

The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

Authorized as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa

Vol. 32, No. 29

130 Gerrard St. E., TORONTO, NOVEMBER 5, 1953

Whole Number 1641

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"They Should Bear Upon Their Shoulders"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, April 15, 1928.

(Stenographically Reported)

"But unto the sons of Kohath he gave none; because the service of the sanctuary belonging unto them was that they should bear upon their shoulders."—Numbers 7:9.

THERE are some stretches of land in our country which produce nothing of value upon the surface. All one can see is rock and stunted trees. And yet in many such places minerals of great value have been discovered beneath. In some parts of the world where the climate is most inhospitable, men have found fortunes overnight. A month or so ago I travelled through Arizona and New Mexico, over long stretches of desert country; and as I looked on either side of the train I wondered what such a country was for, and congratulated myself that I was not compelled to live in it. I saw mountains of earth in the distance which looked like great piles of dry mound, without a bit of vegetation upon them, a most uninviting part of the world. I got out from the train at one point, and was met at the station by a friend who drove me back into the mountains, and there I found in the heart of a cluster of hills a great mining camp, and at one point they were removing the mountain itself, a good-sized mountain of pure copper.

There are portions of Scripture something like that, which on the surface appear to be uninviting; and to the unspiritual mind, to the carnal mind, it would appear that they cannot possibly have been written by inspiration of God. And yet if we look beneath the surface we shall often discover mines of spiritual wealth. The epistle to the Hebrews, from which we read this morning, ought to teach us that everything pertaining to the tabernacle is of value, and is full of spiritual teaching.

The chapter from which our text is taken is not the sort of chapter which people commit to memory. It is a record of the organization of the people of Israel for the setting forward of the tabernacle in their pilgrim journeyings from place to place. And that, in itself, I

think, would yield much useful instruction. The perfect organization of the people, the thorough and equitable distribution of burdens among the pilgrims, everyone had some part to play, some burden to bear. It is most instructive, and suggests the necessity for the people of God in our day each finding his own particular task as they set forward in the work of the Lord.

But our thought this morning will gather particularly around one element of that organization. The work of carrying the tabernacle from place to place was given to the Levites, and its various elements were distributed among three principal families. To the Levites was given the work of taking down the tabernacle and carrying it, and setting it up again. The Gershonites were assigned the heavier portion of the building; to the sons of Merari were appointed the hangings and curtains of the outer court; but all that pertained to the holy place, and to the most holy place, the inner sanctuary, was assigned to the family of Kohath.

Now for the first two, the carrying of the heavier portions of the tabernacle and the hangings and the curtains; wagons and oxen were provided, that it might be loaded upon the wagons and the wagons drawn by oxen; thus the tabernacle was to be carried from place to place. But the furnishings of the holy place, and of the inner sanctuary, were given to the family of Kohath as their special charge. But for them no wagons were provided, to them no oxen were assigned; for it was their part to bear their burdens upon their own shoulders. It was not to be done by any kind of machinery, there must be mechanical substitute for the human shoulders upon which these articles of furniture were to be borne. We read something this morning of the significance of the

holy place, and of the holiest of all. Among the furnishings of these two parts of the tabernacle were the instruments of the ministry, the flesh hooks and other instruments used in offering the sacrifices, the brazen altar in which the priests were wont to wash in preparation for their holy ministry, the golden altar of incense from which the incense ascended to the Lord, the table of shewbread, the golden candlesticks, and above all the ark of the covenant—these were to be carried upon the shoulders of the children of Kohath, and they were expressly forbidden to bear them from place to place by use of wagons and oxen.

I desire you to look for a few minutes this morning at the spiritual suggestion therein contained, for there are some things to-day which you and I have to do ourselves. We cannot make wagons or provide oxen or devise any sort of mechanical substitute—WE MUST, EVERY MAN, BEAR HIS OWN BURDEN UPON HIS OWN HEART AND UPON HIS SHOULDERS, if he is to have his part in making known the glorious gospel of the blessed God.

I.

First of all, *the brazen altar of sacrifice was to be carried on the shoulders of the Kohathites*. Rings were placed beside the altars, and through these rings staves were drawn, and these rested upon the shoulders of those who were appointed to bear the altar. Upon the altar was the perpetual fire, the altar coals that had been kindled from the Sky, and concerning which it was said, "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out." So that the brazen altar with its perpetual, supernatural, fire was carried from place to place upon the shoulders of the sons of Kohath. And that brazen altar surely typifies the great central doctrine of the gospel of Christ, the truth of Christ crucified, the atoning work of the God-man—the doctrine of the Cross.

There is a specific way of approaching the cross of Christ. It is still true, that if any man would be the disciple of Christ he must take up his cross daily and follow Him. You cannot put the cross upon a wagon, you cannot preach the gospel by setting it forward mechanically as a parcel of merchandise, as something that may be printed by a printing press, and wrapped up and shipped from place to place: the cross of Christ to be effectively preached must have a part in our lives. That is true of the individual as it is true of the church collectively, we must ourselves feel the weight of the Cross, or we cannot preach it; we must carry the Cross, or otherwise we shall caricature it. Only as we ourselves are yielded to its subjective power and are crucified with Christ, shall we be able effectively to preach the doctrine of the atoning blood.

That is just as true of the church as it is of the individual. You cannot preach Christ by having occasionally, for the purpose of getting members into the church, a great mission; you cannot, as an organization, set forth the cross of Christ by putting it upon any kind of gypsy wagon. It is only as the church of Christ becomes itself an exemplification of the truth it preaches, only as it by its membership illustrates the great principles of the Cross, and in all the walks of life bear the burden upon their shoulders, can the church effectively set forth the truth that "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures".

Wherever I go I find churches languishing. The tide

The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

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

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

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

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is out in many places, neither spring nor summer is at hand; and men gather together and ask, "How can we have a revival? Can you tell us of some evangelist who will come and help us?" Pastor after pastor, failing in his own work, his own work declining under his hand, hopes to be able to get someone from outside to come in and help him. It is well enough at harvest time, when the grain is ripe to call in other helpers, and I believe in the ministry of the evangelist when he is brought to reap the fruit of faithful sowing; but I declare to you that we have a spectacle in Toronto to-day of men who fifty-two Sundays in the year deny practically every doctrine of the gospel of Christ, and then call in an evangelist to do their reaping! They expect, by some sort of wagon, to carry forward the gospel of Christ. It is not what we do on Sunday, but it is what we do on Monday and all through the week that counts. It is not the occasional, spasmodic, efforts to carry forward the work of the church that will get God's work done: is it when God's people recognize that there is a burden to be carried upon their own shoulders, when they get under the load and yield themselves wholly to all the implications of the gospel of the blood, then we shall be able effectively to bear witness to the truth that Christ died for our sins. The moment you put that truth of the Atonement upon an organization, when you expect by elaborate advertising and by mass movements to preach Christ Crucified, you may have the letter of the thing, but you will find that when the brazen altar is put upon the wagon, the perpetual fire is extinguished. The Spirit of God does not co-operate in real, regenerating, power unless we bear the burden upon our own shoulders.

II.

Another element in the furnishings which the children of Kohath were required to carry consisted of *the flesh hooks and spoons and other instruments of service used in the offering of the sacrifice*. There are great principles of the gospel which are directly related to this

great central fact of the atoning work of Christ: and those principles must enter into our lives daily if we are to be fitted for spiritual service. It will not do for us to discuss these things, or merely to hold them intellectually as theories, as doctrines. I should be the last to underestimate the value of correct opinions. I am not of the number who make light of creeds. Every man has a creed; and when a man says, "I do not believe in creeds," that is itself his creed, it is the thing which he believes. And the man who makes light of these great underlying principles, is a man who has not thought deeply at all. The wise man was right when he said of man, "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he". It is not necessarily what we profess, but it is that which we really think in our hearts, and which we profoundly believe, which makes us what we are. We are the product, not of our profession, but of our actual creeds, of the things which we believe.

I say, it is folly for us, for instance, to prepare a statement of faith and to nail it up in our office and say, "That is what I believe". That is what the Kiwanians do, and the Rotarians, and the rest of them. I remember a man's showing me in his office one day the creed of the Rotary Club. There it was, nailed up, and he stood before it and said, "Is that not fine?"—and the poor man seemed to think that he was what was written on the paper, that he was the embodiment of the principles there set forth. He was a million miles removed from it; but he had it framed and hanging up in his office, and he believed that made him a really good man. That is folly, but it is equally foolish for us to suppose that by the mere writing of a statement of faith we have therefore become the things we now profess. I value the objective statement, the objective standards of truth; but my point is this, We must bear them upon our shoulders, these principles must be wrought out in our lives, or else our profession is vain.

Let me lay this upon the hearts and consciences of every Jarvis Street member once again, intellectual orthodoxy, divorced from the vitalizing power of the Spirit of God, will do infinitely more harm than Modernism itself. Orthodoxy has value—I mean in the New Testament sense; the truth of the gospel has value in the measure in which it is energized by the Spirit of God, and translated and transmuted into human character and conduct. And we must bear these instruments of service, the precepts and principals of the gospel, upon our shoulders, and be the living examples of the truth we preach.

III.

Another instrument was the *brazen laver*. Into that water was poured and in that laver the priests performed their ablutions; there they washed themselves and made themselves thus ceremonially fit for the service of God. I take it that it is symbolic of the New Testament principle of sanctification. We are to be cleansed by the blood, but we are made clean also by "the washing of water by the word". The Word of God is as pure water, and as we apply the principles of the gospel to ourselves, we are cleansed thereby. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereunto according to thy word"; "Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." Let me make it very plain. You young Christians, what are you to do with your Bible? "Read it", someone says. Yes, but more than that. "Study it?" Yes, more

than that. When you find a principle of Scripture, apply it to yourself. If a man has been dishonest, then the Word of God tells him that those who have stolen must steal no more. A Christian must be upright and honest, and when you come upon a passage like that, if there has been any unfair dealing at all anywhere, apply it to yourself, that you may cleanse away everything of that sort. If a man has been given to untruthfulness, and he finds a scripture like this, "Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour", the reader, boy or girl, man or woman, is to learn that untruthfulness, deception of any sort, is forbidden, and is unworthy of a Christian. We are to take that principle as though it were a bowl of water and wash ourselves therein.

You have heard—I suppose there has been more than one case—of the mother who took her little boy, and got some soap and water and made him put out his tongue? She washed his mouth out, to cleanse his mouth of the lie that he had told. Well, that was simply a mother's way of enforcing the truth. But very literally we are to take the Word of God to cleanse our tongues, to cleanse our hands, and our feet, and our minds; we are to bathe ourselves in the laver, we are to take the principles of the gospel and reduce them to practice. You cannot put that truth on a wagon either, and have someone else carry it for you: you have to carry it on your shoulders, it has got to become part of you.

A Scotch professor was going down the street in Edinburgh one day; he was rather an eccentric sort of man, and had allowed his hair to grow very long, until it rested on the collar of his coat. A little bootblack came up to him asking if he might black his shoes. The professor looked down at him, and said, "No, my boy, I don't want my shoes blacked, but I will give you tu'pence if you will go and wash your face." The boy said, "All right." "Well, go over to that fountain and do it." So the little fellow went across the street, and dipped his hands in the water and then rubbed them on his face. He dried his face as well as he could with the sleeve of his coat, and came back with a shining face—there were still some marks on his face, but the rough was gone, the worst of the dirt had been removed. He said, "Professor, how is that? Is that better?" "Yes", said the professor, "here is your tu'pence." "Aw, tak' it yoursel', and go and get your hair cut"! And the boy was right. It is of no use telling a bootblack to wash his face if you have not got your hair cut! And there is not a bit of use of you teachers teaching something in your class if the boys know that you are not practicing it in your life. Think of a Sunday School teacher coming before a class with the odor of tobacco upon his breath, to teach young boys the ways of the Lord. It is perfectly absurd. He must apply the principle that he is teaching to himself, if he is going to apply it to other people; he must bear the burden upon his own shoulders.

IV.

Another element of Kohath's burden was the *table of shewbread*, and the table of shewbread was exactly what its name implied, it was for show; and it was eaten by Aaron and his sons. Everyone else was forbidden to partake of it. Aaron was the type, the representative, of Christ; and he received the shewbread, and partook of it symbolically as the holiest of all gifts to God, the presentation of themselves a living sacrifice

to God. It is all very well for us to preach the doctrine of complete surrender, but we must ourselves bear it upon our shoulders. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Only thus, by not being conformed to this world but by being transformed, can we prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect thing, even the will of God. Let me call you back, if indeed we need to be called back, to that place of entire surrender, and consecration of all we have to the service of the Lord. And if it be not so that we ever have had that joyous experience of knowing that Jesus Christ is Lord, let us go forward then to that truth and make that surrender this morning, and bear this burden upon our shoulders; let it enter into our lives until it shall be known to everybody that we are separated unto the gospel of Christ, and that we are devoted entirely and exclusively to the service of Him Whose we are, and by Whose blood we have been purchased.

V.

Another item in the burden of Kohath was the *altar of incense*, the golden altar of incense, symbolic of the ministry of prayer. The incense was offered by a coal taken from the brazen altar, by supernatural fire; and that supernatural element entered into every service of the sanctuary. But on either side of the golden altar of incense there were rings, and staves were drawn through these also, and they were borne upon the shoulders of the Kohathites. There is an individual ministry of intercession, there is a collective ministry of intercession; but whether we pray alone, or whether we pray with others, it is our part to bear our burden upon our own shoulders. Oh, when will people learn that that is the only way to pray? You cannot pray with an ox-cart, you cannot send prayers to heaven mechanically. Did you ever get a chain letter pronouncing all sorts of maledictions upon you if you broke the chain? Well, I ought to have been dead long ago if there was anything in that, because they all go into the waste-paper basket that are sent to me. What folly to suppose God can be importuned by any sort of mechanical device! How we ought to pity men who give money away while they are alive, and leave money after they are dead, for somebody else to say prayers for them!—"Build me a wagon, get me a yoke of oxen, load it up with prayers, and then perhaps the Lord will hear me!" No, my friends, not thus do God's children pray. It is our part to bear that burden upon our own shoulders.

There are some prayers that nobody can pray for you. I remember a dear man we had here some years ago, a wonderful man of God, John Kolesnikoff, our first Russian missionary. His wife was equally devoted to the Lord, and they used to take Russian immigrants into their own house in order to try to lead them to Christ. There was one man for whom they had been praying much, and one day Mrs. Kolesnikoff spoke to him once again about his interest in Christ. "Well," he said, "you pray for me, keep on praying for me." I believe it was by the inspiration of the Spirit of God that she, calling him by name, said, "I am not going to pray for you any more." "What, you will not pray for me any more?" "No, I

am going to stop praying for you. You must pray for yourself, and if you do not pray on your own behalf, you will be lost." In the moment that the man saw he had to bear the altar of incense upon his own shoulders, that he had to pray for himself, "God be merciful to me, a sinner"—in that hour he was converted. There are things we have to pray for ourselves, and there are other prayers we can pray for others; but whichever it be, it must be a burden; and we must bear it upon our own shoulders.

I saw brother Johnson the other day, and what do you think he said? (You know who I mean; he comes to the prayer meetings, and is a benediction to all who hear him pray.) He said, "I cannot pray for myself now, you know, I am too weak; you will have to pray for me. I prevail for other folks, now you people must prevail for me." Brother Fraser told me last night that he had been in to see Brother Johnson, and he was up. He said to Mr. Fraser, "I have started praying for myself again. I can pray for myself now that I am better."

We have to bear our burden upon our own shoulders, and in this great ministry of intercession, let me appeal to every Christian here, Have you any part in it? Is there a staff resting upon your shoulders? Are you doing your part to carry the golden altar of incense? Or are you depending upon the prayers of other people altogether? Do you say, "Oh well, the work of the church will go forward. I do not go to prayer meeting myself, but I know a great many others who go." Why should you not go? What right have you to expect others to bear your burden? It is your business to be there. Someone says, "I cannot say I pray very much for the Lord's work myself, but I am glad to belong to a praying church; and to know that there are numbers of other people who do pray." That will not take your place, my friends, you must bear your burden upon your own shoulders, and do your part in carrying forward the golden altar of incense.

VI.

Then there were the *golden candlesticks*. We light by machinery now! I suppose we should like to be able to turn a switch and light up the whole world! Would that not be fine, if by some means or another, we could devise a machine that would suddenly carry the gospel to the ends of the earth, and bear witness for Christ everywhere, while we sit comfortably at home and turn on a switch? That is the kind of religion some people want. But you cannot have it, my friends. They were forbidden to put the candlestick in an ox-cart, or any kind of wagon. The Lord said, "Carry it on your shoulders." There is no substitute for personal witness for Christ, you have got to carry the candlestick, to bear your own witness, as our Lord Himself said, "Let your light so shine before men"—not *make* it shine, but *let* it shine; He will give you the light if you will carry the candlestick—"let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Do you carry a candlestick to work in the morning? Do you? I wonder if you have seen those signs that all the wagons in town are carrying? That is a fine illustration of the principle. You see a truck coming down the street with a glaring light on top, and you wonder how in the world that sign is lighted up in

the daytime. Do you know what the working principle of it is? They have the name, whatever it may be, on a glass looking up to God's sun that is always shining—behind the clouds, or through the clouds, or where there are no clouds; that heavenly light is always coming down—then there is a mirror beneath that catches it, and throws it back against another mirror. Thus men have learned to use the sun to advertise their wares. We cannot make the light, but we can let it shine; and if we get our mirrors fixed, there will be plenty of sunlight to show we are Christians. We have none of our own, but the light that comes from God we can let shine through us, we can carry it everywhere, down in the office, in the shop, everywhere, that everyone may know that we have our candlestick with us, that we are bearing witness for the Lord Jesus.

VII.

And then, most important of all, *the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat* were carried on the shoulders of the sons of Kohath. You know what was in the ark. There were the unbroken tables of stone, the second tables upon which God had written His law. Moses broke the first, as men broke the law; and then God gave him two more tables of stone, and with the finger of God the perfect law was written on the tables of stone. They were put in the ark of the covenant, and they represented One Who should come and keep the law perfectly, and work out a righteousness for us; they represented the perfect righteousness of Christ, His perfect keeping of the law. Then there was the golden pot that contained the manna that ordinarily spoiled if kept overnight; but the manna was kept in the golden pot in the ark, and was by a miracle preserved from corruption. That ark was the symbol of supernaturalism, it was itself a miracle of the time because the manna was kept pure in the golden pot. And then there was Aaron's rod that budded. You remember how they were jealous of Aaron's superiority because he had been divinely anointed as priest? And the Lord said, "Bring your rods, and I will show you who my priest is." The man whose rod budded was the chosen one; and so Aaron's rod was put in the ark, significant of the uniqueness of the priesthood of our Lord Jesus. There is only one Christ. Over it all was the mercy seat where the blood was sprinkled, and there were rings to the ark, and staves were put through the rings, and the Kohathites carried the ark upon their shoulders.

You cannot carry Jesus Christ into any department of life by any kind of machinery that the cleverest engineer in the world can devise. You cannot make people Christians by legislation, you cannot organize Christ into your social structure, into your educational system. You cannot do it at all: you must bear the ark upon your shoulders; we have to be ourselves "living epistles read and known of all men". This is the great truth, —

"For Thou within no walls confined,
Inhabitest the humble mind;
Such ever bring Thee where they come,
And going, take Thee to their home."

Such was John's testimony. Let me read you his statement, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard; which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we

have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full."

You say the Kohathites had the hardest part of the bargain—no wagons, no oxen, carrying everything on their shoulders. But could you have asked them, there is not one who would have been willing to take the place of anyone else. They found it the greatest joy of life to bear the burden which God had put upon their shoulders. And what our Lord Jesus said is true, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Take the burden God gives you, and the grace He offers you, and you shall find that you will carry upon your shoulders that which will bring blessing to all the earth.

Let us pray:

O Lord, we thank Thee for the high honour Thou hast put upon us and given to each one of us who has been redeemed by blood, a ministry which angels might well covet. We beseech Thee to help us afresh to yield ourselves to Thee, and to give ourselves with unreserved devotion to the good works that Thou hast ordained that we should walk in. Help us that we may be Thy representatives, that we may be enabled to say in very truth, "for me to live is Christ." We ask it in His name.

A WORD ABOUT THE EDITOR

Last Sunday, November 1, Dr. Shields celebrated his birthday, or rather, we should say, the church and Sunday School celebrated it for him. At the morning service little Miss Lois Slade, bearing a birthday cake, was ushered on to the platform by General Superintendent Ted Kinsinger, who called upon the Pastor to blow out the lighted candles, to the accompaniment of the traditional Sunday School hymn of good wishes:

"Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday dear Pastor,
Happy birthday to you."

At the close of a large communion service in the evening, which filled almost every seat in the downstairs of the auditorium, Rev. H. C. Slade presented the Pastor with a gift as a token of the church's continuing affection and assured Dr. Shields of our sincere appreciation of his ministry and our earnest prayers that God may continue to sustain and bless him in the future. Dr. Shields replied in a few words, remarking that he valued the love and affection of his people all the more highly, coming as it did after forty-four year's ministry in the same pulpit.

Birthday parties are generally of limited interest outside the circle of the immediate family, but we mention this intimate and informal celebration here because we know that there is a much larger company of friends beyond the walls of Jarvis Street Church that have a deep personal interest in the one whom they have learned to regard as their pastor even though they have never seen him in the flesh. We are confident that they will welcome the opportunity to rejoice with us on this happy occasion and to give God thanks for His goodness and mercy to a faithful servant through the years.

Last Monday morning Dr. Shields entered the hospital for a minor operation, and within an hour after leaving the operating room he called the office by telephone. The

members of the entire church family have united their petitions on his behalf since they knew he was about to enter hospital and now they give thanks for his fine progress. Again we mention these matters here that our larger circle of readers may unite with us in continued prayer and thanksgiving to God. The Pastor hopes to resume his regular pulpit ministry after a short time in the hospital and a brief period of recuperation at home. The great sermon he preached on Sunday evening has not yet been revised but will appear in these pages in due course. This week's issue, therefore, carries two messages, one preached in 1928 and the other in 1937.

—W.S.W.

ANOTHER ISSUE OF "THE SEMINARIAN"

The first issue of *The Seminarian* for the current school year has just come from the press, and we congratulate the staff on this fine number, which is attractively set up and printed. The quality of the contents is in keeping with the style of printing, and we wish for this student publication a large circulation. Friends of Toronto Baptist Seminary will find special interest in looking through this window into the life and activities of our school. Included in this issue are words of welcome to new students from the president of the Student Body, several fine editorials, two testimonies from men in the incoming year and reports on their summer's work from returning students. The price of a year's subscription is 75 cents, which should be sent to *The Seminarian*, 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto 2, Canada.

"THE REFORMERS' CALENDAR", 1954

A Protestant Reminder From Ireland That Lasts Throughout the Year

We have just received from Belfast, Northern Ireland, *The Reformers' Calendar* for 1954. This edition is an improvement on last year's. The twelve drawings it contains are in colour, vividly depicting scenes of historic Protestant interest. There is an attractive cover, together with brief historical explanations of the pictures, with appropriate Scripture texts.

A number of friends obtained a copy of last year's edition of this useful calendar and they will wish to have this new and improved production. Copies may be had directly from the publishers, the National Union of Protestants of Ireland, 26 Howard Street, Belfast, Northern Ireland, at the price of two for one dollar. We hope many may wish to heed the invitation of Mr. Norman Porter, the President, to send one dollar for a copy as a donation.

Friends in the Toronto area may prepay their orders for these calendars through the GOSPEL WITNESS office.

GOSPEL WITNESS PUBLICATIONS

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

"The Greatest Fight in the World", by C. H. Spurgeon, 64 pages25

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The Gospel Witness

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2 . Canada

TORONTO'S PROFANE MAYOR

The present mayor of Toronto, a man by the name of Lamport, is a respected member of a respectable church, if our information is correct. Notwithstanding, he is the sort of man the Bible describes as a "profane person". We have never heard His Worship speak, nor have we any desire to hear him; his public utterances and actions as reported in the newspapers are all we wish to know of him and often more than enough.

Esau, the prototype of our present First Magistrate, was a sportsman, a man who loved the great open spaces and the joys of the chase. He was capable of generous acts, though he was vindictive and changeable. But whatever virtues he seemed to possess in the eyes of the world, he was purblind and deaf to the great realities of the spiritual world. He despised his spiritual heritage and sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Thus he is denominated "profane", in the sense that he remained outside the fane, the temple, wholly occupied with earthly, temporal concerns and having no interest in the things of God.

We do not profess to know whether Mayor Lamport uses profane speech, nor whether he is a gambler. Nor do we mean to judge his spiritual state and standing before God. But we do know that every time a moral issue is raised he stands with Esau, a "profane person". Our Mayor is responsible for sponsoring the introduction of Sunday sports in Toronto. Now he is advocating municipal lotteries, that is, public gambling under the aegis of the government. Up till now his systematic pandering to the sporting element, really a highly commercialized industry, has won him unbroken political success. He and his ilk and kin have every prospect of remaining in control of civic politics in the City Hall until the church goers of Toronto show enough concern over these matters to go to the polls on election day and bid Mr. Lamport and Company to pack their bags and baggage.

We note with satisfaction that the *Toronto Daily Star* has protested against the Mayor's iniquitous proposal to institute public lotteries.

—W.S.W.

TALK TO YOUR MEMBER ABOUT THIS

An Editorial in *The Toronto Star*

Mayor Lamport yearns for municipal lotteries to assist hospitals. He thinks the money might better stay in Canada than go to Ireland. It is suggested that people would contribute more that way than they do voluntarily.

No doubt there are many who agree with the mayor on this point, but *The Star* believes that he and they are wrong, and that lotteries are inherently a violation of moral and economic principles. They strangle voluntary giving by discouraging people from contributing to good causes unless there is a chance of winning a prize. They substitute a selfish hope of unearned wealth for the generous impulses which so ennoble mankind when gifts are voluntary.

The end does not justify the means. It has not done so in countries where lotteries are legalized. While a few people win, the great majority suffer disappointment and financial loss. Young people are encouraged to believe that good luck may well be a substitute for hard work, for they hear much of the few who win and nothing of the thousands who lose when a lottery is held.

An attempt is being made to weaken or abolish the federal law against lotteries. A committee will report its findings to parliament, which has defeated lottery proposals on previous occasions. It is to be hoped that people who are against lotteries conducted by any level of government will talk to their federal members about this and urge them not to let the anti-lottery bars down.

An Important Declaration

THE MERGER of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec with another Baptist Body, on Wednesday, October 21st, under the name of The Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches of Canada, occasioned the necessity for the following declaration, which was unanimously adopted on Thursday evening:

A DECLARATION

*Issued By The Conservative Regular Baptist Association of Canada
At Its Convention in Toronto, October 29th, 1953*

When this Association of Baptists was organized on October 23, 1951, the name "Regular" was omitted from its title because the then existing Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec had emptied the name "Regular" of its historic significance.

On October 21, 1953, the late union of Regular Baptist Churches voted itself out of doctrinal and organized existence by merging with another Baptist body on a doctrinal basis which, in respect to the New Testament ordinances, is distinctly different and contrary to that of the original doctrinal basis of The Union of Regular Baptist Churches, which new doctrinal basis of the new organization, to be known as The Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches of Canada, merely states that the two New Testament ordinances are Baptism and the Lord's Supper, without any insistence, either expressed or implied, that the observance of these ordinances in their scriptural order, is a scriptural obligation binding upon the New Testament Church.

Therefore, this *Conservative Regular Baptist Association of Canada*, by adoption of this *Declaration* hereby adds to its official title, with its historic connotation, the name "Regular", and will be known henceforth as *The Conservative Regular Baptist Association of Canada*, with the implied determination to continue to maintain a Regular Baptist Testimony in Canada — which Testimony is clearly set out in its doctrinal statement as adopted at its organization on October 23, 1951, and will thus do the work which the late Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec was originally organized to do.

And further, we cordially invite all Baptist Churches in Canada, of like Faith and Order, who are really "Regular" in the historic sense, in doctrine and practice, to join this *Association* on the terms set out in its *Constitution*.

CONSERVATIVE REGULAR BAPTIST CONVENTION

By H. C. Slade

THE annual Convention of The Conservative Regular Baptist Association of Canada, held in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, October 27-29th, 1953, came to a close on Thursday evening, with the ground floor of that great auditorium almost packed to capacity.

Three sessions were held daily from Tuesday to Thursday. The attendance at each one was exceptionally large, and the high spiritual tone which characterized the first prayer session on Tuesday morning continued throughout. We heard many testify, both during the Convention, and at the close, of blessing received. One man, who has attended Baptist Conventions on both sides of the Atlantic remarked: "This Convention was by far the best I have attended in thirty years." He went on to say, that he had not seen such fine crowds at any of the Baptist Conventions for a long time.

Presidential Address

The keynote address was delivered on Tuesday night by the President, Dr. T. T. Shields, on the subject, "When God Answered By Fire". At the conclusion of his speech, Dr. Shields pointed out that when God sends Revival, fire always precedes the showers. The convincing proof that the power of God accompanied the preaching of this great message was seen in the large number of ministers, delegates, and theological students who attended the all-forenoon prayer meeting the following morning. Glowing with earnestness, continuous prayer was offered until noon.

Special Speakers

The three guest preachers from Texas, Rev. Homer G. Ritchie, successor to the late Dr. J. Frank Norris, Rev. William Fraser, and Rev. George Crittenden, brought with them to the Convention the wholesome enthusiasm which characterizes all the great gatherings of Evangelical Baptists in the South. The messages these devoted servants of God gave on Sunday School work, as well as the other addresses they delivered on practical themes, will long be remembered. When it came to explaining how to build large and efficient Bible Schools, our visiting friends from the Southland are not theorists. The methods they enunciate have been tested and shown to produce in many places almost unbelievable results.

The presence and ministry of these brethren amongst us, contributed much toward the success of the Convention, "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend".

Missionary Addresses

The main purpose for our existence as a Regular Baptist Association was brought vividly before us at the session on "Missions". Back of all our engagements and activities there is one dominating purpose, and that is to get the Gospel of Salvation to men stricken in sin. Through soul-stirring addresses we heard of the accomplishments and needs on three missionary fields, which have been for some years very dear to the hearts of us all.

Rev. Yvon Hurtubise, himself a convert from Rome, told with heavy heart of the numerous priest-ridden com-

munities in Quebec and Northern Ontario, still unreached with the message of God's grace. Mr. Hurtubise spoke of the terrible superstition which abounds, in some cases, to an appalling degree among these French Canadian people. All present were made to feel that the condition of these millions, who live in heathen darkness right here in our own land, is tragic, and the need for evangelism extremely urgent.

In his strong appeal for more missionaries to labour in the Island of Jamaica, Rev. J. W. Knight said, "If twenty-five would offer their services now, I could easily put every one of them immediately to work." The city of Kingston, the capital, with its population of 100,000 was described as a needy centre where a Regular Baptist testimony ought to be established at once. When Mr. Knight asked all present to pray that a young couple may be sent to begin this new cause, Rev. Homer G. Ritchie, suggested that his great church in Forth Worth might be able to supply the answer.

While on furlough in Canada, whether among the churches of our Association, or at the Convention, Mr. Knight has been a means of great blessing to us all.

The subject of the address delivered by Rev. W. S. Whitcombe, was "A Strategic Mission Field That Has Been Neglected". After spending about four months, on the continent of Europe last summer, most of the time occupied in visiting the churches of the French Bible Mission, Mr. Whitcombe was able to bring us news from that field, which was really up to date. His address was most informative and the graphic picture he painted of the religious situation of the countries he visited, showed that, while the vast majority are without Christ and in need of the Gospel, God has here and there a faithful remnant.

The importance of the work being done by the churches of the French Bible Mission under the leadership of Dr. Robert Dubarry, and the strategic position they occupy was, through Mr. Whitcombe's address, brought home, with conviction, to every heart.

EXTENSION PROGRAMME

By Rev. John Boyd

The great message, delivered in apostolic fashion, by Rev. J. R. Boyd, on "Enlarging our Borders", put the whole Convention into immediate action. On behalf of the Executive Board Mr. Boyd was asked to speak to the Convention on some definite plans for extension. The following is the substance of Mr. Boyd's speech:

"After four days of careful study at Board meetings and Convention sessions, the Executive Board of the Conservative Regular Baptist Association of Canada met Thursday evening, October 29th, to ratify plans for an Extension Programme for aggressive advancement. During these days we were blessedly conscious of God's presence with us. We have been deeply stirred, almost horrified indeed, by the realization that this Association represents the only organized group of Evangelical Regular Baptist Churches in Ontario and Quebec to-day.

A few short months ago those of us who broke with the former Union of Regular Baptists of Ontario and Quebec protested against the reckless drift of some of our brethren away from the distinctive and scriptural

position for which we were supposed to stand, and die if need be. But even in our moments of gravest alarm we did not dare to believe that in so short a time those same men would hilariously lead their unsuspecting people to renounce and completely disown both the name they bore, and the distinctive doctrines of truth which God gave us as our peculiar and sacred trust.

We know our former associates wanted numbers without having to wear out in the tedious task of winning the lost to their ranks. They craved the worldly advantages they hoped to gain from being a bigger and more peaceful movement; but we never thought that every preacher and every church would joyfully join in the organizational and doctrinal suicide of the Union into which some of us put the best years of our lives. However, the unexpected has happened. The Union is gone. Its distinctive doctrines have been sold for an empty promise, and we alone are left as a rallying point for those whom God leads to accept and defend the ancient principles of our Baptist forefathers. We find no pleasure in mentioning these facts; but we do rejoice in the privilege of reporting that God has obviously moved within us to prompt and enable us to advance with resolute determination into new and larger fields of opportunity.

Sensing this new surge of Divine Power, the Executive Board looked with joyful interest upon the expanding fields which offer new possibilities for English work. Prayerfully we considered the challenge presented by the ever-growing numbers of European New Canadians. Some of us have already learned the cost and felt the joy of winning a few of these to Christ, and we believe that the near future holds wonderful possibilities of advancement among these bewildered but starving people. Friends who know of Ukrainian, German, Dutch, or other New Canadians who will receive the Word of God are asked to bear in mind that we are willing and ready to help such to the utmost of our power.

Our plans for expansion of French work are even more specific. A three-man committee has been appointed with full authority to take all steps necessary to open up new and larger fields in French Canada. We believe God will provide at least one experienced and proven French worker for new full-time exploration and evangelization work next Spring. Already some useful spade work has been done in one or two areas of extensive and urgent need. Our Association Executive and Convention delegates are resolved to press into these with every possible type of assistance. Some have pledged themselves to go next summer to render assistance by visiting in these pioneer projects. Young people from our churches will spend their holidays in this missionary service. They will do this at their own expense or by the voluntary support of their own church fellowships. In the meantime we hope every church and every interested believer will give such additional support to our mission work that when that not-far-distant hour arrives, when the new campaign against Rome's bulwarks is launched, it may be possible to do so with a mighty volume of prayer already in store against that day, and with money enough on hand to cover the cost that will be involved.

We are going forward. Home mission causes will press their efforts on their own fields to lighten the load on the central fund. Those spear-heading their effort will gladly give further details of the need and plans if desired, but we can pray with thanksgiving and

glad anticipation, for God has called and equipped us to advance. Those everywhere who believe that our strength lies not in numbers but in Him Who works always along the lines of righteousness, can gladly rally to this endeavour, knowing that God the Lord will bless and use it to His praise. God is with us, making our beings to throb with life and impelling desire for service. We know He will not fail nor default on His Word."

Evidently God is already beginning to lay our plans for expansion up the hearts of His children. On Friday, the day following the Convention, a devoted lady, and loyal friend, called up and said, "I am extremely interested in the extension programme which was proposed last evening. I am sending you \$1,000.00 with which to begin it."

For this generous gift we are profoundly thankful, and are led to believe that there are many others who would like either a large or a small share in this Conservative Regular Baptist Forward Movement.

In executing our Evangelization Extension Programme we must naturally be governed by our resources. Therefore the extent of our advancement must be limited to the amount of money on hand. A number of gifts like the above, or even larger, together with numerous smaller ones, will enable us to go far. Please let us hear from you at once.

Toronto Baptist Seminary

On Thursday afternoon the delegates were given a little insight into the life and work of the Toronto Baptist Seminary.

Dr. Olive Clark introduced to the Convention the first year students. Mr. Reed from Wales, gave his testimony and the session was crowned with a magnificent address by Dr. Robert McCaul.

The officers of the Executive Board were elected as follows:

President: Dr. T. T. Shields.

Vice-Presidents:

Rev. Duncan Macgregor, Central.
Rev. J. B. Cunningham, Western.
Rev. A. R. W. Murray, Eastern.

Secretary: Rev. H. C. Slade.

Treasurer: Mr. Paul Bauman.

BOARD

Mr. G. Aceti	Mr. D. Markle
Rev. G. Adams	Mr. H. B. Maw
Rev. J. R. Boyd	Rev. B. R. Oatley-Willis
Rev. S. Dempster	Rev. G. Stephens
Rev. G. B. Hicks	Rev. W. C. Tompkins
Mr. R. R. McNeil	Rev. W. S. Whitcombe

The Annual Report gives a review of some of the work accomplished in our churches and on the various mission fields last year. This report also includes the financial statement. A copy, or copies, may be obtained by writing to: The Conservative Regular Baptist Association of Canada, 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto.

"Higher than the highest heaven,
Deeper than the deepest sea.
Lord, at last thy love has conquered,
None of self, and all of Thee."

A WORD OF APPRECIATION

The following resolution was moved by Mr. G. Aceti and seconded by Rev. W. S. Whitcombe, and carried unanimously:

WHEREAS the Rev. H. C. Slade has given freely of his time in the difficult and onerous tasks of Secretary of our missionary organizations, carrying on this labour of love with great acceptance to all our churches and pastors and with evident fruitfulness in the Conservative Regular Baptist Association of Canada;

AND WHEREAS the Jarvis Street Church, of which he is the beloved Associate Pastor, has graciously permitted him to assume this additional burden to the other heavy responsibilities which he bears in the church;

AND WHEREAS the Jarvis Street Church, with its accustomed generosity to all causes which seek to honour the Lord, has also granted, free of cost, the use of office space in the Seminary Building;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Second Annual Convention of the Conservative Regular Baptist Association, now meeting as guest of the Jarvis Street Church, do hereby express its sincere and heartiest gratitude to Mr. Slade and his labours abundant and to this great church and its beloved pastor and faithful and devoted officers for these further proofs of their devotion to the cause of Christ, which we all love and seek to serve for His glory.

We are happy to have this opportunity of expressing appreciation of our fellow-labourers in the Gospel. The above Convention Report will enable our readers to taste something of the fine fellowship which reigned and of the vision of missionary work presented to us.—W.S.W.

THE CHRISTIAN A SOLDIER

To watch, to fight, with steady front to meet and repel temptation - in other words to do no evil, is, however, though an important part, but one, and not the most important part of Christian work. The Church of the Living God bears no resemblance to those communities of ants where a certain number of these curious insects form a sort of standing army, and have no other duties but to defend and battle for the commonwealth; the building, and provisioning, and other duties of the ant hill belonging to the others, and not to them. Nor, to take an illustration from the arrangements of human society, does Christ's kingdom resemble this, or that of any other sovereign, where the military, wearing a distinct garb, and exempted from those productive labours whereby others support themselves, and add to the wealth of the country form a distinct order of the community. The type of a Christian is seen not in lands where citizens and soldiers, working and fighting men are different classes; but rather in those troubled regions of the East, where the husbandman, constantly exposed to the attack of murderers and robbers, ploughs the soil with a carbiné slung at his back, or a sword slung at his side. The true Christian must be a soldier, and he must be a true soldier, bold, courageous and active in defensive and aggressive warfare.

—GUTHRIE

LOVE LIKE A FLOWER SEED

Love, in this world, is like a seed taken from the rocks, and planted where the winter comes too soon: and it cannot spread itself in flower clusters, and wide twining vines, so that the whole air is filled with the perfume thereof. But there is to be another summer for it yet. Care for the root now, and God will care for the top by and by.

—BEECHER

"MY BELOVED IS MINE, AND I AM HIS"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto
Sunday Evening, November 7th, 1937

(Stenographically Reported)

"My beloved is mine, and I am his."—Song of Solomon 2:16.

THERE is no part of the fortress of truth which we call the Bible against which the adversary of our souls has not directed his battering-ram. There is no refreshing rivulet flowing from this fountain of life which he has not endeavoured to pollute with the poison of his criticism. There is no word contained in all the sweet love-message of the Book against which the sneer of malice, or the contempt of ignorance, has not been aimed.

In the realm of music, many of the world's greatest masterpieces have failed of recognition, and have earned for themselves only the contempt of supposed authorities, until after the death of the composer. And this lovely song which lies at the very heart of the oratorio of the Messiah — for that is what the Bible is — has been treated with contempt, or with scorn, by those who have failed to recognize any significance in the death of Him Whose excellencies it signalizes.

Perhaps that is not surprising. A religion of organization, of machinery, of carnal endeavour, by its flapping belts and grinding wheels, has so filled the world with noise as to drown the love-notes of a song like this. It is not to be wondered at that a spirit which does homage to a religion of numbers, of bigness, of mammonized materialism, should have no taste, nor desire, nor vision, for a lover's walk in an enclosed garden, through an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits, amid trees of frankincense; or for a bower of beauty, fragrant with myrrh and all chief spices, such as were the haunts of lovers described in this Song of Songs.

Some of us have learned that there is a great gulf fixed between the cold, formal, mechanical, largely theoretical, religion of ceremonial institutionalism, and a religion which consists in a vital, conscious, pervasive, inseparable, union with the living Son of God. The Bible has no message for men who hope for an institutional salvation; but those who have learned that salvation is in Him of Whom the Father said, "This is my beloved Son; hear ye him", are able to sing, as we often do here,

"I am my beloved's,
And my Beloved is mine,
He brings a poor vile sinner
Into his house of wine;
I stand upon his merit,
I know no other stand,
Not e'en where glory dwelleth
In Emmanuel's land."

Forevermore it must remain that those who would be saved, and who would live in the fullest enjoyment of the salvation of God's provision, must have eyes and hearts for Jesus Christ only.

Let us look at this old text. I do not suppose we can find anything new in it. Love is as old as human experience—nay, it is as old as God Himself, for "God is love". It is none the less sweet, however, and precious to us all—all the more precious, indeed, if there be nothing new in it.

I.

First of all, FAITH VIEWS HER HERITAGE AS CONSISTING IN A PERSONAL POSSESSION OF INESTIMABLE WORTH. Says the spouse in the Song, "My beloved is mine." So ought every true believer to be able to say—indeed, so every true believer will be able to say concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Beloved of our souls, and He is *our* personal possession.

I think I may say that faith here confesses to a *certain measure of enlightenment*, an opening of the eyes to behold a beauty formerly concealed. There was a time when she did not see so much in Him, when she would fain have passed him by. He was "without form or comeliness", and when first we saw Him, "there was no beauty that (we) should desire Him." But this lover grew upon the vision of the spouse, until his incomparable glory at last dawned upon her consciousness. She awakened to the discovery that her heart had become engaged: she had fallen in love with one whom she now delights to call her beloved.

What a mystery there is about God's method of awakening a slumbering soul! How strangely He came to us who are Christians! How peculiarly He dealt with us in our individual experiences! How He gradually stole in upon us! How, in His presence, all other things seemed to diminish in value, until at last, like the disciples on the mount, coming to themselves, awakened from their slumber, discovering that all else had vanished, they found that Jesus Christ filled the whole horizon. Thus we experienced that miracle recorded in the Word, that the "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." We beheld Him by faith! He had been to us a figure in a Book, a character of history; His name had been to us synonymous with many things for which we had no affection, toward which we could feel in our hearts not the slightest desire. Yet He dispelled all our prejudices, by the divinest strategy He besieged our souls, and when He had subdued the outposts He overwhelmed us by His grace and led our souls captive with such tenderness that when our eyes were opened to behold His loveliness, we called the Conqueror "Beloved".

What a revelation that was to those of us who are saved, when we had to say, like Holy Rutherford, "Christ hath come and run away to heaven with my heart and my love, so that neither heart nor love is mine: I pray God that Christ may keep both without reversion."

I think we may say that this expression of the text *represents a reversion of judgment, a revision of estimate*; for there was a time when she had not been neutral only, but antagonistic. How strange it is that men should hate God! Have you reflected upon that? How extraordinary that any sane man should be antagonistic toward Jesus Christ! Yet men are. "A whisperer separateth chief friends." Who is this whisperer who has so maligned the Prince of glory, so slandered Him to the souls of men, that they now hate Him instead of loving Him? How easily men's minds may be evil affected toward a person or a cause! It is said even of men and women that "the poison of asps is under their tongue." How a poisonous tongue can sting people, and sever friendships! How readily people circulate evil reports!

I had put in my hand to-day a church calendar from

a church in New York State, in which is an item headed, "Evil Reports", which I shall read:

"Let us be slow in believing evil reports unless they are absolutely authenticated. Someone reported that a minister in a rage went to a meeting, which his wife attended against his will, dragged her from the hall, and forced her to go home with him. In the columns of a paper the minister made this admirable defense: 'In the first place, I never attempted to influence my wife in her views nor her choice of a meeting; in the second place, my wife did not attend the meeting in question; in the third place, I did not attend the meeting myself. To conclude, neither my wife nor myself had any inclination to go to the meeting; finally, I never had a wife!'"

That is how the slanderer works, the arch-slanderer, the one who is not only "the accuser of the brethren", but the accuser of the Christ Himself; and he has so misrepresented Him to men, that instead of loving God, they hate Him; instead of giving their hearts' affection to the Son of God, like Saul of Tarsus they "breathe out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord". But here is one who experiences an intense reaction from recognized error. Like the Apostle Paul, who once thought he ought to do many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth and who, when in later years he was going up to Jerusalem, and some of his friends "besought him not to go up", said with tears, "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus—He is more than all the world to me, the Beloved of my soul."

Do you remember that day, my friends?—we are to come to His banqueting-table to-night. What a marvel of grace that we should be invited, we who were His enemies!—but do you remember the day when suddenly life was inverted, turned upsidedown, and all our judgments of spiritual values were seen to be wrong? Suddenly we discovered that in Jesus Christ all virtues had been incarnated, and were now embodied in Him, representing us before the throne. What an unique religion! What a wondrous salvation is guaranteed to us in that simple fact: our hearts being knit in love to the Son of God!

This spouse *seems to take pleasure in advertising her lover's excellencies*. "My beloved"! She extols him as one worthy of her deepest and highest and strongest affection. Very personal it is with her; whatever others may say of him, she says, "He is *my* beloved. He has *my* heart whether he has the hearts of others or not." Can you say that? Sometimes it is all we can say. At one time that was all this spouse could say. She had allowed a distance to come between herself and her lover, and she was indisposed to make any effort, apparently, to recover his presence and his favour, until she heard one knocking at the door. Half awake she said, "I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night." As she reflected upon the worthiness of her absent lover she cried, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedeth, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions." Or, to revert to that dialogue between the risen Saviour and the unfaithful disciple, our Lord did not waste words. He said, "Peter, I do not ask you whether you have been faithful; I do not ask you whether you have proved yourself worthy of me; I do

not ask if you have been courageous, and have played the man: tell me one thing—that is the only thing I want to know. Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Notwithstanding all, in spite of all, apparently in contradiction of all, is there a fire burning in your heart for me, Simon?"

Can you say, "O my Beloved, Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that I love thee"? That is what He always wants to know of us as Christians. Other things He desires as the fruit of it, but this must be the foundation and the root: do you love Him?

Do you lack assurance, any of you? Would you say, "O preacher, my life is so stained; it has been so inconsistent and irregular that I am almost ashamed to say I am a Christian. I once professed, but I have wandered far away." You know what this great Lover says—"Never mind all that for the moment. Tell me this, Do you love Me? Lovest thou Me?" Can you answer in the affirmative? Can you say, "Well, yes; in spite of all, I know that my heart is thrilled by the music of His name. I have sung it, and meant it, and could sing it now, —

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

You do love Him then, do you? You can say before God, "I do. I know it is not as strong as it ought to be, but there is a spark there; I love Him."

"Whosoever loveth, is born of God." It is the hallmark of the true Christian. It is the one unmistakable, indisputable, distinguishing, characteristic of the soul that has been born from Above, that the love of God has been "shed abroad in (his heart) by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Hence he really loves God.

But hear her as she says, "My beloved is *mine*." There is a pride of personal possession: he is mine. How does she know? She knows that somehow or another she has given Him her heart. The believer knows that his love has not been spurned. The believer is made to know, by divine certification, that He will not break His covenant-engagement; He will keep His word to us. He says we belong to Him: He is ours.

We have not very much in this life—nor do we need much, if we have the Lord Jesus. "My beloved is *mine*." Did you sing it just now? Did you sing it with your heart as well as with your lips? Oh the pity of it that we should ever sing these glorious hymns of praise mechanically! I do not think you sang it thus. I believe there was a tone and quality of assurance in it as you sang just now —

"My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine!
For Thee, all the pleasures of sin I resign;
My gracious Redeemer, my Saviour art Thou!
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now!"

Oh the wonder of it, that Grace should make it possible for poor sinners to address the Prince of glory and say, "My beloved is mine."

II.

But further, FAITH ALWAYS RECOGNIZES THE MUTUALITY OF THIS RELATIONSHIP, AND DISCERNS THAT TRUE FAITH FINDS ITS FULL FRUITION, NOT ONLY IN THE JOY OF POSSESSION, BUT IN THE JOY OF BEING POSSESSED. The spouse said, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." How amazing! Do you stop, my dear Christian friends,

sometimes to try to form some estimate of our Lord's valuation of us? "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

There are people who would count it no honour for you to describe yourself as their friend. They want nothing to do with you. I suppose there are some who would not like it to be known that they were even an acquaintance of yours. Sometimes that attitude may justly be mutual. Be that as it may, here is one, who, with a justifiable pride, proclaims her relationship to her beloved. She says, "I am his, and what is more, he is mine."

How did she know? It was the result of his sovereign choice. He had chosen her. The Lord has a way of having His own way. The Heavenly Bridegroom, in consonance with what He knows to be the Father's will, has chosen a bride for Himself. Said He to His disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." Why are you His? Because He made up His mind you should be; because He made choice of you—and made choice of you notwithstanding all your unworthiness. Long, long ago I reached the conclusion, as a minister, that so long as two people were satisfied with a wedding, that was about all that could be expected. I do not expect more than that. If the bridegroom appears to be a worthy man, someone will say the lady in question is not good enough for him—in the majority of cases, it is the reverse. But whichever way you look at it, about all you can hope for is the pleasure of two people. This spouse says, "He is mine, altogether mine: he chose me."

Have you ever wondered why you are a Christian? Make an inventory of all your excellencies, those qualities that excel—we can find none. I do not know how I should put it, good points, if you like. "There is none that doeth good, no not one." If we seriously attempt to try to account for the fact that the Lord Jesus loves us, what shall we say?

"He saw me ruined by the fall,
Yet loved me notwithstanding all."

There is nothing attractive about us.

There was in Him when our eyes were opened to behold Him. But who but a God of love could ever see anything in you or me worth saving for ever? Suffer me a very homely illustration. I have seen our Jewish friends, before they attain affluence or any great measure of prosperity, going along the street with a handcart, gathering rags and all manner of refuse. As I have seen them I have said, "What can they see in that—getting rich from things that other people throw away." I remember my father telling me, as a boy, of a journey he had one day, riding in a compartment such as obtain in English trains. As the train sped along something bright flashed in the embankment at the side. A man, sitting beside him, a Jew, said, "Did you see that?" "Yes." "Did you recognize it?" "I do not know that I did; I thought it was a bottle." "No! No! it was a piece of money." "Surely you could not see a piece of money when travelling at the speed we are going?" "Oh, but have you never heard the proverb, 'Worth a Jew's eye'? It means that a Jew can see money where nobody else can."

That is the explanation of their searching around the

garbage cans, picking up the world's refuse—and getting rich on it. But the Bible says that those who are the princes of glory are esteemed "as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day". Be proud of that, will you? We have nothing of which to be proud, and yet notwithstanding our unattractiveness, our inherent unworthiness, the eye of our gracious God, supplemented by the divine wisdom, with the knowledge of all the powers of Deity, saw potentialities in us that no one else could ever have conceived. Therefore He selected us, and poor as we were and are, we can still say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his."

We cannot too frequently emphasize the value of the word of God. He Himself has proclaimed His possession: "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." "Those whom thou hast given me, I have kept." What a blessing it is to be conscious of being possessed by someone, belonging to someone, owned by someone. The pride of ownership is great. Yes; yet I think sometimes it is better to be owned than to own.

Do you know what it is for the Prince of glory to take you into His grip as He says, "You are mine"? And can you answer, "And I am His"? "My beloved is mine, and I am his." What a safe place to be! Last Sunday evening I spoke to you about the security of the believer. Here it is again: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." That is being saved for ever.

Do any of you read Rutherford? If you do not, you miss one of the greatest wellsprings of spiritual delight to be found outside of the Holy Book itself. Mrs. Cozens has woven into a brief poem from which I have already quoted, some of his lovely sayings. How he loved the Lord! And how he was hated of men!

"I have borne scorn and hatred,
I have borne wrong and shame,
Earth's proud ones have reproached me,
For Christ's thrice blessed name:—
Where God His seal set fairest
They've stamped their foulest brand;
But judgment shines like noonday
In Emmanuel's land."

Blessed is the soul who can say, "I am His." Then it matters little what the world says. To be His is more than a knighthood, more than a peerage, more than all the wealth of the world beside, just to know that for ever we belong to Him. Can you say it?

Is there an unconverted man or woman here this evening? Do you say, "I thought being a Christian was putting restraints upon the soul, setting up a standard, and then labouring to attain it, giving up a thousand things I desired, and finding no joy." No! it is to see in Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Saviour of the world; and to fall so deeply and eternally in love with Him that your relationship to Him transcends all other considerations for time and for eternity, enabling you to say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his."

Will you receive Him? Will you accept Him? Does anyone say, "But would He accept me?" Let the wounds in His hands, in His feet, in His side, and the marks of the thorns about His bleeding brow—the five bleeding wounds—answer whether He will accept you. He died for you, and all He asks is that you give Him your heart and life. Then you twain shall be no more twain, but one—and one for ever.

Let us pray:

O Lord, we thank Thee that ever Thou didst send Thy Son into the world, for herein is love—ah, herein is love—not

that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. O Thou conquering Lover, subdue every emotion of the soul to Thy will, and lead us all captive, conquered by sovereign grace, made Thine for ever, for Thy glory's sake, Amen.

WILL REVIVAL VISIT BRITAIN?

By W. S. Whitcombe

Since our return from across the seas we have been asked many times over, "Are there any signs of coming revival in Great Britain?" "What is your impression of religious conditions in England, Scotland and Ireland?" It would be presumptuous for anyone, even for a native of those islands to attempt a prophecy of the workings of the Spirit of God, and a visitor can at most give his own observations and impressions and report the feelings of those who are closest to the religious life of the country. We do this not merely for the sake of giving an account of the churches in Britain but chiefly with the intention of helping our Canadian and American readers to ask and answer, as best they can, the same questions concerning their own nations.

We met only one pastor who expressed a conviction that revival was on the way, and he like ourselves was a visitor, whose ministry had been spent in the United States. He called himself a "son of the Welsh Revival", and with characteristic Welsh enthusiasm he told us how he had preached this summer to a great throng of people in his native town, and he took the interest as a token of revival blessing that was about to fall. We pray that he might be right in his feeling, though we noted that in the course of the same conversation he lamented the distressing decline of spiritual interest in his beloved homeland, and he admitted that he wondered whether he ought to return there as a missionary.

The National Church in England

Everywhere we were told that there had been a great forsaking of the "National Church", as our "dissenting" friends called the Church of England. (We employ quotation marks for both terms, because happily there is not in Canada any Church by law established, and hence there can be no "dissenters" or "nonconformists".) It is becoming increasingly apparent that the Anglican Church is no longer the Church of the great masses of the English people. The clergy lament the falling away of their people and at least some of the bishops are keenly aware of the necessity of stirring up both priests and people to a more aggressive church policy. Unhappily this does not always indicate a desire to return to the Word of God and to a genuine Christian experience of redeeming grace. Nevertheless, we met a number of genuine evangelicals among our Anglican brethren and we thank God for them and their testimony. We think of one venerable old clergyman, living in retirement, who made it a practise to fill his pockets with Gospels and walk around in a Jewish district of London seeking to engage in conversation those who do not know the glad news that their Messiah has already come to bring salvation to Israel.

Spiritual Illiteracy in Scotland

In Scotland we had the joy of fellowship with several workers in the Army Scripture Readers' Association, an organization that seeks to reach men in armed forces. These men were horrified at the spiritual illiteracy of the young men whom they met in the barrack rooms. Though

these young soldier lads represent a fair cross-section of British homes of all strata of society and of culture; these Christian workers have been compelled by hard experience to talk to the great majority of them as one would talk to children of eight and nine years of age in Sunday school. Few of them knew anything whatsoever of God, of Christ, of sin or of the way of salvation. Devoted workers such as these had no hesitation in affirming that their native land, once under the spell of the Gospel, perhaps more fully than any other, had now become pagan. There is another and better side to their story, and it makes more pleasant telling: despite the hardness of the soil in which they sowed the good seed, it has not all fallen by the wayside. They told us with grateful joy of young men and women gloriously saved and bearing a steadfast testimony by life and by word to their fellows in the armed services.

An Illustration of the Famine of the Word

One of the most pathetic illustrations of the prevailing spiritual aridity that came to our notice was told us on board ship by a lady who is a resident of our own city of Toronto. This good sister was converted in Canada more than twenty years ago. Through the years she tried to write faithfully to her brothers and sisters in the Old Country, telling them of the Saviour she had met. Though they had all been brought up in a church-going/Bible-reading home, her letters appeared to awaken no response. She then felt that the Lord was laying a burden on her heart to go herself and bear personal testimony to her loved ones across the sea. By dint of hard saving over a number of years, this earnest Christian soul managed to hoard up enough to pay her passage to England and back. We met her on the return journey, almost heartbroken because to her own kindred she had seemed as one that mocked. Some told her the theory of evolution had outmoded the Bible; others questioned the authority of Scripture, while some had turned to strange, superstitious cults. Still others refused to hear when she spoke of her Saviour and asked her to desist. This earnest Christian soul who had been called, as she believed, on a missionary trip to her native land, returned to her home in Canada profoundly disappointed. She told us that at the service on board ship ours was the first voice for the gospel she had heard since leaving Toronto. It may have been that special circumstances had thrust her into surroundings that were not truly typical of English church life in general, but she at least was firmly convinced that her beloved native country was ripe for a visitation of God, either in judgment or in reviving blessing.

Northern Ireland

For our part, we found earnest Christian people wherever we went, though they were the first ones to bemoan the deadness and unbelief of the great denominations, and the indifference to spiritual things of their fellow-countrymen. In Northern Ireland evangelicals appeared to be especially strong. We found them in the churches of all denominations. The Irish Evangelical Church, under the leadership of Rev. W. J. Grier, withdrew from the Presbyterian Church nearly a quarter of a century ago as a protest against the introduction of Modernism into that body. We preached at several of the churches in this fellowship and were delighted to hear their pastors preach the necessity of the new birth and to speak of prayer for revival. It seemed as though we

were among old-fashioned Methodists instead of staid Presbyterians. God has blessed their bold witness to His truth and though relatively small in number they are a factor to be reckoned with in the religious life of Northern Ireland. We had fellowship with several Baptist pastors and they, as well as others, assured us that Baptists in Ulster are actually Baptists, that is to say they believe and teach the great doctrines of grace without any admixture of the false and pernicious doctrines that have elsewhere blighted Baptist testimony and emptied their churches.

Our host while in Belfast was an able young man by the name of Norman Porter, who is the founder and organizing genius of the National Union of Protestants of Ireland. We wondered before we met him if he and his movement would deal merely in negations and denunciations. To our great delight we discovered in this fine leader a man whose chief end and aim in life is to proclaim the great truths of the Gospel to Protestant and Roman Catholic alike and whose primary interest in the Roman question is that he might bring its victims to the light of the Gospel and arouse uninformed Protestants to the perils that beset them in order to bring them also to the Saviour of all who trust Him. We had a number of good meetings with Mr. Porter and the National Union of Protestants and we cherish him as a brother in the Lord, raised up for a special ministry in Ireland. Since returning home we received a cablegram from Mr. Porter informing us that since we left him a few short weeks ago, he has been elected as a member of the Parliament of Northern Ireland. We could not honestly congratulate every man who obtains such a high distinction in the political world, but we are sure that Mr. Porter will use his seat in the Parliament at beautiful Stormont as an instrument for the glory of God and for the advancement of the loyal British community of Ulster.

Soldier - A Missionary

In the Lake Country of England there is a beautiful Christian holiday house known as Capernwray Hall. Wearied after much preaching and from still more strenuous travelling, we resorted thither for a few days' rest. We did not find just what we expected. Our holiday place turned out to be an evangelistic effort directed chiefly, though not exclusively, to young Germans. We were invited to preach to them and had a happy time of fellowship with them, and with the director Major Ian Thomas, D.S.O. The way in which the work began reads like an imaginary tale, but we saw and heard something of the workings of God among His people. At the close of the war, Major Thomas was with the British Army of occupation in Germany. In a certain village where his troops were stationed he had to requisition some billets for his men. The burgomaster of the place was a Roman Catholic and when the British requisition was presented to him he assigned the occupying troops to Protestant families, thus permitting the Roman Catholics to escape the unwelcome obligation. Major Thomas thus found himself in a Protestant German family and he was instrumental in leading some of the young people of the house to a personal knowledge of Christ. From this beginning he was led to seek out other German young people and he has been used to bring a number of them to the Saviour. He teaches them to reach out in turn to others and there are now a number of groups in various parts of Germany who constitute a missionary fellowship. These young people come to Capernwray Hall in England and bring

with them other young Germans in order to lead them under the sound of the Gospel. A number of them are university men and through the German Student Mission, an organization similar to the Varsity Christian Fellowship, they maintain an effective testimony to the truth and the power of the Gospel in several great German Universities. The emphasis in this movement is on personal witness of Christ, and it was a blessing to our souls to see these earnest young people, both Germans and British, at work.

A Fire Watcher in London

During the height of the "blitz" on London, our good friend, Dr. John Wilmot was a fire watcher in London. When others went to the shelters to find what protection they could against the terror that flew by night, this quiet, humble pastor donned his helmet and went out into the open where flaming fiery destruction was raining down from the clouds. One of his deacons told us that when the church building was hit by an incendiary bomb, Dr. Wilmot was there so soon after it fell that he put it out with his own hands. This was part of the ordinary round of the common duty of this humble servant of God, and he makes no mention of it. He is still on fire duty in Highgate Road chapel, but in these days his task is even more thankless and far more difficult than in war days. The bombs that he deals with now are the flaming darts of unbelief invented by the father of lies. Yet a solid, Biblical ministry of thirty years has built up a faithful group of people who keep the flag flying in the great metropolis of London. There are others of like faith and like devotion in England, and we rejoice to know that in the time of God's visitation their work will bear its full fruition.

How Will Revival Come?

We should like to tell of others of like precious faith whom we met throughout the British Isles, but they are all recorded in the Lord's book of remembrance, together with many, many more than we came to know. We do not mean to suggest that evangelicals are a mighty army in the Old Country, who by force of mere numbers and efficiency of organization will bring Britain back to the Scriptures. We were reminded again and again this summer of the word which says, "Not by might nor by power, but by Spirit, saith the Lord." There is a good deal of talk in London about a highly organized evangelistic campaign which is scheduled for next year, provided that a suitable site can be obtained for a gigantic portable building. We cannot attach much importance to machinery and organizations as means of bringing an outpouring of God's blessing. The prophet foretold the coming of rain when he saw a cloud the size of a man's hand. Rainmakers and mechanical gadgets for compelling the clouds to drop down their burdens were unknown in his day, and even in our advanced era they have never accomplished much. Our God has never promised to work through cleverly devised instruments and high pressure salesmanship, but He has guaranteed to honour any man, evangelist or other, who is separated unto Him and who honours His Word by preaching the whole counsel of God. We give thanks to the Lord of the Harvest that there are many such faithful workers in His harvest field across the sea and we pray that it may please Him to fulfil to them His promises, not merely in accordance with their asking but exceeding abundantly above all they ask or think.

God's Visitation: Judgment or Blessing?

We write thus because we are profoundly convinced that the fountainhead of the greatness of Britain, its true greatness, is to be found in that incomparable treasure that God has given to men, the Word of God. British history seems to us to prove that in peculiar measure God has favoured the people of these little islands by committing to them the Bible. Its teachings have been indelibly ingrained in our language and thinking from the distant days, when in answer to a martyr's prayer, the King of England ordered that a copy of the Bible should be chained in every parish church in the land. Its philosophy played a large part in shaping our democratic ideals in the days of the Puritan Revolution. Even a sceptical historian was constrained to confess that the evangelical Revival in the days of Whitefield and Wesley averted from England the horrors of the French Revolution. This sacred book has shaped English character and English thinking for four hundred years. Alas, only too often we have sinned against light, and when we have, the Book has been there to bear witness against us. It is a glory of British history, not that we can boast in arrogant pride of our national perfections, but that the strongest voices in criticism of our faults and failures have been raised at home.

The heroic endurance of the British people in the course of the last war, when their house and buildings were tumbled down in ruins upon their heads, give proof that their moral fibre has not disintegrated. That is part of their glorious inheritance from past generations. But God forsakes those who forsake Him. That is the history of the great proud empires of the past, and we cannot hope that our Commonwealth shall be exempt from His judgments if we dishonour Him and His holy Word. The thought of it makes us tremble. In our day and generation we have been witnesses to the stroke of God's judgment that He has laid upon nations that forgot Him. They were crumbled in the dust in the day of His visitation. And what of our beloved people and race? Shall they too go the way of Nineveh and Tyre, of Sodom and Gomorrah? We ask these heart-searching questions of Canadians and Americans also. We in these happy and prosperous lands that were spared the wanton destruction that the invader poured upon Britain have even greater reasons than our fellows across the sea to turn to God in confession of our sins, crying to God for the outpouring of His purifying and reviving blessing.

—W.S.W.

OUR RANSOM

To save us from sin, and from that hell where they seek for death but cannot find it, and only find after unnumbered ages that their torments are beginning, Jesus interposed, saying, "I will save them - suspend the sentence - I come to do thy will, O, my God, deliver from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom - have patience with them and I will pay thee all!" He paid it. Making atonement for sin "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." The debt was paid on Calvary to the uttermost farthing; and now God only awakens our convictions and alarms our consciences, reckoning with us, that He may bring sinners to acknowledge their guilt, and so prepare them to receive His mercy.

—DR. THOMAS GUTHRIE OF EDINBURGH

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 17 Fourth Quarter Lesson 7 November 15, 1953

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

GOD'S DEMAND FOR SEPARATION

Lesson Text: 1 Samuel 7:1-17.

Golden Text: "Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines."—1 Samuel 7:3.

I. Separation and Blessing at Mizpeh: verses 1-8

The ark of God had been captured by the Philistines and taken to their land (1 Sam. 4), but it had proved a curse rather than a blessing, since they were not worshippers of Jehovah (1 Sam. 5). After seven months the ark was brought back again to Israel, and it rested in Beth-shemesh on the border of Philistia (1 Sam. 6) until it was restored to Kirjath-jearim in Judah, not far from Jerusalem (1 Sam. 6:19-21). Abinadab, whose name means "father of nobleness", was a Levite, and the ark remained in his house for twenty years before it was finally removed to its place of honour in Jerusalem by King David (1 Sam. 7:1, 2; 1 Chron. 13:7; 15:2, 15).

Eleazar, the son of Abinadab, unlike Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli, was worthy to be the guardian of the ark. He was qualified by birth according to the law of Moses (Numb. 3:5-13), and he was set apart by appropriate rites for his holy service. Even so, our Lord Jesus Christ was consecrated as a Priest unto God (Heb. 5:1-10), and every one who ministers in His name should be called of God (Jer. 1:5; Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:1, 15).

The children of Israel lamented after the Lord. The longing for the Father's fellowship is one of the first signs of repentance on the part of the backslider (Zech. 12:10, 11; Luke 15:17-19; Gal. 4:15).

Samuel showed Israel the way home to the Father, and the same steps must be followed by all who have wandered from Him. The Christian worker has the privilege of helping to restore the penitent one to full fellowship and favour with the Lord (Gal. 6:1). Samuel urged the people to return to the Lord (Deut. 30:2-10; Isa. 55:7), to confess and renounce the sin which had separated them from Him (Judg. 10:10, 16; 1 Kings 8:46-49; Jer. 3:12, 22), and then to prepare their hearts to worship God acceptably (Deut. 6:13; 10:20; Job 11:13-15; Heb. 12:28). All idols must be put away, and the Lord must have His rightful place in the heart and life. All who would return to the Lord must confess and forsake all known sin, and abide in fellowship with the Lord (1 John 1:9; 2:1, 6). There can be no power without holiness.

Samuel engaged in intercessory prayer at Mizpeh on behalf of the people (1 Sam. 12:23, 24; 2 Thess. 3:2). The true leader will be much in prayer for those over whom he has spiritual oversight (Luke 22:32; Eph. 1:15, 16; 3:15-19; Phil. 1:9-11). All revival is born in the atmosphere of prayer.

As the people united to worship the Lord, they fasted, and they poured out water before Him (2 Sam. 14:14; 23:15-17), as a token that they recognized Him as the One Who supplied their needs. Christ is the Bread of life (John 4:13, 14; 6:35; 7:37-39).

The enemy of our souls is ever at hand to take advantage of our unguarded moments, so let us continue to watch, as well as to pray (Matt. 26:41). The Israelites, gathered in prayer, seemed an easy target for the bows and arrows of the Philistines. We are not exempt from the attacks of the Adversary, even when engaged in the holy exercise of prayer.

The children of Israel looked to God in all humility to save them from their enemies. He only is our Helper and our Saviour (Psa. 146:3-5; Isa. 2:22; Jer. 17:5-7).

II. Sacrifice and Victory at Ebenezer: verses 9-12

At Mizpeh Samuel acted as prophet, representing God before the people and proclaiming to them His will. At Ebenezer he performed the duties of priest, representing the people before God and pleading their needs before Him. God heard Samuel's prayer for Israel, because the people

were now in fellowship with Him (1 John 5:14, 15) and because their leader came to Him on the basis of sacrifice. Prayer which is offered to God on the ground of the finished work of Christ will be accepted for His sake (Heb. 10:19-22).

The Lord is sovereign in His purposes and in His ways. When He chooses He may intervene directly in the affairs of men, or He may use the powers of nature as His instruments (Exod. 14:21; 15:10; 2 Kings 3:21-23; Psa. 107:25; 147:17, 18). On this occasion He marshalled the thunder to discomfit the Philistines (1 Sam. 2:10; Psa. 18:12-16).

Samuel did not forget to give thanks to God for the victory which He had given. Ebenezer, meaning "Stone of help," was a memorial which would remind the people of the Lord's unceasing faithfulness (Josh. 4:1-9). The pathway of the Christian should be marked by many such stones, for He guides us every step of the way (2 Sam. 22:31-33; 1 Kings 8:56; Psa. 37:23).

III. Service and Peace at Ramah: verses 13-17

The Philistines were utterly routed. Not only were they defeated on this occasion, but they were also kept under submission all the days of Samuel, because the Lord's arm had been lifted in defence of His cleansed people. God can make us more than conquerors over our spiritual adversaries (Rom. 8:37).

The cities which Israel had lost in her years of declension were restored. God bestows forgiveness upon His wandering children when they return to Him in repentance, and He also restores them to a position of favour and usefulness (Psa. 51:12, 13; Joel 2:25-27; Luke 15:22-24).

Samuel travelled periodically from his headquarters at Ramah to Bethel, Gilgal and Mizpeh, judging the people. He was the last of the judges, and his ministry forms the connecting link between the judges and the kings. In Jewish history this period marks the transition from the Theocracy, the direct rule of God, to the Monarchy, the rule of a king (1 Sam. 8:7-9).

Samuel was successful as a public administrator because of his exemplary life as a private worshipper of God. He reared an altar in his own home before he presumed to preside over the altar of Israel. The pastor, teacher and Christian worker should not underrate the importance of maintaining their own personal fellowship with the Lord (1 Tim. 4:13-16; 2 Tim. 1:6).

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Nov. 9—The Ark Leaves Philistia 1 Sam. 6:1-11.
 Nov. 10—The Ark Brought to Israel 1 Sam. 6:12-19.
 Nov. 11—Separation Demanded at Mizpeh Judg. 10:1-17.
 Nov. 12—Returning unto God in Bethel Gen. 35:1-15.
 Nov. 13—Reproach of Egypt Removed at Gilgal Josh. 5:1-10.
 Nov. 14—Victory over Our Enemies Psa. 18:1-19.
 Nov. 15—Victory Through the Lord Psa. 18:20-40.

SUGGESTED HYMNS

Come Thou Fount of every blessing. God is here, and that to bless us. Here from the world we turn. Jesus, I my cross have taken. Revive Thy work, O Lord! Jesus, and shall it ever be?

BOOKS AND BOOKLETS

By DR. T. T. SHIELDS

"Other Little Ships"	\$2.00
"The Plot That Failed"	2.00
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