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## "In Her Mouth Was An Olive Leaf Pluckt Off"

**O**F ALL the stories in the Bible there is perhaps no bit of history with which people generally are more familiar than the story of the ark, and of the overwhelming judgment by which it was surrounded. The ark had been prepared from specifications divinely revealed, and in due course Noah, and his family, and the animal life that was to accompany him, were brought into the ark, and "the Lord shut him in".

Of course it is a type and illustration of the ark of salvation — the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, in Whom sinners find refuge from the divine judgment upon sin. But the ark may provide us with an illustration of certain aspects of the Christian life. The ark was designed to maintain the testimony to righteousness on the earth. The ark might be taken as illustrative of organizations which are brought into being for the preservation and perpetuation among men of the truth of the gospel. It may be regarded, really, as a type and symbol of that great principle which requires believing people to be completely separated from all the iniquities roundabout them.

After a certain period Noah sent forth a raven. The raven was a carnivore, it belonged to the great carnivorous family of birds and mammals which live upon flesh. The raven was under no necessity for returning to the ark: it found an abundance of carrion floating about, upon which it could gorge itself. Thus there are people who leave the church, or organizations that are strictly separated unto the gospel of Christ, because they are people of carnal minds: they are not spiritual. The "old man", the raven nature, is uppermost, and they can find satisfaction in things of the world, upon which divine condemnation already rests. Thus the Apostle John said, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." And then addressing the spiritual children of God, John continued, "but ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth."

Many a pastor, who has endeavoured to be a good steward of the manifold grace of God, has been deeply grieved to see some people leave his ministry, and go elsewhere. Of course he, and we all, must endeavour to avoid giving anyone a just cause for leaving us. But not infrequently the departure of some people from a church or organization is really a testimony to the faithfulness of the ministry they have left behind. We have known ministers who were more at home organizing baseball games, and hockey matches, and other forms of entertainment than in the meetings for prayer, even in their own church. They mistakenly assume that the function of the ministry is to entertain people. Such men will become very popular with a congregation of ravens.

There are a great many who profess and call themselves Christians in whom the mind of the flesh reigns—we do not mean that in any vicious sense, but merely that the mind of the natural man has in it all the desires that belong to our carnal natures; and they, like like ravens, can flit about over the flotsam and jetsam of life, and satisfy their carnal, or old, natures with the things of the world. It is vain for Pastor Noah to wait at his window for the raven to come back. It will never come: it belongs to the world without the ark.

But how interesting is the story which tells us that Noah sent out a dove, which flew over the same waters, and was faced with the same opportunities for refreshment as satisfied the raven. But the inspired record says, "But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark".

True believers, regenerated men and women, who have within them the Spirit of God, which, when Jesus was baptized, descended like a dove and lighted upon Him, will not keep company with ravens. They will not mind the things of the flesh, but the things of the Spirit. And though they may, on an errand of duty, like Noah's dove, fly over the waters of judgment, they will find no rest for the sole of their feet in those things which are without the ark, and will return to it: "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him."

But after seven days Noah sent the dove on a further errand of exploration, and it is written, "And the dove came into him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth".

What a lovely story! The dove returned to the ark with an olive leaf in her mouth, which somewhere she had plucked off.

We believe in the eternal security of the saints. We know, of course, also that even doves may leave the ark for a time. But they always come home in the evening. What a blessing it would be if all the children of God who go flying over worldly waters, would shorten their voyage, and return with all speed to the ark.

This article is written in Toronto. What if all backsliders in the city of Toronto, who are really born again, but have allowed the mind of the flesh, with its worldly aspirations and ambitions to dominate them, would say within themselves, "My place is not here: I will fly back to the Ark of Truth, and to the life of the gospel of separation, and will shut myself up to God"!

Some time ago a number of people, in whom we believed, and whom we had greatly loved, and to whom we can say, without boasting, we endeavoured to minister for many a day, went out from us. The majority were misled, misinformed, deceived by the voice of the raven. Someone called at our office recently and said, "Many of them know it now. Not a few of them wish they were back, and some have even said that if Dr. Shields would hold out the olive branch they would come back." Whether that be a strictly accurate report we do not know. We do know the one who made it, believed it to be strictly accurate; but in response to that we have only to say olive trees grow thickly around Jarvis Street, and there are olive leaves enough for every dove that flies our way, to pluck. We have nothing but an olive branch for any dove who flies our way. We have no expectation that a raven will even pluck a leaf. It will be too much occupied with carnal considerations. But as for the rest, the window of this particular ark is not locked, and it will open wide, and quickly to every dove who comes with an olive leaf plucked off.

#### THE PRECIOUS VALUE OF THE BIBLE

There is gold in the rocks which fringe the Pass of the Splügen, gold even in the stones which mend the roads, but there is too little of it to be worth extracting. Alas, how like too many books and sermons! Not so the Scriptures; they are much fine gold; their very dust is precious.

Let no one turn away from the Bible because it is not a book of learning and wisdom. It is. Would you know Astronomy? It is here; it tells you of the Sun of Righteousness and the Star of Bethlehem. Would you know Botany? It is here; it tells you of the plant of renown — the "Lily of the Valley," and the "Rose of Sharon". Would you know Geology and Minerology? You shall learn it here; for you may read of the Rock of Ages and the White Stone with the name graven thereon, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it. Would you study History? Here is the most ancient of all the records of the history of the human race. Whate'er your Science is, come and bend over this Book, your Science is here.

—SPURGEON

## The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

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#### THIS WEEK'S SERMONS

On account of an indisposition Dr. Shields did not preach morning or evening on Sunday. Rev. W. S. Whitcombe spoke at both services. In this week's issue we publish two sermons of an earlier date. One was preached in Jarvis Street in 1911, and the other in 1925. Our readers, we think, will readily note that the testimony of Jarvis Street Pulpit to the adequacy and finality of the gospel of grace has not changed through the years.

#### BUT STUDENTS HAVE TO EAT

Several churches, and individuals, have already sent generous supplies to our Seminary larder. The students' dining room is run on a co-operative plan, and the more food the friends of the Seminary donate, the farther the students' money will go, because the less it will cost them for their meals. Now that the Fall has come, and friends are canning and pickling, we suggest they remember the Seminary, and bring in whatever they can afford. The students will greatly appreciate it.

#### THE COMING CONVENTION

We are anticipating a great Convention of our Conservative Baptist Association of Canada, which will meet in Jarvis Street on October 27th, 28th and 29th.

When originally we were forced to separate from what we have become accustomed to call "The Old Convention" because of its Modernism, our Conventions were attended, not by one or two delegates from a church, but by nearly the whole church, where it was possible for them to come.

We hope our churches will be fired with a similar enthusiasm for the coming Convention, and that we may have the privilege of welcoming a great company of God's people to this time of feasting.

# The Jarvis Street Pulpit

## How Cords of Vanity Grow Into Cart-Ropes

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, April 9th, 1911

"Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-rope."—Isaiah 5:18.

THIS verse presents a very startling picture: that of a human soul harnessed to a wagon, drawing a heavy load of sin! The text pronounces woe upon these poor slaves, upon these harnessed human dray-horses of the devil! And that is not to be wondered at. To be the devil's coach-man were an occupation mean enough for a soul made in God's image; but to be his coach-horse—nay, worse, to be harnessed to his ash-cart, to be his pack-mule, to be driven as a laden ass by his long-lashed whip, surely this is to have reached the lowest level of degradation and shame! When this becomes a fact, we need no further argument to establish the truth of the doctrine of total depravity. And this text asserts that it is a fact: "Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope."

This evening we shall first of all inquire *how these souls are harnessed to the devil's wagon*. Then I shall offer a few remarks about *the road along which they drag this heavy load*; and last of all, I shall tell of *their cruel driver, and of the only One Who has power to unharness those who have been taken in his toils*.

### I.

We are first of all to inquire: **HOW THESE SOULS WERE HARNESSSED** "who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope."

*You have seen a man go into a field to catch a spirited horse?* There was a heavy load in the wagon, a long journey in prospect, when the farmer went out to the field to catch the horse which was to draw it. He took a little oats in his cap—and they were half chaff; but the horse came when he saw the tempting mouthful, and while he ate, the farmer threw a halter over his head and held him fast. But the halter was a thing of webbing, which the horse could have broken with one spring, had he known it; but he was held by a cord as light as vanity, "gone into captivity because he had no knowledge."

But that is not the harness with which he draws the farmer's load to market. Now he has a bit in his mouth, and is harnessed to the heavy wagon by strong leather traces, and a man with a long-lashed whip sits on the load behind him. Caught with cords of vanity he is now harnessed to his load with cart-rope.

And that is exactly how the devil harnesses men to his wagon. No wise horseman ever hitched a young colt to a heavy dray the first time he was put in harness. The lightest thing on wheels is what the colt is harnessed to at first. And the tempter is just as wise. Men would refuse the cart-rope when they offer no objection to cords of vanity. Therefore he catches them with chaff, and ensnares them with vain thoughts, until, or ever they are aware, they find themselves harnessed with

ropes to his dreadful death-dealing juggernaut car.

That is the principle of the text, that the lightest, and flimsiest connection with sin, that which is so insignificant, and of such little worth, requiring so little effort, apparently, to sever it, that the connection may be called "a cord of vanity"—even this grows, by use, into a cart rope, which men cannot break.

This principle is illustrated *in those who live only for pleasure*. God intended us to have pleasure, and finds no joy in our pain. "Out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food"; "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." It is not wrong to be happy; neither is it sinful to smile. But take care that the flowers you cultivate are not the flowers of the hemp-plant which may grow into a cart-rope, or a hangman's line. It is possible with vain and sacrilegious hands to gather the evening zephyrs, the fragrance of flowers; the song of birds, and all delights of human friendships, and of speech, and even the very sunbeams, and weave them together into a cart-rope which will harness a man forever to his sin. You think that is a metaphorical hyperbole, a wild exaggeration; but it is true to life. There is no good or beautiful thing which has not been pressed into the infernal work of building prisons, or forging chains for the soul. Remember that it is of wood stolen from a tree whose fruit was pleasant to the eyes the shafts of the devil's cart are made, and he will be at no loss to manufacture traces. Indeed he has taught men how to snatch the very rainbow from the skies, and bind it with impious hands into a fetter to manacle the soul.

Did you pleasure-seekers read of that terrible double execution at Seville, in Spain, last week? (In 1911) Two men, Juan Aldige, and Manuel Munoz, who lived, presumably, in the first place for pleasure, drawing iniquity with cords of vanity, they became adepts at cards. They invited others to visit them at their house, and fleeced them by cheating them at cards.

A wealthy man, named Rejano, who was a great gambler, and who had disappeared, was traced by the police to Aldige's house. In searching the premises they discovered a freshly-turned-up mound of earth in the garden. When excavations were made, the body of Rejano was found. He had been murdered. Further excavations were made, and six other bodies were found buried in the garden, all of whom had been murdered in the same way—their skulls crushed with a hammer. There were seven murders committed by two men over the card table.

The men were tried and sentenced to death by garroting, by strangulation, as is the custom in Spain. The condemned men shocked even the jailors by their callous-

ness, and when on the scaffold laughed and joked with each other. Munoz talked continually and when the priest begged him to keep silence during the reading of certain prayers the criminal replied: "I am going to talk as long as I have the chance, for I shall be dead a long time". Both men were garroted in the usual manner. When the collar was placed around Aldige's neck he shouted: "One, two, three — go!" and at the last word the executioner turned the screw. With a jest on his tongue, this murderer strutted into the presence of God! Oh, ye pleasure-seekers! That was drawing iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope.

This principle is illustrated in those *who are addicted to strong drink*. Verily they begin by drawing iniquity with cords of vanity. I hope none of you have got to the cart-rope stage yet. May the Spirit of God snap those cords of vanity to-night!

Young man, you did not go into the bar the first time for the sake of the drink: you had no taste for it; you certainly were not thirsty. But you were in gay company. Your companions gave no evidence that they were budding philosophers, or coming statesmen: whoever listened to their conversation could discern no promise of their becoming men of renown in any sphere of life. Knowledge did not drop from their lips, neither was their speech savoured with wisdom. They could laugh heartily, and were exuberant jesters; albeit there was neither wit nor wisdom in their jests. "For as the creaking of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of a fool: this also is vanity," the wise man said. And this was the vanity which drew you in. How dreadful that men should be yoked to sin upon which God's curse rests, by such cords of vanity.

Why did you go into the bar last night? Was it for the joke, the company, or the drink itself? First it was an appetite for nonsense which drew you. Last night it was an appetite for alcohol. Take care, my dear fellow, or you will be tied with a cart-rope before you know where you are. "I can drink; or I can let it alone," says one. I'll cut that saying in two for myself, if you please, and allow you to call me a coward, while I glory in this, "I can let it alone". That foolish boast is a cord of vanity which will soon be a cart-rope.

The same is true of *other evil habits*. There are sins I dare not mention here, and yet they may be sins to which some even in this audience may not be strangers. You had better snap the cords of vanity while you can. You may soon be like the blind horses of the coal mines who are scarcely ever out of their harness of chain, and who never see the sun.

But look at this illustration from the context. Here is a man who has a house of his own. He is prudent, he is provident. There is a house next door he would like to buy. He buys it. Then there is a field adjoining his. That would greatly improve his property. Like Ahab, he must have his neighbour's vineyard, though, of course, he will pay a price for it. But he is only prudent! Take care. Now he must have other houses, and other fields, till the Lord cries in his ears, "Woe unto you that join house to house, and field to field, till there be no peace, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth." They desired the next house, and the next field. To own them would flatter their vanity. Now they covet the earth, and are bound to their passion with a cart-rope.

And there is this danger in *the habit of saving*, com-

mendable as that is within proper limits. There is this danger too *in business*. The thread of prudence made to stitch a coat to keep out winter's cold, may be twisted with the twine of carefulness until it grows into a cord of penuriousness, and that may be doubled, and trebled, and platted until it becomes a rope of covetousness, which Judas Iscariot buys for thirty pieces of silver, and uses it as a cart-rope to drag a sin-laden soul out of the presence of Jesus over the gallows to hell.

Oh, ye busy men! Beware of the cords which draw you from the prayer meeting, and from the place of private communion. They will grow into cart ropes which will drag the burdens of your business after you, until you will go home in your harness; you will sleep — when you can — in your harness; you will dream in your harness; you will rise with furrowed brow in the morning still dragging your load with cart-ropes, until you forget how to cast your care upon Him Who careth for you.

But look at *another of the devil's cart-horses*. He began by seeking pleasure in wine, and was bound by cords of vanity; but he practiced it until he became "mighty to drink wine"; he could drink it, and carry his load without staggering. Then he mingled strong drink for others, justified the wicked for reward, and took away the righteousness of the righteous from him. He began by being a sinner himself, but now he is a wholesale manufacturer of sinners.

Ah, young man! That, I fear, is your picture. Not content with sinning yourself, you have led others into sin. As though your own individual transgressions were not load enough to drag to the judgment seat, you must pile on top of it the sins of twenty other young men, whom you have led astray, and thus get them to help you load the devil's ash-cart, to which you are harnessed. Oh, the curse of evil companionships! They become a rope which binds men to their sins. You might have broken away from certain evils yourself, but your cord of vanity has been intertwined with those of twenty others until you are each bound with a cart-rope, a part of the devil's team. If this be your case, my brother, I beseech you to consider lest your position be with that thrice-cursed man, "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin."

And ere I leave this, shall I tell you that *no man was ever bound to his sin by cords of reason*. There never was a sound reason for sin. You draw iniquity by cords of vanity, the weakest and most senseless excuses. They would snap like a brittle thread only that they are used to pull a wagon-load of sin down hill. *No man could maintain a reputation for simple sanity if, in other matters he were to act with as little reason as governs his actions with respect to his relation to Christ*. Yet those senseless excuses, veritable cords of vanity, have been woven together into a cart rope by which you are harnessed to the sins of the past. We can't get you out of the shafts of sin because you are harnessed to them by a network of excuses. Those men are led on until they take the very Word of God, and fling it back in the face of the Almighty; and challenge God to "hasten his work", and to speed on the judgment day!

Oh, sinner, sinner —

"Fearless brow to Him uplifting  
Canst thou for His thunders call,  
Knowing that to guilt's attraction  
Ever more they fall?"

## II.

Let us now look at THE ROAD ALONG WHICH THEY DRAG THIS HEAVY LOAD.

*The roughness of the road increases.* The sinner fancies that his worst fate is to draw a rubber-tired buggy over asphalted streets, brilliantly lighted, and lined with cheering crowds. But the rubber tires are exchanged for a heavier wagon at the limits of the city of youth, and the rough and stony road stretches on into a darkness that can be felt. Be assured that sin's pleasures are of short duration. The road is stony at best, but it will be found rougher farther on, before long, and the ruts are deeper; so that, impossible as it is, when bound with cart-ropes, to get out of the shafts, it becomes equally impossible to turn the cart out of the road.

Byron speaks of—

"The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,  
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,  
O'er which all heavily the journeying years  
Plod the last sands of life — where not a flower  
appears";

And he describes Childe Harold, in which no doubt his own bitter experience is mirrored:

"Long-absent Harold reappears at last;  
He of the breast which fain no more would feel,  
Wrung with the wounds which kill not, but ne'er  
heal;  
Yet time, who changes all, had altered him  
In soul and aspect as in age: years steal  
Fire from the mind as vigour from the limb;  
And life's enchanted cup but sparkles near the brim.

"His had been quaff'd too quickly, and he found  
The dregs were wormwood; but he filled again,  
And from a purer fount, on holier ground,  
And deemed its spring perpetual: but in vain;  
Still round him clung invisibly a chain  
Which gall'd forever, fettering though unseen,  
And heavy, though it clanked not; worn with pain,  
Which pined although it spoke not, and grew keen,  
Entering with every step he took through many a  
scene."

The cart to which the sinner is harnessed is not like a delivery wagon whose load grows lighter the farther it goes. It is rather like the scavenger's cart which picks up some new refuse at every door, and is always heavier at the end of the day. Every day, and every hour of every day they are busy with their shovels, loading on thoughts, and words, and deeds of evil. Oh, young men! your past which you so insanely drag after you is a juggernaut car whose weight of iniquity is hourly increasing, and is rolling on your heels even now.

But someone asks, "If the road is so rough, and the load so heavy, why not stand still, and refuse to go farther?" That is the difficulty: *The road is down hill, and you cannot stand still if you would.* The cart-ropes are not now necessary to draw the load. I have already explained that if the cart needed much drawing "the cords of vanity" must have snapped. The harness is designed to fasten thy soul to the cart, and its horrid load: as gravitation makes the stone roll down hill, by every law the sinner's sin rolls after him. That is the picture the prophet draws in the context. A man rises "early in the morning" to "follow strong drink" but at night "wine pursues him"; he is going down hill, and the loaded wagon is rolling after him, while he is seeking to flee from the sins to which he is joined by a cart rope.

And *there is no end to this road.* Is there no evening time when the burdens may be laid down, and the long-

desired rest obtained? The evening comes and the dark, dark night, but there is no rest. He who chooses to be joined to his sin goes on an endless journey. There is *but one halting-place* on the way to that measureless circular march of woe, which is paved with glowing coals, and that is *the divine judgment seat.* You will pause there, if you have not paused at the Cross to have your load of iniquity weighed. Did you ever hear of a burglar driving an open cart, loaded with his plunder up to the door of a police station? Did you ever hear of a murderer drawing the bodies of his victims after him in his flight for life? And yet that is what you are doing, who are without Christ: you are piling up sin behind you, binding the load to you with cart-ropes, and dragging it all with you to the judgment seat. And *unless the cart ropes are cut this side of the judgment, they will never be cut at all.* It is characteristic of heaven that there is no sin there; it is characteristic of hell that there is nothing else there. It is a condition of entrance to heaven and a preparation for its joys that sin be abandoned; it is a condition of entrance to hell, and a preparation for its agonies that a man take his sin with him. He will need no further judgment than this, "He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness yet more: and he that is filthy let him be filthy yet more". You may discuss the question of what is meant by "unquenchable fire" as much as you like — there will be no lack of fuel — but God forbid that any one should make a jest of that which is fraught with such unutterable woe! The fact is, every sinner who rejects salvation is drawing a load of fuel with him, "drawing iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-ropes". Oh, ye angels, weep at this! That human souls should be harnessed to the devil's wagons to draw fuel for the flames of hell! Pollock's vision, I greatly fear, is no exaggeration. He pictures the bottom of the hill I have been describing, and says:

"Through all that dungeon of unfailling fire  
I saw most miserable beings walk,  
Burning continually, yet unconsumed;  
For ever wasting, yet enduring still;  
Dying perpetually, yet never dead.  
Some wandering lonely in the desert flames,  
And some in fell encounter fiercely met,  
With curses loud and blasphemies that made  
The cheek of darkness pale; and as they fought,  
And cursed, and gnashed their teeth, and wished to die,  
Their hollow eyes did utter streams of woe!  
But there were groans that ended not, and sighs  
That always sighed, and tears that ever wept,  
And ever fell, but not in Mercy's sight.  
And Sorrow, and Repentance, and Despair  
Among them walked, and to their thirsty lips  
Presented frequent cups of burning gall.  
And as I listened I heard these beings curse  
Almighty God, and curse the Lamb, and curse  
The earth, the resurrection morn, and seek  
And ever vainly seek for utter death.  
And to their everlasting anguish still  
The thunders from above, responding, spoke  
These words, which through the caverns of perdition  
Forlornly echoing, fell on every ear —

"Ye knew your duty, but ye did it not,"  
And back again recoiled a deeper groan."

Thus do men drag their sins after them, and make their own hell.

## III.

Though the time is so far gone, I dare not send you away without A WORD OF HOPE.

There is a *cruel driver*, who having harnessed his horses is in no mind to let them run away from him.

Jehu was a tame driver in comparison with him: "He driveth furiously" and grinds the Ahaziah's and the Joram's beneath his chariot wheels, and madly drives his human horses dragging their freight of sin down the slippery slope to hell.

*Is there no one who can check these maddened steeds? Is there no one to turn them aside ere they reach the steeper declivity, and plunge beyond the reach of hope? When sin is thus pictured in its awful power, when the downward sweep of its accumulating and already irresistible momentum is felt, who will talk about saving himself? In the presence of such dreadful and direful might, how insane to mention resolutions or environments, or ceremonies, or churches, or human priests, as saviours!*

A prisoner in the palace of "the strong man armed", my soul cried out for a deliverer, and I hailed one coming from the dawning: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?" And my soul leaped into freedom at His answer: "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

I desire to INTRODUCE MY SAVIOUR TO YOU TO-NIGHT. He will break the cart-ropes that bind thee, He will cut them by the word of promise; He will take thy load of sin, and, bearing it over Calvary, will bury it deep in His sepulchre, where thou shalt see it no more. And as for thy driver, he will develop wings and flee, as an owl from the morning, from the presence of the "stronger than he". And the blood of Jesus shall cleanse thee from thy guilty contact with the devil; He will put His Spirit within thee so that, like Samson, no new cords of vanity can bind thee, and no ropes can hold thee; and instead of being the devil's cart horse, thou shalt be an heir of glory, thou shalt mount up with wings as an eagle, until from the summit of some mount of communion, from the mountain of Nebo, the top of Pisgah, thy soul shall rapturously exclaim:

"The world recedes, it disappears!  
Heaven opens on mine eyes; Mine ears  
With sounds seraphic ring:  
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!  
O grave! where is thy victory?  
O death! where is thy sting?"

### TRUE CHARITY

If men valued the truth as they do their goods and their houses, they would not regard error with such cool contentment. The cant of the present day cries "Charity, Charity", as if it were not the truest charity to grow indignant with that which ruins souls. It is not uncharitable to warn men against poisonous adulterations of their food, or invasion of their rights; and surely it can not be more uncharitable to put them upon their guard against that which will poison or rob their souls.

—SPURGEON

### GOSPEL WITNESS PUBLICATIONS

"The Priest, the Woman, and the Confessional", by Father Chiniquy ..... \$1.00

"The Greatest Fight in the World", by C. H. Spurgeon, 64 pages ..... 25

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**The Gospel Witness**

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2 - Canada

### REVIVING GRACE

or

### FLYING, RUNNING AND WALKING

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

Preached in Jarvis St. Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, September 20th, 1925

(Stenographically Reported)

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary: there is no searching of his understanding.

"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

"Even the youths shall faint and be weary; and the young men shall utterly fall:

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."—Isaiah 40:28-31.

THERE are some texts of Scripture which are made especially to be quoted, and are too big for any preacher; and this is one of them. I have never attempted to preach from this text, and I am not going to attempt it this morning; I shall let the text preach itself. It is one of the most familiar passages of the Old Testament. It does one good just to read it, to hear the music of it: "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint"—are any of you faint this morning?—"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

If you have studied the context this morning you will have observed how the Lord challenges His people to find a likeness for Himself: "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." Then He proceeds to tell of the vain efforts of man to produce a likeness of God. It has ever been the sin of men that they have tried to produce a likeness of God, notwithstanding the prohibition, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." God forbids us to attempt to produce a portrait of Him, because He objects to human caricatures; for men have always caricatured God. I know that we do not, in our day and in this country, bow down to idols of wood and stone; but men are still changing "the glory of the uncorruptible God"—perhaps not produced in wood and stone, but a mental image, an imagination of God—"into an image made like to corruptible man"—God is measured by human standards—"and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things."—There is not much evolution there, is there? But that is the kind of god men evolve out of their own consciousness. They change the image of the uncorruptible God; they bring Him down to standards of human judgment and limit His resources; and dare to say to God what they would do if they were He—"and to birds, and four-footed beasts and creeping things!" We need to hear what God says of Himself; to turn away from our own imaginings; for the imaginations of the thoughts of man's heart are only evil continually. We need to come back to what God says of Himself, and to receive the portrait

of Himself which He has given to us in the Person of His Son.

I do not wonder that prayer meetings are forsaken in many quarters. If I were to teach you that God is the Great Unknown, that He is Law, that He is Force, that He is the Great First Cause, Who set in operation certain forces unnumbered millions of years ago, and that He then shut Himself up in the machine which He had made, and that He is now merely in it and not above it and over it; and that He never does anything except according to what we call "natural law"; and that we are ourselves but elements in the great plan of evolutionary progress; and that sometime, somehow, yonder in the distant future we may hope for better things, but that these fixed processes of nature can never be accelerated, can never be changed, that its laws can never be suspended; and if after preaching in that fashion, I were to say, "We are going to have a prayer meeting this week; we invite you to come"; instinctively I think you would all say, "I don't see that there is any use to go, if the only God you have told us about is shut up in a machine of His making. I have a lot of troubles, and you have not told me about any God Who will give personal attention to my concerns. I am being defeated in many a fight; and you have not told me about anyone who can help me. You have told me about the survival of the fittest; but I am in despair, I am hopeless. No, I must do the best I can for myself, but it would be useless to go to your prayer meeting."

And your reasoning would be sound. The churches that have no prayer meetings have no God. The men and women who are called Christians who do not pray, have no God to pray to; that is why they do not pray. "Hast thou not known"—God? Who is your God? What God do you know? The everlasting God, the Lord Jehovah; Who communicates Himself to His people? the great I AM, who said to Pharaoh, "Let my people go, that they may serve me?"—"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord"—Who is He?—"the Creator of the ends of the earth"—Who is He? The Lord Jesus Christ, that is Who He is: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Your prayer, the dimensions of your prayer, will depend upon your conception of God. If the God you know is the God revealed in Jesus Christ, and if Jesus Christ be to you "the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth," and if He has said, " whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you"—then it is worth while to pray, is it not?

"Fainteth not, neither is weary." A few weeks ago I stood once again at the rail at Niagara Falls; and as I saw that mighty cataract and heard it thundering away, I recalled some estimates which I had read, given by certain geologists, as to the time occupied in cutting back the Niagara gorge from Lake Ontario to its present position. They did not quite agree among themselves; there was a difference in their estimates between the highest and the lowest of about fifty millions of years. We may conclude that geology is scarcely an exact science after that! And as I leaned on the rail that day, I said to myself, That mighty torrent was pouring over that rocky ledge when Moses stretched his rod over the sea, and made a path for God's people through the tide; it was

still thundering away like that "when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea"; and so far as I can see there is no evidence of its diminution: it is still pouring its mighty tide over those rocks, flowing yonder to the sea. And I thought of what the wise man said, "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again." It is but a picture of all the powers of nature, of the tremendous energy stored up even in this planet. And then I said to myself, I know Who made it all; and I am personally acquainted with Him Who controls it all. He is greater than the things that He has made: "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding."

And it is to such a God we pray, my dear friends. I was going to speak to you about "reviving grace", and I had not selected any particular text when I announced the subject; but I said, The whole Bible is full of it in any case, and that is what we all need—reviving grace: When I came to the Sunday School lesson for to-day, I said, Why, the text I want is here. I can give them the text if I cannot say much about it. If I can but summon everybody with my own soul to look again to Him Who is the Creator of the ends of the earth, and remind them once again of the infinite resources of Deity, if I can persuade them to bow down and worship Him—we were speaking last night of the exceeding greatness of that power which is to usward who believe—then we may indeed be revived.

Now, what does He do? "He giveth power to the faint"—to the faint—to the faint! Are you faint? No, my friends, He has no power to sell. He will put no meter in your house to keep account of what you use, and charge you up with it! Such power as is His He gives—He gives. I read the other day that we were likely to have a power famine in Toronto, that even Niagara had not been sufficiently harnessed to meet all demands. But you cannot exhaust this Power. Let us have a revival in Jarvis Street, let Him give power to the faint; and He still has enough for every other church in Toronto, and for every other church in Canada. One of the deacons handed me a little newspaper cutting, saying that the United Church in Alton were going to have a revival, and I said, "Praise God! Let them have a revival by all means." God can help the United Church as well as a Baptist church, and He will help neither because of their name, but only on the basis of their relationship to Christ. "He giveth power"—and He can give you power, He can give me power, He can give us all power; but He will not sell it. He will give it without money and without price, but only to those who need it, only to the faint. If you have come to the end of your own resources, my dear friends, if you have discovered that in this holy war we must needs have a supernatural Power, a Power not our own, He will give it. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

You boys and girls, I wonder if you have had this Power? Do you need it, too? Power to the faint! Do you need it in school? Do you need it in the playground? What about you Christian boys? Do you need it in company with boys whose tongues are not clean, who take the name of God in vain? Did you listen to that in silence, or did you kindly and truly, as a believer in

Jesus Christ, say to that schoolmate of yours, "Please do not take the name of my Saviour in vain. Don't, don't offend my ears by compelling me to listen to that again?" "No, sir, I did not say that. I wanted to say it but I did not." Why did you not say it, my boy? "Well I wanted to say it, but—" Why did you not say it? "Because I—I rather think I was faint; I did not have strength enough to do it. I came home from school condemned because I had not borne my witness for Christ." Would you like to be victorious next week? Would you like to have strength to go to that boy to-morrow and say, "I failed in my witness before you last week; I ought to have given you a kindly rebuke for your language; but I confess I was a coward, I did not do it. But I have been to Him Who gives power to the faint, and I come to you to-day to tell you that I am a witness for Jesus Christ." Get strength from Him to bear your testimony. Can you do it? Oh, let us be intensely practical. And the rest of you, down in the shop, in the kitchen, on the car, or wherever you are, you know that on many occasions during this past week you fainted, failed, because you did not appropriate the power which He gives to the faint. "To them that have no might"—none at all—"He increaseth strength". When shall we come to understand that it is all of grace; and that when we plead bankruptcy and admit that we have no might, that it is then His strength is made perfect in our weakness? Oh that we might all realize that we have no might. That we are spiritually impotent! To such "He increaseth strength."

Even "the youths shall faint and be weary." I read an appeal the other day to a young men's Bible class to get back "on the job" after the holidays, to come together in good fellowship. It was a Bible class; but there was not a word about Him of Whom the Bible speaks. I do not know what the class was coming together for, apparently it was not to magnify Him—but it was supposed to be a good thing to have a company of young men lined up with the church! My experience is that even the youths faint and are weary; and that it is as hard to keep young men at it as it is to keep old men at it; and it is even harder to keep young men at it than to keep young women, or even older women at it. "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall."

I rejoice that God has given us so many young men in this place. There were many visitors here at our evening service, a couple of weeks ago; and they said they had not seen, in many years, so many young men in a church. I rejoice that God is calling young men; and yet I want to tell you young men that, as your Pastor, I do not depend upon you. That is not complimentary, is it? But I don't. I praise God for every one of you who is saved; but I know so well that even the youths faint and are weary, and young men utterly fall. The work of the Lord in this place can never be carried on by the energy of youth, or by the utmost strength of the greatest army of young men that can be brought together. "Cursed be the man that . . . maketh flesh, his arm." It is folly, utter folly, to trust in young men, or young women, or old men and old women, or men and women in middle life. No matter where you are, human powers fail altogether, and we are called away from all such unreliable support, and told that even the best that man can do will fail. When the Great War was on they wanted the youths of our Province, they wanted the

young men to stand before the enemy, because they had more physical stamina than those who were older in years. But in this conflict, my friends, where we wrestle against "principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world", even the youths faint and are weary, and the young men utterly fail to realize the possibilities of life in Christ! They have been a disappointment to themselves, to their pastor, and to the church to which they belonged. There is no hope there my friends. But,—but—but in contrast with all that, "They that wait upon the Lord"—that is it. My plea this morning is that we should more earnestly and constantly than ever wait upon the Lord. That is where we shall get reviving grace, by waiting upon the Lord.

What does it mean to wait upon the Lord? It means to wait *only* upon Him. It means to depend upon the Lord alone. "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him." How many of you who pray, know what it is to wait only upon God? I asked an elevator man the other day why he needed so many cables to his car; and he said, "To make it impossible that the thing should fall." Any one cable would hold the car if it were full, but there were four or five; and he said, if one should break the other would hold; and if that should break, another would hold. There are some people who pray, but to whom prayer is but one cable! "Yes, I will trust the Lord; but in case the Lord does not answer me, I am going to do something else; I am going to be ready for any emergency, I am going especially to pray, but there is no use praying *only*—you have to do something else. And so I am going to get ready in case the Lord does not answer me." Of course they do not say that in so many words, but they pray with certain reservations. You might just as well not pray at all. We will ask the Lord to send a revival; and then we will call a number of people together to a meeting of some sort to discuss a revival, and talk about ways and means, and canvass the whole situation and see if we cannot get some extraordinary preacher to come and help us. We will mix it all up with a little prayer, and have a revival. That is not real prayer. Revival of that sort is not from God at all; it is a revival that the youths and young men can bring about. A true revival, whether it comes to the individual or the church, comes from God only—therefore wait thou only upon God.

"My soul, wait thou only upon God." Do you know what it is to step out on the promise of God, and have absolutely nothing between you and ruin but God—absolutely nothing? What a paradox! Nothing between me and ruin but God! Then I have everything between me and ruin! ("Hallelujah") "Wait thou only upon God". We do not begin to pray in faith until we pray for things that only God can give us. Shall we ask God for something that no one but God can give us? Shall we ask God for the impossible? Have we not seen the impossible in this place again and again? ("Amen.") Have we not been like Paul on shipboard, "when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, and all hope that we should be saved was then taken away"—until God's angel came and said, "Fear not"; and God took charge of the ship and brought her into her desired haven in spite of the storm?

There is some man or woman here this morning who is facing a difficult problem; and you had it in your mind, perhaps, to come and talk to the Pastor about it, or to some other friend. You said, "I should like to



get a little advice, a little help." The Pastor will be very glad to talk with troubled souls as far as his time will permit; but very probably he would be unable to offer any solution in your case. Perhaps after our talk the problem would remain unsolved; because, my friend, there is a something in your life that I cannot touch, and no one else can touch. There is a something there with which only God can deal; and until He deals with it you are going to be in the same situation as you are in today. Can you believe God? Can you wait only upon God? Can you say, "No one else can help me; and I will wait—wait—wait until He has mercy upon me, wait until He answers me; I have cut all other lines; and my dependence shall be upon God alone." Only then do you begin to trust Him.

Especially is that true of the unsaved man who says, "I have been to church after church, and I get no help. I thought I would come down here this morning; but I do not know whether I am going to get any help here or not." I can tell you in advance, my friend, you will not, so far as the preacher is concerned. This preacher cannot help you; this church cannot help you, except as we may be used of God to be channels of grace to you. You must wait only upon God. Salvation is in Christ, and in Christ alone—not in the church, not in the preacher, not in your own efforts; and in the day that you burn all your bridges behind you, and step out upon the promise of God, and say, "Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, it shall be Jesus only for me. I will wait upon Him"—in that day you will be saved. It simply means putting Him first, keeping Him always first.

There is much that I wanted to say about waiting upon the Lord: Wait thou *only* upon Him; then wait *wholly* upon Him; and wait *expectantly* upon Him: "My expectation is from him." Somebody knocks at your door, and you are unable to answer it immediately; there is a second knock, and still you are unable to answer, and if the third knock has not come, you conclude that they have wearied of waiting, and are not expecting you to answer the door, and have gone away; and so you do not answer it at all. But if they keep on knocking you know they are standing outside expecting that it will be opened. That is importunity, waiting upon God, importuning God, waiting patiently for Him.

But, let me very simply tell you what He does for those who wait upon Him. For those that wait upon the Lord there are four things: they renew their strength. It is like getting some more gasoline in your car. You may have a very good car, but when the tank is empty it will not run; and we have to stop every once in a while to get new power. Just so, we shall be "anointed with fresh oil," we shall renew our strength. He gives us our daily bread, our daily supply; and when we wait upon the Lord we shall find constant replenishment of our every need. Thus our strength shall be renewed.

And they that wait upon the Lord shall "change" their strength. I heard Dr. Hinson preach on this text in Seattle the other day—do not be afraid, I am not going to try to preach his sermon. I could not; I should spoil it if I followed his line of thought. But he said one thing that I pass on to you; he said, "This means 'change' their strength. They that wait upon the Lord shall change their strength. And do you know, I think it means not to depend upon someone else." Just then we had been discussing the Rockefeller matter, and he said this: "I

think the Baptist Denomination needs to change its strength; and instead of leaning upon millionaires, they had better lean upon God. Substitute God for money, and you will have a revival. Change your strength."

Upon whom are you depending? "Well, sir, I brought someone to church this morning, and I am going to bring someone to church to-night. I have known a great many people to be saved in this church; and I thought if I brought someone here they would probably be saved. It is a common thing for people to be converted here, and so I have brought him to be converted."—Praiseworthy as it is to bring people to church, and I hope you will keep on doing it even more faithfully than you have ever done—yet do not allow yourself to suppose that this Pastor has any power to convert anyone. Do you not need to "change" your strength, and say, "I am not going to trust in the Pastor's sermon any more; but I am going to bring someone to church, and then I will put such faith in God that I can believe he will be saved even without a sermon"? They that wait upon the Lord will find there is a Source of power that is inexhaustible; they will change their strength. I think that is a legitimate application of the text.

"They shall mount up with wings as eagles." Did you ever fly? If you have not, you have often wished you could. You mothers sometimes when you have been driven almost to distraction, when the children have been especially fretful, and everything has gone awry, and you have turned to the Book and read of one who said, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest"—when you read that you said, "Amen! I would just like to fly this minute and get away from it all, for I am tired of the strife to-day." Of course, you would like to come back tomorrow! But you would like to have a little excursion, and fly away somewhere. Do you know that that is possible? "They that wait upon the Lord . . . shall mount up with wings as eagles." Have you learned to live above the things you can touch? I confess I could not live if I had not wings; I could not get along sometimes, as a minister, if I could not close my eyes to the actualities of life, and all the things round about me, and fly away. Sometimes I say, "I am going to take an excursion." I fly away, and I do not know whether I am Pastor of Jarvis Street Church with a lot of children about me, and a lot of people who need help, but I fly away and forget all that; I do not know anything about it for a little while. I think that is what the text means, that we are to mount up with wings as eagles, we are to get above all our difficulties, and all our troubles; and soar away into the heavenly places where we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Someone said to me one day, "How do you manage? You have not taken a vacation for years." To which I replied, "No, I have not had what you call a vacation for years, but I have three every week." "Well, do you play golf?" "No, I go to prayer meeting." I used to feel that I could not permit anyone to see me after Thursday night and not very much before that; but I had to have Friday and Saturday. You would not be regarded as my friend if you came knocking at my door either of those days. But do you know, I could not do without the Saturday night prayer meeting now, because we all get into the air, we "take the air". Did you not fly last night? How many did fly last night, put up your hands? Well, I am sorry for the rest of you! We did mount up with

wings as eagles and put all these things beneath our feet, did we not? It means the refreshment of life; and, my friends, it certainly means the enlargement of life. When you get up with wings you can see further, you get visions. You can see the land that is very far off; you can see the King in His beauty. "You "change" your strength by changing your atmosphere, by changing your point of view.

And when you get up in the air, the things that bother you look so small. I think I told you I had a fly once myself. I remember the first time I went back to London, St. Paul's Cathedral, and Westminster Abbey, and all the other places in the land in which I was born and brought up, were all so wonderful to me. But one day I went up in a machine into the air, away above the clouds; and occasionally when the clouds parted I could look down—and what a little place London seemed to be! How insignificant! You could scarcely distinguish those great buildings that all the world has heard about. I had mounted up on wings; and that is the way, my friends, to get away from your troubles. Wait upon the Lord, and you will get over a great many of your difficulties. Some of us have wings pretty much like barnyard fowls. That is not a very complimentary way of putting it, but you have seen the hens in a barnyard? They have wings, but just enough to get over the mud puddles, not enough to take them over the fence into God's boundless space. Some of us just hop, skip, and jump through life; we really never get above the world, and triumph in Jesus Christ. But that is possible when we wait upon the Lord.

And as for the enemy: aeroplanes, you know, are the eyes of the army. They look down upon the enemy. And when you get up there it looks as if victory were possible. "All things are possible to him that believeth." It is hard to beat the man who waits upon God.

"Restraining prayer, we cease to fight,  
Prayer makes the Christian's armour bright,  
And Satan trembles when he sees  
The weakest saint upon his knees."

"They shall run and not be weary." Let me talk to some of you young men for just a minute. I have met many people with a passion for starting something. Someone around here not long ago talked about starting a Young People's Society. We do not need one. This Bible School is a young people's society, — all of you in the gallery, stand up for a minute. How many of you down on the floor were in Sunday School this morning, you stand up. Now, show me any young people's society in the city to compare with that. Nearly eleven hundred present to-day. If some churches had a young people's society like that they would never stop talking about it. I repeat, there are a great many people who are ready to run after any new thing, they are great at beginning things; but they do not keep on at anything. But if we wait upon the Lord we shall run — we shall do things promptly—and we shall keep on running. I have no objection to your running if you keep on at it, but I am weary of religious sprinters. Run, by all means; the King's business requires haste. Get at it. But keep on keeping on. And the only way you can have strength to run and not be weary, even if you are a young man, is by waiting upon God. That is where we generate the power.

"They shall walk, and not faint." The President of our Adult Class said to me this morning, "Pastor, we

need a great many more visitors. Do you think you could say a word about it this morning?" I think I will say it now: I want somebody to "walk"; I do not want anyone to talk just now. Plenty of people can talk; a great many people think the body of Christ is all tongue. Some of us would like to be preaching, always preaching. Well, it is a good thing to be a preacher if the Lord calls you to the ministry,—and it is a good thing to find out if the Lord has not called you to preach, and to do the thing He wants you to do. But it is a great thing to learn how to walk and not faint, I mean to just keep at it all the time. In the Lord's work there is a lot of drudgery to do. When we were coming home Saturday morning from Alton it seemed to me there was a milk wagon on every corner. A lot of people said, "Why, here are the milkmen". (They are my friends every Wednesday night when I go to the printers'.) But I don't suppose you ever say, "Thank you," to the milkman, or to the baker, or to anyone who brings your supplies,—but if anything happens so that they do not come, then you will complain. My dear friends, in the work of the Lord there is need for people who are willing to walk. "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." Hear this, you Sunday School teachers, I know a teacher who called nine or ten times on a scholar and the scholar did not come. One Sunday morning she was as happy as if she had wings: she said, "My eleventh call bore fruit; she is here this morning." Walk and not faint—walk and not faint. Keep on with your visiting; keep on with your praying. Walk and not faint; and in due season we shall reap if we faint not.

Is that brother here this morning who was saved in Montreal at three o'clock in the morning? Someone prayed for him, waited upon the Lord for two and a half years; and then when he was away down in Montreal at three o'clock one morning someone—not a human — knocked on his door, and he awakened. He got down on his knees and yielded himself to Christ, settled the matter of his salvation alone with God, and came back to Toronto to make his confession. We heard his testimony last Sunday night, and he is going to be baptized to-night. Why? Because someone waited upon the Lord, mounted up on wings; and, believing the thing would be done, ran and was not weary; walked and was not faint. We have to keep on doing that, dear friends, and God will give us a blessing.

How many of us this morning have just been waiting upon someone else instead of upon God? Shall we put God first? If there are men and women who have been troubled and defeated, we invite you this morning to trust Christ wholly and then come and confess Him.

#### GOD'S ALPHABET

I suppose Isaiah thought he was as good as most men, in his day, and perhaps he was a good deal better than most men, but when he saw the Lord, he cried, "Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips." When he saw the Lord, he saw his own deformity, and he fell in the dust before the Lord. And that is the proper place for the sinner. Until men realize their uncleanness they talk of their own righteousness, but the moment they catch a sight of Him their mouth is stopped. We can not learn to read till we learn the alphabet. We can not come into His kingdom until we are humble. That is God's alphabet. —MOODY

### CONFERENCE OF FRENCH BAPTISTS IN ALSACE

**A**MONG the many happy and blessed experiences that fell to our lot this summer, the Conference at Mulhouse stands out as one of the happiest and most profitable. *Le Lien Fraternel*, the monthly publication of the Association of the French-speaking Baptist Churches, has just come to our desk and we note that it contains an account of the sessions as reported by Pastor Edmond Itty of Paris. We translate part of that account so that our readers may share something of the blessing with us. After the translation we add a few of our own impressions of our happy meeting with our brethren in France.

#### "How Good and How Pleasant!"

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! . . . for there the Lord commanded the blessing."

These words of the psalmist come to mind when we think of the fine meetings we enjoyed in Alsace. It the setting changes from one conference to another, the spirit remains the same and it is that which gives our meetings their value and their charm. The Conference at Mulhouse was excellent, both as to the programme and the affectionate Christian fellowship which brought visitors and guests together in one accord in one place.

We are grateful to the Lord first of all, and then also to our deaf friends of the church at Mulhouse who did not spare themselves to make this gathering a complete success. The perfection of their organization to care for all the endless details of billeting and feeding hundreds of delegates from all parts of France and from Switzerland and Belgium, left nothing to be desired, and we congratulate them most heartily. All the visitors deeply appreciated the brotherly welcome of the entertaining church which received the conference for the first time in its history. Delegates were pleasantly surprised by the magnificent church building whose fine arrangements bear testimony to the foresight and sacrificial devotion of the pastor and his faithful band of workers.

Mulhouse is an industrial city that suffered severely from the war, and numerous modern buildings are now transforming its appearance. From 1940 to 1945 it was annexed to the German Reich but after the liberation of France, was restored to full liberty together with the rest of Alsace. Despite the shortage of housing hundreds of visitors were lodged in private families or in dormitories. The meals were served in various restaurants of the city. The vast auditorium where we met was decorated with great banks of splendidly coloured gladioli, and over the front of the platform was written in large letters the motto of the conference: "The Word of our God shall stand for ever."

The business sessions were devoted to the presentation of the moral and financial reports. These took place after the reading of our Confession of Faith during which the entire audience stood. This was followed by a prayer of thanksgiving for the great saving truths there set forth and for the divine blessings which have been showered upon our churches. Dr. Robert Dubarry then gave a brief summary of the history of our Association in which we humbly and gratefully recognize the fulfillment of the divine purpose.

Our Association now includes 17 churches with 30 regular meeting places and 24 full-time workers. With

the help of God, our churches are now in a position, we hope, to extend their activities and better to face the manifold exigencies of our times: opposition to error, resistance to our adversary, the Devil, the training of Christians and the work of evangelization. The financial report was presented on Friday morning by Pastor Georges Guyot of Paris who this summer has completed forty years of service as treasurer. It is inevitable that a statistical report should be somewhat dull but Mr. Guyot knows how to present even finances in an attractive fashion. On Sunday afternoon, at a special session, the vast company had the pleasure of hearing Dr. Dubarry present an address, together with a love gift to Mr. Guyot in recognition of his long years of faithful work in our midst. Deeply moved by the unexpected manifestation of his brethren's affection and gratitude to him, Mr. Guyot thanked them briefly in warmest terms that were marked by strong emotion, expressing his joy in having had the privilege of serving his Master within our great family.

The greater part of the conference programme was taken up with spiritual affairs, the general theme of which had already been announced as "The Bible, A Divine Manifestation to Men". The importance of such a topic is evident to all and interest did not flag throughout the numerous sessions of the conference which lasted for four days with three sessions each day. We give herewith the topics of the various sessions, together with the names of the brethren who led our meditations. These addresses will be published (in French) in succeeding issues of *Le Lien Fraternel*:

- Thursday: "Methods of the Divine Manifestation in Different Ages" (Pastors Emery and Waecker).  
 "The Divine Choice of the Bible and its Formation" (Pastors Itty and Berge).  
 Friday: "History and Influence of the Bible" (Pastors Frey and Huser).  
 "The Development of the Teaching of the Bible" (Pastors Ferrazzini and Jalaguier).  
 Saturday: "The Place of the Bible in Our Association" (Pastors G. Guyot and Chamard).  
 "The Role of the Bible Among a Lost Humanity" (Pastor Tusch and Mr. Loverini).  
 Sunday Morning: "Role of the Bible Among the Redeemed" (Pastors Whitcombe and Dubarry).  
 Sunday Afternoon: "Science and the Bible" (Messrs. Humbert and Bonijoly).  
 Sunday Evening: "The Role of the Bible at the Judgment of Mankind" (Pastors Weber and Mafille).

Those who were able to remain in Mulhouse the day after the conference, in the mornings enjoyed a visit to the fine Zoological Gardens of that city and in the afternoon five large busloads of delegates went on an excursion to the highest part of the Vosges Mountains. There on the summit of the Vieil Armand and on the Grand Ballon (1,424 metres high) we listened to one of the young men of the church, himself a veteran of the last war, read an eye-witness account of the fierce combats that took place there between 1914 and 1918 when 60,000 soldiers died to defend their beloved fatherland against the invader.

In closing this brief report we wish to associate ourselves with all those who shared the blessing of the conference in repeating the words of gratitude to our generous hosts of the church at Mulhouse. And together

with visitors and hosts we raise to the Author of all our joys and privileges the thanksgiving and adoration of our hearts. Great tasks await us, above all in the preaching and teaching of the truths of Scripture in order that the whole counsel of God may be given to all those who earnestly and sincerely seek the truth.

—EDMOND ITTY

#### A Canadian Visitor's Impressions of the French Conference

The Atlantic Ocean is very broad, and the visitor who has traversed it and then travelled hundreds of miles, or rather, hundreds of kilometres, on French railroads, is constantly reminded by differences of language, of customs, of architecture, as by a thousand other diversities, that he is a stranger in a strange land. Nevertheless all such walls of separation were dissolved in the warmly spiritual atmosphere of the Mulhouse Conference of the French Bible Mission, as we in this country know the missionary organization that in Europe wears the longer and more descriptive title of "The Evangelical Association of French-speaking Baptist Churches of France, Switzerland and Belgium." The moment we entered the great hall where the sessions were held, we could no longer feel that we were "strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God". Christian fellowship among our brethren in France is a very real thing, cut off as they are by sharp differences from their Roman Catholic neighbours on the one side and their sceptical and religiously indifferent friends on the other. One could sense in all the meetings the glow of genuine fervour, linked with sound Scriptural teaching and spiritual sanity. It was already an international gathering with delegates from churches in various parts of France, Switzerland and Belgium, speaking several languages. The visiting Canadians were cordially welcomed by this cosmopolitan group. Their gratitude for the aid our Canadian churches sent them knew no bounds and with six Canadians or Canadian-trained workers among the ranks of the pastors and their wives, we scarcely needed any further introduction.

There was a great company present at all the meetings, which were held in the public hall, rented from the Reformed Church of France. At the Sunday morning session when it was our great privilege to address the gathering, together with the honoured President, Dr. Dubarry, there were not fewer than 500 persons present, and at the evening meeting there were hearer 700. Dr. Dubarry remarked to me that probably no other Protestant denomination in France could boast of so large an annual gathering. Speaking to the people in their own mother tongue we could feel their response to the practical Biblical message we delivered, for it is our conviction born of experience that the blessing of a sermon is due in no small part to the preparation of the hearts and minds of those who listen as well as of the one who preaches.

Dr. Dubarry is greatly beloved and appreciated among our Canadian churches and few men born and brought up on this side of the Atlantic understand better than he the religious conditions in Canada and the United States. He is also a master in his understanding of his native France and of Europe. His profound expositions of the great principles of sovereign grace, given in a style that only a Frenchman could employ, were most

effective. When this veteran pastor and president speaks, he speaks with all the weight of fifty years continuous service in a church that he built up from nothing to one of the strongest Protestant churches in France. Spiritually we would have little hesitation in saying that it is the strongest in France, and in numbers of active members it is certainly one of the largest. The authority he wields is not of the kind that springs from what are in some circles known as "holy orders", but from his long record of faithful ministry of the Word, his abundant fruitfulness in the Lord's service for more than half a century, and from his deep affection for the people, proved by labours abundant that he freely devotes to all the churches of the Association and to their individual members. This great man of God is undoubtedly one of God's choice gifts to His redeemed people, and we thank God upon every remembrance of him.

All the addresses were of a high order, not only in respect to their spiritual message but in respect to the care with which they had been prepared and the ability with which they were delivered. Our French brethren produce able preachers, whose one speciality is to preach the Word in season and out of season. We may perhaps be pardoned for showing some partiality to our own Seminary men, at least we had a special and particular reason to be proud of them for they sat for so long in our classes in Toronto Baptist Seminary that we came to forget they were French or Swiss and we thought of them only as brethren in Christ. Two of them went so far along the road of forgetting their own nationality as to marry Canadian girls. We noticed with great joy and satisfaction that all these representatives of Toronto Baptist Seminary were held in high regard by their fellow-labourers. As we listened to them speak at the conference and as we preached in their churches and visited their people, we came to a new realization of the greatness and the importance of our missionary work in this institution. Never did we have a stronger conviction of the urgent necessity of this work that we love.

One feature of the conference that specially pleased us was the large proportion of so-called "laymen" that appeared on the programme. We dislike the term "layman" as opposed to "clergy" for it is not scriptural, since the universal priesthood of believers is clearly taught in scripture, that is to say all truly redeemed people are the elect of God, the "clergy". And on the other hand, all truly called preachers and teachers are literally "laymen" since they are the people of God. However, even in denominations that are non-sacerdotal in their beliefs, those who do not give their full time to the services of the church, do not often have prominence at conventions. It is one of the settled principles of action of our French Baptist brethren to develop and train part-time workers in their own ranks, "lay preachers" as they would be called in England. In many instances these devoted and able men carry on an important part of the missionary work of the churches, or relieve the pastor when he is engaged in special tasks away from home. Some of their most effective pastors are men who have received long years of training in this hard school of actual experience, where they have made full proof of their ministry before giving all their time to it. This principle of action is the corollary of another principle upon which all our churches in France proceed: namely, that each and every member of their churches is an evangelist. To attempt to work on any other assumption spells slow death to any evangelical church, but in Europe it is an essential

condition of existence. In France, Protestant churches do not have a large attendance of "outsiders" and few of them are able to preach over the radio. But in the churches of our Association there is a persistent, intensive witness being given by the entire church body, not merely in word but also in deed, in the consistent testimony of holy living in the "midst of a corrupt and perverse generation".

#### The Fruitfulness of Controversy

As we sat in the great hall crowded with a fine company of earnest, devoted Christians from all parts of three European countries, our heart filled with gratitude and praise for what God had wrought in the churches these people represented. We felt as though we were back home in Canada, in Jarvis Street Church, for there was the same atmosphere of worship, the same delight in the things of God, the same sense of the presence of the Lord in the midst of His people. But this was France, not Canada. This was in the land that once wore the proud title of the "Eldest daughter of the Church of Rome"; this was in the France of Voltaire, the sceptic whose leering grin of derision for all revealed truth has blasted and blighted French thought for two centuries. This was in war-torn France that is still reeling from the fearful blood-letting of two world wars that were fought on her soil. But even in modern France, here was tangible, indubitable evidence that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. We rejoiced with great joy over the manifestation of God's working in the midst of his people, and we thanked Him for the human instruments through whom He wrought His work.

There is a story behind this great movement, as there is always a story behind every great revival blessing. The story centres chiefly about Dr. Dubarry and Pastor Georges Guyot of Paris. We have already mentioned their long service to the churches they love, but that is only part of what they have done. It goes back almost thirty years ago to a time when the Baptist Churches in France were receiving financial aid from the Northern Baptist Convention of the United States. This missionary society announced its intention of founding a Seminary in France to train young men for the ministry. The project in itself had much to commend it, but unhappily it became evident that the new school was to be a seed-bed where the future pastors would be nourished on the scepticism and unbelief of destructive criticism of the Bible and all the negations of unbelief which since that time have been dubbed "Modernism". Many of the French pastors protested, but to no avail. Dr. Dubarry and Mr. Guyot, with others, continued to lead the opposition within the Baptist Association to the proposed introduction of unbelief, and when their protest was not heeded, they reluctantly withdrew from the "Old Convention", as we should call it, and formed the present Evangelical-Association. Some of those courageous souls who dared the displeasure of the "Modernistic" American Missionary board, found themselves literally on the street. Churches which joined in the protest were compelled to leave their buildings, in some cases, we understand, pastors were forced to give up their houses, and many of them saw their salaries, hitherto subsidized by American funds, fade to the vanishing point. Notwithstanding, they persisted in their firm stand for the truth of God as they saw it, even at the price of all material advantages. After some time, our Canadian Churches which held like precious faith, together with

evangelical churches in the United States and Great Britain, came to the help of the sorely tried defenders of the faith in France. But it was a long time until appreciable help was forthcoming, and in the meantime, the pastors and churches knew what it was to suffer want. Dr. Dubarry, and Mr. Guyot associated with him, were in the forefront of the battle, not only in their steadfast opposition to the introduction of unbelief but in their unceasing labours to help and encourage their brethren in smaller and weaker churches. It was they who saw clearly the issues involved and bore the burden of responsibility for the leadership of the new association. It was they who led in the formulation of the doctrinal statement and who put themselves without stint at the service of their brethren. We in Canada know Dr. Dubarry, but this great man modestly gives much praise for what has been accomplished to his long-time associate Mr. Guyot.

There are many who decry controversy. If they mean contention for the sake of contention, which is mere contentiousness, then we agree with them. But controversy, not for its own sake but for the sake of the truth of God is sometimes the believer's bounden duty in the sight of God. The Bible exhorts us to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Those who fail to do so when confronted with error are not exhibiting a spirit of Christian meekness, they are giving evidence of a cowardice that is condemned by God's word. In Northern Ireland we were told that in the last century vigorous warfare was waged by the Rev. Henry Cooke upon the Unitarianism of his fellow-ministers in the Presbyterian Church. Within a generation of his effective protest against the "modernists" of his day, a revival broke out in the church which he had cleansed from unbelief.

The vigorous evangelical movement of these French-speaking churches, which are so many lighthouses in almost every region of France, Switzerland, Belgium, is the fruit of the heated controversy of nearly thirty years ago. Had these stalwarts who have now grown old in the service of their Lord and His people, withdrawn from the battle, all the Baptist Churches in France would have succumbed to the deadly plague, without being conscious of their danger or of the fate that awaited them. Had these brethren pursued the easier course, their failure would have opened the door to floodtides of destruction. There would have been no Gospel light-houses in a score or more of cities, towns and villages in three European countries because unbelief cannot produce men who pioneer new causes in Europe. There is a great inspiration in the example of these leaders, valiant for truth in controversy and ready to preach the Gospel in the hard places where Christ is not named. May God continue to bless their testimony and that of the faithful men whom He has raised up to labour with them, and may the blessing that has attended their preaching in France encourage all who are set for the defense of the Gospel.

—W.S.W.

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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## LIBERTY AND THE ROMAN THREAT

By Rev. John W. Orr, B.A.

(An address given in the Assembly Hall, Belfast, in the series "Evangelical Truth and Roman Teaching")

WHAT is liberty? The Oxford English Dictionary defines civil liberty as "freedom from arbitrary, despotic or autocratic rule or control." It is the intention of this article to examine some claims and ramifications of the Roman Church which deny people such freedom.

A witty Roman Catholic, when faced with the striking contrast between freedom in Roman Catholic and non-Roman Catholic lands, summarized the attitude of his Church in this way, "When we are in power we behave on our principles; when you are in power we expect you to behave on yours." That sounds fair enough until you enquire into the respective principles concerned. We, as evangelical Christian people, believe in a freedom which extends tolerance to all types of religious opinion and practice, provided, of course, that nothing subversive of the safety of the State or the well-being of its life is practised. The principles on which the Roman Church proceeds are very different however.

First, the Roman Church claims to be an infallible church with an infallible leader. This means that in all matters of faith and morals (which cover almost every area of life) the Roman Catholic is free to obey the law of his land only if, and so far as, his Church approves of it. There are times when any of us may feel opposed to the decrees of our rulers for sincere reasons of conscience. But a Roman Catholic living anywhere outside Vatican City takes his directions, not from conscience in the final analysis, but from the prince of a foreign state, i.e., the Pope. Moreover, that foreign prince claims the ability and the right to give infallible guidance to all the faithful everywhere. Lord Acton, the Roman Catholic lawyer and historian, seeing the implications of this claim, strenuously opposed the introduction of Papal infallibility as a dogma of his Church in 1870. He said, "It makes civil legislation on all points of contract, marriage, education, clerical immunities, mortmain, even on many questions of taxation and Common Law, subject to the legislation of the Church, which would be simply the arbitrary will of the Pope. Most assuredly no man accepting such a code could be a loyal subject, or fit for the enjoyment of political privilege." (Quoted, Blanchard, "Freedom and Catholic Power," p. 27).

On all vital State issues the devout Romanist will vote and act always, and primarily, for the furtherance of "true" religion, which for him means one thing only — the strengthening of the grip of the infallible Roman Church upon the life and controlling influences of his land.

Secondly, the Roman Catholic believes that he alone has the truth from God which sets men free. "Ye shall know the truth," said Jesus Christ, "and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). But if only within the teaching of the Roman Church is this truth to be found then all non-Roman teaching, however faithful to the Word of God it may be, is dangerous perversion of the truth, to be avoided and stamped out if possible. The logic of this is unassailable: but alas, or fortunately, the major premise is indefensible.

An interesting correspondence was carried on in the columns of an Irish daily newspaper within the past year. A Roman Catholic lady who had organized a meeting

in Dublin for the purpose of exposing Protestant "error" was invited by a Protestant correspondent to read Salmon's "Infallibility of the Church." He himself promised, on the lady's recommendation, to read a book by Sir Henry Slessor giving the Roman side. In her reply she wrote, "I believe I have the truth. Why would I put it in peril by reading the book of a person who would try to destroy my faith? . . . That would be inconsistent of me. On the other hand it is inconsistent for 'Member' (the pen-name of her correspondent who is a religious wayfarer, a seacher for the 'whole truth,' to refuse to read Slessor, who might help him in his search." Further on in the same letter she guesses her anonymous correspondent to be a clergyman, yet she unhesitatingly declares him to be "a religious wayfarer, and a seacher for the whole truth." This is just a typical example of the closed and fixed mind which Rome produces, perfectly convinced that outside Rome there can be nothing but error and darkness.

Now that is serious enough, but what makes it many times more alarming is the fact that Rome allows for the suppression of all opposition to her version of the truth and provides for the winning or coercing of outsiders by methods of fear and force. An authoritative Roman Catholic work, "The Church and the State," quoted by Blanchard (p. 54), states: "If there is only one true religion, and if its possession is the most important good in life for states as well as individuals, when the public profession, protection, and promotion of this religion, and the legal prohibition of all direct assaults upon it, becomes one of the most obvious and fundamental duties of the State."

Father Ronald Knox, in his book, "The Belief of Catholics," writes "a body of Catholic patriots, entrusted with the government of a Catholic state, will not shrink even from repressive measures in order to perpetuate the secure domination of Catholic principles among their fellow-countrymen," (p. 242).

It becomes clear, then, what the Roman Catholic means when he says, on the surface so graciously, "When we are in power we will behave on our principles; when you are in power we expect you to behave on yours." The respective principles will not bear comparison. All perversions of Roman truth are to be discouraged and suppressed. Roman truth only may prevail and the State should be the Church's instrument in seeing to this. Conditions and events in Spain, Italy, and the Latin American States to-day are grim examples of how that policy works out in practice.

The third characteristic of Roman Catholicism, wherein lies peril to human liberty and toleration as we cherish them, is clericalism. What is clericalism? "Roman clericalism, as distinct from Roman Catholicism as a faith, is the pursuit of power, especially political power, by a religious hierarchy, carried on by secular methods and for purposes of social domination" (Dr. Mackay, "Theology To-Day," July, 1951, p. 223).

Dr. John A. Mackay, President of Princeton Theological Seminary, a widely-read and widely-travelled observer of religious affairs all over the world to-day, says: "A totalitarian hierarchy which puts itself in the place of God and becomes the virtual patron of Jesus Christ, a hierarchy which so identifies its acts with the will of Christ, constitutes to-day, so far as the traditional democracies are concerned, the greatest single menace to what Evangelical Christianity and democratic society have both stood for."

The memory is still fresh of an occasion when this

power and threat of clericalism precipitated a government crisis in the southern part of our land. Only a short time ago Dr. Noel C. Browne, then Minister of Health in Eire, resigned and had his Mother and Child Welfare Scheme turned down because of pressure by the Roman bishops. As a Roman Catholic member of the Dail, Capt. Cowan, observed at the time, "Eire's real rulers are the Roman Catholic bishops." It will be recalled that Mr. Costello, The Taoiseach at that time, made it clear that "the government would readily and immediately acquiesce in a decision of the Hierarchy."

Paul Blanchard, in his "Freedom and Catholic Power," has given an alarming exposure of Roman clericalism as it seeks by cunning policy and massive organization to wrap its octopus tentacles around more and more of American life and affairs. He boldly alleges, on evidence, that "Catholics are taught to offer no resistance to the American policy of freedom at the present time but to take advantage of this freedom while working to destroy it." He shows us clericalism working on the grand scale through what is called in America, "The National Catholic Welfare Conference." "Its offices," writes Blanchard, "are full of young priests, lobbyists, journalists, and lawyers, who co-ordinate the Catholic population of the country as one great pressure group when any Catholic issue arises."

Many examples could be adduced to show this dark power of clericalism at work in foreign countries and within the British family of nations. In some cases it can be detected as an influence in a country's administrative services; sometimes it skilfully sets the scene for bitter opposition to Protestant minorities, even to persecute, and then leaves it to the incited Catholic loyalist to commit the act and carry the blame.

On the subject of Rome and Freedom it is important to note that Rome is not the great bulwark of liberty against godless Communism in the world to-day which she so loudly claims to be. Rome, as much as Soviet Communism, cultivates the totalitarian mentality of its people. The complete subservience of every devout Catholic to his Church with its still medieval, feudal organization is itself a peril to true liberty as we have come to know and love it. Dr. John A. Mackay, already quoted above, completed a tour of European lands a short time ago and commenting upon the varied situation from land to land, he said he found those countries where Rome is all-powerful, like Portugal, Spain and Italy, to be Europe's chief breeding grounds of Communism. The obvious reason is that if a Roman Catholic tires of Rome's authoritative rule he turns easily and eagerly to the Russian version of the same thing, mass direction from above. His spirit having been trained in servility he is still quite happy to be less than free.

"Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free," wrote St. Paul to the Galatian Christians. Christ had delivered them from the dead, formal and legalistic religion of Judaism; He had made them "heirs of God" and "more than conquerors" through His own redeeming love for them expressed in His death and resurrection. They were free men because Christ had made them God's men. "Plant your feet firmly therefore within the freedom that Christ has won for us," exhorts Paul, "and do not let yourselves be caught again in the shackles of slavery." That same word comes ringing out from God to us in our day—who are heirs of the Reformation by which God delivered our fathers and their children's children, to live in the light and freedom of His Truth. That Truth we

have in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (let us make sure that we use them!) and supremely in the Lord Jesus Christ (let us be sure that, standing in Him by faith, we have the liberty with which He alone can set men free).  
—*The Christian Irishman.*

## FOR YOUNGER READERS

### The New Girl in Class

By Harriet Wilson

Ellie sat on the porch in the sunshine. She was reading her Sunday School lesson.

"Mamma," she called, "what does 'meek' mean?"

"Well," said Mamma, "it means not having too good an opinion of yourself, and being kind and polite to everybody."

Ellie looked surprised. "Do you mean *everybody*," she asked, "even some little girl who hasn't been very nice to me?" She didn't wait for an answer because just then Anna came to go to Sunday School with her. Later on she found the answer for herself.

As the two girls walked down the street, Anna said, "That new girl who came to school Friday wasn't very friendly, was she?"

"No," said Ellie, "she wasn't. She never said a word to anyone. Even at recess she just stayed by herself."

"She's uppity," said Anna. "Uppity," was Anna's favorite word. "I guess she just didn't want to play with us."

When they reached the Sunday School they were surprised to find the new girl there. As they seated themselves their teacher, Miss Burch, came into the room. Seeing the new girl, Miss Burch said, "What is *your* name?"

The new girl stood up and made a little curtsy. "My name is Amelia," she answered in a timid voice.

"I'm glad you are here, Amelia," said Miss Burch. "You may sit on that long bench with Anna and Ellie." Amelia sat down at the end of the bench, as far from the others as possible.

"See," whispered Anna to Ellie. "She is uppity. She doesn't want even to sit near us."

By that time the children were reading the lesson. Each read one sentence. When it came to Ellie's turn she read, "Blessed are the meek." Suddenly she remembered what her mother had said — that a meek person is always kind and polite to everyone — even to someone who doesn't seem very friendly.

"I guess," said Ellie to herself, "I'm not being very meek." She glanced sideways at Amelia, and just then two big tears ran down over Amelia's cheeks.

"Oh, my," thought Ellie, "I don't believe Amelia is uppity at all! She is just scared and lonely."

"She slid along the bench and touched Amelia's arm. "Would you like to read with me?" she asked.

A happy smile spread over Amelia's face. "Oh, thank you," she said. "I was afraid to ask if I could read with you. I thought you didn't like me."

They read the rest of the lesson together. When it was time to go home they went over to Anna, who looked very unfriendly. "Look, Anna," said Ellie, "Amelia isn't uppity at all. She just thought we didn't like her."

They all looked at one another, and then suddenly they all laughed. "Isn't that funny," they said, "everybody thought everybody else was uppity, and *nobody* was!"

They skipped down the street hand-in-hand.

—From *The Sunday School Times.*

# Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 17 Fourth Quarter Lesson 4 October 25, 1953

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

## THE BIRTH OF SAMUEL

Lesson Text: 1 Samuel 1:19-28.

Golden Text: "There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none besides thee: neither is there any rock like our God."  
—1 Samuel 2:2.

### I. The Mother's Prayer Answered: verses 20-23.

Samuel was born of Godly parents. In an age of confusion and idolatry Elkanah and his wife Hannah worshipped God faithfully, year by year travelling to Shiloh that they might share in the united prayer and testimony of Israel before the tabernacle of the congregation (Exod. 23:14; Josh. 18:1; Judg. 18:31; 21:9; Luke 2:41). The grace of God can help us to overcome handicaps of heredity and environment, but it is a great advantage for a child to be brought up in a home where God is given His rightful place (Gen. 18:19; Josh. 24:15; Prov. 22:6). Example as well as precept will help to mould his life (Psa. 101:2; 2 Tim. 3:14, 15).

Hannah suffered cruelty at the hands of a jealous woman who was a member of the same household (Gen. 16:1-6; Matt. 10:34-36), but she sought refuge in the Lord and poured out her soul to Him in prayer (verses 10-12). She had discovered the secret of comfort; she knew where to go for aid when tempted, troubled, tried and dismayed (Psa. 50:15; 62:5-8; Matt. 11:28-30; 1 Pet. 4:19).

Samuel was dedicated to God from birth. Hannah had promised that if the Lord should give her a son, she would undertake to raise him as a Nazarite, one wholly separated unto God (Numb. 6:1-8; Judg. 13:7).

Hannah's countenance was no longer sad after the priest Eli had prayed for her, pronounced a benediction upon her and repeated her petition for a son (verse 17). To cheer and comfort the sorrowing is an inconspicuous ministry, yet one which brings untold blessing. We have the Word of God which will give light to the perplexed, hope to the downcast, courage to the defeated and strength to the weak. The world is full of aching hearts, and we may point these weary souls

to the Lamb of God.

Eli's sympathy gave the sorrowing woman fresh confidence in God and new faith to believe that He would answer her prayer. There is such a thing as an atmosphere of faith, created by the Holy Spirit working through believers. There are some people in whose presence it becomes easier to believe God and to rest in His promises. Such people refresh our spirits and quicken our faith (Prov. 27:17). May all of us who know the Lord be such a means of blessing to other souls!

The Lord remembered Hannah (Gen. 8:1); He is ever mindful of His children (Exod. 2:23-25; Psa. 115:12). He granted the request of Hannah, and Samuel's name, which means "Asked of God", would be a perpetual reminder to him, to his parents, family and friends that God hears the prayers of His children.

### II. The Mother's Vow Performed: verses 24-28.

As God remembered Hannah, so also did she remember her vow to the Lord (verse 11). She returned to Shiloh to give thanks publicly for the grace which the Lord had shown unto her (Psa. 50:14; 116:14; Mal. 3:16; Luke 17:12-18). Thanksgiving is an integral part of prayer; in fact, very frequently, it is synonymous with prayer (John 11:41, 42; 2 Cor. 1:11; Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:1).

In the early days of Samuel's childhood Hannah began to make preparations to carry out her vow and dedicate him to the service of the Lord (Luke 2:22-24). The work among the young children is exceedingly important. Happy the children whose parents and whose Bible School teachers recognize the solemn responsibility of bringing up the little ones in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4):

Samuel, young as he was, entered the service of the tabernacle willingly and joyfully. He worshipped the Lord there (1 Sam. 2:18; Luke 2:46-52). Let us endeavour to bring the little ones to the Saviour Who loves them, that they may early learn to trust and to serve Him (Matt. 19:13-15; Mark 9:42; 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17).

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Oct. 19—Hannah's Sorrow .....	1 Sam. 1:1-8
Oct. 20—Hannah's Prayer .....	1 Sam. 1:9-19
Oct. 21—Hannah's Song of Praise .....	1 Sam. 2:1-11
Oct. 22—The Evil Sons of Eli .....	1 Sam. 2:12-17
Oct. 23—The Growth of Samuel .....	1 Sam. 2:18-26
Oct. 24—The Warning to Eli .....	1 Sam. 2:27-36
Oct. 25—Mary's Song of Praise .....	Luke 2:46-56

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