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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

### "The Lord Sat as King at the Flood"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, February 8th, 1953

(Electrically Recorded)

"The Lord sat as King at the Flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever."

—Psalm 29:10.

**WE HAVE** in this twenty-ninth Psalm a divinely inspired description, of a great storm. I wonder if you have ever been in a storm at sea, or in the air, when the thunders pealed, the lightnings flashed, and the winds blew at hurricane strength? If you have you will be able to understand this Psalm:

"Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength.

"Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

"The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters.

"The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. °

"The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.

"He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.

"The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire.

"The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness; the Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.

"The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests: and in his temple doth every one speak of his glory.

"The Lord sat as King at the Flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever (R.V.).

"The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace."

What a description of Divine power!

#### I.

I ask you to look at this first of all IN ITS HISTORICAL APPLICATION. The revisers capitalized the word "Flood", meaning that at the Flood of all floods, the deluge, the Lord sat as King at the Flood. What was that Flood? Physically the windows of heaven were opened, the fountains of the great deep were broken up, the rivers overflowed, and the oceans no longer regarded the bounds which God had set, and the waters rose until the tops of the highest hills were covered. But that was the physical representation of another flood. Iniquity was at the flood, and a Holy God declared, "The end of all flesh is come before me." Every fountain of evil overflowed; the imaginations of the thoughts of men's hearts were only evil continually; human rebellion against the most High was at its acme, at the flood. And then Divine Justice descended, punishment fell upon a wicked world, and Justice reigned at the flood. But in the midst of wrath God remembered mercy, and upon the bosom of the tide there floated the ark of refuge, the type and pattern, the symbol and prophecy, of that great redemption which should be effected in the years that were yet to come. And when sin was vanquished and punished, and grace triumphed in the salvation of God's elect, the Lord sat as King at the flood.

The principle of my text is this: that our Sovereign God is equal to every emergency. He is never at His wit's end, like those who stagger upon the reeling decks of the ships that are tossed in the storm. He Himself always knows what He will do. And history, sacred and profane — it is all sacred, and yet in a sense it is all profane — is replete with illustrations of the great prin-

ple of my text, that at the crisis hour, when the fulness of time was come, in His own time and nobody else's, He shows Himself as sitting as King at the flood.

## II.

My dear friends, that is true in respect TO THE FLOOD OF MORAL EVILS WHICH NOW, AS IN OTHER DAYS, THREATEN TO OVERWHELM THE WORLD. I remember in one of Mr. Churchill's early addresses after his assumption of the premiership he put before the world the choice of going forward gradually into a brighter day, or of lapsing into the darkness of the dark ages. But this is God's world, and ours is a forward moving God. God does not walk backwards, nor retrace His steps. "The evening and the morning were the first day." We do not so write history. We write, "The morning and the evening." But God reverses the order, and always moves from darkness into light. And we shall not lapse into the blackness of the dark ages. Difficulties will come, and floods will arise, but whatever may come to individuals or nations or the world we may be absolutely sure that God will always sit as King at the flood.

I say it is true of the floods of moral evil which often threaten to overwhelm human life *in its individual experience*. "Floods of moral evil?" you say. O I am quite aware that comparatively few people are conscious of the existence of such floods. They are smugly complacent and satisfied with things as they are. Human nature is sometimes — ours and all others — like this part of the terrestrial globe, wrapped in its ermine winter garment, seemingly clean and immaculate. The man is proud of himself, boasts of his righteousness, and has no need for repentance at all. I remember a year or so ago, at the end of a severe winter — it was early in March — we had a sudden thaw, and the temperature went up almost to summer heat. I looked out at my garden and I saw a couple of boys there. I do not often see anybody, because we are pretty well fenced in. I wondered what they were doing, so I went out on the verandah, and I said, "What are you doing boys?" They said, "Watching the flood. You have a junior Mississippi down here." So I went down to see, and the water was pouring across my garden from I do not know how many gardens to the north, and into my neighbour's garden at the south. There was a regular lake, and it was not nice to look at. Have you ever noticed how dirty the early days of spring are? You wonder where all the soot and dirt came from. And in *my* garden if you please! I looked at it in amazement. But a day or so before it was white and beautiful and frozen hard, unresponsive to the sun apparently. Then all of a sudden the temperature changed, and everything melted, and we saw what was under and in the snow. Ah yes, when the Sun of Righteousness looks upon a human life, beautifully wrapped in its snow white garment, and satisfied with itself — like Saul of Tarsus, "touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless," then the Sun shines, and it melts, and all the filth comes to the surface: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." I have seen many, when that Heavenly melting time comes, when God sends His springtime to a frozen self-righteous soul, and it is broken up, and the floods rise, the man who but yesterday thought he needed nothing now thinks he is entirely beyond help. "Oh, the flood will overwhelm me; what shall I do?" Touching the

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and

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

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righteousness of the law, blameless? No — "Sinners, of whom I am chief."

But it is then God steps in. As McCheyne says,

"When free grace awoke me, by light from on high,  
Then legal fears shook me; I trembled to die;  
No refuge, no safety, in self could I see;  
"Jehovah Tsidkenu" my Saviour must be."

And when a man gets there it always comes to pass that God sits as King at the flood. As Mr. Slade quoted in his prayer: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

The same is true when men feel in flood proportions and violence the power of sin. I have seen them, many an one, say, "It is no use; I cannot deliver myself. This thing is too mighty for me." That is true. Sin comes in as a flood. I have seen the poor drunkard. I remember a man who came in here one night when I was here late. I heard something scratching at the door — it was locked to prevent anybody's meandering about the place — and I opened it, and there was a poor wretch. His face was bloody, and his hands, and he looked as if he had been mangled by a wild beast. He said, "Let me in, sir." He literally crashed in, and he said, "I've lost everything. They beat me up and took all my wages." Then he said, "Don't tell my wife; don't tell my wife." I said, "But you need help." "No, no, let me stay here." I said, "I must find you help." So I went back into my office, and I called the police. He begged me not to call the police, but I called them. By and by they drove into the courtyard, and when I went out to open the door to them my man was gone. But there was a trail of blood down the stairs and into a dark corner. I turned on the lights, and took the police down. They were very kind, and very tender. He begged them, "Don't tell my wife."

Oh, iniquity at the flood, sin in its utmost power! They took him off to the hospital to give him treatment.

But he is not the only one. I remember another who came in late one night, cursed by the same flood. He fell on his knees, and he said, "Pray for me." And I did pray for him, and he prayed for himself. But he seemed to get worse and worse. He was a man who had a very fine position in the city, but was bound to lose it with that kind of thing. After a while I managed to get him into my car, and I drove him home. I have often seen him since, and I have heard his testimony. He said, "Jesus Christ triumphed." The Lord sat as King at the flood.

*In the strain and stress of great temptation* — and who does not feel it at some time or another, in one form or another? — when it seems as though your nature were like those Holland dykes, and the very ocean was just gnawing at it, and there is a little trickle, and then it pours through. And the man says, "I am done." Ah no, help comes to him, as I have seen in scores of cases. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Do not despair; the Lord always sits King at the flood. "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him."

### III.

Suppose I take that principle AND APPLY IT TO SOME OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE. I suppose you have been in hard places, have you not? I have, and so has this church. I remember in days gone by men have said to me, "Dr. Shields you ought to have died long ago. Your enemies say so. You have had enough to kill a hundred men." I say, "I know; I am quite aware of that." And they used to say gleefully, "It will kill him. No human can withstand the pressure." I suppose they were right; I suppose I ought to have been more accommodating to certain of my enemies, and I ought to have made myself scarce. But I am not allowed to commit suicide, and "having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day." The men who used to say, "He will die; it will kill him," — I speak with bated breath, I may go tonight, — but they are all gone! In the history of this church again and again the Lord has sat King at the flood.

I like to find my illustrations of these great principles in *the Biblical historical record of events*; because I know they are true. I used to know a man who used to say to me, — he was rather an unlettered man in many ways, and yet a man who did a great deal of thinking — it was one of his common expressions, "You know I like things that are so." Down South they say, "I believe it as it is."

Do you remember the story of a company of people unarmed, more than a million strong, among them tens of thousands of women and children, absolutely defenceless — a great crowd of "displaced persons" we should call them now. They were leaving the country in which they had been enslaved, and they came to a certain place, Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea. Behind them was the armed might of the greatest military power on earth, for such Egypt was. They were behind them like an innumerable pack of devouring wolves, in pursuit of these helpless people. And they came right up to the edge of the flood. You know the story, of how the rod was stretched forth, the divided waters, the more than

a million people going through dry-shod, until they reached the other side in safety, which "the Egyptians essaying to do were drowned." The waters returned in their strength when the morning appeared, and the Israelites saw by the hundreds the bodies of their enemies dead upon the seashore. The Lord sat as King at the flood.

There was another rather common experience. I do not know whether some of you may have, at some time or another, been almost where this poor woman was, of which I speak. It was a time of famine, and she went out to gather a few sticks. She met a stranger, and he said to her, "Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand." She said, "As my Lord liveth, all I have got is just a little meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruise, and I am just out now gathering some sticks, and I am going to make it into our last cake, that my son and I may eat it and die, for there is no chance of replenishment." The stranger said, "Go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first . . . for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruise of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth." And she took her last bit of meal, and the last drop of oil, — and then — death? No! the Lord sat as King at the flood. And she was sustained until springtime and plenty came to the earth.

There is another story that I read for my own comfort very often. It was another kind of flood — it was not water, it was not want of any kind, but it was a flood of fire, and there were just three concerned. They had said to the king, "We will not worship the golden image which thou hast set up." But said he, "You will, or you will be cast into a furnace of fire." And I like their answer: "Our God — I think they said it quite calmly — whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. *But if not*, — O hear that! If not — If not — be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." You know the story. His mightiest men were called, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and were bound "in their coats, their hosen, and their hats," and they were thrown alive into the furnace, heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated. What a story! Then Nebuchadnezzar, looking from a distance, coming just as close as the heat of the flames would permit him, looked in, and said to those who were left, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? . . . Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." Of course! The Lord sat King at the flood.

And another story, just that I might emphasize three words. Peter was a great preacher. After Pentecost he had had a great career, but brief. And he was arrested, and cast into prison, by Herod, who had already killed James the brother of John with the sword, "and because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also." So he put him in jail for safe keeping, "intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people." Tomorrow is the day. Now listen — "THE SAME NIGHT — the flood is rising, you see — Peter was sleeping between two soldiers." I was looking at some descriptions of Motels, because my wife and I are going to try and get a little relaxation in the South for a week or so, and I saw one which was advertised as being thoroughly equipped with "Beauty Rest" mattresses. I do not know

whether that would make me beautiful or not; if it would I would stay there for a while. But Peter was in prison, and he must have had some kind of Beauty Rest mattress, for he was delivered to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him. What a compliment the enemy pays a poor preacher! Herod was afraid of his life of him, and he was delivered to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him. "THE SAME NIGHT Peter was—"Oh, I'm going out tomorrow; I wonder how many hours till the morrow." No, no, no. "Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with chains." Some of us, having the fullest kind of liberty, sometimes find it a little difficult to sleep, but I do not know what I should do if I had two bedfellows like that, and chained at the same time. I am afraid I could not sleep very well, could you? especially if the executioner were sharpening a sword for early morning. But Peter did not care. Peter, the tide is coming in! "I know," Peter would say, "so is my Lord; He will be here." "THE SAME NIGHT." The cell was filled with light, and the angel of the Lord struck the shackles from his feet, and said, "Now dress, Peter; put on your garments." I do not know what the soldiers did; we are not told. So Peter dressed for the street, and he went out. You remember how the iron door opened of its own accord, and he went out into the street. And after a little while the angel left him, and Peter began to look around. He said, "Where am I anyway? I was in jail a little while ago. Ah, now I know! Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews." That is what happened. The Lord sat as King at the flood. He does not arrive before time, but He is never late.

I wonder if there is somebody who needs a word of comfort, perhaps from a flood of grief. You have seen people overwhelmed, they could not stand it. One calamity after another has come upon them, like poor Jacob. You see I am referring you to some Biblical stories. I hope you read them all, and get comfort from them. "This is my son's coat; some evil beast has devoured him. I shall go down to my grave mourning." His beloved had gone out of his life, and he does not hear a thing about him for twenty years. Then famine comes on top of that, and his sons go to find some bread, and come back one short. "Where is Simeon?" "The man who is governor of the land kept him there, and he said if we wanted any more the price we must pay is to take our youngest brother with us." "Why did you tell him you had a younger brother?" "We did not know what he would say. He made us tell him." Then when at last that corn was spent the poor old man—I fancy there were tears streaming down his cheeks—said, "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away; all these things are against me." But you know the sequel, of how later he crossed his hands, and put them upon the heads of Ephraim and Manasseh, his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, and his left upon the head of Manasseh, the sons of his long lost Joseph. God had given him Benjamin back, and Simeon back, and Joseph beside, and he who had said, "All these things are against me," crossing his hands in blessing said, "The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads." The Lord had sat King at the flood.

There is that other lovely story of the woman coming back from Moab's land. She went out full, and she came back empty. She had buried her husband there, and she had buried her two sons there, and she had come back

with nothing. O yes, Ruth the Moabitess. They said, "Is this Naomi?" which means pleasant. She said, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me." What was the sequel? Just this: Ruth became the ancestress of our Lord, and the medium of blessing to countless generations for time and for eternity, because the Lord sat as King at the flood.

I do not know what your peculiar sorrow is. You may have lost a child, or a husband, or a wife, and you know an empty chair sometimes looks like an empty world. It is pretty hard, hard to smile, hard to look up. But look to Him Whom you will find sitting King at the flood. "The Lord sitteth King for ever."

#### IV.

May I ask the question, WHAT ABOUT WORLD AFFAIRS? Was the world ever so troubled as it is to-day? It is in a state that is almost worse than war all the world around, everywhere. Surely iniquity seems to be once again at the flood. I read something last night which was very much to my mind, and what I have long believed, though I have not been on the other side of the Iron Curtain. A man who had been an officer in Russia, and made his escape, said there was a great underground movement in Russia, and that Stalin was afraid to attack because he was afraid of his own army. I have never doubted that. I have never been half as much afraid of Stalin as of the pope. Stalin will be forgotten, but that centre of iniquity called the Papacy may still go on until the last great flood. Two hundred millions of people in Russia subdued by perhaps two or three million Communists. And what this man said was very significant. There are millions in concentration camps, and he said there is hardly a family that has not a relative in a concentration camp. I have no doubt myself that the Lord will sit King at the flood. I really do not fear a third world war. But should it come, the Lord will again sit King at the flood. But the Lord has His own ways of effecting His purposes whether of judgment or of mercy. Holland, Britain, and the nations of Europe, are bending low with the weight of armaments to defend themselves against the Russian hordes, so much are they burdened that they hardly know whether they have money to buy bread. What is going to be the end of it? Then we read about the floods in Britain, and in Holland. Poor Holland. I have been there several times since the war. She suffered terribly during the war. They told me it was a common thing during the German occupation to see a man just weakly walking along the street, and falling dead of starvation. They died like flies. It is only a little country, with only a few people, her Eastern empire liquidated by the fiendish influence of the pope through the legislature in Holland. We need not go into that, but Holland was bravely going to take her share. The American Secretary of State was there only yesterday or the day before, and they said, "We cannot do it; we are stripped." The loss in Britain is hundreds of millions. The floods have been dreadful. I hope we shall give generously tonight to do what we can to alleviate some of the ills to which our fellow-humans are exposed. I know the evolutionary mechanistic view of the universe has just about elbowed God out of His world, but do you think those floods just happened? I preached on this text in the early part of the war, when Holland was being overrun. I called up Miss Lindsay, and said, "Tell me, did I ever preach on that text here, and is it published?" She told me where to find it, and I looked it up, and I found that I had been a true prophet. It was

at the time when things were at the blackest. Hitler's war machine was crushing Holland and Belgium beneath its treads, and there seemed to be no help. I found that I had said at that time from this pulpit: "Wait a little while, and you will find that God will be King at the flood." And so they drove them like sheep to the sea-board, and for the first time in a hundred years a great calm fell upon the English Channel. Hundreds of row boats, and pleasure yachts, and everything, crossed, and they took off three hundred and thirty-five thousand men in a matter of hours. Mr. Churchill had said—I can hear him saying now: "I greatly fear I shall shortly have to bring you heavy tidings." But instead of bringing us heavy tidings he brought us the story of the deliverance of Dunkirk. There, the Lord sat as King at the flood.

I do not know what relation these floods have to the general world situation, but they are of such severity as to compel Holland to say, "We cannot defend ourselves; we cannot make our contribution." I do not know about Britain. So often when men are unable to defend themselves God steps in, and I should not be at all surprised, when we see these things in true perspective, to discover that, tragic as these floods have been, terrible as has been the suffering, they have had a direct relation to the world situation, and will, without doubt, have something to do to bring relief by and by. And when it comes we shall see once more that the Lord sat as King at the flood.

#### V.

But I must say this in a few words before I close. THERE WAS ANOTHER FLOOD, when all the powers of darkness united. And there was a Man, the first sinless man that had ever walked among His sinful fellows. The flood broke upon Him, and the waters rose higher and higher, and though His crown was of thorns, His sceptre was a reed, and His throne was a cross, above His head it was written, "This is the King." He bowed His head, and shook the universe with His triumphant cry, "It is finished." He sat as King at the flood. They put Him in the grave, and they sealed the sepulchre. Hell was emptied to make the sepulchre secure; the serried hosts of hell were encamped about the garden grave. Leisurely and triumphantly the Lord of life, with the keys of death and of the grave at His girdle, opened the door and came out, saying, "I am the resurrection and the life." The Lord sat as King at the flood.

When that great day of judgment comes — I do not know when it will come, but come it will some day, when the dykes shall break, and it shall flood this wicked world, — we can be sure of one thing — the Lord will sit as King at the flood.

Oh, my dear friends, we do well to trust Him. Other thrones may crumble, other crowns may fall, other sceptres may be broken, and other kingdoms may be destroyed, but His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion one that shall not pass away. God be thanked for Him Who sits as King at the flood; Who sitteth King for ever! Let us pray.

From the dawn of human history, O Lord, Thou hast been showing Thyself to be Lord of all. Thou hast left to the world an infallible record of Thine achievements. Thou hast come to us in the Person of Thy Son. Thou hast opened the kingdom of Heaven to all believers, and Thou hast said, He that overcometh shall inherit all things. And Thou wilt make us to sit down with Thee on Thy throne. Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Help us to rejoice in it, and to live in the power of it. Come to any beaten and bruised, tried and troubled, soul this evening. Come in all Thy

mighty saving power, and lift them out of the horrible pit, and from the miry clay, and put their feet upon this rock of truth, that God never fails His people. So shall they go from this place with a song of triumph on their lips. Bless us for Jesus' sake, Amen.

### "HANDLING THE WORD OF GOD DECEITFULLY"

By Rev. W. Stanford Reid in *Reformation To-day*

THE tendency today to talk about "God's Word" is very common. While twenty years ago, the use of that phrase immediately marked a man as an evangelical, today it means very little. One hears it coming from the lips of many who sound very pious, and very devout. The Word of God means so much to them, and is to be their only ultimate source of knowledge. Yet in truth they pervert and twist the term beyond all recognition.

Usually such people stress the idea that Christ is the only Word of God. The Bible is not to be given that title, for it is merely human witness to the true Word. The Bible, however, may become the Word of God by the inworking of the Spirit, who enables us to see Christ in it. This is subtle and sounds very spiritual, but the fact of the matter is that it is very insidious. No longer does one have an objective Word of God to whom he can turn, but only a human book which may or may not be the Word of God.

In this way God's Word ultimately becomes subject to the reader. He can accept all the higher critical attacks upon the Scriptures, can deny their historicity and their truthfulness, yet at the same time call it the "Word of God" if it says what he wants. Or he can reject, as not being the "Word of God," what he does not want. There is no guarantee that his emotional and intellectual reactions rather than the Spirit, are guiding his belief or disbelief. He can always make the Scriptures suit himself.

Such people do not really accept the Bible as the Word of God. Quite frankly we feel that they are not honest, for they use the term, although filling it with a different meaning. The Scriptures become subject to them, not they to the Scriptures. Such people can hardly be called Protestants, for they are accepting now the Roman Catholic position of the superiority of the living church to the written Word. Against such people as these, and there are many in the Protestant church, even in the pulpits, we must today be on our guard. While talking about the "Word of God" they kick it around, making it say what they want, really denying its authority, and ultimately endeavouring to destroy its message to men.

### DR. AND MRS. SHIELDS GO TO FLORIDA

Dr. and Mrs. Shields plan to leave Toronto by motor Friday, February 20th, accompanied by Dr. Robert McCaul, for a brief vacation in Florida. Dr. Shields is scheduled to speak at Berea Baptist Church, Phoenix Avenue at Ninth Street, in Jacksonville, Florida, on February 26th.

### THE NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION OF THE BIBLE

#### Is It an Improvement or a Corruption?

This will be the subject of an address by Dr. Robert McCaul at the Thursday evening meeting in Jarvis Street Church, on February 19th. This will be a most interesting discussion, and we hope the place will be crowded.

# THE GREAT CONTENTION

Chapter Thirteen in the History of the Battle for the Bible Among  
Baptists of Ontario and Quebec

By Dr. T. T. Shields

SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER, 1919

AMONG those who participated in the discussion of this subject in *The Canadian Baptist*, was "Valiant for Truth", the late Dr. C. J. Holman, K.C., whose letter strongly upheld the inspiration and authority of Scripture. The other communication to the paper was from the late Dr. D. E. Thomson, K.C., Chairman of the Board of Governors of McMaster University. His contribution was not cast in the form of a letter in reply to anyone, but was a brief article discussing the "inerrancy" of the Scriptures, in which he took middle ground, while defending the liberal position.

That the opponents of the historic Baptist position had been aroused and somewhat alarmed by the controversy, was shown by subsequent events.

My own part in the public controversy was based upon an editorial appearing in *The Canadian Baptist* of October 2nd, 1919. I distinctly recall the feeling of relief with which I turned toward home from England, when I knew that Rev. H. S. Curr had been appointed as Professor of Hebrew. It seemed that the cause of dissension in the Denomination had been removed, and that there would now remain no hindrance to whole-hearted cooperation with the University — as I had always cooperated in all other departments of the Denomination's enterprises. Reaching home on Monday, September 29th, I was made still happier on learning that the new Professor had preached in Jarvis Street the day before, and had magnified the Bible as the word of God.

*The Canadian Baptist* came to hand on Thursday, and I saw by the editorial that Napoleon had returned from Elba. Modernism had been defeated in the controversy in *The Canadian Baptist*, and by the appointment of a sound professor to the Theological Faculty of McMaster. (I am now persuaded that such an appointment was dictated by the very discreet and diplomatic Dr. Thomson.) Evidently the Board of Governors of that day thought discretion was the better part of valour.

But the appointment of an orthodox professor, forced upon the Board as a measure of expediency, had not changed the attitude of the anti-evangelical elements working behind the scenes. When I read the editorial in *The Canadian Baptist*, I knew instantly that it had not been written by the Editor, Dr. W. J. MacKay. He had, however, yielded his editorial pulpit to another, and would have to be held responsible for its utterances as much as if he had written it himself.

I believed at the time — and I still believe — that the editorial was written by a member of the Board of Governors of McMaster. THE GOSPEL WITNESS will publish at any time the proof, from any source, that the gentleman referred to as the author of that editorial was not the author, if anyone is competent to provide such proof.

But I repeat here what I have said before, when this was first published,—the gentleman was still living and would recognize himself as here described and could speak for himself—for beyond all possibility of doubt he was

the enemy of Evangelical Christianity. He was the man who for years wrought behind the scenes, and poisoned all the springs of our denominational life. It is a free country, and it involves no reflection upon a man's personal character when one's convictions force him to express utter repudiation of another's religious views. In my view, JULIAN THE APOSTATE found his modern counterpart in the gentleman I have named, whom I shall "hereinafter" call DR. JULIAN. The editorial was not written, I repeat, by the Editor, and no one has ever yet confessed his identity as the author.

I did not wait until the next issue of *The Canadian Baptist* should appear. October 5th was my first Sunday at home, following my visit to England in 1919. Fired with indignation by *The Canadian Baptist* editorial, I selected for my Sunday morning text: "And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."\*

I need not detain my readers with extensive quotations from the sermon. It is enough to say that I said Elijah was right in recognizing that he lived in a day of religious declension, that it was literally true that the children of Israel had forsaken God's covenant, thrown down His altars, and slain His prophets. From that I proceeded to show that there was a close analogy between Elijah's day and ours. In proof of it, I read the editorial from *The Canadian Baptist*. I am not quite sure that I read the entire editorial, but I at least quoted its salient points; and, in the same connection, I quoted from an article in *The British Weekly* by Sir William Robertson Nicoll, in which he lamented the decline of gospel preaching in Great Britain. I pointed out that the editorial recommended for our adoption the course pursued by the Free Churches of Great Britain, and cited the article in *The British Weekly* to show to what a low ebb that course had brought British Non-Conformity. Having said that, I dealt with Elijah's complaint that he, even he only, was left; and suggested that Elijah's assumption was not without some justification, in the fact that others believing as he believed had made no protest against Israel's apostasy, but that in reality he was utterly mistaken in supposing he was the only one left. I explained that the exponents of Evangelical Christianity might reasonably sometimes assume that they were few in number, for the reason that so many seemed to lack the courage of their conviction. I then announced that at the forthcoming Convention, which was to be held in Ottawa about three weeks later, I would submit a resolu-

\* I Kings 19:13, 14

tion which would afford opportunity for the Convention to declare itself for or against the principles of the editorial I had discussed, that we might learn how many were "left".

That service was on the occasion of my first Sunday at home following a six or eight weeks' absence in England. It was later in the season than was usual for me to return from a holiday, and all the people were at home. There was a large congregation. Just in front of me, slightly to the left, sat Dr. D. E. Thomson, K.C., Chairman of the Board of Governors of McMaster University; behind him, Mr. F. L. Ratcliff, ex-Chairman of the Publication Board; on the right, Mr. James Ryrie, Chairman of the Home Mission Board; the Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board; Secretary of the Sunday School Board; and many others who were members of other Boards, including several who were members of the Board of Governors of McMaster University, were there.

The effect of the sermon upon that congregation can perhaps be more easily imagined than described. So far as I knew, all these men were solidly evangelical, with the exception of Dr. D. E. Thomson. I believed that he was soundly evangelical theologically, but that his attitude on critical questions, as evidenced in his article in *The Canadian Baptist* of a few weeks before, on "Inerrancy", was rather a dangerous one. This, in the friendliest way, in personal conversation, I had told him. Greatly as I admired Dr. Thomson, and thoroughly, as I believed in the genuineness of his own religious experience, I had pointed out to him that his experiences as an eminent lawyer, who had spent his life keeping people out of court by methods of compromise — such compromises being doubtless perfectly legitimate where human opinions and interests were concerned — had developed in him an attitude of compromise even in respect to fixed and axiomatic principles of revealed religion. I had told Dr. Thomson that he had trained himself in the art of logical inconsistency in the interests of peace as between his clients, and was quite unconscious of the fact that he brought that mental habit of compromise to bear upon religious questions; and that while he was able to stop half-way, most of those who attempted to follow him would arrive at Unitarianism and ultimately in agnosticism.

I had not then learned the profound philosophy of our Lord's saying: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."†

I have since learned that men who are seemingly true to evangelical principles are as houses built upon the sand. It may indeed be that some have "inherited" their religious beliefs, and have developed them in circumstantial hothouses, and given an appearance of tropical luxuriance, both in their outer characters and in their evangelical speech. But their evangelicalism is based upon the sands of heredity, education, and expediency.

† Matthew 10:34-39

They are as those hearers who have no root in themselves, and when "tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by (they are) offended."

It were folly for anyone to join the army in wartime on condition that he be not required to leave his wife and family, business associates, and the country he loves! Hence our Lord insisted that no one could truly be His disciple who would not put allegiance to Him before all other considerations of life.

I can see that Sunday morning congregation as I write. Had I measured the personal conviction of each one by his or her profession, I should have estimated there were few opposed to the position I had taken. It had not then occurred to me that a man's opinions, and the probability of his course of action in given circumstances, could never be clearly appraised until the man had talked it over with his wife, and she had made up his mind for him. Nor did I suppose that a business man would subordinate his religious convictions to considerations of business expediency. I thought of men who occupied influential positions as directors in various large corporations, as men of individual strength; and that such boards would probably be made up of strong characters, each of whom would be a pronounced individualist. I never dreamed that a man would refuse to take a course in respect to religious matters, because, should it become known, it would be disapproved by his business associates. Nor had it entered into my mind that men who held membership in certain secret societies that were supposed to exist for legitimate mutual service, would use their fraternalism to further their religious ends, or to oppose the religion of others. I had yet to learn, by many painful experiences, that a large congregation of religious individualists is likely to include a great company of people who, by domestic, social, business, or fraternal ties, are held in bondage not less real than the shackles about the prisoner's ankles, or the handcuffs upon his wrists.

The passage in Matthew anticipates all these considerations, and provides against them; and indicates that only as a man is enabled by divine grace to take up a cross that is a potential instrument of self-crucifixion, can he pursue a course worthy his profession as a follower of Christ.

There were no hostile expressions at the close of that service known to me at the time. I heard later of one whom I would have trusted with my life, who that morning stood in the vestibule of the church, and greeted many, and who remarked that by such action the Pastor would drive hundreds of people away from the church. His prophecy proved to be correct.

I must acknowledge that I had never once considered the consequences one way or another. The only question of importance, as it then seemed to me, was, What is right? As soon as that was determined, there appeared but one course to pursue. At this date I have no recollection of having been approached by anyone on the matter the week following.

In *The Canadian Baptist* of October 16th, there appeared a letter of protest which I had addressed to the Editor. In the same issue there was a communication from Dr. C. J. Holman, entitled, "Those 'Settled Questions' in the Old Land", in which is discussed the effect upon the Non-conformist churches in England of what had been recommended to Canadian Baptists in the editorial under review. Dr. Holman said:

"The decrease of membership in evangelical churches of the United Kingdom in the ten years from 1906 to 1916 is as follows: Baptists, 26,712; Congregationalists, 9,300; Wesleyan Methodists, 49,053. And in the same period the scholars in the Sunday Schools have decreased as follows: Baptists, 59,026; Congregationalists, 104,554; Wesleyan Methodists, 103,409.

"From the foregoing figures it is apparent that, apart from the effect on the adults, the Bible teaching in the Sunday Schools in the light of 'Modern Scholarship' has 'ceased to interest' a large number of the rising generation."

In the same issue, October 16th, 1919, there appeared a letter from Mr. F. L. Ratcliff, a former Chairman of the Publication Board, in which he naively suggested that the letter by Dr. D. E. Thomson, on inerrancy, printed a few weeks before, "should have been accepted by all parties, and ended the whole controversy".

There was also another letter from Dr. D. E. Thomson, in which, referring to the letters of Rev. E. E. Shields, he said:

"I have as little sympathy with destructive criticism as he has. The important question as it seems to me is whether those who love God's work shall trust each other and present a united front to the destructive critics or expend their strength in fighting each other over theories of inspiration."

It was a fair example of Dr. Thomson's invariable endeavour to steer a middle course. For years these questions, in one form or another, had emerged in our denominational life, in Boards and Committees; and I think I may say without egotism, that I had always taken a position of uncompromising loyalty to the old faith. Fearing the effect of any open rupture, the compromisers among the University's governing authorities — who would have called themselves moderates — elected Rev. H. S. Curr to succeed Professor Matthews, as being the more expedient course.

But the uncompromising Modernists, disappointed in being unable to secure the election of an ultra-Modernist to the Faculty, like pestilential rodents endeavoured to gnaw their way into the denominational house by commandeering the editorial columns of *The Canadian Baptist*. The correspondence in the columns of *The Canadian Baptist* had served to awaken the unofficial rank and file of the Denomination to a realization of the danger; and the sinners in Zion had become afraid.

For the information of my readers I here set out the editorial in *The Canadian Baptist* of October 2nd, 1919, upon which my criticism was based; and my letter appearing in *The Canadian Baptist* of October 16th, protesting against the editorial. Here follow Editorial and Letter:

#### INSPIRATION AND AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

Some fifteen or twenty years ago the question of the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures agitated the evangelical churches of Great Britain a great deal more than it does to-day.

This agitation has now largely ceased in the old land because the leading men in whom these churches have large confidence have brought themselves and their people into clearer light. Occasional echoes of the old acrimonious disputations are still heard there, but in the main they have ceased to interest or influence intelligent Christian people.

"It is a singular circumstance that on this continent a considerable number of Christian people, including a fair proportion of ministers, are still threshing away at many of those questions touching the Scriptures, which are regarded as settled questions in Great Britain. To some extent this is true among churches in Canada, and it is especially true in the United States where some crude theological views still prevail in many quarters in which some partially educated but very dogmatic preachers are still making loud

proclamations of views and theories as to the Scriptures, which were laid aside years ago in England and Scotland.

Any of our readers who are still perplexed as to the disputations that occasionally prevail in our midst, touching the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures will be greatly helped by the recital of the story of how light and relief came to Christian people in the old land. Incidentally, reliable light is also thrown on the way in which the methods of modern scholarship affect our views of the Scriptures, when these methods are used by trusted, reverent and scholarly Christian men who abound in England and Scotland.

The story and explanation of how conservative Christian men in Great Britain have made the transition from many untenable theories and inherited beliefs about the Bible to a position in which their religious beliefs can be maintained without creating a breach with other spheres of knowledge, was told some dozen years ago in one of a series of books published by the National Council of Evangelical Free Churches of Great Britain. The well-known Baptist minister, Rev. F. B. Meyer, was selected as general editor of the series, while so distinguished a scholar and stout defender of conservative theology, as Principal Forsyth, M.A., D.D., of Hackney College, London, wrote the introduction to the pronouncement which was entitled, "The inspiration and authority of Holy Scripture", and one of London's oldest, most venerated and accomplished pastors, Rev. J. Munro Gibson, M.A., LL.D., was selected to write the text, and who, while naturally assuming authority for the exposition of views set forth, speaks with the unqualified approval of such men as Principal Forsyth and other trusted leaders of British nonconformity. That this pronouncement was sent forth throughout the old land by the National Council of Evangelical Free Churches of Great Britain, gives it a standing that challenges attention and respect.

This week we have space only to quote a few of the striking sentences from the introduction by Principal Forsyth.

"There is no more difficult position to-day", writes Principal Forsyth, "than that of the minister who has to stand between the world of modern knowledge on the one hand and the world of traditional religion on the other, and mediate between them. It is not a case of adjusting the new knowledge to the untaught faith of others, and doing it in the way of reverence for truth, love for men, and regard for the growth of living faith. Any vulgarian can destroy and offend. But the task of the veracious, alert, and paternal-minded man who has to rear faith amid a world of commotion, to establish the soul in a public war of elements and to secure the Eternal in a tempest, is very delicate and very severe. The difficulty does not readily come home to most people. The plain man, whose demand for a plain yes and no Christ was always baffling, has no idea what it costs to make a traditional creed a moral reality, and to turn as our Lord Jesus had to do, a conventional Messiah to a spiritual Christ."

Principal Forsyth holds that what the church now needs is not so much an army of scholars as a supply of capable middlemen or adjusters who know the new truth, the old faith and the believing people, and who can mediate the inevitable transition without fatal accident. With the vision of a seer gazing into the new religious day for the church, he says, "The premises are being rebuilt, but the business must be carried on; and the builders must be competent to manage both without loss in the process, and with great gain in the end. The education of our ministers must keep this increasingly in view."

How then is the growingly complex situation to be faced, according to Principal Forsyth?

First of all, he intimates, we must have the right sort of ministers to handle the questions at issue. Mere pious talk will not do. "The worst heresy," he says, "is incompetency, degenerating into quackery. It cannot be too clearly understood that no amount of well-doing, and no amount of zeal, and no amount of ethereal mysticism will save the situation. We need men of experimental historic faith, who are also exercised in the knowledge which is creating the present situation. Knowledge will not do it, but it cannot be done without knowledge."

Having thus described the kind of men needed for the work—religious men with solid attainments in modern scholarship—Principal Forsyth then asks what is the best course for such leaders to pursue.



"Only two courses," he says, "are possible, (1) either to stand on every statement of an infallible book, or (2) to treat extreme rationalism with a higher reasonableness, meet the critics on their own ground, accept results tested by their own methods in sounder hands — and proceed amidst all in the experienced liberty with which Christ crucified has set our conscience free to be sure and bold in Him."

This latter plan seems to accord with Paul's method and advice: "Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good."

The task is a high one and must be met, if true religion is to survive. One of the depressing features, however, of the task, according to Principal Forsyth, "is the persistence and recurrence to lower social strata of old fallacies that had long been disposed of in the region of the higher knowledge." For we still have, he says, "mental strata where views and habits of mind still flourish which have long gone to limbo in quarters where wisdom is spoken among the full grown."

In commending Dr. Gibson's work to perplexed Christians, Principal Forsyth shows not only great insight, but great sympathy for those "to whom it is a pain to feel their feet slipping from them, or their ground undermined; who have a real though bewildered faith, and who desire above all things to believe, if they could see their way."

In deprecating the fact that so many of the rank and file of church members just pick up stray notions on the subject from casual sermons, or from the cheap press, Dr. Forsyth describes Dr. Gibson as a man "who knows where the land lies, and who has the secret of reaching the public with his own settled faith," while the book is described as "an admirable example of arduous work."

In turning next to Dr. Gibson's personal foreword, the reader will be greatly interested in the autobiographical sketch he gives of his own mental and religious progress in relation to the Scriptures.

The personal story which Dr. Gibson tells of his own enlightenment in dealing with the Scriptures is worthy of re-telling in a separate article and we therefore hold it for fresh and separate recital in a future issue, as well as some condensation of the more extended review of the whole subject of the inspiration and authority of Holy Scripture, as viewed by the National Council of Evangelical Free Churches of Great Britain.

(From *The Canadian Baptist*, Oct. 2, 1919)

My reply as it appeared in *The Canadian Baptist* was as follows:

### "INSPIRATION AND AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE"

#### A PROTEST

To the Editor of *The Canadian Baptist*—

Your leading article under the above heading in your issue of October 2nd, is bound to provoke much questioning in the minds of many of your readers. Appearing, as it does, with full editorial authority it may be regarded by many as indicating the present position with respect to the vital question with which it deals, of the churches of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, for which *The Canadian Baptist* may be presumed to speak. Had the article appeared as an expression of individual opinion it might have been allowed to pass, but as the editorial voice of *The Canadian Baptist*, it constitutes a challenge to at least one of your readers, and I am greatly mistaken if it be not a challenge to a great host.

And at the outset I must express my regret that the spirit of the article under review forbids a careful selection of refined weapons when taking up arms against it. Britons were reluctant to meet gas with gas in opposing "the methods of modern scholarship" as exemplified by the cultured Germans. I am equally reluctant to resort to such weapons as your editorial employs when it launches its attack upon the historically established Baptist position; but I trust I shall not be accounted unchivalrous if I take the field with my gas-mask properly adjusted.

In such controversies neither side has monopolized the practice of setting up straw men. I shall, however, on this occasion, endeavour to avoid this alleged common error,—the more especially as a bag of chaff or thistle-down would more accurately represent my own estimate of the weight

of "scholarship" and religious effectiveness represented in the reasoning of the article in question.

As I understand it, your article tells us that in Great Britain the ever-recurring question of the inspiration and authority of Scripture has been finally settled, and that while "occasional echoes of the old acrimonious disputations are still heard there, in the main they have ceased to interest or influence intelligent Christian people."

I have seldom read anything more "acrimonious" than the article under discussion. It is, indeed, an insult to every Canadian Baptist who is not ready to follow the apostles of compromise. In a recent issue you exhorted us to "trust one another". But how are men of conviction to trust such leadership as your editorial offers—especially when it is so insultingly proposed? Frankly, I do not, and cannot.

With "the story and explanation of how conservative Christian men in Great Britain have made the transition from many untenable theories and inherited beliefs about the Bible, to a position in which their religious beliefs can be maintained without creating a breach with other spheres of knowledge", and which was "told some dozen years ago", I am not for the moment concerned. Very likely "the story" will be an interesting one, especially for those whose original "beliefs about the Bible" were "inherited". At all events when it is told each must judge its value for himself. But in advance of the story you inform us that the "disputations" whose peaceful ending your story is to record, "have ceased to interest or influence intelligent Christian people in Great Britain", because there they are "regarded as settled questions". The inference is inescapable: Either those of your readers by whom these questions are not "regarded as settled" are not "intelligent Christian people", or else we are "some fifteen or twenty years" behind Great Britain in our religious thinking, and therefore all such are to be editorially castigated as being either dullards or laggards.

For the purpose of this protest I must quote one paragraph of your article in full:

"It is a singular circumstance that on this continent a considerable number of Christian people, including a fair proportion of ministers, are still threshing away at many of those questions touching the Scriptures, which are regarded as settled questions in Great Britain. To some extent this is true among churches in Canada, and it is especially true in the United States where some crude theological views still prevail in many quarters in which some partially educated but very dogmatic preachers are still making loud proclamations of views and theories as to the Scriptures, which were laid aside years ago in England and Scotland."

From this it would appear that in order to rank as "intelligent Christian people" Canadian holders of "crude theological views" must hasten to catch up with the Joneses, since these "views and theories of the Scriptures were laid aside years ago in England and Scotland". And is this the voice of "scholarship" which thus admonishes us? Is this an illustration of "the way the methods of modern scholarship affect our views of the Scripture"? Must we change our views in order to keep abreast of "the reverent and scholarly Christian men who abound in England and Scotland"? I shall be the last to underestimate such men. No one who knows me will charge me with being unappreciative of men and things in the country whose unselfish heroism has so recently saved the world; but some of us recognize a still higher allegiance than that which we cheerfully pay to the Throne of Britain.

And we are familiar with the specious plea of this commonplace editorial. In a discussion on the changing fashions of womankind I heard an English lady say in England about four weeks ago, "We in England are rather amused at the effort of Canadians to keep up with the latest fashions. Women's dresses in Canada are always several years behind the fashions in England." I suggested that English ladies emigrate to Canada, as they would then be able to wear out their old clothes in a land where such clothes would make them leaders of fashion.

And this is precisely the method by which the new "scholarship" has made its greatest gains among some "partially educated but very dogmatic preachers" who appar-

ently care for nothing so much as to be reckoned sufficiently "advanced" and in the fashion to be included among the intellectual "smart set". I make no apology for my irony. In my attitude toward the presumptuous arrogance of this faith-destroying thing that plumes itself in peacock feathers and struts around under the ridiculously assumed name of "scholarship", I have progressed from enquiry to amazement, from discovery to disgust, and from indignation to contempt.

I have had some opportunity of judging of the value of the fashionable religious views which, you say, are so generally held in Great Britain, and which we are recommended to adopt. And what are the facts? Everywhere the churches are losing ground. All sorts of conferences are being held, and innumerable schemes devised to regain the influence the churches once exercised. It has been my privilege to pay five visits to Great Britain in six years. I have travelled the country from end to end, and have talked with many hundreds of people. I have met ministers of all denominations, and while for the most part engaged myself on Sundays, I have had some opportunity of observing the church life of the Old Land. And it is far from encouraging. Everywhere "union" is being advocated. It is not, however, a union of exuberantly healthy churches that is proposed, but a union of the wasted remnants which the popular views you recommend have brought to the verge of ruin. The Secretary of the Baptist Union has even expressed his willingness to accept episcopal ordination in order to effect union!

It may be that the course you champion is popular with certain ministers and theological professors, but it is absolutely certain it is not popular with the great unchurched masses who turn away with disappointment and disgust from the pulpits which no longer have a positive message. If a tree may still be known by its fruits, it is sober truth to say, that the fruits of the new view of the Scripture which your editorial recommends are the most damning evidence of its pernicious character that could possibly be adduced.

In *The British Weekly* of July 10th, Sir William Robertson Nicholl has a leading article entitled, "The Preaching of the Cross." In this article he says:

"Preachers do not, as they used to do, beseech men with much entreaty to receive the gift. They may state the truth of salvation, but they do so without pressing it on their hearers. They assume the take-it-or-leave-it attitude. The consequence is that the church does not grow, but rather decreases and the confession of Christ is rarer and rarer among men."

Replying to this article in the issue of August 28th, Professor G. A. Johnston Ross, of Union Theological Seminary, New York, among other things, says:

"The author of that article fails, I think, to do justice to one of the greatest difficulties which educated young preachers have in preaching the Cross; it is the difficulty of construing theologically the Person of our Lord. 'No effective atonement can be made for the sin of the world except an atonement in which God is Source, Agent and Sufferer.' But is Jesus really God?"

"I wonder whether many of our laity appreciate the intellectual difficulty which some of our younger ministers have in giving to our Lord, however much they may revere Him, the status and value of God."

"We older men can easily, though wistfully, recall a time when we read our New Testament, preached our sermons, and prayed our prayers without a shadow of hesitancy about the Godhead of Jesus. Unitarianism for us was unthinkable, condemned by its chill sterility."

"But then came upon us wave after wave of 'New Testament criticism': the elevation of the Synoptic tradition to a place of historic value all its own; the analysis of the documents; the confidently trumpeted results as to the picture of Jesus which was the 'true historic residuum'; the rejection of the Fourth Gospel not merely as unhistorical, but as a distortion of the real picture; the slighting of St. Paul."

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"What we really need is a return from the humanistic and naturalistic ways of looking at our Lord (which have become too fashionable because of our sociological interests), and the concentration of scholars upon

the steps by which Christian folk in the first century came to give Him the honours of Godhead. What happened in 'the tunnel', A.D. 30-50? How does the 'Jesus of History' emerge as Lord of Providence and Dispenser of Grace and Judgment in St. Paul's earliest letters?"

And now, Mr. Editor, one thing more. What is to be the answer of the "considerable number of Christian people, including a fair proportion of ministers", and "some partially educated and very dogmatic preachers", to the challenge of your editorial?

I do not know. But I know the answer of one. I am proud to be classed in this connection with "unlearned and ignorant men". One of the unmistakable badges of presumptuous ignorance in the realm of religion is the approval of the mechanical, ostentatious, oracular, religious, "scholarship" of the much-exalted, and smugly complacent "modern" academician. From his *imprimatur* may I by God's good grace, for ever be delivered!

I have written strongly, I know, but not impulsively. I write at this moment deliberately and in contemptuous anger. It is time some Canadian Baptists became angry! And I write to provoke the question: When will the "considerable number of Christian people, including a fair proportion of ministers" and "some partially educated and very dogmatic preachers" who are "still threshing away at many of those questions touching the Scriptures which are regarded as settled in Great Britain", demand a reckoning of those in the Denomination who boast of having laid those views aside, and who so noisily champion their own ascendancy in denominational counsels?

We are talking of a "Forward Movement". "Forward" whither? and to what? Is it to be in the direction to which your editorial points? Does this editorial view fairly represent the views of the majority of the members of the churches of this Convention? Are they willing that the denominational organ should so represent them to the world? Some of us must by some means discover where the Denomination stands on these vital questions, and whither it is moving. I am personally of the conviction that the farther we move "forward" in the direction in which your article would lead us the farther we depart from "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints". If the only principle for which Baptists now stand is the much-vaunted "liberty" to doubt everything and be sure of nothing—except that those who believe the Bible to be the inspired and authoritative Word of God are "partially educated" and are not to be classed with "intelligent Christian people", it is a principle which few will sacrifice to "forward". And I am much mistaken if it be not found that the majority of our churches still believe that Baptists still have a peculiar mission; and that the distinctiveness of our message consists in positive principles and not in mere negations. And I would here venture with all respect to urge the "considerable number of Christians, including a fair proportion of ministers" and "some partially educated and very dogmatic preachers" who have not yet thrown their "crude theological views", to the critical wolves, to attend the coming Convention with the determination of making their views known, and their votes felt in the shaping of our denominational policies.

I am prepared for the torrential Niagara of adjectives which will be loosed to describe my uncharity and unmitigated and hopeless ignorance. But I cannot understand how anyone who loves the Bible as the Word of God because therein and thereby he has learned Christ, and because his infallible Lord has borne witness to its absolute reliability, could carefully read your editorial without being deeply grieved and indignantly angry. I am resolved to avail myself of the first opportunity of testing the attitude of the Denomination toward the position taken in your article. Meanwhile I send you this, my indignant protest. And I send it in the earnest hope that it may be possible to demonstrate at the coming Convention, what I feel certain is the fact, that the Denomination as a whole still stands true to its historical position in its present attitude to the question of the inspiration and authority of Scripture. Then we can all heartily cooperate in a real and great "Forward Movement".

(Signed) Thomas T. Shields.

P.S.—Permit me to add, that at the Ottawa Convention I intend to move an amendment to the motion to adopt

the report of the Publication Board to provide an opportunity for the Convention to say by vote whether or not *The Canadian Baptist*, in the article in question, correctly represents the Denomination's view of the Scripture.

T.T.S.

(From *The Canadian Baptist*, Oct. 16, 1919)

At the beginning of the Convention week, October 20th, I personally took a letter to the Editor of *The Canadian Baptist*, addressed to the churches of the Convention, informing them of my intention of raising the question on the floor of the Convention, and urging every church to send its full quota of delegates to the Convention at Ottawa. The Editor of *The Canadian Baptist* said he would have to consult some members of his Board before consenting to publish it. This he promised to do within a few hours, and to advise me. I went again to his office, to receive his answer. He replied that he could not publish my letter. I asked him then for the copy. I had the letter printed, and that night a copy went by first-class mail to every pastor and church in the Convention. Had the Editor published my letter, it would not have reached the churches until Friday, and some of them, not until Saturday. By that time some of the delegates would have left for Ottawa. But, going to the pastors direct, many churches that had not intended to send delegates, held a special business meeting on the Wednesday evening, and appointed their delegates, in some cases, paying their expenses. Pastors who had thought they would be unable to attend, by some means, "raised the wind", and determined to go.

The result was that the delegation was the largest that, up to that time, had ever been recorded as in attendance at a meeting of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec.

(To Be Continued)

### THANK YOU, REGINA.

for good gift of \$30.00 to the work of THE GOSPEL WITNESS, which is much appreciated.

### A SIX-MONTHS' STORY CONTINUED IN THIS ISSUE

The story of **THE GREAT CONTENTION FOR THE FAITH** by Bible-believing Baptists of Canada, which began in the front-page article of Nov. 20, will continue in instalments week by week for probably four to six months.

We earnestly solicit the co-operation of all our readers in making this story as widely known as possible. In order to give currency to it we will send **THE GOSPEL WITNESS** containing this story week by week for the full time of its continuance — not less than six months — for \$1.00. Send in your subscription immediately, and all subscriptions will begin with the first instalment in the issue of Thursday, November 20th.

#### NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS ONLY

**THE GOSPEL WITNESS FOR SIX MONTHS  
FOR \$1.00**

Address 130 Gerrard St. E., Toronto 2, Ont.

### A REVEALING LETTER

**F**EW of those now reading the chapters of *The Great Contention* have any idea of the spirit of the Modernistic army against which we had to contend.

We received at the end of January a letter which speaks for itself. We did not publish it at once. We communicated with Mr. Graydon asking for his permission to do so, and we received a further letter from him on February 6th.

We are publishing both letters for the information of our readers.

The writer of these letters was a delegate from the Courtland Church, according to the Year Book of that date, to the Convention in Temple Church, Toronto, in 1926.

#### NEW LYME BAPTIST CHURCH Rome, Ohio

January 28, 1953.

Dr. T. T. Shields,  
Jarvis St. Baptist Church  
Toronto 2, Ontario.

Dear Dr. Shields,

THE GOSPEL WITNESS of January 22nd has just arrived and was appreciated as always. Your statement concerning the 1927 Convention and Dr. Clark's experience on the street while waiting for a street car brought back a vivid memory of that same time.

It was my privilege to be one of the 217 to vote against the exclusion of Jarvis. When the vote was taken to exclude Jarvis St., and you in particular, I was one of the first to shake hands with you at the back of the church (Temple Church). I was present at the meeting in the Lecture Hall to which you refer when Dr. Clark was present at Jarvis St. for the first time.

Now here is the experience of which I am writing. I came out on Gerrard St. after that meeting in the Lecture Hall to return to Temple Church. Just as I reached the sidewalk and started walking east to the street car I met a man about middle-aged, or a little beyond middle age, well dressed and wearing a derby hat, who was almost frothing at the mouth because of his violent rage. When he saw me come out of the Jarvis St. Church he lit into me with ferocious language. I have never been treated to a more scorching tongue lashing since or before. I cannot recall his exact words except at the one point I was able "to get a word in edge-wise" and received his answer. I said, "All we are doing is standing for the Word of God." Back came the frenzied reply, "TO HELL WITH THE WORD OF GOD"! His words and actions were so violent that I wondered if he would next attack me physically. It was a relief to be able to escape him on the car. His words and attitude seem characteristic of present day so-called "Modernism", although not many would speak so frankly of their inner feelings.

I hope that the history you are publishing in THE GOSPEL WITNESS will eventually be published in book form. It should be required reading in our Conservative seminaries.

With every good wish to you I remain,  
Your son in the ministry,

J. ARTHUR GRAYDON

P.S. I have been a regular reader of THE GOSPEL WITNESS since early 1924.

Rev. T. T. Shields, D.D.  
Jarvis St. Baptist Church,  
Toronto 2, Ontario.

Feb. 4th, 1953

Dear Dr. Shields,

This will confirm my telephone conversation with your secretary at noon to-day in which I gave full permission to use my letter of the 28th, over my signature, in any way that you would care to use it. The letter was written on the spur of the moment immediately upon reading the story of Dr. Clark's first visit to Jarvis St. It was written without any thought of its being used, but you are welcome to use it any way you like. The account is true and one that will never leave my memory. This was my first visit to Toronto so that the incident was engraved all the more deeply in my memory.

This man gave every evidence of being a well educated man of ample means. He probably classified himself as a "liberal" and a man of "tolerance", which he probably was in the realm of infidelity, but like other "tolerant liberals", he had no tolerance and no liberality of spirit toward those who stand for the plenary verbal inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. I happened to come in contact with him just in time to receive the volcanic explosion of his wrath.

I have never seen anyone else become so violent on this subject but it does seem to me that it is a characteristic of many who are "liberal" and "tolerant" to be that way only in matters of infidelity and to have neither quality when faced with what is termed "Fundamentalism". The 1927 Convention was a shocking revelation of that very thing. I can never forget the wild frenzy of the usher who tried to keep Rev. C. J. Loney from the rostrum, nor the scarcely-less frenzied action of the Recording Secretary when he arose from his seat and pushed Mr. Loney backward off the rostrum.

The men who are staying by the American Baptist Convention over here deplore the "Spirit" of our Conservative Baptist Association in breaking off all ties with the A.B.C. The other day I came upon a situation in a Pennsylvania Baptist Church where two of these, "liberal" (?), "tolerant" (?), "fine-spirited" (?) ministers had come into a church fight which they had evidently stirred up from the outside. It was a sad story. If the full story of that meeting could be told abroad as the broken-hearted pastor told me it would not be believed by many as these two "tolerant" men evidently parked their ethics, and even their common decency with their car. This stirs no indignation in the hearts of their fellow ministers — the indignation is reserved for those of the C.B.A.

May you long be spared to carry on your great work.

One of your "boys" in the ministry,

J. ARTHUR GRAYDON

P.S. For some strange reason your telegram was not delivered to me until just a few minutes before I called you on the telephone to-day. A letter would have reached me much sooner!

### A BOUNTIFUL PROVISION

His peace for you is perfect,  
His pardon for you is complete,  
His strength for you is everlasting,  
His supply for you is inexhaustible,  
His love for you is infinite.

### "MUCH FRUIT"

WHEN our Lord uttered His profound and momentous maxim of the Christian life, "Without me ye can do nothing," He was stating what we call the doctrine of Sovereign Grace. In the realm of nature the truth of this principle is indisputable, and no one would be so foolish as to deny the scientific accuracy of the Master's illustration: "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." But in the spiritual realm there have never been wanting those who seek to minimize the sovereignty of Grace and to magnify, if not to glorify, the part played by the human will and man's own efforts. Someone has wittily remarked that those who boast that they are self-made men never fail to worship their maker! But are there really any self-made men? Of course not: "It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves." It is well to view the profound spiritual principle enunciated by our Lord in the light of His illustration so as to see that its truth is neither isolated nor arbitrary. Over every part and department of human life is written large the scientific dogma: "Without me ye can do nothing." In all nature there is inscribed the principle: "The branch cannot bear fruit of itself."

Take, for instance, the universally accepted doctrine of the law of cause and effect. What is it but a scientific, or rather a philosophic statement of the Biblical truth before us? The law of cause and effect lays it down as axiomatic that in the natural realm no event takes place of itself. Scientific thought banishes chance and teaches that all things are dependent upon antecedent causes, hence the whole universe is made up of a great mass of dependents and interdependents. The atheist would hang this unbreakable chain of cause and effect upon a yawning void and end its utter disruption, thus crowning the majesty of law and order with the fool's cap of chance. The believer, however, rejoices with thanksgiving that

"So the whole round earth is every way

Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

Our bodies are living witnesses to the truth that we have nothing that we did not receive. How helpless is the human infant at birth. For the first few years of life it is completely dependent upon the loving care of a mother's indefatigable labours. It cannot feed nor clothe itself, nor shift for itself in any way. When at last, after long, weary stages, the infant emerges into childhood and learns to assert its own will, it is still far from providing for all its own needs. Consider also that the dependent years of childhood and youth are but a part of the inheritance that every newcomer into this world receives from those who have gone before. The stalwart young giant has no valid reason to take pride in his magnificent physique but only to give thanks to His Maker and to his forbears who endowed him with such a bodily heritage.

In like fashion the same principle rules in the kingdom of the mind. There is a sense in which our intellectual powers are merely the development of latent potentialities. Education, we are reminded by some, does no more than to "lead out" the innate capabilities with which we are endowed. But this is the principle of grace for mental endowments and physical inheritances are pure gifts, not earned but freely granted to those who have done nothing to deserve them. Doubtless there is much in

the conception that regards learning as the appropriation of knowledge gleaned by others, but this too brings us back to the free bestowal of truths for which others have toiled and shed their blood. We are all heirs of the ages that have gone before us and we too reap whereon we bestowed no labour: "Other men laboured, and (we) are entered into their labours."

The Good News heralded in the Bible and bestowed in Jesus Christ is the crowning example of Sovereign Grace ever made known to men or to angels. It proclaims: "By grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his own mercy he saved us." What God has done in nature He does more gloriously in the spiritual world, the lower creation is an image of the higher: "Of his fulness have we all received and grace for grace." He who has given us physical life, now graciously gives us the new life in Christ; He who has bestowed knowledge upon us, now "hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." It has been well said that, "God spoke to create the world, but to save it He died."

Our text, however, does more than merely expound a doctrine, great and glorious as it is. It also proposes a personal relationship to Him who is the fountainhead of all grace, the Giver of every good and perfect gift. The Bible never conditions a man's salvation solely upon his acceptance of revealed truth. It points to Jesus Christ, "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." The key to our Lord's teaching here is the personal relationship to Himself: "in me", and the contrasting phrase, "apart from me". Men are ever willing to talk about church membership, to discuss opinions, argue about doctrine or even to submit to sacraments, but our Lord does not concern Himself with external, mechanical acts as a way of salvation. All these matters have their place, doubtless, but let them be kept in their place, the one capital question is, What is your personal attitude to Jesus Christ Himself: "What think ye of Christ?" Our Saviour offers Himself, not things or institutions, and he urges as the prime prerequisite, the necessity of coming to Himself: "Abide in me, and I in you. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing."

Will those whose feet have long trodden the Way of Life say that this truth is elementary? It is that, but it is also that "strong meat (that) belongeth to them who are of full age, even to those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the Gospel of the Grace of God, but those who have believed on His name can never forget that the same grace that provided the way home and sought the poor wanderer must also lay in heaven the topmost stone:

'Twas grace that wrote my name  
In life's eternal book;  
'Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb,  
Who all my sorrows took.

Grace taught my wandering feet  
To tread the heavenly road;  
And new supplies each hour I meet,  
While pressing on to God.

Grace taught my soul to pray,  
And made mine eyes o'erflow;  
'Twas grace which kept me to this day,  
And will not let me go.

Oh, let Thy grace inspire  
My soul with strength divine!  
May all my powers to Thee aspire,  
And all my days be Thine.

The maturést believer will never come to the place where he can dispense with the grace of God. On the contrary, the farther on the Christian pilgrim struggles toward heaven and home, the more keenly is he aware of his utter dependence upon the unfailing Companion apart from whom he can do nothing. Those who quit the King's Highway of Salvation, no matter how far along they may have progressed, will surely fall into the hands of Giant Despair and languish in the dark recesses of Doubting Castle, if indeed they do not meet with some other speedier destruction.

The Saviour's words do not define life, they offer the life itself. We need to ponder this simple yet searching truth lest our professed Christianity should be lost in a vapour of words or exhaust itself in the utterance of pious resolutions. Does this probing sentence of the Great Teacher not cut to the quick: "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." Are we bearing much fruit? Are we glorifying the Father? How humbling this is for all but the self-satisfied whose blind pride prevents them from being humbled. And yet, on the other hand we have this encouraging assurance joined to the other, probing, searching words: "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The Master looks for "much fruit", but when He finds any fruit, so far from despising it, he undertakes to cleanse the branch that he may bring forth "more fruit". The only branch that He takes away is the one that bears no fruit, the one that though seemingly attached to the vine yet has no vital bond with it and hence does not truly belong to the vine. It is noteworthy that the sole condition of fruitfulness is "abiding". The labour of bearing fruit is not the responsibility of the branch but of the vine, and to those branches that abide the vine guarantees, in ever ascending scale of productivity "fruit", "more fruit" and "much fruit".

The Saviour's parable of the vine and the branches presents a beautiful picture of the genuine Christian. Last summer we visited an orchard in the Niagara fruit belt. Greatly to our surprise the owner allowed us to drive in among the peach trees and to pick the luscious ripe fruit for ourselves, or rather for our Seminary students. We gazed with wonder that was akin to awe upon the heavily laden boughs that bent down almost to the ground under the weight of their golden harvest. The productivity of the trees amazed us. It seemed incredible that such small, frail trees could produce so abundantly.

As we admired and tasted the bounties that God had provided through His creation, we thought of the inspired picture of the believer: "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." The trees in the beautiful orchard preached a sermon that summer morning, abundantly illustrated everywhere we looked, and once again we prayed that we too might be "like a tree planted by the rivers of water."

—W.S.W.

## AMONG THE CHURCHES

REV. H. C. SLADE

### Two More French-Canadian Brands Plucked From the Burning

**T**HE Baptist Church at Malartic, through its radio, pulpit and visitation ministry, is like a beacon light shedding its benign rays over the dark waters of ignorance, idolatry, superstition and sin in the Northwestern section of the Province of Quebec. Below, Rev. Yvon Hurtubise, the Pastor, himself a convert from Rome, relates the story of two more French Canadian Roman Catholics who have come to experience the saving power of the Gospel.

"A few months ago I learned that Mr. T., who lives about 65 miles from Malartic and who had shown considerable interest in the Gospel previously, was going blind because of a bad infection in one eye. As soon as possible I called at this home and found that this affliction had only served to deepen his concern for his soul's salvation. Throughout our study of the Word of God, his wife listened carefully but said nothing. I endeavoured to show them that God was the only one who could help them in times of spiritual and physical distress, and I entreated them to put their trust in Him alone and not in any of the so-called saints of the R.C. faith. Some time later we received a very surprising letter from Mrs. T., saying that that night she asked God to reveal plainly to her if what I taught was the true way of salvation. As proof, she asked that God would enable her husband to see, at least enough to return to work. The next morning he said, 'It is strange, but I think my eye is getting better.' After a few days, when it was quite apparent that his eye was better, she told him of her petition to the Lord. In her letter she begged me to return as soon as possible to teach them more of the truth of the Word, and so I went again last week, walking the last four or five miles because of snow drifts. I found them really receptive and open to listen to the Gospel, and happy in their decision to 'follow the way of the Lord', as they say.

"Please pray that they might be a real testimony in that district, and that nothing will dim their joy nor their delight in His Word which has become a Light to them in their darkness.

"It was also my joy this week to lead another seeking soul to the One who is the Light of the world. She is the niece of a German immigrant who was saved here last year.

"For these, we praise and thank our God, and yet pray that soon many more will come to know Him whom to know is life eternal."

### Sudbury Church Has Best Year in History

The history of the Berean Baptist Church, Sudbury, reads like the parable of the mustard seed. Under the leadership of its one and only Pastor, Rev. J. R. Boyd, it has grown from extremely small beginnings to be probably one of the largest and most influential Evangelical Baptist churches in Ontario. Mr. Boyd has written to thank all GOSPEL WITNESS readers who have, by their prayers and practical help, shared in the burden of this ever-widening ministry throughout Northern Ontario, also to give some valuable information of his work. Mr. Boyd writes as follows:

Dear Faithful Helpers:

Since your loyal and prayerful assistances and that of many GOSPEL WITNESS friends, helped to make 1952 one of the best years in our experience, we gladly share with you something of the thrilling story of its achievements.

During the year just ended our extensive radio ministry continued every week to carry the Gospel in English, French, or Ukrainian to many thousands of listeners scattered all over the country from the darkness of Quebec to the plains of Manitoba. In that time God opened up our new French outlet in Northern Quebec where our brother and beloved convert from Rome, Rev. Yvon Hurtubise, is our spokesman to his own people every week. During those months of challenge and progress we added our first part-time missionary helpers to our budget. 1952 also afforded us the privilege of seeing our new Church at North Bay take full responsibility for our broadcast there. Our French associate, Pastor W. P. Bauman, there preaches the Word and the thriving young church has just now gallantly dared to assume full responsibility for the cost of the programmes. This gives us welcome relief to enable us to enter another new field this year. These ten regular broadcasts each week, with the cost of recording, visitation, printing and assisting missionaries on the fields in following up the broadcast Word has required a great deal of money.

We started the year, as we started in the beginning of our ministry, with scarcely any money, but our records show that God through His faithful people enabled us to pay out twelve thousand seven hundred and seventy-one dollars and twenty-six cents (\$12,771.26) for the support and extension of our radio and French missionary works alone. This, of course, does not include what went through the regular channels of our local churches to missionary works abroad, nor does it include what it cost for the up-keep and development of these churches, in their constantly expanding ministries. Our whole responsibility, exclusive of special building expenses, amounts to about twenty-four thousand dollars per year.

What of the future? We know no more of it than we did a year ago. We see needs on every hand. We hope to extend our foreign language radio work as well as increase the number of English outlets in places not served by such Gospel works. We are pledged to do our utmost to establish one or two new-branch works in Sudbury District. We are planning for a more intensive visitation ministry in responsive areas of French Canada in the coming summer and we hope, God willing, to keep what works we have advancing in the Saviour's name.

It is not easy to prepare an average of fifteen or sixteen messages every week of the year, to fulfil the executive and pastoral responsibilities of three growing churches; to visit and assist eager, searching groups of Christians and seekers in needy districts hundreds of miles apart and still answer for all the financial demands; but we believe God will undertake and we can with confidence plan for a year of blessing better than any yet known.

For the part played already by every one of our many friends and for the part each one will yet have in making available funds and helpers needed we are profoundly thankful and so we move into the future knowing that in the days unseen God will give us the blessed privilege of going ahead with friends old and new to greater achievements for Him.

### Blessing at Westbourne Church, Calgary

The last few Sundays in Westbourne Baptist Church, Calgary, have been times of great spiritual awakening. Each Sunday has seen souls making public profession of their faith in Christ and, in New Testament fashion, following their Lord in believer's baptism. In a recent letter from Rev. J. B. Cunningham, the Pastor, he mentions that one man who, among several others, was baptized a little over a week ago, had been under the ministry of Dr. Shields of Jarvis Street Baptist Church years ago. A Sunday School contest which ran for four months with Westwood Baptist Church, Edmonton, resulted in a considerable increase in attendance at both Bible Schools. During the four-month period the average attendance in Westbourne Sunday School was brought up by forty per Sunday. Thus goes on the glorious work of sowing and reaping among the churches of the Western Canada Regular Baptist Missionary Fellowship.

The Westbourne Church at present is faced with a tremendous challenge in the west end of the City of Calgary. The church has already purchased a lot in the new area with the hope of putting up a suitable building next summer.

### North Bay Church Broadcasts Gospel

The work in North Bay continues to go steadily forward. Pastor Wilfred P. Bauman, with his usual vision and zeal, has led his people to assume financial responsibility for a weekly broadcast which is heard over CFCH at 1.15 every Sunday afternoon. Great numbers are listening to these programmes and the people of Grace Baptist Church are earnestly praying that through this means God's Word may run, have free course and be glorified in the hearts of many. Last November the Church at North Bay began holding, in addition to the other regular meetings, a Sunday morning service at 11 o'clock. The Bible School on this account was moved forward one hour to meet at ten o'clock which resulted in an improved attendance at Bible School and a goodly number of the Sunday School scholars remaining over for the morning service. Previously the Orange Hall, where the meetings are held on the Lord's Day, has not been available to them on week days. In this respect the Church is handicapped by not having a building of its own. Lately, however, the Lord has answered prayer in opening the door for a children's meeting to be held in the same hall every Saturday morning for one hour. Daniel's Band will be held next Saturday morning for the first. After the evening service a week ago last Sunday the hearts of all were encouraged when a young lady came to the pastor's wife saying she wanted to be saved. We shall join in prayer with the faithful Christians at North Bay that this one may be but the forerunner of many who will yet come "asking their way to Zion with their faces thitherward."

### AN OFFERING FOR BRITISH FLOOD VICTIMS

Last Sunday evening, after the sermon, a special "retiring" offering was received for the British flood victims. The offering amounted to \$1,500. If any readers of THE GOSPEL WITNESS desire to have fellowship with us in that matter, their offerings will be gladly received.

### VICTORIA AVENUE CHURCH, HAMILTON

The Annual Meeting of Victoria Avenue Baptist Church, Hamilton, was held on Wednesday evening, January 28th, with Rev. John Byers, presiding. A spirit of gratitude to God, good fellowship, hope and enthusiasm pervaded the meeting. Throughout a difficult year the Lord had manifested His presence in an unusual way, so that in answer to believing prayer what had seemed to many an impossible task had been accomplished, in that the mortgage on the church and parsonage had been fully discharged. For the first time in the history of the church, this valuable property is free of debt. Because of the goodness of the Lord the financial report indicated an increase in total income of about \$200 over that of last year. The Bible School report stressed the generosity and faithfulness of officers, teachers and scholars. Some scholars made a profession of salvation on a recent Sunday.

On January 4th, the eleventh anniversary of the commencement of Mr. Byers' ministry in Hamilton, a letter from the Deacons was read, expressing appreciation of his powerful preaching, based upon the Word of God, and not upon the opinions of men; his high ideals concerning the function, privileges and responsibilities of the members of the Christian church; his unselfish, kind and devoted service among the poor, the sick, the sorrowing and afflicted; his wise leadership and trustful spirit.

The following Deacons were elected: Mr. Charles Linklater (clerk), Mr. La Verne Ball (treasurer), Mr. David Simmonds, Mr. Arthur Abrahams, Mr. C. Rodgers and Mr. Gordon Bigelow.

—O.L.C.

### PRAYER

"Fervent, persevering prayer, the prayer of faith, the prayer of a soul which never feels itself alive save in constant communion with God, how little is this prayer known! All mighty men have been men of prayer, and they were mighty because they were men of prayer."

—ADOLPHE MONOD

## Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 17      First Quarter      Lesson 9      March 1, 1953

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

### THE BREAD OF LIFE

Lesson Text: John 6:1-14.

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

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

This outstanding miracle was recorded by all four Evangelists (Matt. 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17). The Sea of Galilee was also called the Sea of Tiberias, and the Sea or Lake of Gennesaret (Luke 5:1). The journey across the lake was undertaken to secure quiet for the disciples (Mark 6:31, 32), for they were weary after their tour of preaching and healing, and they were in need of recuperation, that their natural and spiritual vigour might be renewed (Isa. 40:31; Mark 3:20; 6:7, 30; 2 Cor. 4:16). Our Saviour affords rest for the weary; He is as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land (Isa. 32:2; Matt. 11:28-30).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The people were completely satisfied; "They did all eat, and were filled" (Mark 6:42). Our Lord gives not only life;

but also full satisfaction to those who come to Him (2 Kings 4:42-44; John 4:13, 14; 10:10; Eph. 3:20). There is always bread enough and to spare in His banqueting-house; no rationing is necessary in the heavenly economy! He satisfies the desires of every one of His believing children (Exod. 16:18; Psa. 17:15; 22:26; 103:5; 107:9; 145:16).

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

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

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

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Feb. 23—Bread from heaven for murmurers..... Exod. 16:1-17.  
Feb. 24—Not by bread alone ..... Deut. 8.  
Feb. 25—5,000 fed. 12 travelling baskets over..... Mark 6:32-44.  
Feb. 26—4,000 fed. 7 large hampers over ..... Mark 8:1-9.  
Feb. 27—Bread of life. No hunger, no thirst..... John 6:25-40.  
Feb. 28—Appropriating Christ insures eternal life  
John 6:41-59.  
Mar. 1—We believe and are sure ..... John 6:60-71.

#### SUGGESTED HYMNS

Break Thou the bread of life. The Gospel bells are ringing. "Till He come!" Oh, let the words. Jesus, Thou Joy of loving hearts. Come ye yourselves apart. Thy life was given for me.

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