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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"The Promise That He (Abraham) Should Be the Heir of The World"

What Is Meant by Abraham's Being "Heir", not of PALESTINE,
But of "THE WORLD"?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, July 25th, 1948
(Electrically Reported)

"For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham,
or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith."
—Romans 4:13.

IN THE Province of Alberta, not very many miles from Edmonton, a farmer and his wife, who had come to this country from a foreign land, and who had received the land upon which they lived, as a free gift, on condition that they cultivate it, lived there for a number of years. They had a house, not very large, not particularly comfortable, or convenient. But they eked out a living of some sort. They were not wealthy. They had to go without a great many things which they desired.

Later someone, who knew a little bit more about the land in that neighbourhood, than did the owners, sought permission to explore its hidden wealth. And so there was developed the Leduc Oil Fields. These people who had been living in comparative squalor for many years discovered that they had been living above a lake of wealth, of which they had had no knowledge.

There are many of the Lord's people like that. They are His; they have entered into the possession of an inheritance purchased for them, freely given to them of God's grace; but they have no idea of the enormous wealth which is really theirs, if they would take advantage of that which God has laid up for them that love Him.

I think it is part of the true pastor's duty not only to endeavour to lead the unsaved to Christ—that is his first duty, of course,—but after they have received Christ, and are really His children, to let them know

something of the unsearchable riches of Christ. How many of the Lord's dear children live on the borderline of spiritual destitution! They have just enough to get on with, but they don't enjoy their religion. They do not know how to revel in the luxuries of grace, because they think they have been given little more than a piece of dry land that is cultivated with much difficulty.

What would you do if you had a farm like those people at Leduc? When they really discovered their riches, reporters gathered around them; and asked this good woman, the wife, what they were going to do with their newly-found wealth, which was to pour in upon them thousands of dollars a week. "Oh," she said, "I am going to have a better house. I hope to have some of the comforts and conveniences which I have so long desired, but which have been denied me." She was going to take advantage, so far as her judgment would permit, of the wealth which had been theirs for twenty years, without their knowing it.

I have seen Christian people like that,—people who have lived far below their privileges. One could not doubt that they were Christians. And then something has happened to them. God, by His Spirit, showed them something more of what it means to be a Christian. And we have seen them living in a new house, metaphorically, wearing new clothes, enjoying richer food, breathing a purer atmosphere, living as children of the King as they ought to have lived for many a year.

It is with such a purpose I address you this evening, to try to lead you to a little better understanding of the fulness of God's promises, which are called in the Scripture, "the exceeding great and precious promises"—something of the enormous riches bequeathed to us in the last will and testament of the Lover of our souls.

And we go back to Abraham, and I will tell you why I have long been afraid of Dispensationalism and Dispensationalists—more afraid of the "ism" than the "ists". If it be true that God is the same, and that His years do not fail, if from everlasting to everlasting He is God, if His holy nature has always been the same from all eternity, then His attitude toward sin has always been the same, and His attitude toward the sinner has always been the same. He always hated the sin; He always loved the sinner. And whatever is revealed as a necessity to salvation in the New Testament, once you have postulated the immutability of Deity, by an inexorable logic, you are forced to the conclusion that the same things were necessary to salvation of the Old Testament saints. Of course, the fact is, the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world; and as we in this dispensation of light and grace, go back to the cross, to the empty grave, to the opened heavens, so did they, who lived on the other side of the cross;—look forward by faith to it:—not as clearly as now we see it, perhaps only dimly apprehending the glory, for it is said of the prophets to whom it was revealed: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost, sent down from heaven; which things the angels desired to look into." The Old Testament says they looked forward to the day when Messiah should come, and seeing the promises afar off, they were persuaded of them, and embraced them. They died in the same hope which we, the New Testament believers, are now permitted to cherish—the promise of Abraham, the promise that he should be "heir" of the world.

What discussions there are about what people are pleased to call "the sign of the fig tree"! What talk about the return of the Jews to Palestine,—some people have even addressed Governments, telling them that God has ordained that Palestine be given to the Jews, and they had better give it to them, or look out! making endless trouble for statesmen who are at their wits' end to begin with.

I.

WHAT IS THE PROMISE OF ABRAHAM? How did it begin? God came to Abraham, and *promised him the impossible*. He and his wife were at an age when parentage had become by every known natural law, an absolute impossibility. Abraham had no child, and yet God said to him, that his "seed" should be as numerous as the stars of heaven, and as the sands upon the seashore. Abraham said, "How can it be, for I have not a son; I am childless." But God said, "It shall be." And He Who is the Source of all life, made promise to Abraham; and the scripture says, *Abraham believed God*,—not only the word of God, not only the particular

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promise of God—Abraham believed *God!* That is to say, Abraham, by the Holy Spirit, identified God as God. His faith enthroned Him above all worlds, and above all laws. He said, "It is too much for me, but if God says it, it must be so, and I believe God."

That is the meaning of the scripture in the New Testament: "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." That is to say, "He that cometh to God" must come to Him as God!—What sort of god is yours? "He that cometh to God, must believe that He is (God)", and because He is God He "is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."

This promise began by *necessitating Abraham's belief in the supernatural*. God promised him something that was not natural—promised him something that was naturally impossible.

What is Christianity? It is a religion of supernaturalism. It is a revelation of the transcendent Personal God manifesting Himself through Jesus Christ, as One Who, being the Source of all laws, can suspend all laws, can harmonize all laws, and bring to pass that which no other power than the power of God could ever effect. That is where we part company with Modernism. Modernism says, "I will do this. I . . . this." Evangelicalism says, "God"! In the beginning — "God"! And in the end "God"! And all between, "God"! That is where our hope is. Abraham believed God,—believed His promise that he should have a son.

Then he was promised, not only that he should have a "seed", but that *he should have a numerous "seed"*. His seed should be as "the dust of the earth", as the "stars in the sky, innumerable". In passing, let me ask you, was that ever fulfilled to Abraham? No; not in any physical sense. The Jews have never been a prolific race. The children of Abraham, after the flesh, are

not numerous, by descent through Isaac and Jacob. The Arabs, of course, are the children of Abraham, through Ishmael. But the promise that Abraham should have a "seed" as numerous as the stars has never been fulfilled in history, in respect to the seed of Abraham after the flesh. The Jews were so terribly decimated during the last war that I suppose to-day, according to statistics, there are probably scarcely more Jews in the world than the population of Canada. There were said to be, before the war, something like twenty millions. Perhaps there are not more than twelve millions left—no one knows exactly how many there are. But *God must have meant something more than that*, because so far that has never been fulfilled; nor does there seem to be any prospect of its fulfilment.

Not only so: for Abraham was promised not only a numerous seed, but that he should be *the father of many nations*. Now don't quarrel with me,—you need not believe what I say, if you do not find it scripturally established. I noticed in turning the pages of my Bible just now, the scripture: "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" There are some people so prejudiced that they will not hear the truth at all.

But now a word to our British-Israel friends,—I do not know whether there are any here this evening, or not—but when I said just now that Abraham is to be the father of many nations, perhaps, if there is one here, you said, "Aha! he is going to get into trouble there. That is just exactly what we contend, that the British are the descendants of Abraham." I am not going to argue with you about that. I think it is no healthier to have ten tribes on the brain, than to have two, or to have two, than to have ten. I have them all in my heart, but none on the brain. But if you tell me that that is what is meant by "the father of many nations", I must anticipate my later exposition in reference when I say that the contention that he is "heir of the world" as "the father of many nations", at best, in view of present prospects, is rather a remote probability. I cannot see any sign of the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham on the natural plane.

But I remind you, dear friends, that *the promise was not given on the natural plane, but on the supernatural*. Isaac was supernaturally born. His birth was a miracle. Explain it? You cannot explain it. It is not our duty to explain miracles, but to proclaim them. That is what the Bible says. Had there been men of science in those days, had they been consulted on this matter of religion, I know what they would have said. They would have said, "Abraham, you are a fool for your pains. That is all. We tell you that this thing for which you hope is an impossibility. It never has been, and it never can be. Why believe in the impossible?" I think Abraham would have said, "Quite true." Had there been microscopes, and laboratories, and all the rest of it, then I think he would have said, "Were I concerned in a laboratory-tested fulfilment of that promise I would not believe it either; but I believe God! That is why I believe it. You wait and see."

Whatever may be involved in the numerous seed, and the fatherhood of nations, it is all on the supernatural plane, and never on the natural. I grant you that these theories I oppose are most conducive to human pride. Persecuted as they have been, there are no prouder people in the world than the Jews, because

they certainly imagine at least their own superiority. I am a Britisher, through and through. Next to being a Britisher I think I could be an American. Our British-Israel friends tell us that our "Yankee" friends are the tribe of Manasseh, and that we are the rest. Is not that a lovely feeling? Is it not enough to make us strut around and say, "We are the people!" What people? Oh, we are superiorly born; we belong to a superior race! That is as bad as Hitler. I am a Britisher; but I must admit that some of the meanest people I have ever known were Englishmen. And some of them were Scotch, and not a few were Irish, and some Canadians.

My dear friends, the promises of God do not move on that natural plane at all. The promise to Abraham was not a promise of mere land—Oh, incidently it was, and intermediately, a promise that was conditional. But every condition has been violated a hundred times.

I do not know why some of my Millennial friends should be so tremendously interested in the establishment of the Jews in Palestine. Would you want to go and live there just now? "No thank you," I think you will say. Do you know that Lenin was a Jew? Trotzky was a Jew! I am not an anti-Semite. I hate it. But if the Jews continue to behave as they are behaving now, we shall all be anti-Semites, one of these days. There is nothing in the world anywhere worse than their present conduct. They have turned upon the nation that for centuries has been their best friend. She stood between them and destruction times without number—but it is all as nothing to them now. There are Rabbis in this city preaching that doctrine, too. They might easily be better employed. No, my dear friends, God's promises to His people, through Abraham, were of a different character altogether.

II.

NOW THE PROMISE THAT HE SHOULD BE THE "HEIR OF THE WORLD", WAS NOT TO ABRAHAM, OR TO HIS SEED, THROUGH THE LAW, BUT THROUGH THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH. That is to say, the promise to Abraham and his seed was not on natural grounds. Four hundred and thirty years before the law, "To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

I should not like to say that Abraham beheld the Lamb of God in his day as clearly as we do now; but that he saw Him, there is no doubt, for Jesus said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." Jehovah of the Old Testament is the Jesus of the New.

Was it when God made promise to Abraham and his seed that Abraham saw Christ's day, and rejoiced, and was glad? The particular point of time, we do not know: we only know that he saw Christ somehow; and that before the law was given by Moses—"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"—but before the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came to Abraham: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed;" and

Abraham believed the gospel, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Now the promises made to Abraham were made to Abraham through Christ. I desire most earnestly that you should see that! There is no promise of mercy or of grace in the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, to anyone save through Christ. There are many promises to the wicked; many predictions of judgment, and of the wrath to come. But there is no grace; there is no mercy apart from Christ. It was He of Whom we read in the book of Job, Who said: "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom. For how many soever be the promises of God, in him is the yea: wherefore also through him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us" (R.V.).

The promises that were made to Abraham were made to Abraham through Christ; and then that there might be no mistake it is said, that it was confirmed of God in Christ four hundred and thirty years before Sinai "was on a smoke", and thunders and lightning shook the earth. That promise was given and confirmed to Abraham in Christ. Abraham believed God, as everyone must believe God, as He is revealed in Christ. There is no other way of knowing God save through Christ. I have reminded you many times, directly and indirectly, that the revelation of God in nature, is a revelation of God through Christ; for the reason that, "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made". He is the One and only Mediator between God and man, and every promise that God has ever made of mercy and grace to a bankrupt race, has been made on the strength of all that Christ is, and all that He has promised to do, even as the scripture saith, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God . . . Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." It was the obedience which Christ wrought at the cross, becoming obedient unto death, that wrought out a righteousness for us.

The promise that he should be heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or his seed, through the law. You remember I read to you in that chapter in Galatians, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them". There was nothing but curses in the law! "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us"; hence the promise to Abraham, and through Abraham to us, is in Christ. "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Believers are the children of the promise. We have been supernaturally born: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood" the union of bloods—"nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God". If you are a Christian, you are a Christian not because you accepted Christ: that was a necessary outward expression of the inward operation of His energizing will:—if you are a Christian you are so because God willed that you should be. You remember

the great high-priestly prayer of our Lord, (read it before you go to bed to-night) the seventeenth chapter of John. Take your pencil or pen and underline it. Listen to Him praying, "Father I will—I will—I will—that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." That is my only hope that I shall ever get to heaven. I should change my mind to-morrow, if He had not willed it. I could not keep on, and keep on keeping on, neither could you; but He has said that He has willed.

"He wills that I should holy be:
What can withstand His will?
The counsel of His grace is me,
He surely will fulfil."

So you see, dear friends, from the beginning right through to the end, if we are Christians, it is the power, the sanctifying power of the will, of our God that has made us heirs of the promise with Abraham. Are you of faith, do you believe, do you really believe? Do you really believe that your sins were laid on Christ, and that you have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace? If you thus believe, then, brethren, we, as many as are of faith, are the children of Abraham.

III.

That being so, then WE ARE HEIRS, HEIRS OF WHAT? Was Abraham, are we his children, heirs of the little land of Palestine? Will you forgive me if I seem almost impatient. I do sometimes feel impatient with the littleness, the segmentary, the fragmentary, character of certain interpretation of the word of God, and the purposes of grace.

I do not know that I ever told you, perhaps I did, but some years ago I was in New York, and they asked me to preach on the Second Advent. I said, "Now that is a very big subject, and I know the predilections of some of you. I know how sensitive you are. Suppose we leave that matter for the discussion of some experts. I do not want to offend you." "Oh, no!—no!—no! we shall not be offended. You preach on that." I said, "I will on one condition: To-morrow night I won't stand in the pulpit. I will come down in front, and I will be a professor, and you shall be students in my class. You may ask me any questions you like, and I shall do my best to answer them."

The next night there was a gentleman from Dr. Haldeman's Church present. I had preached for Dr. Haldeman during his lifetime but never met him personally. I suppose he was the most outstanding exponent of Premillennarianism in the United States. Of course, this man had imbibed it all. So he turned to a few passages, talked about God giving Christ the throne of his father David; and proceeded to tell us how the Jews were to flock back to Jerusalem; how the temple was to be rebuilt; how the bloody sacrifices were to be resumed, restored. Then Christ was to come in Person, and from Jerusalem He was to reign over the earth for a thousand years.

"Now" he said, "what have you to say to that?" I said, "Do you find that picture very attractive?" "I certainly do." "I do not at all," I said. "I know I am under the Stars and Stripes, and I mention to-night a matter that I have never before mentioned publicly"—

and I had not up to that time. I said, "I am a Britisher, and I refer to a matter of which we are all thoroughly ashamed. There was a man who sat on the throne of the greatest Empire the world has ever known. He was the titular head of nearly six hundred millions of people. And for the illicit love of a woman he laid aside his crown and sceptre, and stepped down from the throne. Nobody knew what to do with him. At last he was appointed Governor of a little Island, called Nassau, among the West Indian Islands." I said, "What a step down for the ruler of the greatest Empire ever known to man, to become Governor of a little bit of an Island. Now Christ 'ascended up on high (and) led captivity captive'. The gates swung wide to welcome the returning Conqueror. And He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, having said before His ascension, 'All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations.' Now do you mean to tell me that the Lord of Glory, the Emperor of all worlds, will condescend to a material throne in a little city in Palestine?"

Can you think of anything more absurd? I am positive it is not in the Book. But my text says the promise to Abraham was that he should be heir, not of Palestine, but "*heir of the world*". What can that mean?

I should like to ask Abraham what he thought it meant. The Lord came to him and said, "Abraham this promise I give unto you will not be given unto you in the days of your flesh. You will be gathered to your fathers, and your seed will go down into a foreign land, into the land of Egypt, and be in bondage four hundred years; and after that I will visit them."

What does the New Testament say of these patriarchs of the Old Testament? What does it say of Abraham? Abraham had a bigger idea of the promises of God than some of his present-day protagonists! "By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise." Why? "He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." That was Abraham's view. "Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised." Now listen: "Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable." Not "There shall spring", but even at that time there had already sprung from him, who had been as good as dead as many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable."

Who were they? His seed according to the flesh? No! Never! That was never true of them. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them and embraced them, and confessed"—"We are waiting for the Millennium. We are going to live in the Millennium." They did not so speak. They confessed that they were "strangers and pilgrims on the earth". They said, "We don't belong here. This sin-cursed earth is not our place." They confessed it: "They that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly. Wherefore

God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." Heirs of the world! Do you mean to say that all Christians are heirs of the world? Christ is "Heir of all things". "All things are yours, whether it be Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Heirs of the world, are we!

But someone says, "I don't want it". Neither do I, in its present state.

A good friend who had been to Germany said that if every man in Germany were to do nothing else from now on for the next fifty years he could not clear up the rubble in the city of Cologne alone. It is a badly battered world, is it not? A friend is here this evening who used to be with us, and has just returned from England. She said to me last night, "The dear old land is terribly scarred, but it is as beautiful as ever." Oh, yes; of course it is. There are beauty spots. But my dear friends, you would have a lot of trouble taking care of it if you had the world given to you.

Heir of the world! You go looking for a house, and you see some place almost falling to pieces. You look in, and the landlord says, "Well, we shall have to re-decorate. We shall have to put in a new floor, improve the conveniences, and so on." "Will you do that?" "Oh, well, yes; I suppose, in conscience I shall have to do something to make it habitable." He says to himself, "I should not like to live there myself, even though I own it."

The great Landlord looks at this world. Do you think He is going to give it to His people just as it is? Nor do I believe He will lease it to us subject to its present defects, for a thousand years. I do not. I do not believe He ever meant to. And yet we are heirs of the world. What sort of world? Not the world as it now is. Did I not remind you last week that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. . . . waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body". The whole world is to share in the regeneration, which is already yours and mine. And in that same passage in the eighth chapter of Romans, the Spirit of God, through Paul says, "And not only they"—that is the people of the world generally, but we, ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, "groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body". But do you want this world, as it is just now? No; I have told you I have a garden. It is not much of a garden. I have a lot of trees, and very few flowers, because you can't have colour without sunshine, and I love the trees. And I have a man come to look after my lawn, because I can't do it myself. I said to him one day, "Now Mike, don't wait for me to tell you. As soon as you see a weed in that lawn, get down on your knees and get it out". He spent some hours taking out the weeds; but only to-day when I walked through the garden, I said, "There is some grass here, but where did those weeds come from?" There they were: "Thorns also and (briars) shall it bring forth to thee". The earth is cursed for our sake. In Genesis we read, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake". If we get a living out of it, it is with the sweat of our brows. It is hard work. Weeds and all the rest of it! But you know in that new world the lion shall eat straw like an ox,—but that is not in the millennium. No; the lion must be changed in nature. The whole created order would

have to be regenerated before those things could become true. And so they will be. Heir of the righteousness which is by faith. What does that mean? Listen: "We, according to His promise look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness". Oh, how wonderful it will be when this old earth is completely redeemed from the curse, and made partakers of the regenerating grace of God! When God's ideal of Paradise is actually and literally fulfilled in the resurrection, when spiritual men and women with spiritual bodies, and no more tendency to sin, shall live under a new heaven and upon a new earth.

If you picked up some poor little wretch from the gutter, a boy or a girl, in rags and tatters, as dirty as the streets, and you were to say, "Where do you live?" "Oh, I have not any home." "Well I must find you one." I think you would take him, or her, home, to be washed and clothed with new garments. And after you had changed his clothes what would you do? I heard a painter say once, when I said, "Could you paint so and so?" "Yes, but it would not be of any use." I said, "Why". "Because the new paint would laugh at the old. The contrast would be so great it would spoil it. Do it all or none, where all is exposed to view."

What would you do with your little urchin of the street, dressed up like a prince or a princess? Would you not try to put him in a respectable home, and not in a pig-sty. Our gracious God, clothing us with garments of righteousness, and putting His Spirit within us, making us partakers of the divine nature, through the exceeding great and precious promises, says, "I am going to prepare a world that will be fit for you. I have made you heirs of the world." Some day we shall have a regenerated, earth, free from all sin and all tendency to sin, free of all corruption of any kind.

What about the "city"? They "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God". Once I was in Hyde Park in London, on one of my numerous visits, I forget whether it was during the first war, or not. If you want to hear real oratory, if you want to learn public speaking, go to Hyde Park. They know how to speak. There was a man there speaking to an enormous audience. And they were listening with interest, whether they believed what he said, or not; for he said what he had to say well. He could command anyone's attention. Of course, he was discussing the economic conditions of the world, London, and in particular the slums, and all the rest of it, like they do at religious conventions. Then he prescribed a remedy.

When he got to a certain point there was a woman, a little back from his rostrum, who said, "Mr. Speaker, may I ask you a question or two?" "You may," he said, "but if you would like to speak, come up here. I will give you my place." I wondered what she would do. She walked up and stood up on whatever it was there, complimented the speaker, and said how much she had enjoyed many things that he had said. "But when you talk about reforming and regenerating London, cleansing all the slums, and giving everybody good dinners, good clothes, and good houses, and eliminating every objectionable thing from human life, it seems to me, sir, it is rather an impossible programme. I believe we need just such a city, and even a better city than you have described, and I believe we are going to have it. But we shall not get it your way. It is not coming from down here." Then she quoted with marvellous effect,

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

"And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

"And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

"Sir", she said, "and friends, that glorious day is coming, but it won't come my friend's way. It will come only as every good and every perfect gift comes, down from God out of heaven". As our friend, Dr. Pethingill says, "Keep looking up!" "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth."

Let us pray:

O Lord, we thank Thee for the present enjoyment of many of Thy good gifts. We thank Thee that so many have tasted already that the Lord is gracious. And if there were nothing more for us than that which Thou hast given, then we should have to praise Thee for ever. But we look forward to the day when Thou shalt serve the later courses in Thy banquetting hall, when we shall be constrained to say, as they did when Thou didst first manifest Thy glory: Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. For the path of the just that shineth more and more unto the perfect day, we thank Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Now let us sing of that future of glory:

Jerusalem the golden!
With milk and honey blest;
Beneath thy contemplation
Sink heart and voice opprest.
I know not, oh, I know not
What holy joys are there;
What radiancy of glory,
What bliss beyond compare.

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The Gospel Witness

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They stand, those halls of Zion,
 All jubilant with song,
 And bright with many an angel,
 And all the martyr-throng.
 There is the throne of David;
 And there, from toil released,
 The shout of them that triumph
 The song of them that feast.

O one, O only mansion!
 O Paradise of joy,
 Where tears are ever banished,
 And smiles have no alloy!
 The Cross is all thy splendour,
 The Crucified thy praise;
 His laud and benediction
 Thy ransomed people raise.

And they who, with their Leader,
 Have conquered in the fight,
 For ever and for ever
 Are clad in robes of white.
 O land that see'st no sorrow!
 O state that fear'st no strife;
 O royal land of flowers!
 O realm and home of life!

O sweet and blessed country!
 The home of God's elect:
 O sweet and blessed country
 That eager hearts expect!
 Jesus, in mercy bring us
 To that dear land of rest;
 Who art, with God the Father,
 And Spirit, ever blest!

Amen.

"BOUND HAND AND FOOT WITH GRAVE CLOTHES"

WITH the exception of the Toronto minister who, when giving "Religious Instruction" in a Toronto school, said the man whom Jesus raised from the dead, was called Naaman, we assume that nearly everybody knows the story from the eleventh chapter of John, of the resurrection of Lazarus. This is the verse with which we are here specially concerned:

"And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go."

Of course the story is replete with the profoundest spiritual lessons. But we refer to it now for another purpose.

It is a suggestive picture of present-day civilization, all but slain and buried, yet, by sheer force of arms, brought forth from its cave-like shelter, but "bound hand and foot with grave clothes".

During the war freedom was everywhere curtailed; and the ordinary liberties of the citizen, in many cases, taken from him. Since the war "controls" have been multiplied. Every kind of business is shackled, and multitudes of supposed experts gather about this enswathed Civilization, presumably to contribute something to its liberation. But what do they do? They call sundry

conferences of political undertakers, who order more and more grave clothes. Our modern Lazarus, though he has emerged from the grave, is as much a prisoner as ever.

But what followed in the historic story? The voice of Incarnate Wisdom commanded, "Loose him, and let him go." Was not that dangerous? Would a man who had been several days in the grave, know how to use his liberty if it were given to him? But that was the command: "Release your controls: let natural law have an opportunity to function. Let him go where he will."

Where did he go? The twelfth chapter of John tells us. In Bethany they prepared a supper. Tears were banished. Laughter and smiles were the order of the day. There was no longer any rationing: but plenty of everything for everybody was provided for the supper. And it was a supper in honour of Incarnate Wisdom.

What of Lazarus? "Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him." That was where he went! He chose the company of the Wisdom that had given him freedom to go where he liked.

That voice needs to be heard in many a Government circle: "Loose him, and let him go". Finance Minister Abbott has just used his official scissors to strip off one band of grave clothes. He would do well to continue snipping. There might be a few who would use their liberty as a cloak of maliciousness. There might be a little hardship here and there for a while. But if nature were allowed to have her way, and the law of supply and demand were permitted to operate without let or hindrance, it would not be long before we should see our modern Lazarus sitting at a well-supplied table.

In one of his lectures to his students, Mr. Spurgeon named three heads: Firstly: *Fill up the barrel*; secondly, *Pull out the bung*; thirdly: *Let nature caper*. That would be good advice to our present-day Economists, including the Trades Unionists. Fill up the barrel. That means produce, and still produce, and produce more and more. Production is the need of the hour. The world's wealth will not be increased by shortening hours, and multiplying holidays, and increasing idleness. The barrel must everywhere be filled up. Then, Pull out the bung. Let industry, and commerce, and finance flow freely. A full barrel would make a full stream. Then, Let nature caper. Let Governments take their hands off legitimate business, except as they may justifiably require a proportion of the profits in taxes.

There is a great verse of scripture in Galatians, chapter five, verses twenty-two and twenty-three:

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

In these verses there is condensed the true science of Government. *The liberty of the individual should be curtailed, or interfered with, only when such liberty is exercised in the infringement of others' freedoms.* "For goodness sake!" Yes; "for goodness sake" — for goodness is a fruit of the Spirit—"Loose him, and let him go".

We are not against holidays. We suggest these Governmental theorists be given a long vacation, to go fishing. Society would then have a chance to recover itself, and find its way to a comfortable chair before a full dinner in some modern Bethany.

THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE

The Sovereignty of God As Shown in the Incarnation

Second in a Series of Week-Evening Lectures on the Doctrines of Grace

By Dr. T. T. Shields

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Thursday Evening, January 22nd, 1931

(Stenographically Reported)

THE fourth verse of the fourth chapter of Galatians will form the basis of what I have to say this evening: "But when the fulness of the time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

The Scripture teaches that we are justified by faith. It is said that salvation is "of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to the seed". Faith is one of the great words of the gospel. It is difficult perhaps to define it, and sometimes I think scarcely necessary. Faith is nothing apart from its object. It is a knowledge of what a man is that enables us to trust him; or, knowing that he is unworthy of trust, leads us to withhold our confidence.

Thus if we are to trust God, we must know God. Those who know His name put their trust in Him. We can never be men and women of strong faith unless we have a clear conception of God; and that, as I pointed out to you last week, we can never discover for ourselves. Our knowledge of God is dependent always on what God is pleased to disclose of Himself. Just in the measure in which the revelation of God is apprehended and appropriated by us are we enabled to trust God for what He is.

It is said of Abraham that he "believed God". That is to say, he believed Him as God; he believed Him because He was God. We trust God because there is nothing else to do but trust Him as God because He is God.

Last Thursday evening I spoke to you of Divine Sovereignty,—which is not an attribute of Deity, but a divine prerogative. We saw that God "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

That doctrine is very objectionable to the natural man. In the beginning man was tempted at that point when the tempter said, "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. Ye shall share in the prerogative of Deity. You shall be your own master." That is what men have sought to be, and just in the measure in which they have succeeded they have succeeded in destroying themselves.

I suppose one reason that men object to the idea of the absolute rule of God is that we so generally judge God, measure God, estimate God, by human standards,—

"I may not climb where cherubim
And seraphs can see,
But nothing can be good in Him
Which evil is in me."

So says Whittier—but that is not true. Many things may be good in God which are evil in us, for the simple and sufficient reason that He is God. It is quite right for God to seek His own honour and glory because He is God: it would be entirely wrong for us to do so.

In our thought last Thursday evening we reached this stage, that divine sovereignty, the absolute rule of God over His universe, finds its moral sanction in the divine perfections. It is because of what God is, because He is God, that He has a right sovereignty to rule, so that none may dispute His government.

How is that sovereignty exercised? How does God manifest His sovereign power? There is a dim illustration—of course, it is subject to all human limitations, but it is suggestive—in Joseph's life. When Joseph was exalted to the throne of the Pharaohs, and wore the king's signet ring, and exercised in Egypt an authority second only to that of Pharaoh himself, he exercised that authority in doing good. He filled the storehouses, and then in due time he opened all the storehouses, and all countries came to Joseph to buy bread. He exercised his sovereign rule in grace. He showed kindness to people who were in need.

Then you will remember another instance: Mordecai was clothed with royal authority, and the record in Esther closes with these words, "And all the acts of his power and of his might, and the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai, whereunto the king advanced him, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia? For Mordecai the Jew was next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed."

That is how he used the authority which was given him, to seek the enrichment of others, and to speak peace to all his kindred.

So we read of the Lord Jesus in that fuller revelation: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."

Let me call your attention, then, to some simple fundamentals that perhaps will help to supply a tonic

for our faith, and make it a little bit easier, if God should show us the truth of them, to believe God.

I.

God has shown His sovereign power, His sovereign rule, first of all, BY HIMSELF, WITHOUT AID FROM ANY OF HIS CREATURES, DEVISING "MEANS THAT HIS BANISHED BE NOT EXPELLED FROM HIM"—"Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?" The plan of salvation was made without the aid of a single theological professor! That is extraordinary, but it was! There was no great conference of bishops meeting to help God decide how He should save men. He was not beholden even to the expert advice of men of science, for before the morning stars sang together, or all the sons of God shouted for joy, before He laid the foundations of the earth, before He gave to the sea His decree that the waters should not pass His commandment, He provided a way whereby poor, rebellious men might be saved.

One of the arguments frequently used in support of the postulate that God is, that He really lives, that there is a God, is that in nature there is evidence of design, and that there cannot be a design without a Designer; that the marvellous plan of things, the operation of a thousand inter-related laws, proves that above it all there must be a Law-Giver. Men talk much about their learning and what they discover about natural phenomena—the things about us, the stars, the sun, the rocks, and all the rest of it; but in it all they discover evidences of design, of a plan somewhere, and behind the plan a Designer.

How did Dr. Banting discover insulin? Who taught him? He studied the human system, and he discovered something that was indispensable to the proper functioning of certain organs. When he had learned that, he discovered that a certain disease was the result of an insufficient supply of some element, or too much of something else, and because he knew how certain organs function, he said in effect: If I can get that extract from some other than human creatures, and inject it into the human system, thus supplying that defect, I can prolong life. But how did he find that out? And of what value would it have been if you were made after one plan and I were made after another? If the laws of nature operating in our bodies were not alike, he would never have arrived at it. All that he was able to do was to observe how certain natural forces worked, how certain organs functioned; and, having observed the design, he was able to fill in the deficiency. But back of all that there is Somebody Who planned us, Who made us, and not we ourselves.

You may apply the same principle to the stars, or to the rocks, to the minerals of the earth. Study any branch of physical science, and the same principle obtains. There is a law operating, there is a design; and back of it a Designer. But before these laws were set in operation at all, God laid the plan whereby men should be saved. No angel contributed to it; no mortal was there to add his wisdom to it: the whole scheme of redemption was conceived in the mind of the Eternal. It is His work from beginning to end. Oh, if

men could only see that salvation is of God, and of God only! If they could only see that there is not an infinitesimal fraction of human effort or energy or action in it, that it is all of God because He dwells as Sovereign over all, blessed for ever, how easy it would be then for us to trust Him! What else could we do but trust Him if only we could see who and what God is? That is the foundation of all true faith, to see God.

II.

Well then, not only was the plan His, but THE EXECUTION OF IT WAS HIS. He chose the time: "When the fulness of the time was come." He waited a long time, but at His own appointed hour, the time appointed from all eternity—"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son." Nobody asked for Him. Nobody sought Him. Nobody expected Him until Simeon was told by special revelation that He was coming. The time was God's. I love to remember that when men did not desire a Saviour, when they never dreamed of such a scheme of redemption as God had wrought out for us, that when the clock of the universe turned its hand to the minute that God had appointed, He came! Nobody helped Him to come: time is with God.

He had His own programme, His own schedule. If you can believe that principle, you will have no difficulty with the miracle of the sun's standing still, you will have no difficulty with anything else when once you get God in the right place. All time is His.

I would remind you, too, that "he sent forth his Son". I wonder may I use a very crude illustration? It only faintly suggests what I want to make clear. There is no irreverence in it, but there is a principle that I think will help us to understand. A great many men have invented things, useful things, and then have allowed other people to reap the profit of their genius. I read the other day about the death of a man who was the inventor of something that had made others multi-millionaires, but he died a poor man. Others took advantage of the thing that he had invented. They put it on the market, and secured an absolute monopoly of it, and piled up great fortunes by the use of that which the mind of this man had produced—while he died a poor man.

Mr. Henry Ford is distinguished from a great many others by the fact that he knew how to turn what his own brain had evolved to his own profit. He proved to be not only a great inventor, but a great captain of industry and a great financier. He was able to keep to himself the profit of what he had produced. In the beginning he got other men to help him; he sold stock. The people who put their money in it thought they had thrown it away, but when the company began to prosper and before he had gone too far, he bought it all in, for he said, "We will keep this business in the family." He bought in all the stock so that he should have the whole thing under his own will and that of his son.

I say, there is a principle there that only faintly illustrates the great matter I am discussing; it is infinitely removed from it, but it serves as an illustration.

God devised a way of salvation, and when His appointed time was come He sent forth His Son. He did not even share His glory with the angels. He did not allow the archangels to participate in His prerogative. It was the work of God; and the Son of God, one with

the Father from everlasting to everlasting, came as His Messenger to execute His will, and to fulfil the provisions of His covenants. When we seek to trust God, we need no priest, no church, and no ordinances: we need nothing in order to be saved, but God. It is His prerogative to save. He provided the way of salvation, nobody else. Nobody had an infinitesimal share in it. It was His own doing—God the Son.

He "sent forth his Son, *made of a woman.*" The manner of His coming was of His own choice. It is beautiful to read those delicate and incomparable stories of the nativity in Matthew and Luke. How surprised was Elizabeth! How full of wonder was Mary that she should have been chosen for that honour, to become, as Elizabeth described her, the mother of the Lord! But it was all God's doings. He asked nobody's advice. He sought counsel of no one. He commissioned an angel to make the announcement that it should be so. He sovereignly willed it. No one could prevent it.

"When the fulness of the time was come" Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea. He chose the manner of His coming, and *He chose the place of His arrival.* It was written in the Book, but nobody understood what that writing meant until the wise men made their enquiry. The Book was consulted. They read the letter of it with unseeing eyes, but never saw the Christ. Yet it was predetermined, foreordained; and Jesus came to Bethlehem just as God had planned He should come.

I am glad He was laid in a manger because there was no room for Him in the inn. He was almost the only Child for Whose advent to this world no preparation was made. His coming was a surprise to men, but it was a fulfilment of God's eternal will and purpose. And they laid Him in a manger because there was no room in the inn.

Then you see *how that infant Life was sovereignly cared for.* A delicate exotic let down from paradise amid the snows of earth,—surely He cannot live? All the world is against Him—Herod especially. The king gave commandment to slay all the male children. In the old days in Wales when miners used candles, they used to carry them sometimes to light themselves home from their work. I have been told that they became very expert, that an experienced miner would light his candle, put it between his fingers, and shelter its flickering light, so that he could walk over the hills, no matter which way the wind was blowing, and throw that little gleam on his path, thus lighting the way for him—and no wind could blow it out.

It looked as though the storms of earth would extinguish that little Light that began at Bethlehem. There was no one to care for it, no one to protect Him from the wrath of the king. But a Divine Hand shadowed Him till by and by it was said, "They are dead that sought the young child's life." We see Him later walking the paths of men, where the winds are blowing, and the storms are raging; and when they seek to cast Him over the precipice, and to take His life, "He, passing through the midst of them, went his way." He sovereignly said, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

Then, when that sovereign will of God was expressed in the Incarnate Son, do you remember how He showed His sovereign power not only over the forces of nature, but *in the conduct of His own life?* There is a verse I have often quoted to you. I love it. It always tones me up when I think of it. When the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill Thee. Be very careful or you will not finish your career as you planned"—there are some people who imagine that the Lord Jesus changed His plans after He came to earth, that He offered some people the kingdom, and, had they accepted it, things might have been different. That is to me utter nonsense. He never changed His plan; He never turned from His predetermined course by a hair's breadth. He never turned a single step from the path appointed. He went sovereignly to His goal—and nobody could stop Him, for Jesus was God. "None can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

But here is the verse I love. When they said, "Depart hence: for Herod will kill thee", He said, "Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must walk to-day and to-morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. That is my programme. You may advise Herod of it, and tell him exactly what I am going to do to-day, to-morrow, and the third day." It is as though He said, "I challenge him and all the devils behind him—and Beelzebub himself—to interfere with My programme. I am going to carry it out to the end." And He did! He went to Jerusalem.

He chose *the manner of His death.* There came one day some Greeks who said to Andrew, "We would see Jesus." The disciples told Jesus, and if you read the story I think you will see that Jesus never showed Himself to them. There is a very beautiful hymn by Mrs. Stowe based on that text, "We would see Jesus", but I doubt whether she caught the right meaning. In any case, they did not see Him. I heard of an old captain who had an explanation of that. A friend of mine told me that he was talking with a sea captain one day who had sailed the seven seas and knew all peoples of the earth, and he said that the Greeks are the most treacherous people in the world; that when those men came to see Jesus they did not want to see Him: they came to assassinate Him before His time. I do not think we have absolute proof of that, but we do know this, that Jesus said on that occasion, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."

He said, "The time is appointed, the place is appointed, the manner is appointed, and no one can effect My exodus from this life in any other way."

He went to Jerusalem, and He chose the time of the Passover that He might fulfil all that was written, and that later it might be written, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."

Are you not glad that *nobody helped to raise Him from the dead?* The women said, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" But when they came they found it was rolled away already. The Lord Jesus did not need an alarm clock to get up in

the morning. He knew when to waken. He rose and sovereignly threw up the blinds and walked out the Conqueror He had always been.

"God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." He fulfilled the last item of the covenant. He paid the last farthing of our indebtedness. And at His own time, when He had given commandment to His disciples, He went back whence He had come. From Eternity to Bethlehem, to Calvary, to Olivet, and back to the glory, it was all God's work: nobody helped Him.

Is that something to enable us to believe? When we come to see that He did it, that He is all and in all, we have something upon which to put the feet of our faith.

I shall try to show you next week that the sovereignty of God is revealed also in the application of these matters, that our faith is His gift, that regeneration is His act, and that salvation, as applied to the individual—just as surely as salvation is provided for the individual—is equally of God; and "not of works, lest any man should boast".

"GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT"

HOLD what view of life we may, we are ever exposed to the danger, even when holding the truth, of holding the truth in unrighteousness. If a man seek to order his life by this counsel, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you"; and if he argue that the surest way to possess "these things"—meat, and drink, and clothing—is to seek the kingdom of God, clearly while holding the truth he has perverted it, and by its very perversion is become "bereft of it, supposing that godliness is a way to gain".

The truth is, one may be religious in a most irreligious way. One may turn the most sacred things of life to the most secular uses, until the commandment which was ordained to life is found to be unto death. There is not one of the good gifts and perfect gifts which come down from above, which may not thus be converted into a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence. And that is true of the least even to the greatest, the "unspeakable gift" of God's Son.

There is a scripture which teaches that men err from the truth when they suppose that godliness is a means to an end, because it is, in the nature of things, an end in itself. The Apostle Paul warned Timothy against teachers whose doctrine was not according to godliness, saying, "He is proud, knowing nothing, but dotting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

This is a word which may well be pondered in these trying days.

The real value of godliness can be appreciated only as it is desired for its own sake: "Godliness with contentment is great gain." When godliness is regarded as being self-sufficient, as carrying its reward within itself, then it is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come; but when it is supposed to be "a way of gain", it turns out to be a mirage of the desert, or, at best, a bitter Marah without a sweetening branch.

I.

A godly life is the normal life because it agrees with the nature of things, and that is proved by the fact that to confuse the end with the means in any realm of life is disastrous.

The godly life is the life that is properly related to God, to men, and to things. It is not an abnormal life. It is not wearing a straight jacket, but being free as God meant, and means, us to be free. The resetting of a dislocated joint may be a painful operation, but everyone knows that, in such a case, there can be no freedom from irritation without a restoration to the normal state of articulation. And conversion is the readjustment of the soul by the Great Physician to God, and the world. Godliness is the normal articulation of a human life; the proper, becoming, reverent, attitude of the human soul toward God. And our text says that that is an end in itself, that virtue is its own reward; and that to regard godliness as a way to profit is to disarticulate the life, and to put it out of joint with the truth, which is another word for the nature of things.

When we speak of the nature of things, we mean nothing less. And when we say that the godly life agrees with the nature of things, we mean that the ungodly man is not only at war with God, but at war with the universe, with things as they are; and that sin, in its very nature, is an inversion of the laws of order—it is a thorn in the flesh, a grain of sand in the eye, a mover of sedition, a harbinger of disintegration.

And if this be true, it follows that it will be possible to discover an analogy, a parallelism, in all the affairs of life with those principles which, taken together, constitute godliness. We shall observe some of these parallelisms.

Does the workman who works only for wages ever succeed in securing adequate remuneration? Does the workman, to whom work is only "a way of gain" ever succeed in getting the gain he seeks? Of course a man must be paid for his work, or he cannot live. No one can long survive on sentiment alone. But if a man's daily occupation be nothing more than a means of livelihood, if he be a stranger to the sacred secret of finding pleasure in the work itself, he will be equally a stranger to the pleasure he hopes to find in the proceeds of his work. No man can afford to spend half his time providing means with which to live the other half. He must live, really live, all the time. Whatever the character of his work, whether he be the engineer or the architect who plans, or the humblest labourer who assists to execute the plans, if he does not find pleasure in his work, he will be sure to find pain; if his spade be not a sceptre it will prove a shackle: he is bound to be a sovereign or a serf.

So then whoever, deliberately, uses his situation as a

stepping-stone, will find it a millstone about his neck. No man can make a mere convenience of his opportunity without having the tables turned unto himself. The man who lives to minister will never lack opportunity; the opportunist will often be out of work. To suppose that the labour of the day is nothing but a way of gain is to be "bereft of the truth"; it is to strip life of its dignity; to degrade the noblest qualities of manhood. If that is all our work amounts to in the morning—a means of getting bread—we enter the house of bondage when we go to work.

But observe the converse of this: Let us put the principle of our scripture thus: Labour with contentment, labour which is its own reward, is great gain. The man who delights in his work understands this. He receives wages, and he cannot afford to be indifferent to the returns; but he is not thinking of gain all the time he works. He devotes himself to his task with enthusiasm; he finds a real joy in it. He does not require the oversight of a master. He is really not working for a master. He is not under the law but under grace. He is in love with his work. He would choose to work on, if he did not need wages. He works as others play, because he enjoys it. To him, his labour is great gain. It yields him perennial satisfaction. His workshop is a palace, not a prison—his bench is quite as much to him as a throne to a king. It provides him with an opportunity to invest his manhood, and he finds he receives his own with usury.

Of course, the same principle holds in business life. If a man's business be nothing more to him than "a way of gain", he has missed the meaning of life. It is just as true of a captain of industry as of the humblest workman under him, that if he labours only for gain his labour becomes a bondage, and his office a gaol. And if that be his attitude toward his work, he will get through his work as the burglar gets through his, as quickly and with as little conscience as possible. He is doing violence to his own nature by such an attitude; he is walking backwards through life, who turns his face to the wages instead of to the work. It is not surprising, therefore, if such an one becomes unscrupulous in business. It is inevitable that he should. When his whole life is arrayed against the nature of things, loving to get instead of to give, it is no wonder if he violates his own conscience in common with all other things.

But look at the opposite. We know a man to whom business is more attractive than golf. He has a passion for it. He is a large employer of labour. But he told us once he could sit up all night with the greatest pleasure if given a set of books to keep. And he is a Christian—with the renewed nature of a Christian man. In the nature of the case his business is bound to be honestly and honourably conducted. If it were a mere avocation, an incidental into which no part of his very life entered—he might consent to its irregular conduct unwittingly. But as it is, it must be conducted in harmony with the moral qualities wrought into his soul, or he would be continually subject to loss; his whole life would be robbed of everything of value. But making his business a life's ministry, into which he puts all of life that God has given, he finds his satisfaction in it; and so it comes to pass that business with contentment is a gain.

But perhaps in no sphere of life is this principle more easily understood than in that of the esthetic. He is surely bereft of truth who supposes that art is a way of gain. One thing is certain, whoever supposes so is not

an artist. It is impossible that a true artist should ever be so deluded. Whoever devotes himself to any of the fine arts as a way of gain will miss both the true art and the gain.

What if we take Music as an example! Music was born of royal blood; she was born to be a queen. And does anyone say, "I will make music my profession, as a means of earning a livelihood"? Whoever says so is musically dead in trespasses and sins. He has no musical soul. What, make Music—a royal queen, a mere hewer of wood and a drawer of water! She would die of a broken heart if reduced to such a menial task. The golden bowl would be broken, and the pitcher broken at the fountain. But let one fall in love with the queen, and she will make a king of you, and give you a kingdom. And you will find it true that music with contentment, music that ministers contentment, is great gain.

We have said all this to show you that the principles of our holy religion do not propose an anomalous condition of life: but that they are in profound agreement with the nature of things. They seem paradoxical and anomalous because they have to do with the realm of the moral and spiritual, with which we are at variance.

II.

With that background, look at the religious aspect of this principle. The Christian religion is wholly misunderstood when it is regarded as "a way of gain". We need not say that the mistake of Simon Magus, who desired the Holy Ghost that he might turn the gift to monetary gain, is fatal to the joy of salvation. Nor are they very far removed from him who regard religion as a sort of bargain with God, as, in the end, the surest way to get on in life. Nor are they superior to him who use the holiest privileges given to men to promote their own interests, who think that the mercy seat was designed to give them their own way.

We may go further. If the gain of religion be salvation from hell to heaven, if that be the end of godliness, or if godliness be only a means to that end, if that be our aim, then we are bereft of the truth—we are bound to see everything out of *perspective*. They who enquire whether certain things be "essential to salvation", who think it a light matter to disobey the divine commands, or such of them as they think may be classed as non-essentials, these suppose that godliness is "a way of gain", that we are saved for ourselves and to ourselves alone.

How different the other view, that godliness is itself the highest gain, that to know we are in harmonious relation with God, that one's life task is God-given, and that in the doing of it we find the true balance, and progress of life; to learn that godliness ministers to one's wholeness will eliminate friction, will enable one's soul to breathe, and labour, and love naturally, and thus to be satisfied.

This is the true gain of life. To choose godliness as a way of gain is to find our way to a waste, howling, wilderness; but to choose godliness for its own sake, is to hear the Saviour saying, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise"—literally *to-day*, to be in a condition of life of which it may be said, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE QUEBEC ELECTION

THE sweep of the Province of Quebec by the Duplessis Government is profoundly significant. The Government won 82 out of 92 seats. Nearly all the papers explain the Duplessis victory on the ground of his insistence upon Provincial rights, and his refusal to yield anything to Ottawa. It is interpreted by some as a body blow to the Liberal Party. Of course, the fact is that all these diagnosticians confine their examinations to the economic and political elements in Quebec. They will not recognize that the explanation of Quebec's isolation is always religious. The Roman Catholic Hierarchy care nothing for party politics. They will support the Party that is most completely subservient to the Church. Sometimes it has been Conservative, sometimes Liberal: now it is Union Nationale.

Of all the political leaders Quebec has ever had, we believe there has not been one who was such an abject slave to the Papacy. Premier Duplessis, himself, has admitted that the late Cardinal Villeneuve was the real author of his infamous Padlock Law. The persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses—we disagree with their views, but would fight for their freedom—and other repressive and reactionary measures, are all to be traced to an ecclesiastical source. As Mr. Duplessis is the Hierarchy's tool in Quebec, George Drew is its lump of putty in Ontario. We have loathed Premier King's administration, and we have no liking for the possibility of Mr. St. Laurent's ever becoming Premier. Notwithstanding, we think he would be a less dangerous man than George Drew.

Why did the Hierarchy turn away from the Liberal Party? Almost any party or institution, that has had a conspicuous, and extended leadership, when the leadership is changed, begins to decline. We have never regarded Mr. King as a statesman, but only as one of the most subtle and unprincipled of all politicians. But he has been a successful politician. He has kept himself and his followers in office. He has built up in Ottawa a bureaucracy that is appalling in its power and dimensions: But it will require the subtlety of a Mackenzie King to keep it together. When he is removed they will begin fighting each other, like the Kilkenny cats, and then the Party will begin to disintegrate. The Roman Hierarchy knows this. They have discarded the Liberal Party, just as one throws away an orange or a banana peel. They have taken all they could out of it. Now they must prepare themselves for another Party, in which they may parasitically establish themselves. A Party under the leadership of George Drew would afford the most generous hospitality to such a cancer. The Quebec election should be regarded as a Roman Catholic triumph of the very first order. From this forward Romanism will be more aggressive, and more dangerous than ever.

Is There Any Remedy?

The only Government that has ever held power in Ottawa, without the support of Quebec, was the Union Government of Sir Robert Borden; and that Government derived its authority from eight Provinces, who, unitedly, determined to be independent of Quebec. If a leader could be found for the Conservative Party who would have the political sagacity, and the moral and religious insight to recognize that nothing can come from Quebec but more manacles, and more ankle-chains, one

who would rally all freedom-loving people of any and every Party, and make as a basic principle of his platform: "Equal Rights for All, and Spécial Privileges for None", Liberals, who have wearied of King's subservience to Rome, and CCF'ers, who have become such because they have despaired of obtaining better things from either of the old Parties, would rally to such a standard.

By far the ablest man in view, in our judgment, is Mr. John G. Diefenbaker; but even he would need to be delivered from the Quebec complex: indeed, not only from Quebec, but from the tendency toward the appeasement of the Roman Catholic Church in general. So delivered, we believe he is the best man in sight.

Christians, who value soul liberty, may well pray that somehow God will break in upon the darkness of Canadian political Partyism.

MAYOR HOUDE OF MONTREAL CITES DR. SHIELDS

MR. CAMILLIEN HOUDE, the Mayor of Montreal, was interned for about four years during the war. That the Government had good reason for their action, we have little doubt. Quebec is definitely anti-British; and Mr. Houde was no exception. But he is a very popular man. In the recent election he threw his full weight on the side of Duplessis, even going so far as to criticize his fellow Roman Catholic, the Right Honourable Louis St. Laurent.

The following is a press dispatch, dated July 26th, upon which, when our readers have read it, we offer a few observations.

OTTAWA HAS NEWFOUNDLAND TO DROWN FRENCH—HOUDE

By ROBERT TAYLOR
Star Staff Correspondent

Quebec, July 26—The way the Duplessis-Houde portion of any future alliance in the federal field with Premier George Drew would attack the Liberal party is on the records today, placed there by Mayor Camillien Houde of Montreal.

The paunchy, dramatic, former Conservative M.P.P., delivered his oration to a jam-packed armories here last night.

His speech was almost completely concerned with the federal field and was being tested, close supporters said, for audience reaction as to whether it could be the core of the unborn party's propaganda program for the forthcoming federal election, expected next spring. Reaction seemed only fair.

Mr. Houde, speaking in French, told the audience Prime Minister Mackenzie King was the man responsible for the second great war.

He said in 1937 Mr. King saw Mr. Roosevelt. "But there was no report on that meeting," he said. Mr. King then went to an imperial conference in London. Only after the war was it revealed that Mr. King went, in 1937, to Berlin to provoke Hitler into war.

Betrayed During War

"Now these men say it is the duty of this country to send money to countries in Europe which they helped to destroy by provoking Hitler into war," he declared.

Mr. Houde, who was interned for his stand in 1940 in advising Canadians not to register, told the audience, "There is not a French-Canadian M.P. at Ottawa that didn't betray you during the war."

He said the "real reason why Ottawa wants to draw Newfoundland into confederation is to drown the French-Canadian people."

Setting the stage for a further dispute between Quebec

and Newfoundland over Labrador, if Newfoundland enters confederation, he said the only reason the privy council awarded Labrador to Newfoundland was because the Quebec lawyer spent his time horseback riding rather than fighting the case. He blamed the Liberal party and Rt. Hon. Louis St. Laurent for this, but didn't explain why.

Mr. Houde referred, as have Union Nationale speakers throughout the campaign here, to Mr. St. Laurent's statement in the Commons, that legally the French-Canadian language could be ousted from its official status by a simple vote of a majority in parliament. It was a straight answer by one of Canada's outstanding lawyers to a question asked by an opposition member who also is a lawyer. But Union Nationale speakers have been trying to use this to suggest Mr. St. Laurent has some designs against the use of the French language and is an enemy of provincial autonomy.

Not Up to St. Laurent

"Would even Dr. Shields of Toronto say what St. Laurent said?" demanded Mr. Houde. "Of course not, because he is much too afraid of being called a fool. Yet not a member of parliament got up to protest this statement. Even if it were true, it is not up to the supposed leader of the French-Canadians to say it.

"If I were the designated leader of my race and had been exposed, as Mr. St. Laurent has been exposed, by the Union Nationale speakers, I think I would go away and hide in a concentration camp," he said.

He declared there should be nearly 40 per cent. of the deputy ministers in Ottawa of French-Canadian extraction. "But there isn't space for them, because their ranks are filled up with Communists. That's the reason why there was an inquiry in Ottawa. It showed how many Communists there were in Ottawa and why they were placed there.

"The Liberals aren't Communists, but if they were they wouldn't act any different than they do now," he said.

Dealing with conscription, Mr. Houde recalled Mr. St. Laurent had told a delegation of French-Canadian unionists who visited Ottawa he would not promise there would not be conscription in Canada.

"The Liberal party does not promise not to have conscription," he said. "Right now we are on the verge of it and this in time of peace."

Mr. Houde's tirade is typical of the sort of political pabulum supplied the people of Quebec. If one has absolutely no regard for truth, and can persuade himself utterly to ignore all the facts of the situation, one can say anything at all to catch votes.

To say that Prime Minister Mackenzie King was the man responsible for the Second Great War, is sheer nonsense; or to say that "Mr. King went to Berlin to provoke Hitler into war", is silly. Indeed, to read this report of Mr. Houde's speech, one feels that a great mistake was made in sending him to an internment camp: he ought to have been sent to a hospital for the mentally ill.

Mr. Houde Refers to Dr. Shields

Opposing Mr. St. Laurent's statement in the Commons "that legally the French-Canadian language could be ousted from its official status by a simple vote of a majority in Parliament," Mr. Houde said: "Would even Dr. Shields of Toronto say what St. Laurent said?" Then he answers his question, "Of course not, because he is too much afraid of being called a fool."

Mr. Houde is mistaken. Wise men are complimented when they are called "fools" by—well, by such an one as Mr. Houde! The fact is, this Editor is not afraid of being called anything, because already he has been called everything.

But this one time we must defend Mr. St. Laurent. English in the British North America Act means exactly the same as it does in other documents. And nothing is clearer than that what Mr. St. Laurent says is true. Only in certain of the Courts, and in Parliament, has the French language any official status. Bilingual money, and bilingualism in general have been sops to placate French-Canadian Nationalism, until what was accorded as a privilege is now demanded as a right.

One of these days, however, THE GOSPEL WITNESS will discuss this matter thoroughly.

It is rather rich to hear that a large proportion of the Deputy Ministers in Ottawa, are Communists, and that the Mackenzie King Government "has behaved as a lot of Communists". We recommend this to *The Globe and Mail*, of Toronto, for their daily item, "Your Morning Smile".

Poor Mr. Houde! Perhaps we should pity him. It may be that his years in an internment camp affected his mind. But how amazing that Canada's largest city should have for its Mayor a man with such an ill-balanced mind as that of Mr. Houde!

It is not difficult to understand how the illiterates of Quebec would eagerly swallow such piffle as Mr. Houde provided.

KIMBERLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

We are glad to report that the work at Kimberley is progressing despite strong opposition in the village. Its testimony is being felt in the community, and also in surrounding districts. An Orange Hall has been rented for one night a week in a nearby village where children's meetings will be held in co-operation with our Friday night meetings for boys and girls held in Kimberley. Other fields are being surveyed also with the view to an extended ministry.

The church building has been completed outside with the arrival of brick-siding this spring, and a building improvement fund launched for the purpose of obtaining an electric lighting system in the church.

Though our church members are few in number, the state of their spiritual health is good, and this always brings joy to the heart of a pastor.

We go on in the strength of the Lord, remembering that He is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:20). The people of Kimberley send their greetings to the other churches of the Union, and would covet your prayers on our behalf.

—K. CAIRNS, Pastor.

REMEMBER THE SEMINARY IN YOUR WILL

We suggest that our friends should remember Toronto Baptist Seminary in their wills. The proper form for this is: "I give, devise and bequeath the sum of to Toronto Baptist Seminary, 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto 2, Canada, associated with Jarvis St. Baptist Church." We are laying foundations for the future, and we are determined to make it as impossible as it is within human power to do, that one dollar given to Toronto Baptist Seminary shall be used for anything but the propagation of the gospel. No amount would be too large, and certainly no amount would be too small. We earnestly solicit the gifts of those who believe in ministerial and missionary education.

FROM THE DAILY PRESS

R. C. MAYORS REBUKED BY U. K. PRELATE

By The Canadian Press

WOLVERHAMPTON — Roman Catholic mayors who attend non-Catholic services as part of their duties were rebuked in a statement issued by the Most Rev. Joseph Masterson, archbishop of Birmingham.

The rebuke was made public after Mayor H. E. Lane of Wolverhampton, a Roman Catholic, attended Protestant services held in connection with Wolverhampton's civic centenary.

"We are gravely concerned at the serious departure from established tradition and practice of conscientious Catholics in this country which is involved in the attendance of Catholic mayors at non-Catholic services," said the statement, issued in the name of Catholic Archbishops of England and Wales.

"We earnestly appeal to all to whom it may apply to adhere faithfully to the well-established tradition of the past."

Mayor Lane said after he had attended a Sunday morning Congregational service he planned to go to an evening concert in a Catholic church. The organizer of the concert asked him on the telephone not to go.

"The statement makes it seem as if I will have to choose between being a good Catholic and a good mayor," said Lane. "I will try to be a good mayor."

CHURCHILL—AND CAESAR

Mr. Winston Churchill has unofficially been given his place in history. He and Julius Caesar are the world's two outstanding figures of the last 2,000 years who have "combined pre-eminence in action with pre-eminence in letters."

This remarkable judgment is that of a scholar, writer, soldier, journalist and formerly military secretary to the Prince of Wales when in Canada, but now disguised under the title of Lord Altrincham. Speaking in London this week he considered Mr. Churchill without exaggeration to be "the most illustrious figure in the world today."

The parallel with Caesar, needless to say, is not exact. No one can imagine Mr. Churchill hankering after a god-emperorship, defying the House of Commons, or getting assassinated at the foot of a statue of Lord Baldwin. Nor can anyone imagine a Cleopatra on the background.

But as statesmen, historians, administrators and writers, the two men march together astonishingly. Gaius Julius, like Mr. Churchill, made history and wrote it—as every schoolboy bemoans when he comes to struggle with *de Bello Gallico* in the original. Caesar wrote wonderful Latin as Mr. Churchill writes wonderful English; and the Roman's rebuke to those who used newfangled and affected expressions rides exactly with the Englishman's rebuke to those who write "civil service English."

Caesar stood no nonsense from his bureaucrats. The red slips on Mr. Churchill's war-time table in Downing Street—"Action Today"—no doubt had their equivalent in Caesar's peremptory wax tablets.

Then, again, Caesar dreamed of empire and built it; Mr. Churchill finding one built, would not give an inch of it away. Both statesmen nevertheless agreed that colonies should not be exploited by their rulers.

The parallels could be extended indefinitely. But it is enough to add of two whose lustre shone and will shine across the centuries, that they were obviously "born to write and act great deeds."

—Ottawa Citizen.

AFTER QUEBEC—WHAT?

In sweeping Premier Duplessis and his Union Nationale party back to power the Quebec electors have exercised their democratic right to choose their own government and settle their own affairs. No doubt provincial and local issues played their part in the verdict. Mr. Duplessis could point to some good legislation, and he was backed by one of the most highly organized and lavishly financed political machines that ever functioned in Canada.

But the Quebec premier made his main appeal on the rejection of new fiscal arrangements with the dominion and can regard his overwhelming victory as a mandate to continue his policy of non-cooperation with Ottawa and with the other provinces. His return will probably defer Quebec's entry into any nine-province agreement with the dominion and block the long-range, nationally planned social security program which such an agreement would make possible.

Provincial results are not always an indication of how voters will react in a federal election. This was demonstrated in Ontario in 1945. But such a decisive success and virtual elimination of the provincial Liberal party as an influence in Quebec politics can scarcely help but affect the course of national affairs.

For one thing it sets the stage for the cementing of the Drew-Duplessis axis, a development of special significance should Mr. Drew, as is expected, become national leader of the Progressive Conservative party. The Quebec outcome is a clear encouragement for the Duplessis forces to enter the dominion arena as the silent partner of the Progressive Conservative party in the rest of Canada. Few doubt that Mr. Drew would welcome this. If the Union Nationale were to meet with any measure of success federally it might well presage the defeat of the Liberal government which depends largely on a solid Quebec for its return.

A Drew-Duplessis alliance in the federal field would constitute an even more formidable combination than it does now provincially. It is a prospect which progressively-minded Canadians will contemplate with uneasiness.

More immediately, the Quebec vote may reduce the chance of Mr. Louis St. Laurent being elected national Liberal leader at next week's convention. Mr. St. Laurent's signal reverse in trying to stem the Duplessis tide can scarcely have added to his prestige within the party. Nor will the near-annihilation of Quebec Liberals at the provincial polls increase their leadership influence in national Liberal councils.—Ottawa Citizen.

Blessed . . . they who wash their robes.— Revelation xxii:8-21.

"Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life," carries us back to the old law, and has no more hopeful a sound in it than the thunders of Sinai. If it were, indeed, amongst Christ's last words to us, it would be a most sad instance of His "building again the things He had destroyed." It is relegating us to the dreary old round of trying to earn heaven by doing good deeds. The fact that that corrupt reading came so soon into the Church and has held its ground so long, is to me a very singular proof of the difficulty which men have always had in keeping themselves up to the level of the grand central Gospel truth: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by His mercy, He saved us. The Revised Version which runs, "Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have right to the Tree of Life," has the clear ring of the New Testament music about it, and is in full accord with the whole type of doctrine that runs through this book; and is not unworthy to be almost the last word that the lips of the Incarnate Wisdom spoke to men from heaven. So then, taking that point of view, look at three things that come plainly out of these words:—First, that principle that if men are clean it is because they are cleansed; "Blessed are they that wash their robes." Secondly, It is the cleansed who have unrestrained access to the source of life. And lastly, It is the cleansed who pass into the society of the city.

—ALEXANDER MACLAREN, D.D.

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 12 Third Quarter Lesson 7 August 15, 1948

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

THE BREAD OF LIFE

Lesson Text: John 6:1-14.

Golden Text: "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."—John 6:35.

Supplementary Reading: Matt. 14:13-21; Mk. 6:30-44; Lk. 9:10-17.

I. The Scarcity of Bread: verses 1-7.

This outstanding miracle was recorded by all four Evangelists. The Sea of Galilee was also called the Sea of Tiberias, and the Sea or Lake of Gennesaret (Lk. 5:1). The journey across the lake was undertaken to secure quiet for the disciples (Mk. 6:31, 32), for they were weary after their tour of preaching and healing, and they were in need of recuperation, that their natural and spiritual vigour might be renewed (Isa. 40:31; Mk. 3:20; 6:7, 30; 2 Cor. 4:16). Our Saviour affords rest for the weary; He is as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land (Isa. 32:2; Matt. 11:28-30).

But, instead of the respite which the disciples sought, they found the multitude waiting for them, or rather for their Lord. There would now be fresh demands upon their time and energy. The servant of God must learn not to be impatient when there are interruptions in his plans. Some lives are self-ordered every minute, so that no room is left for casual ministrations. On the other hand, those who are led by the Spirit of God will often find that the seeming interruption in their own plans is by the appointment of God, and opens the way to service undreamed of before. The path of duty is frequently the path of glory.

As the crowds were gathering, even before they had reached the place where Jesus was, He perceived that they were weary and hungry; but, above all, He detected their spiritual need (Mk. 6:34). No aspect of human suffering could escape the eyes of the loving Saviour. It is the same to-day; His compassions fail not (Lam. 3:22).

God frequently tests His people as He did Philip (Gen. 22:1); not to embarrass them, or cause them to stumble, but that He may strengthen their faith by giving them an opportunity to exercise it (Deut. 8:2; Job 23:10).

The things of sense loomed too large in the mind of Philip (John 14:9); not yet had he learned to look beyond human resources for the solution of a difficulty. Andrew was willing to make a suggestion, even although he considered it all but useless. If we trust God and do our part, He will be faithful and do His part.

II. The Supply of Bread: verses 8-14.

"Little is much, if God be in it." By divine power our Lord multiplied the small offering given to Him and fed the hungry ones. Small and insignificant as our resources may seem to be, they will be multiplied when presented to the Saviour. That which would have been impossible with men, was possible with God (Matt. 19:26; Mk. 10:27; Lk. 18:27). Notwithstanding the scarcity of food in the desert place, Christ fed the people by performing a miracle.

The disciples had the joy of distributing the blessing. How gracious that God permits us to be co-labourers with Him! Sunday School teachers have the privilege and duty of giving to scholars the bread of life which has been provided (Matt. 10:8; 1 Cor. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:10, 11).

The people were satisfied: "They did all eat, and were filled" (Mk. 6:42). Our Lord gives not only life, but also full satisfaction to those who come to Him (2 Kings 4:42-44; John 4:13, 14; 10:10; Eph. 3:20). There is always bread enough and to spare in His banquetting-house; no rationing is necessary in the heavenly economy! He satisfies the desires of every one of His believing children (Exod. 16:18; Psa. 17:15; 22:26; 103:5; 107:9; 145:16).

There was no confusion when the five thousand were fed. Order is one of the principles of the divine government of the universe, as is evidenced by the stars in their courses, the regular succession of day and night, and the alternate approach of summer and winter. The same sense of order and fitness characterizes the Lord's dealings with His people.

The divine economy allows no waste; the fragments that remain must be gathered. Care is taken even in the commercial world to see that all work is performed with maximum efficiency and with minimum waste. By-products are investigated with a view to their possible use.

This miracle of the loaves and fishes formed the basis of our Lord's discourse on the bread of life (vv. 22-58), wherein He taught the people outstanding truths concerning His person and His ministry. He declared that He was Himself the true Bread of life sent down from the Father to feed the souls of men, even as the manna was sent from heaven to feed the bodies of the children of Israel in the wilderness. The fathers who ate manna in the wilderness all died. The manna nourished their physical life, and that but temporarily, whereas Christ by His Spirit comes to dwell with the spirit of the believer, imparting to him the very life of God, which is eternal (John 7:37-39; 10:28, 29).

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Aug. 9—Bread from heaven for murmurers	Exod. 16:1-17.
Aug. 10—Not by bread alone	Deut. 8.
Aug. 11—5,000 fed. 12 travelling baskets over	Mk. 6:32-44.
Aug. 12—4,000 fed. 7 large hampers over	Mk. 8:1-9.
Aug. 13—Bread of life. No hunger, no thirst	John 6:25-40.
Aug. 14—Appropriating Christ insures eternal life	John 6:41-59.
Aug. 15—We believe and are sure	John 6:60-71.

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