

The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

Authorized as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa

Vol. 26, No. 37

130 Gerrard Street East, TORONTO, JANUARY 8, 1948

Whole Number 1338

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE SURE FOUNDATION

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, August 3rd, 1947

(Stenographically Reported)

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."—II Timothy 2:19.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON

Our hearts are glad, O Lord, when we remember Thou art ever nigh to all those who call upon Thee.

Thou dwellest in a place remote from us, yet Thou art nearer to us than breathing, and closer than hands and feet. Therefore we may speak to Thee for Thou dost hear us. We know very little of each other, therefore we do not know how to pray in particular for one another. We can only pray that Thou wilt supply all our needs. There are general needs, common to all of us. We need the upholding of Thy Spirit; we need to be sustained by Thy grace in all the experiences of life. We need guidance, the direction of Thy word in all life's details. O grant this to us every one, and because no two of us are similarly situated, and no two of us similarly constituted, our needs are peculiar to ourselves; but Thou hast made us for Thyself; therefore Thou hast full knowledge of all our peculiar requirements. We pray that these may be ministered to as Thy word is proclaimed.

We desire above everything that we may be fortified for the days to come; that we may be built up in our most holy faith; that we may leave this place this morning with a faith that has been strengthened by the hearing of Thy word, that we may all be conscious of being strengthened with might by Thy power in the inner man, so that we shall meet the emergencies of each day in the wisdom and strength of the Lord. Oh, unseal to our view the treasures of Thy holy word. As we view the common bush may it burn with fire! May we hear a voice out of the bush.

We pray that every one within these walls may be made specially aware of the nearness of God to-day. There may be strangers here, those away from home. Their thoughts are divided between this place, and some separated from them. Help them to understand that the same God is here, and that as Thou shalt bless us here, Thou wilt bless others. Make us to know that this is our Father's world, and this is our Father's house. Help us to have the freedom of children in the Father's presence.

We pray for all the interests of Thy kingdom the world around, that Thy grace may be upon all those who minister the word privately, and publicly, in all lands, and on all peoples of all colours and races.

Let Thy benediction rest upon the household of faith. Specially we bring to Thee Thy young servants this morning, and the experiences of the day. Give to Murray Heron and those associated with him, grace to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Teach his hands to war, and his fingers to fight. Give him the shield of Thy salvation, and by Thy gentleness make him great. Minister to him, and to those who labour with him this day, and may the name of the Lord be glorified.

Let Thy blessing descend upon every one of us, that in this service Thy people may be edified, and Thy great name glorified, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

MEN and women generally are incorrigible imitators. It is by imitation the child learns to walk, and to talk. He observes the speech and conduct of his elders, and endeavours to follow their example. That tendency is everywhere apparent. Whenever a good thing is discovered, or a new thing is produced, you will find people ready to copy it: hence our patent laws, and our laws of copyright, of design, to reserve for the originator the fruit of his mental or physical labour. You will find that ways of doing business, discovered by one, are very soon copied by others. The first chain store had but a few links in it. Now it is many miles long. Whatever is found to be profitable, is imitated.

But that tendency to imitation, and the faculty for imitation is not always exercised in the right direction. There are some who copy others illegitimately, and contrary to all ethical principle. So the advertiser admonishes you to beware of substitutes, by which he means counterfeits. You get it over the radio every time you turn the dial. "Be sure you ask for the genuine article"; and you are invariably told how it may be identified, and you are warned to accept no substitutes.

It would be strange, therefore, if the religion of Jesus

The Gospel Witness

and

Protestant Advocate

Published every Thursday for the propagation of the Evangelical principles of the Protestant Reformation and in defence of the faith once delivered to the Saints.

\$2.00 Per Year. Postpaid, to any address. 5c Per Single Copy.

Editor

T. T. SHIELDS

Associate Editors

W. S. WHITCOMBE, M.A. (Tor.)

W. GORDON BROWN, M.A. (Tor.)

Contributing Editor

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

S. S. Lesson and Exchanges

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

Address Correspondence:

THE GOSPEL WITNESS

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2, Canada

Telephone RAndolph 7415

Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada

Christ were not counterfeited. It would be strange if there were not some who put on the form of godliness while they are devoid of, and deny the power thereof. We are admonished to try the spirits, whether they be of God, for many false prophets are gone out into the world. The Bible is full of warnings to be on the lookout for counterfeits. When counterfeit bills, or coins, are in circulation, there is usually an official warning, so that whenever one goes to a store, and presents a bill, he examines his change to be sure he has the real thing, and not a counterfeit. The counterfeiting of money is held to be a great crime. To fashion an engraving that can produce a bill which has no substance behind it, which has a promise with no power of fulfilment, to mint coin in the king's name, and stamp it with his image and superscription, when the king's treasurer does not stand behind it, is reckoned to be, by our criminal law, one of the greatest crimes, because once perpetrated, there is scarcely any limit to the damage it may do.

Now there are counterfeits of the religion of Jesus Christ. Some people say, "Do not look at your bills; take everything that comes along; everyone is sincere; one religion is as good as another. Do not make any fuss. Let us have no controversy." What sheer nonsense! In no other matter does a man say, "We should not seek security from others."

There are counterfeits in religion—Mohammedanism, Hindooism, Taoism, Shintooism, Mormonism, Christian Science, Romanism, Modernism—these are all counterfeits of the genuine religion; and we need to be on our guard against them. That is what exercised the Apostle, when, inspired by the Spirit, he reminded Timothy of the counterfeits that are abroad, and admonished Timothy to "study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth". He is to "shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker:

of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." The apostle Paul is writing to a young preacher, Timothy, his son in the faith. He warns him against all these evil doctrines, and the false teachers who are overthrowing the faith of some. Then he turns to the opposite, to the genuine coin of the realm, to that which bears the image and superscription, the seal of God Himself, about which there can be no doubt whatever. "Nevertheless" notwithstanding all this uncertainty, "nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his".

I.

There is a foundation described as THE "FOUNDATION OF GOD". Every house is builded by some man, and He Who built all things is God. Divine wisdom, I think a prophetic utterance of the wisdom that became incarnate, speaks in the book of Proverbs about the foundation of the earth. Nothing is more important about any building than the quality of its foundation. If the foundation be wrong, then everything else will be wrong.

I was speaking to a university chancellor a good many years ago now, and I said, "You know, Chancellor, some of your students remind me of an elaborate house, fairly well furnished, and ornately decorated, and yet with a crack in every room, indicating that the thing rests upon no good foundation." He said, "What do you mean?" "I mean that your students display an utter lack sometimes of the most elementary principles of education. They have reared an educational superstructure without a solid educational foundation."

There are professing Christians like that, whose whole Christian profession is a ramshackle affair. Nothing is plumb where it ought to be plumb. Nothing is horizontal where it ought to be horizontal, because they were never in the beginning strengthened in the elements of Christian doctrine. They did not pay attention to all these basic fundamental underlying principles upon which everything else must depend.

Now there is a foundation divinely wrought, a foundation of God; and you may be sure when the Lord lays a foundation it is, to use the familiar expression, "well and truly laid". No one but God can lay a foundation for faith, upon which one can safely build his hope for eternal life. There is but one foundation upon which we may safely build: "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

"The foundation of God"! What is it? It is not laid haphazardly, without plan or design. One of the arguments which men were wont to employ in times past, in support of the doctrine of the existence of God, was the evidence of design, which is apparent in all the-works of nature. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." Sun, and stars, the myriad living creatures with which the world is teeming, the rocks and rills, of which the children sang this morning, "Our Father's World", speak of Him all the time. You cannot pluck a flower, if you have eyes to see, without discerning the evidence of the Designer behind it all.

In the new creation there is nothing haphazard. God has designed the foundation appropriate to a structure that is to last for ever; and into that foundation He has put, if I may reverently say it, the best of divine thought. How much the Bible speaks of God's covenant relation-

ships with His people and the foundation of God, of which my text speaks, according to the scripture, antedates the foundations of the world, for there are some things revealed in this Book which were divinely planned before the foundation of the world.

I was brought up in England, and I remember wondering, when I saw houses going up in this country, why they should immediately begin the raising of the superstructure, after laying the foundation. As a boy I had supposed the building of a house was a matter of years. When the solid masonry was laid for the foundation it was given a long time to settle, until it had become solidified, like a rock. Then the superstructure was raised upon it. Some of you Old Country people may remember things like that.

Now this foundation is not a hastily prepared matter. The redemption that is in Christ Jesus was not an afterthought, but it was pre-determined, and foreordained. The foundation was well and truly laid before the foundations of the earth were laid, and it has had a long time to settle. Nothing has been added to it, nor is any addition or removal necessary. The Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world. The ink is well dried, and not even an archangel could rub it out. The Lord entered into covenant with His Son from the beginning. You read in class this morning the twenty-second chapter of Genesis, where Abraham and Isaac went the two of them together, and came to the place. Twice it was said in that chapter, "They came to the place which God had told him of".

Then when the trial was over, and the ram that was caught by its horns in the thicket, had been offered up in the stead of Isaac, God entered into covenant again with Abraham. His promise was repeated. And He said, "Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: . . . in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies."

But when Abraham and Isaac went, both of them together, to the place of sacrifice, they were doing only what Father, Son, and Holy Ghost had been doing from the beginning. Calvary was predetermined: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." "It must needs be that offences come; but woe unto that man by whom the offence cometh!" "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born."

These two principles are seen through all human history; and, my dear friends, when those who try to improve the doctrine of the atonement, and to re-shape the whole scheme of salvation, we say to them: not "You are many years too late", nor "Centuries", but "You are millennia too late. That was settled long ago; and the foundation of God standeth sure."

"Whom say ye that I am?" "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Of course not! The salvation of God standeth sure, and when that same Peter preached that great

sermon on the day of the Pentecost, he quoted from the Old Testament scriptures. He turned back the pages of the blueprint, and he said, "It is written", "It is written", "It is written". Now you ask the meaning of this. "Having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. . . Therefore" — I remember reading of the great Joseph Cook's quoting that text in one of his great lectures, and saying: "'Therefore'. I call that Peter's colossal 'Therefore'" — "'Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?' We did not know that. If that be true, how shall we re-adjust ourselves." And you remember Peter's reply: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you . . . Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." What a carload of bricks for the superstructure to be laid upon this solid foundation of the eternal Lordship, and Saviourhood of the Son of God! Nevertheless, in spite of all the false prophets say, the foundation of God standeth sure. There is something upon which we may rest.

II.

And that foundation, which is thus laid, BEARS THE DIVINE SEAL: "HAVING THIS SEAL". God has put His stamp upon it, like a building inspector examining every detail, and saying, "All right, that is correct. You may go on." And so the Lord has said that the foundation is truly laid, and thoroughly inspected. He stamps it with His seal, and says, "That is the foundation upon which I will build My church, and upon which everyone who believes in Me, shall base his hope of eternal life."

Do you remember that great word of the Apostle Paul, when, in giving his credentials, he says: "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." "And upon that promise," said the Apostle, "my hope of eternal life securely rests."

Now we have the same truth here: "Having this seal"! You know what a seal is. When Brother Wilmot was here I was sending a registered letter to someone. He said, "Do you not seal it?" I said, "No. I suppose they do at the Post Office, but an ordinary letter may be registered." He said, "Not so in England. The Post Office will not receive it unless it is sealed with wax, and stamped. And that seal must not be broken. His Majesty's mail accepts responsibility for the content of that parcel, after it has been duly sealed." And the Lord will accept responsibility for that which He, Himself, has sealed, as being true: "Having this seal"!

What is that seal? "The Lord knoweth them that are his." It does not say that the believer knows. He may; he ought to; but whether or no, "the Lord knoweth them that are his". There are some who belong to Him. They are His: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Again He says, "Other sheep I have" — not "I am going to have other sheep"; but "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold." In the parable of the lost sheep He put these words into the mouth of the shepherd who found it: Calling together his friends, and his neighbours, he said, "Rejoice with me; for I have found a sheep which was lost"! Did He say that? No; "Rejoice with me; for

I have found MY sheep which was lost. It was always mine, when it was out on the mountain, and I went out after it till I found it, and laid it on my shoulders, rejoicing. I want you to rejoice with me, but I was the first to rejoice. As soon as I saw that poor, weary, thing, I knew it was My sheep." My dear friends, "The Lord knoweth them that are his".

We have read of amnesia victims. We have read of a man who travelled all over the United States, and other countries, looking for his home. All he knew was that he had a home, but he did not know where it was. He had a father, and mother, but he did not know where they lived. Through some advertisement somehow they got in touch with this wandering young man. When he came home and saw his mother, he did not know her, nor did he know his father. But the mother said, "He is my son." She knew him. I rejoice to believe that the Lord knew me long before I knew Him. He knew me as His own. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Most parents, I suppose, know their children. I knew a man once who had so many children he was like the woman who lived in a shoe, who had so many children she did not know what to do. He was an old man. He came in to see me one day, and told me about his family, twelve or thirteen of them living. They were married, living away from home. But he began to count them up, and tell me how many he had, and then he began to name them, one after another. I said, "Well, Mr. Jack, you have a big family." "Oh; yes." After a little further conversation he left me. In a short while he came back. He said, "I forgot; I have one more." I did not wonder he had forgotten, particularly at his age.

My dear friends, our heavenly Father does not forget how many children He has, or where they are. He knows all about them: "The Lord knoweth them that are his". If a burglar were to break into your house, and steal something, have you an inventory of the contents of your home? Could you tell what was stolen? I notice that when burglaries are reported, it is almost invariably said, "They took a lot of jewelry." Well, if there happens to be a burglar in this company, I warn you in advance there is not much jewelry in my house. But I imagine there are some people who have a great deal of wealth even in the house, and if they were to have their valuables stolen, it would take them a little while to discover the extent of their loss.

The Lord is infinitely rich. But in the files up yonder, where no one can interfere with them, He has an inventory of all His jewels. The list is all written down up there. And no one can ever steal one without His knowing it. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." You remember He says: "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels", when I count them all, to make sure they are all here." Like a mother or father who sits up late for the incoming of their children. One after another comes in. But there is still one outside. After a while the door opens, and the last member of the family comes in, and he or she—most likely she; the good man probably has long been fast asleep!—but mother says, "Now I can lock the door: they are all in."

That is what God did when Noah went into the ark. "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." There is going to be a big storm. Come in." And Noah, when all the rest had gone before him, went in, and the Lord shut him in. The Lord knew those who were His, and He was not going to leave one of them out in the storm. I am glad that my salvation does not depend so much

upon my knowing, as upon His knowing. That is the foundation. The Lord knoweth, whether I know or not.

Sometimes *some of His own, do not know it*. Is there anyone here troubled with doubts? I could not find what I wanted in the hymn book, so I asked Miss Lindsay to type it for me, just as I went into my class. John Newton tells the story of the troubled soul, who is beset by doubts of all sorts. I know some who do not feel so deeply, who are inclined to mock at this sentiment, but I think it is one we are all familiar with in our own experience:

ART THOU ALSO HIS DISCIPLE?

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought;
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I His, or am I not?"

"If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull, this lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard His name!"

"Could my heart so hard remain,
Prayer a task and burden prove,
Every trifle give me pain,
If I knew a Saviour's love?"

"When I turn my eyes within
All is dark, and vain, and wild:
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

"If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do;
You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?"

"Yet I mourn my stubborn will,
Find my sin a grief and thrall;
Should I grieve for what I feel
If I did not love at all?"

"Could I joy His saints to meet,
Choose the ways I once abhorred,
Find at times the promise sweet,
If I did not love the Lord?"

"Lord, decide the doubtful case!
Thou who art Thy people's sun,
Shine upon Thy work of grace,
If it be indeed begun."

"Let me love Thee more and more,
If I love at all, I pray;
If I have not loved before,
Help me to begin to-day."

If you have any doubt, then make sure, as sure as you can. Is there anyone who has cast away his confidence, and because of being betrayed into the commission of some evil, says, "I am afraid I am not a Christian. I fear I had better give up my profession"? You remember when they said to one: "Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee". With an oath he denied, and said, "I know not the man". Then the Man looked on him, and Peter's heart broke, and he went out and wept bitterly. Peter said, I am not a disciple; I don't know Him:

Mrs. Browning accurately describes that occasion:

The Saviour looked on Peter. Ay, no word,
No gesture of reproach! The heavens serene,
Though heavy with armed justice, did not lean
Their thunders that way. The forsaken Lord
Looked only, on the traitor. None record
What that look was; none guess: for those who have seen
Wronged lovers loving through a death-pang keen,

Or pale-cheeked martyrs smiling to a sword,
Have missed Jehovah, at the judgment-call.
And Peter, from the height of blasphemy—
"I never knew this man", did quail and fall,
As knowing straight THAT GOD, and turned free
And went out speechless from the face of all,
And filled the silence, weeping bitterly.

* * *

I think that look of Christ might seem to say—
"Thou Peter! art thou then a common stone
Which I at last must break my heart upon,
For all God's charge to his high angels may
Guard my foot better? Did I yesterday
Wash *thy* feet, my beloved, that they should run
Quick to deny me 'neath the morning-sun,
And do thy-kisses, like the rest, betray?
The cock crows coldly—Go and manifest
A late contrition, but no bootless fear!
For when thy final need is dreariest,
Thou shalt not be denied, as I am here.
My voice to God and angels, shall attest,
"Because I know this man, let him be clear."

When Jesus was risen from the dead, He said, "Go, tell my disciples, — and Peter, that I go before them into Galilee." Why did He say, "And Peter"? Peter had answered the charge, "Thou art His disciple", by saying, "I know not the man." The Lord knew it; and He knew also that Peter was His. He had said so. And when He asked three times, parallel to his three-fold denial, "Lovest thou Me", he said, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." Yet he had said he did not.

The shepherd knew when He laid the sheep on His shoulders all that was to come to pass, but for the joy set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame. He knew what His travail of soul was to bring to Him: knowing them that are His.

How can you know? Well, go and ask Him: "Lord, am I Thine?" If the Lord says, "Yes; you are: he that believeth on me hath everlasting life": "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." If you hear Him say that to you, you can surely say, "Then I share the knowledge of the Lord Himself. He knows I am His, and now I know He is mine. My Beloved is mine, and I am His." That two-fold knowledge always brings salvation.

III.

IS THERE ANY SIGN BY WHICH OTHERS MAY KNOW WHETHER OR NOT WE ARE HIS? "Having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." That is the proof that you are His child. By faith, without works, you are justified before God; only by faith and works are you justified before men. That is the difference between Paul's epistles, and the epistle of James. Paul speaks of the justification of the soul before God. Believing in Him we are justified. James speaks in a very practical way of the justification of our profession before men. If I say I am a Christian, God knows whether or not I am telling the truth. If I say I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, He knows whether I have faith, or not; and if I have, I

am justified in His sight. If I say it to you, you do not know; you cannot know. How can you know? "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Let everyone see that we have been with Jesus, and little by little as "the old man" is put off, and "the new man" put on, which is renewed in righteousness and holiness — as this process of sanctification proceeds, it will be just like a growing child in the beginning.

I heard of a minister who was greatly embarrassed when mothers brought their new babies to him, and he knew he was expected to say something, but what to say, he did not know. To him all the babies looked about alike. As soon as the baby was exhibited, he would say, "Well, now, that is a baby" — and the mother went away delighted. That is true. But the child grows up. In the beginning they say is he like mother, or father? Do not be too ready to answer. When they ask me, I say, "I don't know which of you he resembles." But in a few years you can see his mother, and his father, not only in his appearance, but in his habits, his walk.

When preaching once in Spurgeon's Tabernacle, on arriving there one Sunday morning, I received a letter from someone, saying, "I read in the papers that Rev. T. T. Shields is to preach at Spurgeon's on Sunday. I am going to hear him, and I am cherishing the hope that it is my old friend, whom I knew in the days of my youth." In the evening, in the first balcony, just about at the turn of the circle, I saw a patriarchal-looking man, with snow-white hair. As I preached he leaned upon the rail in front. Occasionally he sat back, and closed his eyes. When the service was over that night, I took a taxi to the address given in the letter I had received. I found the street, and the house, knocked at the door, it opened, and there stood my old friend. "Oh," he said, "come in. I know you won't be hurt when I tell you that when you walked into the pulpit this evening I was greatly disappointed. I hoped to see my old friend, the friend of my youth. I looked at you, and I was not quite sure whether or not you were related to him; but as you preached I closed my eyes, and all the intervening years rolled away, and I heard your father preaching. It was his voice; not quite like it, but there was a sufficient resemblance for identification." I was not at all hurt that he would have preferred my father before me; I was glad to be in the succession, and to be the recipient of his cordial greeting.

Not quite like Christ, yet we may have a voice something like His. We may have a spirit something like His. There may be a savour of Christ about us, so that people will know, as they meet us that the grace of God has made us different, and has made us what we are. May He help us, then, to rest in perfect peace upon this foundation, sure of this seal: for ourselves we are known of Him, and He is known of us. And as for the world about, say, We are doing the best we can as grace enables us, to

"Show to all around
What a dear Saviour we have found."

Let us pray:

We thank Thee, O Lord, for this sure word of truth, this sure word of prophecy unto which we all do well to take heed. May Thy word minister to Thine own people, and oh, may it please Thee, by Thy Spirit, to engender in the hearts of any who, as yet, perhaps have not openly enrolled in the household of faith, a desire to be numbered among those whom the Lord knows belong to Himself, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

What Is the First-class Fare to Heaven?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, on a Sunday Evening

(Stenographically Reported)

"So he bringeth them unto their desired haven."—Psalms 107:30.

Prayer by Rev. W. S. Whitcombe

O Lord, Thy name is great, and greatly to be praised. Before Thou hadst brought forth the earth, before Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God. A thousand years in Thy sight are as a day. Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men. Thou workest all things after the counsel of Thine own will. Thou workest, and no man hindereth.

How dare we who are of sinful lips and sinful hearts praise Thee to-night? We would make the words of the hymn our prayer,—

"O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free;
A heart that's sprinkled with the blood
So freely shed for me."

No man can call Jesus Christ, Lord, but by the Holy Spirit. How much less can we praise Thee apart from Him, apart from Thy grace! Enable us to praise Thee as we ought. Bow down Thine ear, O-Lord, as Thy feebleness creation lisps to Thy praise. We thank Thee that Thou art not a God Who is afar off, for though the heavens and the heaven of heavens are not great enough to contain Thee, yet Thou dwellest with the humble and contrite heart. Such, O Lord, are we. Thou art not far from any one of us. We would search after Thee, and find Thee to-night—yea, rather, Thou hast searched after us, and found us. So we rejoice in the God of all understanding, yet Who abides in us. Our faces are not hidden from Thee. Thou waitest to bless us, to bestow upon us the fulness of Thy mercy and grace.

"Centre and soul of every sphere,
Yet to each loving heart, how near!"

Bring home to our understanding Thy nearness, O Lord. To those who have been many years in the Christian life, may Thy presence be very real to-night. To those who have but begun, those who have in Thine own appointed way witnessed before the world their oneness with Christ, be near to them in a special way. Come near, O Lord, to every one of us and bless us while we wait before Thee.

We would remember our missionaries to-night. Put Thine everlasting arms roundabout them as they sail toward that sin-darkened land to proclaim the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.

Come near to-night, O Lord, unto those who are distressed, and to those in sorrow, those whose hearts are burdened, the tempted ones here, and the tried. Come near, O Lord, to those who are afar from Thee, to those whose eyes have been darkened, who know Thee not. Draw them, O Lord, to Thyself. We thank Thee that Thou hast come near to us in the Cross where there is found plenteous mercy, and grace to cover all our sin.

We thank Thee for the gracious provisions of the gospel, that Thy offer is still open, that whosoever will may come and take of the water of life freely; and that him that cometh unto Thee Thou wilt in no wise cast out. We rejoice that the feast has been spread. We thank Thee that Thou dost extend Thine invitation to-night, "Come, for all things are now ready." We pray that the Holy Spirit, the divine Messenger, may bring us to Christ, that He may convict of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. May He draw men to the foot of the Cross. We remember in our own experience that,—

"'Twas the same love that spread the feast,
That sweetly forced us in;
Else we had still refused to taste,
And perished in our sin."

We beseech Thee, Who art a God of salvation, a seeking God, that Thou wouldst seek men out to-night, and draw them to Thyself where Thou shalt bestow upon them every blessing through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

"SO HE bringeth them unto their desired haven." It is the veriest commonplace to compare the journey of life to a sea voyage. We have it in our hymns, in all the world of poetry; and one must immediately be struck with the aptness of the comparison. What a great adventure life in its simplest aspect really is! How much of mystery there is about it! How much of mist and of fog! How numerous are the perils to which we are exposed! And how pathless is the sea we traverse! Though millions have gone before, every life has its own peculiarities; and we must live our lives, in a certain sense, separately.

How full of loneliness life is sometimes, like the wide, wide sea! People who have not crossed the ocean, seeing the ships jostling each other in the harbour, may sometimes imagine that the sea is covered with ships. But I have sailed the Atlantic from New York to Europe without ever seeing a ship until we saw land. There are times when we feel as though we were a ship at sea, as though we were the only ship, all alone in the world. Wind and wave beat and batter us. Storm and calm succeed each other. Even the most favoured life is full of complexity and perplexity, and who can be a sufficient guide in these circumstances?

The text I have read to you is part of an inspired description of a sea voyage. There are those who "go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters", and of them it is said: "These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven."

I shall use the text this evening accommodatingly, taking this figure of the voyage of life, that we may learn something of how we may safely make that voyage, and drop anchor at last in a desired haven, under the guidance of One Who knoweth how to direct us thither.

I.

Let me remark, then, that WE ARE ALL SEEKING SOME SORT OF HAVEN, WE ARE VOYAGERS ALL. How quickly the days, and the weeks, and the months, and the years slip by! How soon the grey hairs appear! What evidences there are on every hand of the brevity of life!—when “the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, and the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low; also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.”

We are all on the way, every one of us. “Here we have no continuing city.” There is no stopping place, whether we like it or not. We are moving hence. “The place that now knows us will shortly know us again no more for ever.”

Well do I know that that is an aspect of life that receives but little emphasis nowadays. Men are urged to make the best of this life,—sometimes in utter forgetfulness of the life that is to come. But whatever our circumstances, however vigorous our physical frame, however strong our will, we are going on.

I remember a minister, a dear fellow he was, a lovely man personally. Not always did he emphasize the verities of the gospel, I fear; but he was advertised to speak on a certain Sunday evening on, *The Cultivation of the Will*, how to determine to do things, or, at least, an address entitled to that effect. When the congregation assembled, someone had to announce that the preacher was indisposed, and could not be there,—and before the day broke on the morrow his spirit had departed to God Who gave it.

You may exercise your will over some people, but when the grim Monster calls, when Death shall summon us, whatever our wealth, our learning, our strength of character, or force of will, we shall all have to obey him. We may just as well face it, and recognize the fact that life is but a voyage. We cannot go on for ever. We must reach a haven of some sort. There must come an end to this earthly existence. We are sailing on—but sailing whither? To what haven is our ship directed? To what sunny summerland do we believe ourselves to be voyaging? It is not an inadequate description of life as most of us find it. Some of us perhaps have learned to long for some kind of haven, for the stormy wind has blown, and the waves have mounted up to heaven, and again, they have gone down into the depths. Some of us have had a pretty stormy time of it.

There is a kind of sea-sickness that affects people who never go to sea. You have heard the saying that there are two stages to that dread malady? When one is rather ill, he is afraid the ship will go down: a little while later he is rather afraid it will not! Some of you have had experience enough of life to wish you were well out of it. Do not call me a pessimist. Do not say that I look darkly upon life, for I know very well there are seasons of tranquility. I know there are

periods of calm, and pleasure, and real delight. But let us be frank with each other this evening—I am not going to preach a sermon. I shall talk about your experiences,—you have had a stormy time of it, have you not? Sometimes you have said, “I wish the voyage were over. I wish this ship would make port somewhere.” You have felt not unlike one who has been tossed upon the deep. It seemed as though the voyage would never end.

Some of you, perhaps, have not been afflicted with homesickness—for alas! your soul is orphaned, and you have as yet no home to go to—if that be your lot, you may be weary of this life and know not where to go.

What a troubled world this is just now! Find me a bit of tranquil water anywhere. Tell me what sea to sail with the expectation of a pleasant voyage. Where can one go to get out of trouble and distress? I wonder if someone is trying to wean us away from things earthly and temporal? I wonder are we being taught in a wholesale fashion to say, as the wise observer said, “Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?” What there may be above and beyond the sun is another matter, but “under the sun” there are stormy winds, and troubled seas, and weary voyagers who would gladly be out of it all.

That is not an exaggeration, is it? —Is that not true to fact to those of you who have had experience of life for a few years? This preacher confesses it to be perfectly true. How often—how often could he have borrowed the Psalmist’s saying, “Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.” Thus in our weaker and wearied moments do we complain. Notwithstanding, all the days of our appointed time must we wait till our change comes.

II.

TO WHAT HAVEN, THEN, ARE WE SAILING? This text speaks of a “desired” haven, desired because desirable. It intimates that somebody has set sail with definite purpose, and is not sailing over uncharted seas without compass or pilot, but is sailing a definite course, with a definite haven in view, and is sailing thitherward because it is a land greatly to be desired.

Where can you find a desirable haven? To what land will you emigrate? Where would you rather live than in Canada? I suppose there was a time in early youth when most of us dreamed of an earthly paradise. We saw here and there the work of the grim Reaper, and we observed that old people died, and that they were passing on to some other land, but as for ourselves we had youth on our side, and life was full of happiness and of pleasant things, and we felt as though we could enjoy an earthly paradise. We dreamed of conditions of life which would be ideal, in which we should be perfectly happy. The visions we saw satisfied, for the time, our youthful imaginations.

I heard a missionary say, who had been long years in India under the scorching sun, when he came home to Canada in early June, that as he travelled through the country and saw verdure and beauty everywhere, the lambs gambolling in the fields, and all nature springing forth into newness of life, he remarked to someone, “It may be that heaven will be better than this, but for the moment this is good enough for me.”

Yes; we can say that in June. Anybody in good health

and reasonably comfortable circumstances can say that in June. What is rarer than a day in June? But can you say it in December? Can you sing about it in January? Are you still of the same mind when March winds pierce you through? Is it not true that we are soon disillusioned? I have seen people of great wealth lose all interest in life. I have seen people of great learning who found it very hard to learn the way to heaven, but easy to learn the barrenness and bitterness of earth. If we will be frank, we shall admit that we had not gone very far until we were forced to the conclusion that our dream of paradise could never be realized here. There are too many graves in this old hollow earth. There are too many broken pillars, too many disrupted families, too many blasted lives, too many ruined fortunes, too much wreck and ruin all about us, to find a paradise on earth. Is not that true? Must we not all say, "If I am to find my way to a haven of rest, it will have to be somewhere other than on earth. There is no haven to be desired here that can meet the longings of my immortal spirit."

Very well, then, let us emigrate, shall we? Let us set sail for another country.

If that be so, let us find out to what country we should sail. What sort of haven would you desire? What would fulfil your ideal? How many people would you take with you? How many would you gladly leave behind? How much baggage would you carry? And how much would you label, "Not wanted"—and forget even to put it in the hold? Life would have to be vastly different from this if we would realize our ideal.

I will tell you somebody I should like to leave behind. He is called in the Scripture "the old man". I do not see any possibility of getting to heaven if the "old man" is to be there. I do not see any possibility of having a heaven where he is. Years ago I had a man in my church who, before the days of tree-sitting competitions, used to climb up into the miff-tree—and I used to leave him there, because I soon learned that there was no use bringing him a step-ladder to help him down from one, for he would only use it to climb another. I thought it better to leave him to nurse the ills he had than acquaint himself with others that he knew not of. But he was a nice man, and had a splendid wife. One day I talked the matter over with her, at her suggestion. I said, "Suppose you and your husband take your church letters and go somewhere else and be happy?" She shook her head and said, "I fear Pastor, it would be as Dr. So-and-So used to say (naming my predecessor) we should take our miserable selves with us." Alas! That is the chief trouble with all of us.

You have heard of the Quaker who was met by a man with a pack on his back, looking for a home? The traveller came to the crest of a hill, and looked down into the valley where a village was snugly nestled. He stopped the Quaker and said, "Can you tell me what sort of people live down in the village?" The Quaker replied, "Friend, what sort of people did thee leave behind?" "They were a bad lot. They did not tell the truth; they quarrelled with each other. I left them because I could not get on with them." "Yes," said the Quaker, "and thee will find the same kind of people down yonder in the village to which thou art going."

What is your greatest trouble in life? "My circumstances." No; they are not! "Some people who are hard to live with"—a husband or a wife. "It is the man down in the office. He is an utterly unreasonable man. I have no peace in my life. If I could get away

from these people, all would be well." No; it would not. Your chief trouble is in your own breast—and so is mine.

The land to which we are going must be a land where the "old man" will never be known. It must be

"A land upon whose blissful shore
There rests no shadow, falls no stain."

It must be a sinless land. That is the kind of haven we all need. Circumstances may be difficult for you, people about you may harry you, and you may have just cause for complaint against many; but even if all these adjustments could be made, the root-cause of all your trouble to-day is the sin in your own life; and there is no haven for any of us unless some way be found by which that can be eliminated, and the "old man" left behind.

I read of a city of which it is said, "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." That is the city I should like to live in, where there is no defilement, where sin never comes. But we shall not find it upon earth. Of that you are as certain as I.

But that is not all. Even were we freed from these moral distempers, even if we were so purified that we might consort with angels, and find ourselves able to join in their songs of praise without discord—even then we should need something more than that, for while a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth, he cannot very well get along without some of them. To read of some great men, one would think they never ate breakfast! One would suppose they were so different from ordinary mortals that they need only the food of the gods. But as a matter of fact, these matters of which Mr. Whitcombe read to you this evening, "What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?", while they are not the all-important matters, they are not wholly insignificant. While we are in this flesh, we shall have to give some consideration to these things.

Many people have emigrated from one country to another in order to better their condition. Thus Abraham turned aside and went down into Egypt. So, at a later day, did Jacob send his sons into Egypt because he had heard there was corn there. At a still later period Naomi, with her husband, emigrated to Moab's land because in Bethlehem, the house of bread, a famine prevailed. She went to a far and strange country in the hope of finding easier conditions of life.

How many people have left Europe to come to Canada or the United States, dreaming almost of picking up gold in the streets? One might suppose, to hear some people talk across the sea, that you could buy the best of motor cars in one of these red stores where they sell things for five and ten cents! From their extravagant view of this hemisphere's abundant wealth it might be supposed that everybody here were wealthy, and poverty were unknown. It is true that some people who have crossed the sea, for their want have found wealth. Many have come to this land, and made a new beginning. But inevitably at last they too have had to go, for the shadow waits for every one of us.

Is there a haven of which it is said, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat"? Is there a land where there are no climatic difficulties, where the plain and the valley are as salubrious as the hills, where ever-

lasting health obtains, where there are no cemeteries, and no breaking hearts?

Tell me of a haven where I can get rid of all these earthly limitations, so that I can find at last the satisfaction for which my soul longs. I want a salvation that is good for the mind, so that my mind can find exercise in great matters through all eternity. I want something that satisfies the heart, that satisfies spirit, soul, and body, the whole man. Let us set sail for such a desirable haven where we shall all be comfortable and happy at last.

It is not on the American continent, nor in Australia, nor Europe, nor Asia, nor Africa. We shall have to leave this planet and sail to another world to find a haven like that.

Then, my dear friends, we do not live in things. We live in our affections, if we live at all. Home is not the house you live in. It is not the furniture you use; it is not the clothes you wear. Home consists in association with kindred spirits whom you love. If you can find a place like that anywhere, that is the nearest thing to heaven that you will find on earth.

But that does not last. The chair is soon vacant. Oh dear, how well do I know it! And how well do you know it! Why are we so foolish as to live as though we were going to stay here for ever? We think of those whom we have loved and lost. We sometimes sing,—

"One army of the living God,
To His command we bow;
Part of His host hath crossed the flood,
And part is crossing now."

And they are crossing. Others may cross to-night. Shall we see them again? Can you tell me of a haven where Death never comes, where disease is unknown, from whose golden shore sorrow is for ever banished, where there is no night, no shadows, no shortening day, no deepening night, where a tender hand will somehow, at some time, wipe away all tears from our eyes?

I should like to find a place like that somewhere, would you not? Would you not like to set sail for it?

There is such a haven. There is such a land beyond. There is a place where everlasting spring abides, and never-withering flowers. Did you ever hear of such a city, a city in which there are no cemeteries, a city in which there are no hospitals, a city in which there are no orphan asylums, a city in which there are no sighs, no groans, no pain, no tears? I say to you again, let us seek that city. That is the desired haven! God help us to set our faces toward it.

III.

I wonder could I tell you in a few words A LITTLE ABOUT THE VOYAGERS? Here are some who go down to the sea in ships, and who do business in great waters. What a world of business this is! Some time ago there was a political earthquake in Great Britain. Old party alignments were obliterated, perhaps never to be rediscovered; and the whole kingdom was turned upside-down. New standards were set up; new philosophies were adopted; new sets of opinions, once objectionable, are now lauded to the skies. What was it all about? Just a new way of doing business. There was not a word in it all about the vanity of earthly things. It was simply a plan to devise new ships to do business in great waters, new ways of recapturing the world's trade in order to do more business.

This is Sunday. Tomorrow will be a business day, and

even in hard times in what a whirl this city will be found! Thousands, and tens of thousands, will be running hither and thither, trying to make money, to do a little business to keep body and soul together, to live in this dreary land a little longer. Men are building banks that challenge the clouds,—towering buildings everywhere. But they are all "under the sun", and there is nothing of abiding value in Time. In but a moment they may pass, and we shall be left empty-handed. It is not worth while going down to the sea in ships, merely to do business in great waters.

Do not misunderstand me. Of course, I know these things are necessary. Of course, I know, as I intimated just now, that we must deal with these mundane affairs. It is perfectly legitimate that we should, so long as we keep them in right relation, and look for a "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." It is right enough, if we do not lose our perspective, and spend all our energies on the things of Time, to the utter neglect of Eternity; if we do not set our affections on things of the earth rather than on things above.

But even those who go down to the sea in ships soon find themselves in the storm. What a picture that is of the sea of life in general: in the face of all their difficulties, which threaten to engulf them, men "reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man." Did you ever see a landlubber trying to walk the deck of a ship in the storm—reeling "to and fro, and staggering like a drunken man"; their soul melted within them, and they are at their wit's end.

I wish I could find a man at his wit's end, to-night, some man who says, "I am out on the storm-swept sea, and I do not know which way to turn." Occasionally, I say, there are quiet hours at sea, not many of them—for soon the storm comes again. Is that a description of your case? Have you plumbed the depths? Have you found out how vain a thing this world is?

IV.

If so, I must tell you of A SHIP AND A PILOT THAT ARE BOUND FOR THIS MUCH DESIRED HAVEN.

I am here to tell you that there is a liner that is guaranteed to transport all who desire to go from this sorrow-stricken world to that desired haven, and that there is a Pilot who never lost a passenger. There is a heavenbound ship. That is what salvation is. Dropping the metaphor, I am here to tell you that God has provided a way whereby immortal spirits may be transported from this life into a world beyond in perfect safety, without any possibility of loss by the way: "He bringeth them unto their desired haven." Are you glad of that? (chorus of hallelujahs).

Once when crossing to England, we reached the Mersey near Liverpool one day before the sun was down. As everybody does, we had packed up all our traps, and everyone was ready for landing. The heavy pieces of baggage were out on the deck ready to go down the gangplank. We were coming up the river, and stopped for a few moments to let the pilot on. He was soon on the bridge, and within five minutes I heard the engines stop. The ship dropped anchor, and inside of fifteen minutes the stewards were going around saying, "We are not landing to-night, sir; everybody back to their staterooms." I asked my room-steward what the trouble was. He said, "It is Old Cautious." "What do you mean?" I enquired, "could we not have got in?" "Sure.

The captain could have taken us in. But Old Cautious will run no risks. He is so careful that he will not face the possibility of trouble. We could have got in before the tide was too low—but he would not have it." "What sort of pilot is he?" I then enquired. (The ship hands were going home, and were rather irritated because they had expected to land that night.) "What is his record?" "His record is all right. He never lost a ship. He could not! He never got a ship into trouble in his life. He will not get anywhere near trouble. Old Cautious is all right." I said, "I am glad he is on the bridge. I will wait until morning."

You and I have run on to so many sand-bars, and have narrowly escaped destruction so many times, that it is a marvel of mercy we are here to-night. It is a wonder that we are not in some other haven than a desired haven. It is only the mercy of God that has spared us. It would be a good thing to have a safe Pilot to take us in.

I wish you would have my Pilot. I wish I could see Him taking command of your soul-ship. I wish I could know that before you leave this place to-night the helm were in His hand. No reefs or rocks can trouble you then when Jesus has taken command. Do not make any mistake, however. Even if you become a Christian you may have troubled seas. I do not know that a Christian enjoys a funeral any more than anybody else. A Christian mother is anxious about her children when they are ill. She is full of trouble if anything threatens them. We are mortal. We are human. Sometimes the stormy winds will blow, and even as Christians we shall have a stormy time of it. We read in the Book of a time when Jesus Christ was on board and the disciples said, "Carest thou not that we perish?"

I knew an old man once who was rather a melancholy brother, and who found his only pleasure in being melancholy. You have known some people like that. But he was sound in the faith, and I think his gloom was partly to be attributed to his physical condition; he was a dyspeptic of some sort. But he knew the Lord, and although he did not show it in his face, I think he rejoiced in Him. Somebody went to him for advice about his soul's salvation; he had believed in Christ, but did not now know whether he was saved or not: "I have so much trouble, so much difficulty in my business," said he, "and my children cause me trouble. Even this old body of mine troubles me; and I have wondered, if I am a Christian, if I should not be free from all these things." This old brother said, "Did you ever cross the sea?" "Yes." "Did you have a good passage?" "No; a dreadful passage." "What was the matter with you?" "Well, it was terribly stormy." "Did you get off the ship?" "Oh, no: I had to stay on." "You had your ups and downs?" "Yes, I did." "But," he said, "you did not have your ins and outs, did you?"

The old man was a good theologian. Though there were storms, he was in the ship, and was perfectly safe—although not as comfortable as if the sea were calm.

Some people are more troubled by storms than others. I have in mind a stormy passage. I like a storm at sea. I saw myself described once in a certain city, I think it was by the Ottawa press, as "the stormy petrel". I said, "I am not much of a naturalist, but I will find out about that bird." I studied it, and found out its habits. I discovered that the petrel had nothing to do with making the storm, but it is unlike other birds in this, that when a storm comes it stays out in the storm and does not run for cover. Then I said to myself, "I do not care

if they call me a stormy petrel. I like a storm at sea. I think it is glorious."

The one to which I refer was when I was crossing on the *Mauritania*. I climbed to the ninth deck, right under the captain's bridge. For three days we pitched, and for three days we rolled. While we were in the pitching process I was under the captain's bridge watching that mighty ship go down into the trough of the seas and then mount up again. But at last we nosed into a wave, and although I was on the boat deck, the water swept that deck, and I was drenched to the skin. I kept the hat that got that drenching, with the mark of the salt water upon it, for some years. As I shook myself free of water, I looked up at the bridge. There, was a man walking back and forth—not a bit troubled. The ship could pitch as much as it liked. I had sea legs, and as long as the captain was as calm as that I did not need to worry. I went down and changed my clothes—and went out for more of it.

Turn your eyes toward the Captain. "So he bringeth them unto their desired haven." If you are a Christian all will be right. By and by we shall reach the heavenly shore.

Would you like to know the fare? How much does it cost? I read of one prophet called Jonah who went down and found a ship of Tarshish—and paid his fare. Somehow or another people always have money enough to pay their fare to run away from God—and if you have not, the devil will provide it for you. Jonah paid his fare. I have known many people come to this country whose passage had been assisted, partly paid by the government; then they had to repay it. There are many people who would like God to partly pay their way to heaven. They say, "I should like to have a little hand in it myself." But you cannot do it that way.

What is the price? Nothing at all. The name of the ship is "Grace". The ticket is marked, "Without money, and without price." You get a ticket for nothing if you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. The wonderful thing about it is that there is no difference between the price of first-class and third-class.

I remember before the days of Church Union in Canada I met a friend who was a Methodist, a real Christian. He said, "How are you? I am glad to see you. I have a warm spot in my heart for you Baptists. After all, it does not make any difference whether we are Baptist, or Methodist, or Anglican, or Presbyterian. We are all going the same way, are we not?" I said, "I hope we are. All the cars in one train, pulled by one engine, are going the same way, but there are first, second, and third-class carriages. If you travel third-class, that is your choice; but I am going first-class."

You have to pay no more to get all that God has provided for you than for just a little of it. Why do you want to travel to heaven third-class. Why not prove the height, and length, and breadth, and depth of the love of God, and by faith appropriate His boundless grace, and live in the luxury which His love would provide us while we sail on the stormy seas? I have no objection to that kind of luxury. It is hard enough to go to sea, and I should like to have the largest measure of comfort consistent with a stormy passage. You will get the storm—why not get all God has for you, to help you through it?

And when we get off the ship yonder we shall find that the "old man" has jumped overboard, or, at all events, has disappeared. He will never be given a "land-

ing ticket". He will not be there. But our Pilot will be there. We shall awake in His likeness, and we shall be satisfied. Having left behind us every element of life that would mar the perfection of our joy, we shall come at last to the desired haven.

When the ship is at the dock, and most of the passengers have got on board, and the time for departure has come, at last you hear the cry up and down the deck, "All ashore! All ashore! Visitors, all ashore." And when all the passengers are aboard, and all the visitors are ashore, the gang-plank is withdrawn, the ship is loosed from her mooring, and she sets her prow toward the open sea.

There comes a time in every man's life when the Pilot, for the last time, bids men come aboard. So with Noah: "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." They all went in, and the Captain Himself lifted the gang-plank: "And the Lord shut him in." They went safely through the storm, while others perished.

Shall we come aboard this evening? I want to read a prayer for you. Please do not look at it. Please do not open your book until I tell you where it is. I want you, if you will, by God's grace, to pray this prayer for yourselves:

"Jesus, Saviour, pilot me,
Over life's tempestuous sea;
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rocks and treacherous shoal;
Chart and compass come from Thee:
Jesus, Saviour, pilot me!

"As a mother stills her child,
Thou canst hush the ocean wild;
Boisterous waves obey Thy will
When Thou say'st to them, 'Be still!'
Wondrous Sovereign of the sea,
Jesus, Saviour, pilot me!

"When at last I near the shore,
And the fearful breakers roar
'Twixt me and the peaceful rest,—
Then, while leaning on Thy breast,
May I hear Thee say to me,
'Fear not! I will pilot thee!'"

CO-OPERATION APPRECIATED

TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY

337 Jarvis Street, Toronto 2

December 31, 1947.

Miss
Hamilton, Ont.

Dear Miss

Yours of the 30th to hand today enclosing Money Order for \$50.00. We are pleased to send our receipt, which, you will notice, is dated inside 1947. These receipts do make a difference on income tax, and we are very careful on the matter. . . .

I wish you could visit us some time and see the work that we are doing. I am sure you would be impressed by the group of men and women which we have, and by the excellent spirit of work which they show. The recent acquisition of a men's residence and the prospect of a ladies' residence, together with the power which we have now received from the Government to grant theological degrees, make us feel that we are really going forward in this very important task. We appreciate the co-operation of our friends, by whose help alone this work is possible.

With best wishes for the coming year, I am
Yours in Christian service,

WGB:M

(Signed) W. GORDON BROWN, Dean.

THE NEW ITALIAN CONSTITUTION AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

By Dr. Virgilio Sommani

Moderator of the Waldensian Church of Italy

ONE must be in Italy to realize fully the supreme importance of the Vatican as a political organism and to understand how difficult it is to penetrate its extremely subtle diplomacy. Its mental processes are completely different from our own Protestant ones. In a very subtle article, published some time ago in the *Osservatore Romano* ("The Roman Observer", the official paper of the Vatican) this opinion was maintained: "We stand for freedom, but a freedom in all that is truly good, approved by God." (And up to here we also agree.) But the *Osservatore* thus proceeds: "In the world, the Catholic Apostolic Roman Church only is empowered to be entrusted with the truth, and the Pope is the Vicar of Christ, who alone can establish what is good and what is evil. It is therefore the duty of the Church not only vigilantly to protect the truth, but also to withstand whatever opposes it, in the same way that any crime must be withstood."

Now, we know what the Roman Church considers as truth is very far removed from what we ourselves consider as such, basing our judgment exclusively on the Word of God as interpreted by itself alone and not by other concepts.

How can so absolute a Church accept the idea of full religious freedom? There is nothing strange, for such a Church, in trying to include within the Constitution what gives it the possibility of having full religious freedom while curtailing it for others.

Such a Church does not consider it strange that in the new Italian Constitution there should be an Article 7 which hinders (without saying so) religious freedom, and an Article 14 which favours it, in order to make it appear that religious freedom does exist. Articles 3, 7, 31, quoted by the Foreign Office, belong to the draft of the Constitution, but they have been classified and approved of in a different way, both in number and contents, in the debates of the Constituent Assembly.

At the present time the conditions of religious freedom in Italy are these:

ARTICLE 1 of the Constitution asserts that the Italian State belongs to the Roman Catholic religion.

ARTICLE 7 states that the "Lateran Pacts" (signed by the Italian State and the Vatican on February 11, 1929) which also include the Concordat with the Italian State, are law in the present State.

The Lateran Pacts have given back to the Papacy the "temporal power", with all the material and sovereign benefits accruing thereto.

In the Lateran Pacts obligations exist on the part of the Italian State, which may compel it to limit freedom of conscience and of religion. Here are some examples:

ARTICLE 8:

"Public offences and injuries committed within Italian territory against the person of His Holiness the Pope, by speech, act or writing, are punished as are offences and injuries committed against the Head of the State."

Outside Italy, such a proviso appears to be just, since

no person should be offended, though his or her ideas be contrary to those of the offender.

But here in Italy the widest interpretation has been given to the word *person*: therefore to speak against the institution of the papacy is considered as an insult to the Pope; to criticize a papal speech is to injure the Pope's person, and so on.

ARTICLE 10 says:

"Those ecclesiastics who, by reason of their office, take part in the emanation of acts from the Holy See, outside the City of the Vatican, are not subject, because of them, to any impediment, investigation or molestation on the part of the Italian authorities."

This signifies an uncontrolled liberty of action; and yet the Moderator of the Waldensian Church, for instance, was often subjected to surveillance, wherever he went and whatever he did.

In the Concordat there are articles even more injurious to freedom of conscience and religion. The following declaration appears in ARTICLE 1:

"In consideration of the sacred character of the Eternal City, episcopal See of His Holiness the Pope, center of the Catholic World and goal of pilgrimages, the Italian Government will take care to prevent in Rome whatever may be in contrast with the character specified above."

There was a time when the Roman Catholic papers started a campaign to maintain that it was "indecent" to see "Protestant Churches" in Rome; "to print and sell Protestant papers and publications", etc.; this being in evident contrast with the sacred character of Catholic Rome.

ARTICLE 5 says:

"No ecclesiastic can be employed by, or remain in the employment, or in the office of, the Italian State or of public institutions depending from it, without the permission of the Diocesan Ordinary. If the permission be revoked, the ecclesiastic loses the faculty of continuing in the employment of the office undertaken. In any case, apostate or censured priests may not be employed or kept in a chair, an office or an employment in which they come into immediate contact with the public."

As may be seen, the above article absolutely tramples upon the freedom of conscience and allows the ruthless persecution of those priests who, for reasons of conscience or of thought, put themselves against their Church. If they convert themselves to the evangelical religion they cannot become pastors because this article forbids it. If they should become teachers they cannot remain so; nor can they even become beadles or porters, nor sell papers on the streets, since this brings them into "direct contact with the public"!

ARTICLE 29:

"The Italian State will revise its legislation in all that concerns ecclesiastical matters, to the end of reforming and completing it, in order to harmonize it with the principles which inspire the Treaty, concluded with the Holy See, and the present Concordat."

The above article is highly dangerous to religious freedom in Italy inasmuch as it subordinates the laws of the Italian State to those of the Vatican State. Protestantism, being a minority, the Italian State is constantly being tempted to satisfy the desires of the Vatican by sacrificing a minority, in order to gain other ends in exchange. Nowadays one does not understand in Italy that the State should particularly protect the equality

of the law towards minorities, since majorities, owing to their very quality, are able to protect themselves.

ARTICLE 36 states:

"Italy considers as the foundation and crowning act of public instruction the teaching of Christian doctrine according to the form accepted by Roman Catholic tradition."

The above article has, in the past, authorized attempts to oust Evangelical teachers from teaching. One must admit that the Italian Government did not lend itself to this. Still, in several places a notable preference towards Roman Catholic teachers was not wanting, as if not being a Roman Catholic was a demerit.

All these things considered, one may well ask what meaning a Constitution can have, which includes on the same subject articles both positive and negative.

First of all, it means that the Constitution reflects, in many parts, the situation of political compromise in which Italy now finds herself, and is wanting in a true spirit of freedom and tolerance. The Constitution has not yet been approved as a whole. If it is approved, including within itself the present Articles 7 and 14, it will be possible to say that in Italy no stable foundation exists as to freedom of conscience, and that such a freedom is left to the arbitrary power of succeeding Governments. Under Governments prevalently Roman Catholic, religious freedom may undergo severe restrictions. If instead, truly democratic men will enter the Government, religious freedom may be sufficiently observed, as it is today, owing to the presence of the Allies in Italy.

However, even now some want of equity persists towards members of different religions. Let this example suffice: while the Government provides the means to rebuild Roman Catholic Churches and their presbyteries, damaged or destroyed by the war, it gives nothing—absolutely nothing—for rebuilding Evangelical Churches. Every appeal made to obtain equality of treatment has had no practical result. And yet the Evangelical must, as well as the Roman Catholic, pay all the ordinary and extraordinary taxes imposed by the Government. But they do not gain therefrom, in various cases, the benefits enjoyed by the Roman Catholics.

In a general way, we are contrary to the State giving salaries to the clergy, and subsidizing religiously directed schools, and repairing edifices belonging to Churches, for we believe this should be done by the members of the various religions. But if the State does this for one religion, taking the means to do so from the public funds, then it is only right that it should do so for all.

GOSPEL WITNESS
PUBLICATIONS

(Reprints)

"The Priest, the Woman, and the Confessional," by Father Chiniquy	\$0.75
"The Antichrist—His Portrait and History," By Baron Porcelli50
"The Greatest Fight in the World," by C. H. Spurgeon, 64 pages25
"Blakeney's Roman Catholic Doctrines Examined", 316 pages	1.00
"Blakeney's Popery in Its Social Aspect," 312 pages	1.00

The Gospel Witness
130 Gerrard Street East
Toronto 2 - Canada

CALVIN ON ROMANS

Commentary on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans, by John Calvin, 576 pages plus indices, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1947, \$4.50 American, \$5.00 Canadian.

Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company have undertaken the tremendous task of republishing the complete works of the chief scholar of the Reformation, John Calvin. This is a major contribution to the bibliography of Evangelicals today. Too many of us have read about Calvin without reading Calvin; but as these works are re-issued, we may now follow his mind for ourselves.

In spite of the tremendous obligations of his life, Calvin found time to write commentaries on most of the Bible. Outstanding among these is his work on Paul's Letter to the Romans. This was put into English a century ago, and it is that edition with notes by the Rev. John Owen, then Vicar of Thrussington, Leicestershire, which is reprinted this time.

Key to the Bible

"When any one understands this Epistle, he has a passage opened to him to the understanding of the whole Scripture" (p. xxiv).

For a statement of Evangelical Christianity there is nothing like the Romans. Its truth is everywhere. It is particularly patent in Galatians. But in the Letter to the Romans the inspired Apostle works it out with inexorable logic in his grand style for all ages of believers.

When Calvin addressed himself to the task of expounding Romans he "thought that the chief excellency of an expounder consists in *lucid brevity*". Hence his work is not overly discursive nor does he quote endless authors who have gone before him, although he refers to others from time to time. Having earnestly sought the meaning of the epistle, with like earnestness he attempts to set forth that meaning in the clearest way possible.

Rome Then!

The errors of his day and of all days were about him and he shows how Paul contradicts them. Take this, for instance:

"It hence appears what just objects of ridicule are those dumb dogs, who render themselves conspicuous only by their mitre and their crook, and boast themselves to be the successors of the Apostles!" (p. 42).

The Reformers were never far from battle with that system which they regarded as anti-Christ, the Roman Catholic Church.

The Believer's Security

In reviewing such a work as this one looks for certain outstanding features of Calvinism. Here, for instance, is a good statement on the security of the believer.

"This declaration is clearly against the schoolmen, who idly talk and say, that no one is certain of final perseverance, except through the gift of special revelation, which they make to be very rare. By such a dogma the whole faith is destroyed, which is certainly nothing, except it extends to death and beyond death. But we, on the contrary, ought to feel confident, that he who has begun in us a good work, will carry it on until the day of the Lord Jesus" (p. 331).

Naturally Calvin rejoices in the doctrine of election

taught in such tremendous language in this Epistle. Our Editor, however, feels that he goes too far in his view of reprobation (e.g. p. 417).

"All Israel"

We were curious to find Calvin's view of Romans 11:26, "And so all Israel shall be saved":

"I extend the word Israel to all the people of God . . . This interpretation seems to me the most suitable because Paul intended here to set forth the completion of the kingdom of Christ, which is by no means to be confined to the Jews, but is to include the whole world" (p. 437).

One hesitates to criticize those who have been so bold as to bring out this tremendous work, in which we wish them every success, and which we commend to all serious students of the Bible. Minor criticism is that the proof reading of the Greek words which are used in the footnotes is rather poor. Major criticism is that the notes of the editor of Calvin's work are a hundred years old. If we must have an editor, why not have one who can review the best scholarship on Romans down to the present day?

Hallelujah for the Cross!

How Calvin rejoiced in the Cross! How we should rejoice! Perhaps the Apostle Paul's greatest statement of the matter is in the third chapter, beginning at the twenty-third verse. Here Calvin says:

"There is, perhaps, no passage in the whole Scripture which illustrates in a more striking manner the efficacy of his righteousness; for it shows that God's mercy is the efficient cause, that Christ with his blood is the meritorious cause, that the formal or instrumental cause is faith in the word, and that, moreover, the final cause is the glory of the divine justice and goodness" (p. 141).—W.G.B.

BOOK REVIEW

Palestine and the World's Drama, two shillings, 80 pages, 1947, by David Simpson.

This little book is a review from Australia of the world situation today in the light of the author's view of eschatology. As to the Palestine problem, he tries to show from Scripture that Palestine rightly belongs to the Jews. He goes so far as to say:

"Indeed the climax of the world's drama cannot be reached until this covenant is an accomplished fact, and the Jews are in Palestine as an independent nation" (p. 52).

Supposedly relative prophecy "deals with *all* Israel, that is the whole twelve tribes". This is the more remarkable when few Jews know what tribe they belong to, except, of course, the Cohens, whose name indicates priesthood and who presumably belong to the tribe of Levi! Our author's view in regard to Palestine is based on his interpretation of the Old Testament. We should like to suggest to him and all others like him that they look for their views in the New Testament; and particularly that they carefully study the New Testament fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies as they are set out, for example, in Paul's Letter to the Galatians.

We read that

"the prophetic calendar has been suspended to allow of Church dispensation, which is distinct entirely from all prophecy as regards time. The Church period must run its full course and be removed, before the Seventieth Week of Daniel's prophecy begins" (p. 64).

All those who hold this "parenthesis view" should study the work by Dr. Olswald T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*.—W.G.B.

News of Union Churches

Beulah Baptist Church, New Toronto

REV. S. WELLINGTON, pastor

There is a great influx of people in between Toronto and Hamilton, and almost the whole area is becoming heavily industrialized. We are glad for such causes as Beulah Baptist Church and others in that area where the Word of Life is being faithfully proclaimed. Pastor Wellington writes:

"By the grace of God, steady, healthy growth is being experienced in all departments of Beulah.

"The fellowship among the saints is a delight to the heart of the pastor who feels his hands upheld by them in prayer and practical support.

"God has been pleased to honour His Word with the salvation of souls during the past few weeks. Some of these recently have been baptized while others await the next opportunity thus to obey their Lord. Others, among the new-comers are uniting with the church by experience and by transfer of membership. Of special encouragement is the continued attendance at the services of a good number who have heretofore been strangers to us.

"Our church year ends with the close of the calendar year and our Treasurer tells us that we have enjoyed a banner year financially. We shall need all the money we can obtain, however, inasmuch as we, like our good sister-church in Long Branch, are finding our present facilities inadequate to meet the growing opportunities."

Lachute Baptist Church

REV. W. H. BRITTON

"We had the joy of baptizing two on a recent Sunday, one a young married lady and the other a French-Canadian young man who took his stand for Christ some months ago.

"Our Bible School is a source of real encouragement. We have had to discontinue our meetings in the outlying districts pretty well although we hold a meeting every now and then in order to maintain the interest.

"The people here are proud to be part of our great Union family and count it a happy privilege to share in a prayerful and practical way, the responsibilities of the ever-widening ministry of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches and Toronto Baptist Seminary."

Protestants in Austria number 342,436 at present, including an estimated 70,000 displaced persons, according to a report made public by the High Consistory of the Evangelical Church in Austria. The report disclosed that attendance at Protestant religious services has increased by 50 per cent. during the past year.

—*Watchman-Examiner.*

BOOKS AND BOOKLETS BY DR. T. T. SHIELDS

"Other Little Ships"	\$2.00
Beautifully bound in blue cloth with gilt letters, 280 pages.	
"The Plot That Failed"	2.00
Special Illustrated Number of Sept. 2825
"Russellism or Rutherfordism", 71 pages25
"The Papacy in the Light of Scripture", 26 pages25
"The Oxford Group Analyzed"05
"Does Killed in Action Mean Gone to Heaven?"05
"The Christian Attitude Toward Amusements"05
"The God of All Comfort"05

The Gospel Witness
130 Gerrard Street East
Toronto 2 - Canada

Among Ourselves

Devoted to Activities of Former and Present Students of TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY

By W. Gordon Brown, Dean

The Seminary family expresses its sincere sympathy to Professor W. S. Whitcombe and Professor A. C. Whitcombe and their families in the passing of Mrs. Alfred Whitcombe, Sr., on January 2nd.

Rev. Grahame M. Reeve left Monday the 5th for Vancouver, where he will be pastor of Collingwood Baptist Church and part-time teacher in Northwest Baptist Bible College, Port Coquitlam. A number of the Alumni, Rev. Stanley Wellington, Chairman, tendered Mr. and Mrs. Reeve a farewell luncheon on the 5th at the Seminary, expressing their good wishes both in words and in a gift of money.

We are happy to announce the arrival from Switzerland of M. Maurice Boillat, who comes as a student and as our third tutor in French. French, of course, is his native language, but he also speaks German. After school work in Switzerland and three months in England, he has a fair command of English also. He will work with M. Guy Appéré and Mr. Wilfred Bauman, B.A., under Prof. W. S. Whitcombe in our French Department.

The thanks of the Seminary is expressed to a dealer in second-hand furniture who anonymously donated a radio, clock, etc., to our men's residence; also to Mr. J. Coghill for one of his oil paintings. The residence is now fully occupied, although improvements are still under way. Our greatest need in furniture is for drapes, small bookshelves, library tables, or office desks and some double-decker beds.

Reviews of books are from time to time published in this magazine. These and others may be purchased at the Seminary Book Store, Miss A. Sewell Steward. In fact, Miss Sewell would be glad to handle any orders for religious books and pamphlets, birthday cards, prizes for Juniors and Bible Schools, etc.

Miss Margaret McCreadie the first of November began work with *La Bonne Nouvelle*, under Rev. Henri Lanctin, Moncton, N.B. For the past two months she has been filling in here and there, but is now beginning her real work as a deaconess. Mr. Lanctin says: "We are certainly very glad to have her, and she has come at a time when she has been a real God-send. I do not know what we would have done without her. As you may understand, the work is very pressing, the field is large and the difficulties are many."

EVANGELICAL OR INFIDEL

From the liberality which says everybody is right, from the charity which forbids you to say anybody is wrong, from the peace which is bought at the expense of truth; may the good Lord deliver you! I speak for myself. I find no resting place between downright Evangelical Christianity and downright infidelity, whatever others may find. . . . I can see consistency in the full maintenance of Evangelical truth; but as to the middle course between the two . . . I cannot see it, and I say so plainly. Let it be called illiberal and uncharitable. I can hear God's voice nowhere but in the Bible, and I can see no salvation for sinners in the Bible excepting through Jesus Christ; in Him I see abundance; out of Him I see none.

—BISHOP RYLE

SUBSCRIBE FOR
THE GOSPEL WITNESS
\$2.00 per year

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 12 First Quarter Lesson 3 January 18, 1948

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

GOD PROVIDES FOR ELIJAH

Lesson Text: 1 Kings 17:1-16.

Golden Text: "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing."
—Psalm 34:10.

I. Provision at Cherith: verses 1-7.

Jeroboam persisted in his evil and idolatrous practices until his death about the year 956 B.C. (1 Kings 13:33, 34; 14:19, 20). His son Nadab also did evil in the sight of God, walking in the ways of his father until he was slain by a conspirator named Baasha, who then ruled in his stead (1 Kings 15:25-31). Through the prophet Jehu the Lord spoke against Baasha, who had failed to please Him when exalted to be ruler of the people (1 Kings 16:1-7). Elah his son reigned for two years, and was succeeded by Zimri his servant and captain of the chariots, whose brief reign was marked by conspiracy and bloodshed (1 Kings 16:8-20). Omri, the captain of Zimri's army, was the next king, remembered only for the fact that he established Samaria as the capital of Israel, the northern kingdom (1 Kings 16:21-27). Omri was succeeded by his son Ahab (1 Kings 16:28). Not one of these kings walked in the ways of the Lord.

Of Ahab the King of Israel it is said that he "did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him" (1 Kings 16:30). His sin was greater even than that of Jeroboam (1 Kings 14:9), and he added to his wickedness by marrying a heathen princess Jezebel, an evil-hearted idolatrous woman (Exod. 34:12-16; 1 Kings 16:31; 21:25). The Lord had determined to bring a judgment of drought upon Israel, inasmuch as they had failed to regard his specific warning against serving other gods (Deut. 11:16, 17). This discipline was necessary in order to bring the people back to God.

Elijah, also called Elias (Matt. 11:14; 16:14; 17:3; John 1:23), was given the task of announcing the Lord's sentence of drought. Very little is known concerning Elijah the Tishbite. It is probable that he came from Tishbeh, in the Gilead region east of the Jordan. He was a rugged, fearless prophet (Luke 1:17). Elijah was given courage to stand before the king because he had already taken his stand before the Lord God of Israel (Exod. 8:20; 1 Kings 18:15; 2 Kings 3:14; 5:16). It is a great thing to realize that our lives are lived before God; it is to Him that we are responsible for all that we think, say and do (Matt. 12:36; Rom. 14:12; 1 Pet. 4:5, 6).

Elijah was a man of faith. He believed implicitly the word which the Lord had commanded him to deliver. He believed the fact, because he believed the word. This is the essence of faith (Matt. 7:7; 21:22; Heb. 11:1, 6). The servants of the Lord in these days need similar faith in the revealed Word of God (Matt. 17:19, 20; 21:21; Mk. 11:22, 23).

Elijah was also a man of prayer; he prayed earnestly that it should not rain (Jas. 5:17). Possibly the Lord's will to bring chastening was revealed to Elijah as he prayed for the people. Chastening is grievous at the time, but afterward it brings blessing to those who are exercised thereby (Deut. 8:5, 16; Jer. 24:5-7; Heb. 12:5-11).

The Lord protected Elijah from the wrath of the king. He is able to guide and guard those who are placed in danger because of their obedience to Him (Psa. 27:5; 31:20; 34:7; Matt. 10:28-32).

The Lord also made miraculous provision for Elijah's need of food, using His own messengers (Matt. 6:25-34). The raven was regarded as an unclean bird, but on this occasion it was the chosen instrument of the Lord (Gen. 8:7; Lev. 11:13-15; Acts 10:9-15).

The brook Cherith finally dried up. Elijah would not expect to escape the drought and barrenness brought on in accordance with his own prophecy. The Lord frequently tests those of His servants whom He would greatly use (Matt. 4:1; Lk. 22:31, 32). Elijah must be willing to endure the spiritual death, if he would be used to bring revival showers to Israel. A man must be able to stand alone. Moses spent weary years in the backside of the desert before he was ready to lead the Israelites out of Egypt (Exod. 3:1).

II. Provision at Zarephath: verses 8-16.

The Lord had not forgotten His faithful prophet (Psa. 34:9, 10; Prov. 10:3). He commanded him to go to Zarephath, or Sarepta, in the country of the Sidonians from which Jezebel had come (1 Kings 16:31). To the natural eye the prospects of food for the prophet were very dim (1 Cor. 1:27-29). The famine raged in Zarephath, and a widow could not be expected to support him comfortably. But Elijah was a man of faith, and he obeyed the word of the Lord. Had Elijah not been found in the place of the Lord's appointment, he would have lost out, for God had said, "I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." It pays to obey the Lord without questioning, without murmuring and without delaying.

If Elijah's stay in Zarephath was a test for him, it was also a test for the widow. Her condition was desperate. She was asked to bake a cake for the Lord's servant first, in order that her faith might be proved (Deut. 8:2; John 6:6). But she stood the test, and she believed the word of the Lord as it had been spoken by Elijah. Our Lord paid high tribute to the woman's faith (Luke 4:25, 26).

Because the widow was willing to put God first, and against all odds to obey His word, the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail. God proved once more His faithfulness to those who trust Him (Josh. 21:45; 23:14; Psa. 71:15, 16; 89:1, 2). The widow, her son and Elijah lived upon the bountiful provision which the Lord had made. There is always bread enough and to spare in the Father's house; He abundantly satisfies the need of His children who look to Him in obedient trust (Psa. 34:10; 63:5; 65:4; 81:13-16).

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Jan. 12—The Accession of Ahab	1 Kings 16:28-34.
Jan. 13—The Prophet Announcing Drought	1 Kings 17:1-7.
Jan. 14—The Prophet Announcing Plenty	1 Kings 17:8-16.
Jan. 15—The Prophet Announcing Life	1 Kings 17:17-24.
Jan. 16—Elijah, the Prophet of God	Luke 4:16-30.
Jan. 17—Elijah, the Man of Prayer	Jas. 5:13-20.
Jan. 18—God Provides for His Own	Psa. 34.

SUGGESTED HYMNS

God moves in a mysterious way. A wonderful Saviour is Jesus my Lord. He leadeth me! Oh, blessed thought! Am I a soldier of the cross? Precious promise God hath given. There shall be showers of blessing.

THE HOMEGOING OF MRS. ALFRED WHITCOMBE, SR.

AFTER a lengthy illness, there passed to be with Christ, "which is far better", one of God's saints, Mrs. Alfred Whitcombe, Sr. She leaves to mourn her loss her companion of almost a half century, and two sons, Rev. A. C. Whitcombe of Shenstone Church, Brantford, and Professor in Toronto Baptist Seminary, and Rev. W. S. Whitcombe, also of the Seminary staff and associate editor of THE GOSPEL WITNESS. Dr. Shields conducted the service in Greenway Hall last Monday, assisted by Rev. H. C. Slade, associate pastor of Jarvis Street, and Rev. John Boyd of Sudbury.

While it is not possible individually to acknowledge the many expressions of sympathy which the family received during the illness and death of Mother, in behalf of my Father, Brother and myself, I should like to express to all the kind friends our sincere appreciation in as personal a way as is possible through the medium of these pages.—W. S. WHITCOMBE.

"WHY"

"The Canadian Protestant League"

By Dr. J. B. Rowell, Rev. W. S. Whitcombe
and Dr. T. T. Shields

40 pages, designed for circulation by League
Members. Send for sample copy. If con-
venient enclose 3-cent stamp for postage.

130 Gerrard St. East

Toronto 2, Canada

SPECIAL OFFER

**To New Subscribers of The Gospel Witness
Both Blakeney books for the price of one, \$1.00**

This means THE GOSPEL WITNESS
and THE BLAKENEY BOOKS for \$3.00

OR

**THE GOSPEL WITNESS, including
Father Chiniquy's great book, "The
Priest, the Woman and the Con-
fessional", as a premium,**

FOR ONLY \$2.00

The titles of the Blakeney Books are:—

Book No. 1—MANUAL OF ROMISH CONTROVERSY
(An Exposure of Roman Catholic Doctrine)

Book No. 2—POPERY IN ITS SOCIAL ASPECT
(How Romanism Affects Governments and Society in General)

Over 3,000 Blakeney Books Sold To Date

Your subscription may be dated from the first installment
of the series on THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

USE THIS HANDY ORDER FORM

SPECIAL ORDER FORM FOR NEW SUBSCRIBERS ONLY

THE GOSPEL WITNESS,
130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2.

Please send me the **FIRST OFFER** of a year's subscription to THE GOSPEL

WITNESS with the two Blakeney Books at _____ **\$3.00**

Please send me the **SECOND OFFER** of a year's subscription of THE
GOSPEL WITNESS with a free copy of "The Priest, The Woman and the

Confessional" at _____ **\$2.00**

Name _____

Address _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____