

"That Thou Wouldest Rend the Heavens!"—p. 3.

"All Things New."—p. 11.

"Yea Rather."—p. 8.

A Premier Heeding Seducing Spirits.—p. 14.

# The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

*Authorized as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa*

Vol. 30, No. 36

130 Gerrard St. E., TORONTO, DECEMBER 27, 1951

Whole Number 1544



JARVIS STREET CHURCH AND SEMINARY BUILDINGS

## "OH THAT THOU Wouldest REND THE HEAVENS"

This article is taken from THE GOSPEL WITNESS of January 6th, 1938. We insert it here because it is as appropriate now as then.

The sermon in this issue was preached on the date assigned to it, the week following.

**A**T THE New Year's meeting the Pastor suggested as a motto for the year Isaiah's exclamatory prayer: "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down."

Even the most casual observer of conditions everywhere prevailing in the world to-day, including what we are accustomed to call the religious world, must recognize that improvement can come only by extraordinary means. We believe that now, as always, the world's only hope is in God. For a generation or so, men have been more than ordinarily puffed up, proud of themselves, and of their achievements. Human society everywhere is not unlike a young lad who flatters himself that he needs no instruction in order to drive his father's new car. So he sits at the wheel, and starts off, only to be found but a mile or so distant seriously injured in the midst of the wreckage of the machine of which he thought he was the master.

Men have made new machines to move themselves about at great speed on land and sea, and in the air. They have found new methods of bridging distance, and of talking through the air to each other and to vast multitudes. They have formulated new theories of education, and have evolved new systems of government, and boasted that they had converted the whole world into a brand new shining car of the latest model. The main difficulty is that no means have been found of controlling the man at the wheel. Like it or not, laugh as they may, the line in Heber's hymn which describes this world as a place in which "every prospect pleases, and only man is vile", remains true. There is no hope for the world unless and until something is found which can make men better.

The gospel of the grace of God can do so. But men's hearts are closed against it. And the deadly influence of those who, for a couple of generations, while calling themselves its friends, have mocked at the gospel's efficacy, has all but destroyed public confidence in any and every sort of religion as an instrument for human betterment.

We believe the world's hope is in a special divine visitation, some extraordinary manifestation of divine power on a worldwide scale. The chapter from which our motto is taken contains a verse carried forward into the New Testament, which reads, "As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Isaiah refers to the record of God's interpositions in times past: "When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence." It was with that in mind that he exclaimed, "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence, as when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence!"

## The Gospel Witness

and

## Protestant Advocate

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

\$3.00 Per Year. Postpaid to any address. 10c Per Single Copy.

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We believe that only the Lord Himself can make His name known to His adversaries; and that only when He thus comes down will the nations tremble at His presence. Believers know that God has come down in the person of His Son, and that the miracle of the Incarnation has made any necessary divine interposition easily possible. Let this be our readers' constant prayer, that as God has made bare His arm in days gone by, as He has repeatedly "answered by fire", he may do so again until multitudes shall cry, "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

### A GOOD TIP

There is a little boy in the Jarvis Street Sunday School who is only ten years of age. We call him Jimmie. He comes from one of our most faithful families. He has a paper route; and he gets up at 5 o'clock every morning to deliver his papers. His customers say they have never had a boy more faithful. Their papers are delivered regularly and always on time.

Sunday evening at the close of the service Jimmie came up to the Pastor and said, "I have a paper route, to give this \$5.00 to THE GOSPEL WITNESS Fund."

### LAST SUNDAY NIGHT'S SERMON,

#### "NOT PURGATORY BUT PARADISE"

The final sermon in the series of seven on How to Receive Eternal Life, of necessity is held over until next week, for the reason that the day on which THE GOSPEL WITNESS is set, Tuesday, is Christmas Day this year, and it is not possible to have the sermon ready to go to press on, Wednesday.

### NEW YEAR'S DAY FELLOWSHIP SERVICE

In Greenway Hall, Beginning at 10.30 o'clock in the Morning

## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

# "Oh That Thou Wouldest Rend the Heavens!"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, January 9th, 1938  
(Stenographically Reported)

"Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence, as when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence."—Isaiah 64:1-2.

**G**OD'S plans and purposes do not change. He is Himself the same, and His years do not fail. The Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world. The gospel was "preached before unto Abraham". Indeed, Eve, the mother of us all, was promised a Seed which should undo the mischief which sin had wrought. God's attitude toward human life, His purposes in respect to the disaster wrought by sin, His attitude toward the sin of the world, have undergone no change.

It sometimes seems to those of us who have but short memories and little acquaintance with the history of the past, that we have fallen upon strange days, that we are passing through experiences new to humankind. Properly viewed, that is really not true. The course of the river may wind about, and sometimes it may even seem to be flowing in an opposite direction, and there may be some eddies in the stream: notwithstanding, "all the rivers run into the sea"; and however indirect and circuitous their route; they find their way to the great deep at last. It often seems as though the course of human history were reversing itself, as though forces of reaction had set in. It seems as though midnight had dropped down at noon. And yet I venture the affirmation that the river of human history still flows in the bed of the divine purpose, and that nothing comes by hap or chance in the sphere of human life any more than in the realm of nature where everything is subject to inexorable law. In the end, the purpose of God will be achieved, and His will will be done on earth even as it is done in heaven.

Sometimes it appears as though the people of God were passing through times of special difficulty, but actually no new thing has come to us. Nor should we count it strange that we fall into divers temptations. It is ever true that daylight succeeds the night, and harvest follows upon the seedtime; cold and heat, winter and summer, do not cease. We must expect, individually and collectively as the people of God, to pass through all these vicissitudes. The church of Christ has had its ups and downs, its days of light and glory, and its days of gloom and apparent disaster. Always the lean kine follow upon the heels of those which are "fatfleshed and well favoured", and feed "in a meadow"; and, ever and anon, after the seven plenteous years, the days of dearth begin to come.

Such a dearth has come to the professing church in our day. Such an era indeed has come to the whole world. And such a drought had come to Israel of old. Her history is reviewed in the preceding chapter which I read to you, and in many other chapters. Deborah found

the inspiration of her song in the record of divine faithfulness, and borrowed courage from the past. Again and again in the Psalms we find the record of God's dealings with His people reviewed, and the events recorded in the sacred volume gathered together for the inspiration of faith.

It was upon such an occasion of darkness the prophet looked, a period, in which God seemed almost to have forsaken His people. It was that situation which led him to utter this exclamatory prayer, "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down". That is the cry: that God would make bare His arm, and show Himself strong in behalf of those who feared Him.

Let us see what this prayer, which I suggested to the church on New Year's morning might appropriately and profitably be our motto and the inspiration of our intercession during this year, may teach us as the people of God.

### I.

It is A PRAYER WHICH RECOGNIZES THAT CONDITIONS MAY OBTAIN IN HUMAN LIFE WHICH ARE ALTOGETHER BEYOND ALL POSSIBILITY OF HUMAN AMELIORATION. All human aid has failed; it has become evident that if conditions are to be bettered, God Himself must do something, for there is no other hope than in God.

I say, *such a condition obtains in the church*, the professing church of Christ. I dare say that as I seek to expound this part of my thesis this evening, there may be some who will be disposed to question the accuracy of some of my statements. There is a religious optimism that might well be called ostrichism. It consists in shutting one's eyes to the plain and indisputable facts of life.

There are people who live by the fallacious philosophy of Christian Science who have never subscribed to the tenets of that strange sect. They try to persuade themselves that evil may be overcome by ignoring it, and that difficulties may be removed by denying their existence. The fact is, the Christian church—and by that I mean the great body of people of all denominations who profess and call themselves Christians—has fallen upon days of dearth, of darkness, of great impoverishment. No one conversant with current religious history can successfully refute that statement. There was a day when religious life of some sort seemed to be at the flood, but it is not now. The tide of religious interest has ebbed, it has flowed out. In many cases, where once there was a proud river upon whose bosom religiously

there sailed great ships, we have now, nothing but the muddy banks, with a small and impotent stream marking the place where mighty argosies of faith once bore great cargoes of grace for the world's enrichment.

Take a view of the professing Christian church to-day. Very largely, *it is without an authoritative message*. In many cases it assumes that the heavens are shut up; there is no open vision; the priest and the prophet fail; and the pulpits of the majority of churches have been engaged for many a day in mere human speculation, in the dissemination of doubt rather than in the sowing of the word of God by the hearing of which alone, faith can be generated. I know that here and there a few oases in the desert—or what at least appear as such, may be seen. Here and there amid the barren lands there may be a pool that seems to be of fresh water; for God has left not Himself without witness. He never has done so. He gives us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons. There always are to be found, though they are not always in evidence, the seven thousand who have not bowed their knees to Baal. But speaking generally, the professing church does not recognize the authority of the Bible. There is scarcely a religious educational institution to be found, an institution of higher learning, a theological college, where the Bible is not discounted, and its authority repudiated. It is so in Toronto; it is so in Canada; it is true of the United States, of England. Germany has no monopoly of paganism. Paganism abounds in this country, even in religious circles.

The church of Christ, as a whole, *no longer professes to have a remedy for the world's ills*. The Cross and the precious blood may find a place in formal prayer, and in the ancient hymns of the church, but very little place in its preaching. Men have substituted human reason for divine revelation, and the speculations of men for the oracles of God. There are comparatively few places where conversions are either expected or believed to be possible. In its many councils, its annual meetings, its publications, the church generally is like one who has lost his way in a fog, without compass and without a chart.

We shall see within the next few weeks the account of various annual meetings of churches reported in the press; and in the majority of instances, the greater part of the report will consist in a financial statement, and perhaps the names of the people who have been appointed to office to carry on, if not the merry-go-round, the ecclesiastical roundabout; to go through another year of hymn-singing and prayer-saying, and at the end of the year have not one single convert or transformation of life and character to record.

Who is sufficient for these things? Where shall we find a power to combat it? Quite generally a social gospel is substituted for the gospel of salvation. There was a time when John R. Mott, typical of hundreds of others, was a sound evangelical; he has now become an experimenting economist. One might suppose Heaven to be dumb, and the arm of the Lord to have lost its power to save. The Bible is set aside; and a vital, present, authoritative Saviour is no longer preached as the church's message, to a sinful, bankrupt world. Understand, I say there are exceptions. But in order to overcome the difficulty, the Anglican Communion must flirt with the Roman Catholic Church and both of them must make overtures to the Eastern, or Greek Catholic Church. The so-called Free Churches of England must consider the problem, as some call it, of "reunion". And thus by might, and by an army, by human wisdom and human

organization—by human effort of some sort—men are trying as they long have tried, to improve this old world.

If you look into *the realm of moral reform* and see what is called the church at work in another way, what has been accomplished? The gospel of social readjustment has been substituted for the gospel of individual salvation. We have heard about it for a long time. I must commend at least the courage and perseverance of the social gospelers, for I cannot see that they have accomplished anything. In that respect, conditions are no better, but rather worse. If we forget all about Heaven—and the new emphasis is upon the visible and temporal—and view the efforts of men to make this old world a better place, is anyone prepared to offer his congratulations to those who have so valiantly essayed the task? Society everywhere is in a ferment. There is no more agreement between Labour and Capital, employer and employee, than there ever was. Though we talk forever and a day about these things, what better are we?

Are we any better off *politically*? Sometimes I imagine the war must have killed off all those who had any political sense, and left us—well, with what we have in Ontario, in Quebec, and elsewhere! Nor does it appear that the nations, to look at human life in the large, are any better. Formulate your political theories as you will, and consider Russian Communism as the approximation of the Christian ideal, as some optimistic religious proponents are bold enough to do—well, you are welcome to it. The liquidation of all opponents in Russia seems to me to be as far from Christian as Hell is from Heaven. Be that as it may, as each new political system is propounded, it is immediately attacked by other political principles and a new conflict is precipitated, and the new political isms are set in battle array as germs that fight against each other. Thus we have a world at war in every realm of life.

I do not know how it is to be improved. I cannot see any human saviour on the horizon. I can see no help in legislation, education, or godless education. Nor can I see any help in modern religion either; for it is a powerless thing, devoid of dynamic, spinning its theories, setting forth its ideologies, telling men to hitch their wagon to a star. "Pretty talk", as they say down South. I have seen many people who professed to have hitched their wagon to a star—but the towline must have broken, for I have seen none of them moving starward.

That was the condition faced by this prophet. When convinced of human impotence, he turned his thought heavenward and said, "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down".

## II.

It is A PRAYER THAT RECOGNIZES AT LEAST THE POSSIBILITY OF DIVINE VISITATION, AND IS OPPOSED TO ALL MODERN RELIGIOUS TEACHING. I know what some men will say of my argument. Sometimes I am half disposed to boast when I hear the pratings of some religious midgets, mere pygmies. How helpless they would leave us in the face of such conditions!

Can God come down? Modern religion says, No. In this place now these many years we have contended against these currents of religious thought. We have been called a fool for so doing; we have been called cranks and fanatics. I get letters sometimes containing not a single correct sentence, with perhaps a couple of dozen mis-spelled words—from people charging me with ignorance!

"Oh no"! they say, "God does not come down"! People are blinded by the great delusion that we are just a part of the cosmic order, and are being evolved into something, I know not what. If there be anything in evolution, I am profoundly thankful I did not arrive on the scene earlier. Men are near enough to the animal creation now, I do not know what they were before they began to evolve. But you see how that strange philosophy of life has permeated human thought everywhere until it has elbowed God out of His world in the popular view. I do not wonder that many churches in this city have no prayer meeting—why should they pray? I do not wonder that many ministers cannot pray without its being written for them. I would not pray if I were an evolutionist. Why should I? That would logically drive me to a conception of—well, if there be any God at all, an excluded God, a God apart.

That, my dear friends, is where the controversy has raged these many years. It has raged about the Bible, and chiefly about what the Bible teaches. Men have ceased to believe that God can rend the heavens and come down. They may reluctantly admit His Landlordism, but if so, He is an absentee Landlord Who is not very particular about collecting His rents. They have dismissed Him, and gone on without Him. Ah, but He has rent the heavens and come down more than once! And the God Whom we worship, and Whom we proclaim, can rend the heavens and come down. Often I have told you, and I shall keep on telling you to the end of the chapter, that the whole Bible is a record of God's coming down. That is why it was written, to tell us that notwithstanding the world's sin, Heaven is not divorced from us. He does rend the heavens and come down.

Specifically, reference is here made to *His coming down upon Sinai*, when Sinai was altogether in a smoke, and when He appeared as a consuming fire. All that were roundabout were forbidden even to touch the mountain that flowed at His presence. Let me remind you that on that occasion, when God did rend the heavens and come down, when He gave His law to His people, and made man to know that He is not only the Creator, but the Ruler of this world, and that He will not be ignored, and that His standard of righteousness and His requirements in human life must in the end be recognized and obeyed; the mountains smoked at His presence. There are special instances in Scripture when He came down in judgment, when He came down upon the wicked cities of the plain, Sodom and Gomorrah, and the smoke went up like the smoke of a furnace until they were utterly consumed.

"A bit of legend", someone says. I know! That is what I have been telling you. "Historically untrue", says another. That is what I have been telling you. "Easily explained, if there be any historical element in it, on natural grounds". One explanation is as good as another. Any speculation will do to explain away the fact that God came down. Men do not want to believe that God can rend the heavens; but He has many times done so. What I want to make clear is that those of us whose prayers find their inspiration in this Word of revelation have abundant ground for offering this petition. He has come down.

The prophet looked back upon the past and saw how God came down upon His people in Egypt and delivered them, and led them through the sea. The whole course of human history, if we were not blind to it, would dis-

close the fact that it is a record of divine visitation repeated.

He comes in many ways. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was an act, a divine act, of moral sanitation. When, earlier, He came, not in fire, but in flood, He came because the hearts of the sons of men were fully set in them to do evil. He purged the earth of its iniquity, and began again. And surely, surely, this sinful earth is due for another fire of some sort; but I content myself with reminding you that that is exactly what the Bible teaches us, that God can and does rend the heavens and come down. Therefore, we may pray this prayer. It is up to date, prepared for us by the Holy Spirit. We may earnestly petition the King of kings and Lord of lords that He would rend the heavens and come down.

### III.

HIS COMING HERE IS SET FORTH UNDER THE FIGURE OF FIRE. "Our God is a consuming fire." It is proverbial that it is not safe for children to play with fire. This sinful world is a world of children who now for a long time have been playing with Fire; but do not forget that from everlasting to everlasting He is God. It is just as appropriate to preach in this day as it was in the days of Jonathan Edwards, that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God". God, in this modern day, has not only been misrepresented: he has been caricatured. He is largely an unknown quantity, the Unknown spelled with a capital, a Force—with a capital F; He is Energy—with a capital E; He is Law—with a capital L. He is anything in the thought of men, but what He really is, and "even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient". Men have changed the image of the incorruptible God, but it still remains that our God, in His very nature, is like unto fire.

Fire purifies; fire can consume; fire can give light; fire can produce energy. Call God Force, Energy, Law, Light—call Him what you will, He is all that, but vastly more. He is Fire, and this petitioner prayed that He might come down as fire.

*He has come as fire.* He came to Sodom and Gomorrah. He came on Carmel—broke in upon the idolatry of Israel, and the prophets of Baal were slain. He came as a little Babe; He rent the heavens and came down. "Ah", someone says, "now you are getting near the gospel. God came as a little Babe". Yes, He did; and He came as a Man, as an High Priest "touched with the feeling of our infirmities; (and) was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin". He came during that parenthesis of His eternal existence outshining in truth and grace—"full of grace and truth".

Then He went back to heaven, and He sent Someone to represent Him. When that Someone came, He came as a *Tongue of Fire*. The church was baptized with the Holy Ghost and with Fire. And even in that day people thought they could presume, and a certain man who had been but a humble fisherman said to another, "Tell me, did ye sell the land for so much"? "Yes". Then said Peter, "Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price"? Ananias played with Fire—and in New Testament times "Ananias, hearing these words," fell dead in the presence of our God Who is "a consuming Fire". Then came his wife, to whom Peter said, "Tell me whether ye sold the



land for so much?" And she said, "Yea, for so much". Then Peter said unto her, "How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out". Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost. Men cannot play with God. He does, He will again, rend the heavens and come down. Many times in the subsequent history of the church has He come, and He will again rend the heavens and come down.

I suggest that those of us who have come to know God in Christ Jesus will do well to remember that we must serve Him with reverence and godly fear. "O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places". Oh that we could take our religion more seriously! Oh that we could recognize that when we turn the pages of this Book, and on the basis of its promises bow our knees and take upon us the name of Jesus Christ, we are praying to One Who is Fire. There is an expression commonly used about one's relation to dangerous things and dangerous situations, "it is dynamite; do not touch it". I know He speaks in a still small voice; I know He comes to cover us with His feathers, and that Almightyness touches us with infinite tenderness. I know that He has revealed Himself in grace. But hear me: Our God is dynamite! He can and will come down in His own appointed time.

#### IV.

It was A PRAYER WITH A PURPOSE. This man did not pray that God would come down for spectacular reasons. May I without irreverence say that there are people who seem to think that God is interested in putting on a kind of divine show, as though He were the master of a theatre. Do you know what *hypocrite* means? Do you know its origin? A hypocrite was one who played a part. Can we conceive of God as playing a part? Oh no! When He comes down, He will come down for a purpose. What will it be? "To make thy name known to thine adversaries". You ask, "Has God any adversaries?" This world is peopled with the enemies of God. You Christians know that. You know that down in the office, in the shop, and elsewhere. Wherever you try to bear testimony to Jesus Christ, some merely oppose, while others almost gnash their teeth at you. Not if you are a mere church member, but if you witness for Christ in the New Testament fashion, you will find immediately the adversaries of the Most High will be upon your track.

I wonder could I use it as an illustration? I do not know that it troubles me now: it would have done so once upon a time before I came to understand it. I came to this church nearly twenty-eight years ago, when it was supposed to be a church of wealth and social position. It was then supposed to be the richest church in the Denomination. I did not preach any differently from what I do now: I have not changed my gospel. They stood it for eleven years, and then rebelled. But the Lord gave us the victory. I have not stolen anything, I have not played burglar, I do not know that I have hurt anyone; yet I receive word almost every day of my life from somewhere of people who simply gnash their teeth at the very mention of my name. In the majority of instances, I do not know the people. Why do they hate us? "You go to that place, to Jarvis Street Church?" It is as much as one's reputation is worth, in some cases, "Adversaries"? Preach Christ, stand for the Bible, and

you will become identified with your Lord. As they hated Him, they will hate you. You need not expect an easy life.

"Adversaries?" Yes! Luther, in his day, was thought by some to be full of the devil. I do not know how many devils he had! We live in an anti-religious age. This prophet prayed that God would come down and deal with His adversaries, because he could not. A man came to me one day and said, "I have just been talking to a man who lives not far from this church. When I mentioned your name, he was furious, but I am sure if you would only call on him, you would change his attitude in five minutes. He would like you". I said, "Thank you; but I never did call on anyone for such a purpose, and I am not going. I cannot help what he thinks of me". The enemies of Christ's gospel are too much for me: I shall leave them alone save as I mention them to Him Who can rend the heavens and come down and deal with them Himself.

"To make thy name known to thine adversaries". There was once a proud king, and there was a man who was the representative of a race of slaves, who came to that proud king and said, "Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me". And Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice? I know not the Lord; neither will I let Israel go". You know the story—a great king who did not know God, and whom nobody could introduce to God; and God said, "Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong hand will he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land". Plague after plague was sent until at last an unseen Hand was laid upon the firstborn of the royal house, and upon the firstborn of all Egypt. There was not an house in which there was not one dead. Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron by night and said, "Rise up and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go and serve the Lord as ye have said". But later he repented and pursued them.

I have sometimes tried to imagine the operations of Pharaoh's mind. At the head of his army, representative of the greatest power upon earth, he followed this nation of slaves as they went through the divided waters. Pharaoh gave the order to go after them. He descended into the valley of waters, as the Israelites emerged safely on the other side. I imagine that when Moses stretched forth his rod, and the waters returned in their strength, and those mighty billows were breaking over Pharaoh and his army, he may have had a fraction of a minute to say, "This is Jehovah. I did not know Him, but I know Him now!" Yes, he knew Him; for "the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them". Thus did the Lord rend the heavens and come down and make His name known to His adversaries.

In the New Testament, a scholar, a philosopher, a religious leader, is described as "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord". What a suggestive word! Like a beast of the jungle, frothing at the mouth, eager for its prey. Suddenly God rent the heavens and came down, and a light that never was on sea or land shone upon Saul and all who were with him, and blinded them so that they fell to the ground. He could see nothing; just one flash of that Fire, and all the glory of the earth departed. Then he heard a voice saying unto him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

And he said, "Who art thou, Lord?" And the Lord said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." And he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence"—what for?—"to make thy name known to thine adversaries".

A time is coming when the Sauls of our day, and the scholars and religious leaders of our day, will learn that this Book they have opposed, and this Jesus against Whom they have gnashed their teeth, are really the Lord of heaven and His word; and they will "know his name".

Is it not wonderful that He is able to do it? I have seen Sauls converted into Pauls, the adversaries of Jesus Christ converted into advocates of His cause, ambassadors of the King of kings. Blessed be God, that is the power we need. Nothing else will do.

Thus I have shown you that our God does come down and make His name known unto His adversaries. He may come in judgment as upon Pharaoh, or in boundless grace as to Saul: but either in judgment or in mercy sooner or later He must again come down.

"That the nations may tremble at thy presence". You say, "That would be impossible. I can hear the march of Hitler's millions, the tramp of Mussolini's armies, the millions of Russia, and the mechanized forces of Japan. Put the gospel against that?" No, not apart from the God of the gospel. In Luther's day, God came down, and the nations literally trembled at His presence. He shook thrones; He overturned governments. It is not impossible. There is no other hope for the world than that He should rend the heavens and come down.

Continue the study of this chapter, and you will find a verse which the Apostle Paul carries into his first letter to the Corinthians: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God". "There is no God like thee", said the prophet, "that worketh"—for whom?—"for them who wait for thee". Those who depend upon Him, He never fails.

We have seen something of His mighty power in this place. Many a time have we seen His outstretched arm. I live in the confident hope that we shall see it in full measure, and by special divine visitation again.

## V.

But I cannot send you away without this word. We know He will rend the heavens and come down for His own. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ". But what else? "He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe". What a glorious Saviour He is! What a mighty King! How some of us love Him even now! We are constrained to say that He is the fairest among ten thousands; He is the altogether lovely One. "This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem". But some day He will be manifested, and we also shall be manifested with Him in glory. He is really coming—Jesus is coming again! May He come to us in all the fullness of His saving grace, bringing

multitudes to His feet. Then in the time appointed He will come in glory, to take unto Himself His great power and reign.

So, Jarvis Street, I give you this motto, this model prayer. Fail not to address it to the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Pray unceasingly that He will rend the heavens, that He will come down and make His name known unto His adversaries. Amen.

## THE PASTOR'S REVERIE

"The pastor sits in his easy-chair,  
With the Bible upon his knee.  
From gold to purple the clouds in the west  
Are changing momentarily;  
The shadows lie in the valleys below,  
And hide in the curtain's fold;  
And the page grows dim whereon he reads,  
'I remember the days of old.'

"'Not clear nor dark', as the Scripture saith,  
The pastor's memories are;  
No day that is gone was shadowless,  
No night was without its star;  
But mingled bitter and sweet hath been  
The portion of his cup:  
'The hand that in love hath smitten', he saith,  
'In love hath bound us up.'

"He thinks of the day when first, with fear  
And faltering lips, he stood  
To speak in the sacred place the Word  
To the waiting multitude;  
He walks again to the house of God  
With the voice of joy and praise,  
With many whose feet long time have pressed  
Heaven's safe and blessed ways.

"By the couch of pain he kneels again;  
Again, the thin hand lies  
Cold in his palm, while the last far look  
Steals into the steadfast eyes;  
And now the burden of hearts that break  
Lies heavy upon his own—  
The widow's woe, and the orphan's cry,  
And the desolate mother's moan.

"So blithe and glad, so heavy and sad,  
Are the days that are no more,  
So mournfully sweet are the sounds that float  
With the winds from a far-off shore.  
For the pastor has learned what meaneth the word  
That is given him to keep,—  
'Rejoice with them that do rejoice,  
And weep with them that weep.'

"It is not in vain that he has trod  
This lonely and toilsome way.  
It is not in vain that he has wrought  
In the vineyard all the day;  
For the soul that gives is the soul that lives,  
And bearing another's load  
Doth lighten your own, and shorten the way  
And brighten the homeward road."

—Washington Gladden.

## "BLESSED ARE THEY THAT HUNGER"

Once-a-day-hearers, represented by a Perthshire landlord, were pithily rebuked by Mr. Walker, the minister of Muthill. The landowner meeting the minister on Monday, explained to him that he had not been hearing at the second service on the previous day, as he could not digest more than one sermon. "I rather think," said Mr. Walker, "the appetite is at fault rather than the digestion."

## "YEA RATHER"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, December 16th, 1951  
(Electrically Recorded)

"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.  
"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen  
again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."  
—Romans 8:33-34.

**I**N the Bible school this morning your thought has been directed to the great fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. We shall pursue that study a little farther this morning.

The amount of money being spent today by the nations of the world, in the production of arms and armaments of every sort, in order to protect themselves against a possible attack from some powerful enemy, I suppose is quite beyond our computation. Billions and billions of dollars are being spent every year just to defend ourselves, to maintain our right to live. What a world it would be if all this effort could be turned in the direction of human welfare, instead of being a preparation for human destruction. So experts busy themselves in estimating the relative strength of different nations—whether the allied powers would be sufficient to defend themselves against a Russian attack.

That is all very important, and the particulars of it are quite beyond our knowledge and understanding. Yet there is an analogy to the spiritual condition in the world. We are all under attack. We live in a wicked world, and we are subject to the hostile approaches of principalities and powers, and the rulers of this world's darkness, and spiritual wickednesses in high places. And we may well ask ourselves what defence the human soul can possibly hope for against the united efforts to destroy it by all the powers of darkness. How helpless we are! How hopeless the prospect would be had we no communication with any other world than this, if there were no disclosure of the existence of a Superior Power adequate to defend us, and to ensure our safety even in the presence of so many formidable foes.

That is what the apostle Paul, by inspiration, has been discussing in the eighth chapter of Romans. And he comes to this great question: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" Where is the power equal to the task of destroying the elect of God? "It is God that justifieth." He is more than our ally; He is our unconquerable Defender. "Who is he that condemneth?" We may well sing:

"Frail children of dust,  
And feeble as frail,  
In Thee do we trust  
Nor find Thee to fail:  
Thy mercies how tender,  
How firm to the end,  
Our Maker, Defender,  
Redeemer and Friend."

And here is the great argument; here lies the ground for the full assurance of faith: "It is Christ that died." Now we cannot too strongly or too frequently emphasize the tremendous fact of the crucifixion. That is a matter of indisputable historic fact. That was a matter of which everybody in Paul's day, I suppose, had been apprised. They all knew that Christ had died. And

yet, if we may without invidious comparison relate one truth of the gospel to another, we may be justified in giving priority after all to another truth, because it is complementary to the first. "It is Christ that died." Yes, our Roman Catholic friends believe and teach it, and in their homes and in their churches they present figures of Christ nailed upon a cross. To me a crucifix, a representation of the dead Christ, is utterly abhorrent. Jesus is not upon the cross. He was, but He is not now. "It is Christ that died, YEA RATHER, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." The resurrection is the keystone of the arch of Divine revelation. It is the climax, it is the ultimate, of Divine power. It is the one great truth to which the apostolic preachers bore witness. "Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us," said the Scribes and the Pharisees, as "with great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of Christ from the dead."

There is a proverb to the effect that dead men tell no tales. I have read somewhere of a missionary proclaiming the truth of the resurrection to a tribe of African savages, their chief being present. And the chief stopped the preacher, and said, "That must not be." Lifting his strong right arm he said, "This arm has slain thousands. Do you tell me that they shall rise from the dead?" A terrible prospect for a murderer, would it not be? And a terrible reality it was to those who had murdered Jesus Christ that the dead Man now lived to tell the tale. And all through the Acts of the Apostles you will find the same emphasis as in this text—"Yea rather." The emphasis was upon the resurrection of Christ, as the final, fullest, and ultimate revelation of the power of God.

Years ago I read a book entitled, "When It Was Dark." The purpose of the book was to show what would happen to the world if the resurrection of Christ could be proved to be other than an historic fact. It told the story of a very rich man who was bitterly hostile to Christ, and to Christianity. And he conceived the idea of dealing the religion of Christ a death-blow. So he gathered about him some men who were somewhat like-minded, who were reputed to be scholars, and he took them with him to Palestine secretly. There they carefully prepared what they thought would result in such an explosion that Christianity would be destroyed. Then in due course it was announced that these "scholars" had actually discovered the sepulchre of Joseph, in which the body of Jesus had been laid, and that they had found within the bones of the crucified Jesus. And there were certain inscriptions which, they said, indubitably established the truth of their contention—that their discovery proved to a demonstration that Jesus Christ had never risen from the dead.



It was great news that was flashed across the world, and was carried on the front page of all the newspapers of the world, and as soon as it was published anarchy broke out everywhere. It was universal. All the people seemed suddenly to become Ishmaelites—every man's hand against his fellow. Civilization threatened to crumble, until, according to the story, it was discovered that the report was a hoax, and there was no truth in it.

How dreadful it would be if Jesus had never risen from the dead! How hopeless we should be!

Next Sunday, I suppose, the world will be celebrating Christmas. Perhaps there are some here who are old enough to remember when the twenty-fourth of May was one of our most honoured and popular holidays, because it marked the birthday of the good Queen Victoria. But Queen Victoria has been dead many years, and now they call it Empire Day. But the enthusiasm dies down; you cannot long celebrate the birthday of someone who is dead. They try to remember Lincoln's birthday in the United States, and Washington's birthday, but it is hard to be enthusiastic about the memory of a dead man.

Countless millions will observe the birthday of Christ who never have known Him. And yet, the truth that He died and rose again has become part of the accepted creed of millions of people.

### I.

Why is the resurrection of Christ so important? Because IT IS THE COMPLEMENT OF HIS CRUCIFIXION. The resurrection of Christ establishes beyond controversy the truth of everything He ever said; it vindicates Him in every claim He made for Himself; it validates all His proclamations of authority. And it attaches to His death the particular value which He Himself ascribed to it. He said, "My death will be no accident, and it will not occur by the exercise of any human power. No man taketh (my life) from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down." Somebody might say, "Well every man has power to lay down his life if he wants to." Yes, but said He, "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." His enemies were particularly solicitous to proclaim and to establish, so far as they possibly could, as truth, the report of His death. They put a great stone—we read this morning that it was very great, for they said, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" But when they came it was already rolled away. They sealed it, and set a watch, because, they said, "Lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first." "It will be a terrific calamity to us if it should be believed that the Man Whom we profess justly to have executed should be alive again." They argued accurately. Their logic was invincible. The resurrection of Christ proved that Jesus was really the Son of God. It proved that everything He said was the word of God. It proved that the life He laid down was the very life of God, that the life which He took again, "because it was not possible that he should be holden of (death)" was the life of God. It proved His unity with the Father—that He came from Heaven into the world, and returned again to His Father.

My dear friends, we need have no doubt about the value of the death of Jesus any more. We know why He died. He "died for our sins according to the scriptures," and do not forget the complement of that text is this: "He rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

The testimony of the Word of God was one in respect to His death and His resurrection, and I venture the affirmation that there is no fact of human history more thoroughly, more incontrovertibly attested, proved, and demonstrated, than the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Oh, that gives us a gospel, because, proving who Jesus is, it establishes the truth of the whole Book, because this Book is like the celestial City, which has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof, from Genesis to Revelation. Now that we know who He is, we have an infallible Bible, because we have an infallible Christ. And having an infallible Christ we have a salvation that is proof against all the assaults of the enemy of our souls. Talk about the atomic bomb! The power of the resurrection, the dynamite—that is the word that is used here, the word from which we get our word "dynamite"—of the resurrection is mightier than all the atomic bombs that men can produce, because it betokens the life of Him Who gave power to this universe, and to everything that is in it. He is the Source, the Beginning,—Oh, let us open the Book, and open every book, and let us read it the same way: "In the beginning God . . . ." Postulate that, and there remains no difficulty.

Now, "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God." What was the death of Christ? *It was the culmination, the utmost expression and manifestation of Hell's hostility to God, of the devil's hatred of God.* They killed Him, by His allowance, but that was an expression of their attitude toward God. They would blot Him out of existence if they could, they would bury Him deep out of sight, so that we should have nothing but a godless world. Mark you, Jesus took your place and mine, died in your room and stead, and the strokes which fell upon Him were those which we had merited. He died "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." And so in His character as our Substitute and Representative, His death was the culmination of sin, the reward of sin, the wages of sin, the last thing that the devil could do. Christ Himself said it: "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do." They kill the body, but they have reached the limit of their hostile power; they can do no more. So the sealed sepulchre which enclosed the precious body of incarnate Deity represents the acme of Satanic hatred and power.

### II.

Very well then, WHAT SHALL WE SAY OF THE OPEN GRAVE? He was there; where is He now? "Who is even at the right hand of God." The right hand of God, as I said to you a little while ago, represents *the utmost of Divine power.* He is seated at the right hand of God. *From the utmost power of evil He is delivered, and becomes the embodiment of the utmost power of Deity.* No wonder the apostles emphasized the resurrection. Why you see, we haven't a dead Christ. The resurrection proclaims that our Saviour is a living Saviour. He is, at the right hand of God. Aren't you glad of that? We used to have some people here sometimes, who if that truth were spoken they would say "Amen". You are too respectable, you never say "Amen" any more. I hope you feel it. But I say we have a living Christ. "I . . . was dead," He said, "and, behold, I am alive for evermore". What an object of faith that is, isn't it? The

Son of God, having faced the serried ranks of Hell itself, having single handed, like David in the field against Goliath, laid man's enemy low, put His conquering heel upon the neck of death, and extracted its sting, rolling back the stone He robbed the grave of its victory, and from the opened heavens proclaimed, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." You are asked to put your trust in a living Saviour, Whose power, Whose defensive and offensive power exceeds that of all the allies of the kingdom of darkness. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" Who dares that, since it is true that He Who died is even now at the right hand of God? I wish I had an hour or two to expound the implications of that tremendous truth.

### III.

But I must pass to this. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST ASSURES US OF THE MINISTRY OF A CONTINUING INTERCESSOR—"Who also maketh intercession for us." After this church was destroyed in 1938 we engaged an architect to prepare the plans for its reconstruction. We had a good time together as we looked over the ruins, and he went back to his office and wrote me a letter, expressing his appreciation of the fact that the task had been assigned to him, and assuring me of the joy with which he would undertake the enterprise. The next morning this office received that letter, but the same morning, as the architect, Mr. Horwood, Senior, was shaving in his bathroom, he was suddenly seized, and dropped dead. Then half the architects in town came to see me, and said, "Your architect is dead. Don't you want us?" I said, "No thank you". His son, who was his partner, came to see me, and said, "You could wait a few days, could you?" I said, "Most certainly". And after the funeral he came with his partner—this was all ruins, and I had my office in the Seminary building. He asked his partner if he would stay outside a moment; he said, "I want to see the Doctor alone." He came in and closed the door, and he said, "Until the last two nights, as long as I can remember, when I have laid my head upon the pillow I have done it with the knowledge that my father had prayed for me, and had commended me to God. Now," he said, "he is gone, and he can pray for me no more. Would you please take his place, and may we here bow together—for the son was a Christian too—and ask the guidance of the great Architect and Builder in the reconstruction of this house of prayer?" And we knelt together in my office, and I prayed for him and for this building, and for all our endeavours. And I can tell you heaven came down our souls to greet, and glory crowned the mercy seat. And all through the succeeding months I felt the assurance that we were being led step by step by the Spirit of the Lord.

I could say what that young man said, as many of you can. Up to a certain time, from my earliest recollections, I knew that both my father and my mother had commended me to God. Ah, it is a great blessing to have godly parents, isn't it? What a heritage is theirs who are the heirs of the blessings of the prayers of father and mother! I am sure they follow us all the days of our life; I haven't the slightest doubt about it. But alas, we all sooner or later have to mourn for the touch of the vanished hand, and the sound of the voice that is still. It is many a year now since I heard my father pray for me, and some of you are just in the same place. But wouldn't it be a glorious thing to have somebody, who

is a friend at court, to pray for us, who could never die, and who would always live, and whose intercessions would never fail? I value the prayers of God's people. When I was in Australia, not quite two years ago now, I met a man from whom I had received many letters. For fifteen or sixteen years he had been a reader of THE GOSPEL WITNESS, and he used to write to me, and every time he would say this: "I remind you that every morning and evening as my wife and I bow in prayer we always pray for you, and we always specially pray for your health. We watch the paper just to see how you are." When I got to Melbourne I found that his wife had but a short time before passed away, and I found him in a soldiers' convalescent hospital, for he had been a veteran of the South African war. I went to visit him, and sat out on the sunny porch, looking out over a beautiful landscape, and we talked together about the things of God. He told me of what rich fellowship he and his wife had had with me, though they had never seen me, for well on to twenty years, as day by day they prayed. Then he managed to get out to a service in the great Assembly Hall, and he sat right up in front. Shortly after I got home I received word from a friend who had been with him that he too had gone to be with Christ, which is far better.

I can recall so many who used to pray here. I was just thinking of them last night, and calling them up before me again, and remembering, Mrs. Lilly, and Deacon Greenway, Deacon Hyde, Deacon Brownlow, and Deacon Jennings. I can hear Deacon Jennings praying for me now. My heart used to leap as I heard him pray, and ask God's blessing upon one whom he called "my Pastor". But he is gone, and his prayers have ceased. Yours haven't, nor my prayers for you.

What I want you to see this morning is that there is One Who is alive for evermore, "who also maketh intercession for us." As our architect said, "I never laid my head upon the pillow without remembering that my father had prayed for me." I feel that I never come into this pulpit, or never open this Book, or never undertake anything in the Name of the Lord, without feeling that my great Intercessor has already taken account of the matter in hand, and He has prayed for me. Oh, what a truth the resurrection of Christ is! "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

There is a verse which I love to quote to myself very often. When Jesus came to the grave of Lazarus, and told them to take away the stone, He lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said this: "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." I believe that, don't you? And I believe what He said in that prayer: "I knew that thou hearest me always." I know that I have a Friend at court, and I know that He never prays in vain.

I told you a story once; let me repeat it for the children's sake. I was going along the street one day in Hamilton, and I saw a little girl trying to post a letter in the red box fastened to a pillar. She stood on her tip-toes and reached as high as she possibly could, but she could not reach it. Then after a while she jumped at it, and tried to throw up the lid and put the letter in, but she could not do it. She tried it several times as I was coming along the street. Then she saw me coming, and she ceased her trying, and came running toward me hold-

ing up her letter. I suppose I looked to her as though I could reach anything, I do not know. But she came running up, and she said, "Please sir will you post my letter for me, because I cannot reach". I took the letter, and I saw it bore the image of His Majesty, the proper stamp, and it was addressed. And so I took her along with me, and when she came to the box I lifted her up, and I said, "Now you post your own letter." She lifted the lid and put her letter in, and I let her down. She said, "Thank you sir". Ah, when I have written a letter to heaven, as I do many times a day, I stand on tip-toe, and I jump, but I cannot reach the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity. Then I see my great Intercessor stoop to my low estate, and He says, "Give me your letter, and I will present it to my Father". He takes my poor prayer, He stamps it with His merit, and He presents it to His Father, and I have found it gloriously true these many years, I know that God hears Him always. Let us pray.

O Lord, there is not one of us here this morning who has not some great need; not one of us who is not in a situation that is quite beyond our ability to cope with. We all need Divine help, and our only merit is in the Lord Jesus; our only help is to Him. The only Name we may subscribe to our petitions is the Name which is above every Name. Oh hear us for His sake. Help us all, from the oldest to the youngest, to understand a little more clearly what an unspeakable gift Thou hast given us in giving us a crucified and living Saviour, Amen.

### "RING OUT THE OLD, RING IN THE NEW"

Ring out wild bells to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light:  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
For those that here we see no more;  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times;  
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out the old shapes of foul disease,  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

—TENNYSON

"This is the noblest science—to know how to live—in hourly communion with God in Christ."

—R. M. MCCHEYNE.

### "ALL THINGS NEW"

BY THE time that these lines come under the eyes of our readers, they will have already embarked upon another New Year. As we write, the celebrations and the sound of bells and whistles that mark the dying of an old year and the birth of a new are still in the future. We never pass through that season of the year or hear the ringing of the bells without recalling the canto of Tennyson's *In Memoriam* that we have reprinted on this page. It was written a century ago, yet it prays to be rid of "the feud of rich and poor", "ancient forms of party strife", "the want, the care, the sin", it laments "the faithless coldness of the times". All this sounds very modern and up to date. It is well for us, as we review the conditions of our own day to be reminded that human nature in our time is not radically different from what it has been ever since the Garden of Eden. We talk about the "good old days" and forget that there were many things then that were not good. All the sins and wrongs and errors of the world are not the sole invention or the monopoly of this day and generation. We must give even the devil his due: there is nothing new in sin except its exceeding sinfulness, what was attached to

Man's first disobedience, and the Fruit  
Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal taste  
Brought Death into the World, and all our woe.

When the Saviour of mankind was born, the strife and tumult all but drowned out the song of the angel chorus, and it was unheard by the busy innkeeper as it was by Herod in his palace and the chief priests and the scribes, wholly occupied with their traditions and their lore. If the world treated our Master thus, ought we to be surprised that it deals in the same way with His Gospel?

This is not to excuse sin, but rather to intensify the guilt. Through the long years of history Christ and Barabbas have been demonstrating what they are and of what their respective kingdoms consist, and men with more and more knowledge still choose Barabbas and crucify Christ.

It is also well for us to be reminded that ours is not the first age to cherish high hopes of great things that are to be. At first one is inclined, perhaps, to dismiss Tennyson's beautiful poem as a piece of facile optimism. Progress upward and forward seemed the law of being in the nineteenth century, it appealed to men of that era in the world's history as the inevitable law of the universe. But we know better now, it is often said, having been taught the dreadful lesson by two world-wide holocausts within the span of one generation. Perhaps our predecessors accepted it a little too easily, though Tennyson fully recognizes the evils of his day. But shall we, by way of compensation swing to the other extreme? Shall our generation be noted for its cynicism, its hopelessness? Is the only gospel this age accepts a gospel that is not a gospel, but the death knell of a hopeless pessimism. The Word of God describes unbelieving men as being "without God, and without hope". God and hope are inseparable. The law of progress which was the gospel of the last century is not a self-acting law. Indeed there are no self-acting laws. Laws, whether physical or spiritual, are God's ways of working. If the world and all that is in it is the fruit of chance, the freak result of a chapter of accidents, then in the nature of the case there is no hope for the future. But if the world is the scene of God's eternal and all-wise Providence, then, as

Tennyson clearly saw and concisely expressed, we have this ground of hope:

That God, which ever lives and loves,  
One God, one law, one element,  
And one far-off divine event,  
To which the whole creation moves.

To the saints of old it seemed sometimes, in seasons of trial, as if God had forgotten, or that His purposes had failed. The psalmist confesses: "I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." Not until he ascended into the sanctuary did he find his painful problem resolved. Even in the last book of the Bible that tells of the final glorious triumph of Christ, it is said that the saints under the altar "cried with a loud voice, saying How long, O Lord, holy and true?" Our God does not do His work according to our little-clocks; His progress cannot be measured by men with their stop-watches in hand. He works in the fulness of time, but He is never early and never late. He is "longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9).

Our measurement of time by clocks and calendars, by days and years, is an artificial device as anyone that has crossed a time zone or an international date line will recognize. While we in Toronto are celebrating the incoming of a new year, in another hemisphere the event is already a thing of the past. The fact that a needle passes a mark on a dial does not create a new span of existence. When we rise in the morning and are reminded by the calendar that we are beginning another year, unhappily we are aware, if we are wise, that we are taking the old man with us into a new year and that it will speedily prove to be like the old year, filled with sins and errors, with things left undone and opportunities neglected. The kind of fresh beginning we all need is that which Caliban supposed he had obtained:

'Ban, 'Ban, Cacaliban,  
Has a new master: get a new man.

Unhappily, Shakespeare's creature changed his old master for a worse one, but for the soul that takes Christ as Master, all things become new because our Lord is a Creator and if any man be in Christ he is a new creature. He says, "Behold, I make all things new." The past record is erased, the filthy garments are stripped away, a new heart is given, fresh grace is bestowed. All things are made new. The day, in which the soul believes on the Lord Jesus Christ is truly a beginning of days.

The world at large is still occupied with its schemes for a new order, for some Utopia that will usher in a new era. All these fine dreams are but pale copies of the glorious picture given in the Word of God of the new heaven and the new earth. That will come in God's good time, but in the meanwhile it is for each individual to rejoice in the newness of life that is in Christ Jesus. Our business is not primarily to reform the world but to regenerate the individual by preaching the Gospel. The Gospel is a reformatory power in the world at large because first of all it is a regenerative force in the individual life. And so we venture to extend the sincere wish to all our readers that this will be a truly happy New Year, and what is even better a blessed New Year, blessed with the presence and power of Him that sitteth upon the throne and who saith, "Behold, I make all things new."—W.S.W.

## "REDOLPH, THE RUDE-NOSED REINDEER"

A little girl of four years, who is closely related to the writer, returned from a shopping expedition down town with the triumphant assertion that she had seen and spoken to "Redolph, the rude-nosed reindeer". We hope that this famous and fabulous beast has not secured a copyright on his name for the aforementioned little girl has no resources to withstand a lawsuit and neither have any of her immediate relatives. Until we heard this astounding assertion, we had been under the impression that this much-publicized animal together with the songs about him had gone the way of all popular songs and fads. That may have been the result of not listening to the radio or it may have arisen from wishful thinking. But sooner or later Rudy and his allegedly luminous nose will have been relegated to the limbo of the forgotten with all other fleeting fancies that hold the public attention for a short season. But the old Christmas hymns persist. Even the choirs from the great departmental stores, and the loudspeakers that blare on the street corners during the Christmas season, re-echo the song the angelic chorus sang long ago to the startled shepherds on Bethlehem's hills:

It came upon the midnight clear,  
That glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth  
To touch their harps of gold:—  
'Peace on earth, good will to men,  
From heaven's all-gracious King!  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
To hear the angels sing.

The popular song sheets used in festive gatherings of the season all contain some of the old hymns of praise and adoration for the Saviour which is born. Even many of the old carols are coloured with a note of wonder and thanksgiving for the message of salvation through the God-man. It is some compensation for the commercializing of Christmas to know that in spite of it all some element that is genuinely Christian has remained through the years. Comic characters and popular fads come and go, the message of Christmas remains. A more subtle enemy of the genuine spirit of Christmas is the sole concern for good cheer, for food and drink, that occupy the care of so many people. It is disheartening to see the crowds thronging the liquor stores and hastily carrying home their horde of strong drink with which to celebrate the birth of Christ. What a blasphemous fashion in which to dishonour the sacred name by making it the excuse for bestializing men and women for whom He died. In the Dickensian Christmas, typified by the new Scrooge, no longer a miser but a hilarious dispenser of good cheer, there is much that is praiseworthy and admirable in its spirit of unselfish service, but there is little that is specifically Christian.

The first Christmas was celebrated by intense hatred and by ferocious cruelty on the part of Herod and by careless indifference on the part of those who could find no room for the mother and her Child in the inn of Bethlehem. But the humble shepherds heard the angels' song and went to the place where the young child was; the Wise Men from the East saw the gleam of the star and followed it to worship Christ; old Simeon was awaiting His coming and when he saw the infant was content to say "Lord, now lettest thy servant depart in peace according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salva-

tion." We can scarcely hope that conditions would be otherwise in our day. Let us thank God for the coming of the Saviour, let us make room for Him in our hearts and praise Him and serve Him as we ought, rejoicing in the persistence of the Good News down through the centuries and in the countless thousands in this day who know and love Our Saviour.—W.S.W.

### K. OF. C. AFRAID OF FREE SPEECH

**T**HE Knights of Columbus have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in advertising their peculiar religious beliefs in the free press of this continent. They have insisted time and again on the necessity of hearing the whole truth about Roman Catholicism and have also engaged in sly, indirect attacks on Protestantism. From the way in which they have exercised their right to the use of the free press and from their insistent demand on hearing both sides of the story, one would think that the band of Romanist knights were different from their brethren in Spain, Italy and Quebec where "error" i.e. non-Romanism is not granted the same rights as "truth" i.e. Romanism, and this according to the dogma of the papal church. But when our Canadian and American papal knights are scratched a little, they quickly reveal that they are brothers under the skin to the persecuting priests of lands where the Church of Rome is supreme.

An example of this comes to hand from London, Ontario, where the "Information Committee of the Dormer General Assembly, Fourth Degree, Knights of Columbus" complain in effect that too much information has been given on the religion they sponsor by the local branch of the Canadian Protestant League. One might have expected that such convinced and practising advertizers of the necessity of hearing both sides would have welcomed free discussion of these questions. But no, the enraged papal committee wrote to the local school board who had rented a hall to the above-mentioned society and threatened the board that, in default of an immediate and satisfactory explanation, they would be compelled to take up the matter with the Minister of Education for Ontario. Strange language is not, from the authors of the advertisements entitled: "You Hear Strange Things about Catholics"!!!

The Knights of Columbus are careful to state in their letter: "Let it be understood at the outset that we are not attacking the right of free speech or the right of others to their own opinions . . . We have no objection to these organizations and individuals ranting and raving on some street corner or in a private home, club or hall . . ." They have no objection to free speech but they would refuse the use of public halls for its exercise! They would allow such things to be said on street corners or private homes but not in public halls! In Quebec, the use of the street corner is denied to preachers of the Gospel, and in Spain, Protestant churches are closed by government order, and Protestant private schools are expropriated. The Knights of Columbus have their separate sectarian schools supported by public taxes in which they teach the primacy of loyalty to the pope and hatred of Protestantism, but they object to the rental of a public hall for the use of a Protestant society. They would not deny freedom of speech, they would merely limit it to those who agree with their particular dogmas! It would appear that the Knights of Columbus are not satisfied with the special privilege of controlling their own separate Roman Catholic Schools, they now wish to dictate

to the Public School Board how it shall manage the Public Schools also!

The Knights of Columbus are running true to form: what they really demand as a right is that they may be free to attack all other churches and movements but that the Church of Rome shall be exempt from criticism. That is the condition that obtained in the Dark Ages when heretics were burned to death for their opinions and learning was hidden under a bushel and the Bible an unknown book. This state of affairs constitutes the Roman Catholic ideal of "liberty".

Following this article we reprint the text of a report by Trustee C. C. Carrothers K.C., on the Knights of Columbus protest against free speech.—W.S.W.

### TEXT OF REPORT ON FREE SPEECH

From *The Free Press*, London, Ont., December 15, 1951

Following is the text of a report submitted to the Board of Education by C. C. Carrothers, K.C., in response to the K. of C. communication:

"The letter which has been referred to me by Mr. H. B. Rockey addressed to the Chairman and Members of the Board of Education by the Dormer General Assembly, Fourth Degree, Knights of Columbus, has received some consideration on my part.

"No matter how sympathetic one may be to the position of the Assembly as set forth in the letter, I can only say that it would be the duty of a Board of Education who are trustees of a public building to adhere strictly to the law, constitutional and otherwise, in dealing with the public.

"The matters raised would appear to involve the right to freedom of speech or discussion. Under our system of rights obligations involving the citizen, which we inherited from Great Britain, falls into two classifications.

"The first of these involves the relationship of the subject to the Crown. It has been held many times that so-called right to freedom or discussion, insofar as it involves the subject with the Crown, simply means that any person may write or say what he pleases so long as he is neither treasonous, seditious nor blasphemous. It is treason for any person or persons whatsoever, within the realm or without, to compass, imagine, invent, devise or intend death or destruction or any bodily harm tending to death or destruction, maiming or wounding, imprisonment or restraint of the person of the Sovereign; to express, utter or declare any such compassing, etc., or intentions by publishing any printing or writing or by any overt act or deed.

"Sedition consists of an intent—

"1. To bring into hatred or contempt or to excite disaffection against the King, the Government and Constitution of Canada or either House of Parliament or the Administrator of Justice;

"2. To incite persons to commit any crime in general disturbance of the peace;

"3. To raise discontent or disaffection amongst His Majesty's subjects or

"4. To promote feelings of ill will and hostility between different classes of his subjects.

"But an intention is not seditious if the object is to show that the King has been misled or mistaken in his measures or to point out errors or defects in the Government or Constitution with a view to their reformation or to excite the subjects to attempt by lawful means the alteration of any matter in Church or State by law established or to point out with a view to their removal matters which are producing or have a tendency to produce feelings of hatred and ill will between classes of the King's subjects.

"Blasphemy consists in scoffingly or irreverently ridiculing or impugning the doctrines of the Christian faith or in uttering or publishing contumelious reproaches of Jesus Christ or in profane scoffing at the Holy Scriptures or exposing part thereof to contempt or ridicule. It is not blasphemy with due gravity and propriety to contend that the Christian religion or any part of its doctrine or the whole or any part of the Holy Scriptures is untrue. There was a time, of course, when the denial of the truth of Christianity or attacks made on the Roman Catholic Church or on the established Church in England, from time to time



through the history of the United Kingdom, was punishable by death. Even in the early years of Canada's life, attacks on the Roman Catholic Church, and later attacks on the Church of England, were punishable by imprisonment. These laws have long since been repealed, either by legislative action or by implication and the law to-day is such that the discussion of various religious denominations by those who disapprove of them is legal and, as one must be aware, unfortunately very common in Canada in the last few years.

"As to the relation between subject and subject, which covers the second branch of the right of freedom of speech and discussion, the position is that anyone may say or write anything he wishes about any other person, subject to his liability in damages for making any statements about another person which would tend to hold such persons up to the contempt or ridicule of his fellow subjects. This, of course, relates to the well-known law of libel and slander and need not be extended.

"This would appear to cover the whole question of the right to freedom of speech and discussion and I would conceive it to be the duty of the police with regard to the first branch of the matter and to the individual defamed, insofar as it relates to the second branch of the matter to take appropriate action for the punishment of the wrongdoer.

"As I have intimated, no matter what sympathy I may feel for the cause set forth in the letter referred to me and to the trustees of the London board, I cannot conceive it to be the duty of any public body to pre-censor speakers who may appear in public halls nor to make use of public halls under the control of the Board of Education rentable only to those persons whom seven trustees may consider to conform to the standards required by the law. Much as I am opposed and dislike the doctrines of Communism, there is no doubt in my mind that if an application were to be made for a Communist meeting in a public hall controlled by the Board of Education that the Board of Education should grant such use.

"It is not for Boards of Education to determine whether groups are subversive or otherwise. That is the duty of the Parliament of Canada and until it determines that groups or individuals upholding certain doctrines are seditious or treasonous, I do not think it the duty of the board to attempt to legislate for the Dominion Parliament."

The report is signed by C. C. Carrothers.

## A FATAL DIVORCE

"So these nations feared the Lord, and served their graven images."—II Kings 17:41.

And that is an old-world record, but it is quite a modern experience. The kinsmen of these ancient people are found in our own time. Men still fear one God and serve another.

But something is vitally wrong when men can divorce their fear from their obedience. And the beginning of the wrong is in the fear itself. "Fear", as used in this passage, is a counterfeit coin, which does not ring true to the truth. It means only the payment of outward respect, a formal recognition, a passing nod which we give on the way to something better. It is a mere skin courtesy behind which there is no beating heart; a hollow convention in which there is no deep and sacred awe.

But the real "fear of God" is a spiritual mood in which virtue thrives, an atmosphere in which holy living is quite inevitable; the fear of the Lord is always found upon its knees. And so "the fear of the Lord is to hate evil"; it is an indignant repulsion from all that is hateful to God. It is the sharing of the Spirit of the Lord. There cannot be any true fear where the soul does not worship in spirit and in truth.

—J. H. JOWETT

## A PRIME MINISTER "GIVING HEED TO SEDUCING SPIRITS AND DOCTRINES OF DEVILS"

**D**URING his term of office as Prime Minister of Canada the late W. L. MacKenzie King was many times criticized by this paper. We criticized him on political grounds that were based in turn, as we conceived of them, on religious grounds, namely his willingness to take dictation from Roman Catholic Quebec and the priests which controlled its vote. We are convinced that when the history of Canada during those years is written, Mr. King's name will be recorded as a time-serving politician who paltered for office with an anti-democratic minority who happened to hold the balance of power. Apparently the criticism which THE GOSPEL WITNESS directed at Mr. King was effective and he was moved to such anger that in defense he mentioned the name of the Editor, Dr. Shields, on the floor of the House of Commons.

Our quarrel with Mr. King was not on personal grounds but, as we have said, on political and religious grounds. But we could not forbear on many occasions, asking ourselves what sort of man he was in private life. We heard many rumours, some of them evidently from friends, some of them apparently from enemies, but we never dealt with them because we were concerned with principles and not primarily with persons. But now that our war-time Prime Minister has passed from this earthly scene to another where the deeds and motives of men are tried by purer and more searching eyes than in this world, there have been repeated reports as to Mr. King's activity in what is commonly known as "spiritualism" or more accurately as "spiritism". Some time ago an Ottawa paper printed an account of his interest in this strange cult. The current issue of *Maclean's Magazine* also has an article on this matter, and *The Toronto Star* of December 14 gives further publicity to it. The evidence of Mr. King's belief in that strange delusion which the Bible calls "soothsaying" and "necromancy" would appear to be of indubitable weight. The widow of a former M.P.P. tells of Mr. King seeing photographs of "the face-likeness" of C. H. Spurgeon and of the son of Sir Oliver Lodge, supposedly transmitted by "psychic energy". Part of a letter purporting to have been written by him describes the seances as "truly marvellous". It is further reported that he intended at one time to write a book on the subject.

During Mr. King's lifetime, it was repeatedly stated by circles close to him that he was a staunch Presbyterian and that he read his Bible for a half an hour each morning. We heard this statement so many times, as if it were an answer to every conceivable sort of criticism, that we began to feel that it was the beginnings of a legend that was being sedulously cultivated for purposes of political-propaganda. We know a good many people who read their Bible for more than a half an hour each day and we do not subscribe to their infallibility either in religion or in politics. Has Bible reading come to be a meritorious act that gains an extended indulgence guaranteed to cast a cloak of charity over all shortcomings and weaknesses in public life? We remember that when mass was said on Parliament Hill in the front entrance of the House of Commons, Mr. Mackenzie King attended his own Presbyterian Church that morning and the fact was spread over the front page of every newspaper in Canada as though it were an answer to his permission to use the front portico of the Parliament as an altar

for the idolatrous sacrifice of the mass. Mr. King certainly believed in mixing religion and politics and of using the former for the advantage of the latter. It was on these grounds that we criticized him.

The Book that the one-time Prime Minister of Canada was sedulously reported to have read each day has the following to say about seducing spirits: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats" (1 Tim. 4:1ff). The last two phrases of that quotation describe Romanism rather than spiritism, though the phrase that proceeds them, "having their conscience seared with a hot iron", may be taken as an accurate description of the morals of Jesuit casuists and of the gross frauds perpetrated by the papacy in its mad struggle for supremacy. Whether or not Mr. King sought political guidance where Saul, an ancient king of Israel, once sought it to his own ruin, we do not know. But we are convinced that our former Prime Minister did seek and obtain his political power at the hands of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy of Quebec.

No further comment is required on the moral and mental state of one who seeks after those who "peep and mutter" than the following verses which are found in the Book that Mr. King was reported to have read each day:

"And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter, should not a people seek unto their God? for the living unto the dead?"

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

"And they shall pass through it, hardly bestead and hungry: and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look upward.

"And they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness" (Isaiah 8:19ff).

Among the many other passages in the Bible that speak in the strongest condemnation of such practices that are now denominated by the euphemistic title of "spiritualism" is found the following:

"When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

"There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,

Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

"For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee" (Deut. 18:9ff).

The folly of these degrading superstitions is pointedly illustrated in the story of Mr. King listening to a trumpet from which the voice of some dead French statesman was supposed to be emanating. The voice from the trumpet spoke in atrociously bad French, but Mr. King's confidence was unshaken since, it was said, he was almost as poorly furnished linguistically as was Chaucer's Prioress:

"For Frenssh of Parys was to hire unknowen."

—W.S.W.

### "WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?"

We may be Christians by education, may be well versed in Christianity as a science, may be able to converse and preach and write in defense of it; but if Christ crucified be not that to us which food is to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty, we are dead while we live. It is on this ground that error concerning the person and work of Christ is of such importance as frequently to become spiritual death to a man. We may err on other subject and survive, though it be in a maimed state; but to err in this, is to contract a disease in the vitals, the ordinary effect of which is death. When Peter confessed him to be the Son of the living God, Jesus answered, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against." Upon this principle, as a foundation, Christianity rests; and it is remarkable, that to this day a deviation concerning the person and work of Christ is followed by a dereliction of almost every other evangelical doctrine, and of the spirit of Christianity. How should it be otherwise? If the foundation be removed, the building must fall.

—ANDREW FULLER

They used in old times to catch pigeons and sent them out with sweet unguents on their wings; other pigeons followed them into the dove-cote, for the sake of their perfume, and so were captured. I would that every one of us had the heavenly anointing on our wings, the divine perfumes of peace and joy and rest; for then others would be fascinated to Jesus, allured to heaven.

—C. H. SPURGEON

## Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 17 First Quarter Lesson 2 January 13, 1952

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

### MOSES AND AARON BEFORE PHARAOH

Lesson Text: Exodus 5:1-9, 19-21.

Golden Text: "This Moses whom they refused—the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush."—Acts 7:35.

#### I. The Interview: verses 1-9.

History affords many illustrations of the principle that as a general rule the successful campaign is that one which has been planned to the very last detail (Lk. 14:31, 32). The Lord God of hosts, Himself the Maker of history, as a God of wisdom makes every provision for the execution of His sovereign designs (Gal 4:4). Since the exodus of the children of Israel by His mighty hand was to be the standard of God's grace and power throughout the whole Old Testament era, He made Divine preparations for the great event, choosing well the time and occasion, but above all, His instrument.

Moses, the destined leader of the Israelites, was first given a vision of God (Exod. 3:1-6; Isa. 6:1-4), and was then called to his task (Exod. 3:7-10, 16-18; Isa. 6:5-10). When he hesitated by reason of his natural timidity and the many difficulties which the prospect presented to his mind, the Lord assured him of Divine guidance and of Divine authority in his mission (Exod. 4:1-9). He was forewarned also of the intense opposition of the king (Exod. 4:21). Moreover, the children of Israel, whose attitude was fickle and uncertain, were constrained to believe the word of God, especially when it was confirmed by miracles (Exod. 4:29-31).

Assured of the sympathetic support of the people of Israel, Moses and his brother Aaron went together into the presence of the king. These two were to be partners in service (Mk. 6:7; 1 Cor. 3:6; 2 Cor. 6:1); Moses to receive messages from God, and Aaron to deliver to the people the words which

God had spoken through Moses (Exod. 4:15, 16; 17:1, 2). The preacher and the teacher must perform both duties (Jer. 23:28; Ezek. 33:7; 1 Cor. 15:3).

Moses and Aaron did not presume to use their own words in making the request for the liberation of the captives, but went to the king with "Thus saith the Lord" (Exod. 7:17; 8:20; Ezek. 33:25). So must we all be voices for the Lord (Isa. 40:3).

Pharaoh gave an immediate and decisive reply: "I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go." The brothers were prepared for this opposition (Exod. 3:19), and calmly repeated their request, adding the consideration that since the journey was by the command of the God of the Hebrews, Whom Pharaoh would have known if he had taken notice of their history, they must obey or suffer chastisement.

But the selfish monarch thought of the Hebrews as his chattels, and any suggestion of liberation meant to him a loss of revenue. Moreover, what had they to do with speech-making and vain plans? Let them get on with their toil (Exod. 1:11). The remedy for this restlessness was to give the slaves more work, that they might not have time to dream (verses 9, 17).

## II. The Reaction: verses 19-21

The immediate result of the appeal made by Moses and Aaron for the release of the people was heavier bondage. The people were no longer to be provided with straw to keep the clay together in the making of the bricks: they must gather it for themselves, without diminishing the daily output (verses 10-18). They were indeed in "evil case".

Wound a snake, and it immediately rears its head and prepares to strike. Sin, like jealousy, is as cruel as the grave, and rebuke at first seems but to increase the activity of Satan. Thus did Pharaoh oppress the people the more.

But there is another principle involved. A person who is docile under restraint will not feel the pain of the ropes which bind him, but should he seek to free himself, the ropes will cut his flesh: It is only when the sinner would become free from the bondage of Satan that he realize how effectually

he is confined (Rom. 7:21). The pangs of slavery indicate the approach of deliverance.

The Israelites soon forgot that it was God Who had commanded Moses and Aaron to make this appeal on their behalf, and that He had assured them that He had visited them and looked upon their affliction. It was their part to obey, and leave the consequences to God. They had no patience, and when the promised freedom was not provided immediately, they began to complain. Moses and Aaron were regarded as enemies and traitors; they were accused of assisting Pharaoh in his determination to kill the Hebrews (Exod. 16:2, 3). When things go well, people are every ready to take the credit to themselves, but when things do not go well, the leaders are the ones responsible for the defeat. The Israelites were a complaining people (Exod. 15:24; 17:3; 1 Cor. 10:10), easily discouraged.

The complaining spirit of the Israelites dampened the faith and enthusiasm even of the leaders (Hos. 4:9). The plague of defeatism is very contagious (Heb. 12:15), but so also is the virtue of faith, optimism and courage (Acts 27:22-25).

Moses poured out his complaint before the Lord (Psa. 142:2). Our God is a God of mercy and compassion: He renewed His promise to the discouraged prophet, and sent him back to the appointed task with fresh courage (Exod. 6:1-8; 1 Kings 19:1-18; Isa. 40:31).

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Jan. 7—Moses and the Rod of Power .....	Exod. 4:1-9
Jan. 8—Moses and Aaron .....	Exod. 4:10-17
Jan. 9—The People Convinced .....	Exod. 4:27-31
Jan. 10—The People Complaining .....	Psa. 106:1-25
Jan. 11—The Prophet Complaining .....	1 Kings 19:1-10
Jan. 12—The Prophet Comforted .....	1 Kings 19:11-18
Jan. 13—Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh .....	Exod. 5:1-9, 19-21

## SUGGESTED HYMNS

As pants the hart. When upon life's billows. Oh, safe to the rock. Ho, reapers in the whitened harvest. Lord, speak to me. Who is on the Lord's side?

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