). Persecution and trial would be the portion of His servants, and these would be intensified toward the end of the age (verses 9-13). The period of sorrow and tribulation would be ushered in by conditions of idolatry, blasphemy and cruelty (verses 14-23).

EXPOSITION

I. The Appearance of the Saviour: verses 24-31.

Parallel Passages: Matt. 24:29-35; Lk. 21:25-33.

There is a real danger that people may occupy their minds with watching for signs, rather than for the Lord Himself. The glorious truth that Christ will return in person is the hope of the church and of the individual believer (1 Tim. 1:1; Tit. 2:13; Heb. 9:24-28; 1 John 3:2, 3). All should rejoice that the Saviour Who died, rose again and ascended into heaven will come back again for His own and gather them into His heavenly kingdom (Matt. 3:12; John 11:52; 2 Thess. 2:1).

Our Lord said that there would be portents in the physical world, disturbances among the heavenly bodies, and these would be reflected in perplexity and distress among men (Isa. 13:9, 10; 34:3; Ezek. 32:7, 8; Joel 2:10; Amos 8:9; 2 Pet. 3:10-12). Then they would see the Son of man Himself coming in power and great glory, accompanied by the angels and His saints (Dan. 7:13, 14; Matt. 16:27; 25:31; 2 Pet. 1:16; Rev. 1:7).

When He comes again, our Saviour will be glorified in His saints and admired in all that believe (2 Thess. 1:10). All those who are His shall be re-united with Him and with one another, for it is the purpose of the Lord that the whole family of the redeemed shall live forever with Him (John 17:24; 1 Thess. 4:17).

Just as the presence of leaves on a fig tree or any other tree (Lk. 21:29) indicates the approach of summer, so also, when the conditions which our Lord described are evident, men will know that "He is nigh, even at the doors" (verse 29, Revised Version; Matt. 16:3; Lk. 12:36).

The words "this generation" in verse 30 may refer to Israel, or they may suggest that the generation which sees the sign—the beginning of the birth-pains (verse 8) will witness also the consummation of these things.

To us heaven and earth seem permanent, but these shall one day be dissolved (2 Pet. 3:7-12). However, there is one thing which is dependable and sure, which shall never pass away, and that is the word of the living God. Since God Himself is faithful, His word is faithful (Psa. 119:89), and every word of His shall surely be fulfilled in His own time and in His own way (Matt. 5:18; Acts 1:6, 7; 1 Thess. 5:1; 1 Pet. 1:25).

II. The Attitude of the Servant: verses 32-37.

Parallel Passages: Matt. 24:36-51; Lk. 21:34-36.

While the fact of the Lord's return is certain, the time of His return is uncertain, so far as we are concerned. The Lord outlined the general conditions which would prevail as the time drew near for His glorious appearing, so that His own would not be in darkness (1 Thess. 5:4-6), but, inasmuch as we do not know the day or the hour wherein the Lord will return, we must ever be watchful and prayerful (Matt. 24:50; 25:13; 26:41; Eph. 6:18). He

bids us maintain an attitude of patient expectancy (2 Thess. 3:5; Jas. 5:8; 1 Pet. 1:13), lest carelessness, sleep and sloth should dull our senses (Rom. 13:12; 1 Thess. 3:12, 13; 5:4-10). At the same time, He would have us remain active in His service, and not idly sit down to wait (Lk. 19:13). We shall be blessed in our watching, and in our doing (Lk. 12:37, 43).

To enforce the necessity of watchfulness and preparedness, our Lord spoke several parables; the Parable of the Porter (verses 34-37), of the Master of the House (Matt. 24:43, 44), of the Faithful Servant and the Evil Servant (Matt. 24:45-51), of the Ten Virgins (Matt. 25:1-13), and of the Talents (Matt. 25:14-30).

We are to be as the porter at his master's gate, ever ready to welcome the Lord, whenever He shall return (1 John 2:28). Our eyes are unto Him, for He is the Desire of our hearts (Song of Sol. 2:8; Tit. 2:13; 2 Pet. 3:14). "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

- April 21 ... Warning against carelessness ..... 1 Thess. 5.
- April 22 ... The necessity of watching ..... Matt. 24:45-51.
- April 23 ... The necessity of readiness ..... Matt. 25:1-13.
- April 24 ... The necessity of working ..... Matt. 25:14-30.
- April 25 ... The necessity of patience ..... 2 Pet. 3.
- April 26 ... Our blessed hope ..... Tit. 2.
- April 27 ... The Son of man ..... Rev. 1.

SUGGESTED HYMNS

When Jesus comes. Rejoice! rejoice! our King is coming.  
When He cometh. With harps and with vials. It may be at morn. Our Lord is now rejected.

THE SOVEREIGN GRACE OF GOD

"That is the centre of the Christian religion—the absolutely undeserved and sovereign grace of God, saving sinful men by the gift of Christ upon the cross. Condemnation comes by merit; salvation comes only by grace; condemnation is earned by man; salvation is given by God. The fact of the grace of God runs through the New Testament like a golden thread; indeed for it the New Testament exists. It is found in the words which Jesus spoke in the days of His flesh, as in the parables of the servant coming in from the field and of the laborers in the vineyard; it is found more fully set forth after the redeeming work was done, after the Lord had uttered his triumphant 'It is finished' upon the cross. Everywhere the basis of the New Testament is the same—the mysterious, incalculable, wondrous, grace of God. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."  
—*What Is Faith?* by J. G. Machen

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