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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

The Function of True Religion

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, June 7th, 1931.

(Stenographically Reported)

"And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."—Luke 15:2.

Prayer Before the Sermon

O Lord our God, once again we confess the darkness of our understandings and the hardness of our hearts, and our utter inability, of ourselves, unaided by divine grace, to do anything with which Thou canst be well pleased. Yet we rejoice in Him Who is our Saviour, Who lived our life for us, and died our death for us, Who was raised again by the power of God, and ascended into heaven, where now, as our Representative, He intercedes in our behalf. We thank Thee, O Lord, that for His sake we are assured Thou wilt have respect unto our cry, and that the prayer of many hearts for divine blessing this evening shall be answered in the experience of earnest suppliants, not on the ground of their merit, but in fulfilment of the promises of a covenant-keeping God.

Look upon us, we beseech Thee, in our need, in our urgent need. We are sinners every one by nature. We have fallen short of Thy glory, even of the perfection that is in Jesus Christ. Only as His righteousness is imputed to us, and Thou dost look upon us in the face of Thine Anointed, can we be acceptable in Thy sight. May Thy believing children be led by Thy Spirit to rejoice with a joy unspeakable and full of glory in Thine abounding grace.

It may be there are some who hear us this evening whose hearts cry out to God for help, whom we do not see: people in hospitals, in sanatoria, and in the sick-room at home. Oh, look with compassion upon them. Where it can be Thy will to restore them to health and strength, graciously cause the tides of health to flow again as Thou shalt touch them with Thy healing touch. Where it is Thy pleasure that they should leave this world for another, we pray that they may have a clear view of the future, that through the blood of the Lord Jesus may be saved, and may be able to read their title clear to mansions in the skies.

There are some who hear us who have not darkened the door of a place of worship for many a year. Some are far off from God, who have no religious interest at all. Yet, Lord, Thou canst smite the conscience and break the heart, and find entrance for Thy truth into that citadel of darkness. We pray Thee to claim the purchase of Thy blood this evening. May the slain of the Lord be many! May multitudes of men and women, some within this building, and perhaps hundreds in remote places, prove as they shall receive Thy

truth in the love of it, that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

Graciously bless, we pray Thee, every effort to do good: all Thy ministering servants at home and abroad, street preachers, hospital visitors, tract distributors, those who speak to but a few in lonely places—may the hand of the Lord be upon His servants to-night! May there be much rejoicing in heaven over good accomplished upon earth! Bless, we beseech Thee, all who are endeavouring to stay the tides of wickedness, and to make it easier for people to do right and more difficult to do wrong. Nerve the arm of those who go forth to battle. Inspire with courage those who find it necessary to do the old thing over again. We pray that Thy righteous will may be done.

Bless us in our meditation upon Thy word. We acknowledge that this is Thy Book, a Book of divine inspiration, a Book of mystery to all save those whom the Holy Ghost shall initiate into the sacred secrets of God. Lead us into an understanding of the heart of the gospel. Enable us every one to open our hearts to the Christ of the gospel. Send us away with melody in our hearts, and songs of praise and thanksgiving upon our lips, as Thou shalt bring us into Thine presence with Thyself and with those who rejoice in Thy presence over sinners' repenting. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

THE words of the text were uttered as a complaint against Jesus Christ. They are an expression of the antagonism of a formal and conventional religion toward a religion that is serviceable to men and well-pleasing and glorifying to God. It is true that our Lord opened His heart to sinners. It is true that He did eat with them, that He spoke to them in a language they were able to understand.

The Scribes and Pharisees were unable to understand a religion which found its incarnation and supreme exemplification in our Lord Jesus Christ.

They conceived of religion as a means of classifying

men, as the setting up of a standard for the appraisal of human worth. They had no thought whatever of religion as a thing of power, as having power to make men other than these religious standards of theirs declared them to be.

I use the term "religion" in the broadest sense. I am aware that there is much religion that has no kinship with Christianity—and, indeed, that there is much that is called Christianity that has no kinship with religion. But these men were religious, they were religious officials; they were men who were thoroughly instructed in the great principles of the religion they professed—but they had no idea whatever that religion could impart a new nature to a man, that it could inspire him with new desires, with new hopes, with new expectations. Their religion was merely a system of weights and measures, a way of measuring and weighing human character, and appreciating it, or, otherwise, discarding it. In other words, they had no idea whatever of the function of true religion.

That is my subject this evening, The Function of True Religion. But the Scribes and Pharisees were unable to understand its processes. The text which I have announced is the answer of Incarnate Truth to that stupendous error represented by the Scribes and Pharisees. Our Lord, in that connection, uttered the three parables which I read to you this evening. These parables had much in common, and yet each differed from the others at some points. While complete in itself, and full of teaching, there is a sense in which each of these parables is complementary to the others, and they ought to be viewed together and related one to the other.

They all had this in common: something was lost; something was found; and the finding provided an occasion of great rejoicing.

Look this evening at our Lord's interpretation of what religion, true religion, as represented by Himself, is divinely designed to accomplish.

I.

First of all, IT MINISTERS SOMETHING TO THE JOY OF HEAVEN. If religion be true, it does something for God; and that is a principle that is almost entirely ignored in some quarters. Even Christianity is reduced in the thought of some to a kind of humanism which has to do with human obligations and human relationships, and which ignores the relationship of the soul to God. Our Lord Jesus Christ said that this religion effected a certain form of salvation, and that when that salvation was imparted it brought gladness to Heaven. Whatever man thought about it, there was rejoicing in the Skies.

We read the parable of the one going out after the lost sheep. We think much of the sheep, but we forget that that journey over the mountains brought not only salvation to the sheep, but ecstatic joy to the heart of the shepherd. Let me remind you, dear friends, that Jesus Christ came into this world not only to save sinners—He did come for that—but the salvation of lost men was really, in a certain sense, a means to an end. He came, if I may reverently say so, to minister to the divine completeness, to bring gladness to the heart of God Himself.

The woman swept the house for the piece of silver. It was an inanimate thing. It had no consciousness of being lost, nor any gladness in being found. But the woman had! The woman swept the house and searched diligently until she found it, and when she found it she

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

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was filled to overflowing with gladness, so that it necessitated her bringing together her neighbours that they might share her rejoicing.

Salvation is a far bigger thing than most of us have dreamed. The height and depth and length and breadth of it no mortal has ever estimated. The infinite reach of it the most vivid and daring human imagination has never conceived. God has been pleased so to exercise His will in the hearts of men that heaven itself shall be thrilled with triumph, and the multitudes of the heavenly host which sang over the fields of Bethlehem, shall sing in the halls of glory for ever and ever.

The son came home; and we are accustomed to speak much of the transformation effected, and of the manifest change which took place in his circumstances and in his whole outlook on life—and you cannot exaggerate that. You need not fear the excessive use of superlatives in trying to describe the joy of one who is restored to divine fellowship. But let it be remembered that in the parable a father is described who lived for one thing only, and who at last realized the thing for which he lived. His heart, too, was filled with joy, as the wandering, wayward, and wicked son came home again.

I remind you of that passage in the Acts of the Apostles which describes the church at Antioch at the time the Holy Ghost said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." When did that happen? When did they hear the voice of the Holy Ghost? While they were busy in the bowling alley? While they were exercised in the kitchen? While they were training their young people for some dramatic performance? Were they engaged in such secular pursuits as these when they heard the whisper of the Holy Ghost? No! The record says, "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost" spoke to them.

What is a church for? What are we here for? To minister to men only? To clothe the naked? To feed the hungry? To educate the ignorant? To evangelize the unconverted? Is that all? That is a large programme,

I grant you. But if we are redeemed men and women, we are here to "minister to the Lord". We have been saved by His grace that from us He might derive a revenue of glory, a perpetual stream of satisfaction. We are to minister to the heart of God.

Did you really worship God as you sang those hymns a few moments ago? Did you sing the words with understanding? Were you able to say with the Psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me"—do you know what that means? All that is within me of judgment, of intellect, of memory, of imagination, of reason, of affection, of will; all that is within me, regenerated, energized, quickened, and inspired by the Holy Ghost—"all that is within me, bless his holy name." We can enter heaven on earth. We can join with the angels, if so we are attuned to the divine will and nature, and recognize in ourselves what Jesus Christ came to do for us.

I speak this word not that I may dissuade any of you from any service in which you are engaged for the betterment of your fellows, not that I would underestimate the value of what is called Social Service in any of its aspects. We ought to do not less of these things, but more. Yet I beseech you to remember that if we are saved men and women we are brought into such relationship to God that the Lord will find in us some measure of satisfaction, grace bestowed, and returning to Him again with praise and adoration for all that He is and all that He has done.

II.

I desire for a moment to endeavour to ANALYZE THIS HEAVENLY JOY which is the fruit of the Redeemer's work; for, of course, He is the Good Shepherd, and He is the woman who swept the house; it is He Who looks toward the far country and awaits the returning prodigal. "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." And he enjoys it. Whether you enjoy your religion or not, the Lord Jesus does.

The satisfaction here described in these three parables is threefold. I say, Jesus enjoys His religion. I spoke to you who were here Thursday evening of the gladness of Israel when the Lord turned the captivity of Zion: "We were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing." We ought to be able to laugh and sing. The Christian religion is a laughing religion, and it is a singing religion.

I know you will remind me that my Lord was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief". Yes; but He "bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows"; and I read of Him, that "for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame." He was inspired, borne onward, in His arduous ministry, which cost Him the last red drop of His blood, by the certainty of that joy which awaited Him when the task was completed.

What is the joy of the Lord? It was first of all *the joy of achievement*. The sheep did nothing. Please do not misunderstand me. Let me guard my speech carefully. We are not to understand that God expects no response on the part of human nature to divine grace. In fact, it is of the very essence of grace that it secures its own response, for that is grace. But this is but one aspect of the truth represented here. The sheep was perfectly passive. It did nothing. The Shepherd did everything, and He accomplished that upon which His heart was set. He went after that which was lost until He found it, and when He had found it He laid it upon His shoulders rejoicing. When He came home He sum-

moned his friends and neighbours, bidding them share His gladness on this ground, "I have found my sheep which was lost. I did it. I have conquered. I am victorious. I bid you come and share with me my glorious triumph."

I weary of hearing men talk about the religion of Christ as though it had fallen upon evil days, as though God were beholden to the caprice of men, as though the gospel could never succeed unless first of all we should manage to close up the movies and a few other things. Close them up by all means. They are the Devil's traps, I have no doubt. But the gospel triumphed in Jerusalem under the most difficult circumstances. I believe that when the Lord Jesus commanded His disciples to begin at Jerusalem He resolved that He would win His first victory in the place where He had been rejected. He said in effect, "For all ages to come I will demonstrate my ability to triumph over all the powers of earth and of hell, and the gospel shall win its first victory in the very city where I was crucified, and where they said, 'Away with Him; He is not fit to live.'"

The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is the mightiest exhibition of divine power the world has ever seen. It is not an experiment. It needs no amendment. It does not need the wisdom of your scholastic gentlemen who are always trying to "restate" that which God has adequately stated once for all ("Hallelujah!") in "the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints". It needs no restatement. The gospel is an instrument to operate in the sphere of human life where God shall show, as we sang to-night, His superior power and guardian grace.

I would give up preaching at once if I had to go and ask the city council to pass legislation to make it possible for me to preach. I would give up preaching at once if I had to secure the endorsement of scholarship or of advanced science. I thank you for nothing, and will preach this gospel in the teeth of hell, and challenge the imps of the pit to do all they can to keep men from Christ. This Good Shepherd will go out after His sheep "until he find it".

What a beautiful world this is! Even when superficially viewed, how glorious it is—the trees and the shrubs, the flowers, the grass, and the birds, the brooks and the sea, the mountains and the myriad stars—how indescribably glorious it all is! It is no wonder an inspired writer said, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." It is no wonder the New Testament says, "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." Or again: "He left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

All that is external, but if you remove the wrapper what treasures are inside! Did you ever see a snowflake under a microscope? Did you ever examine a flower under a microscope? Go to some great gallery where the masterpieces of men are assembled. As you stand at a very respectful distance the pictures look their best, but if you examine them closely they are like big daubs of paint. You are inclined to say, "I could do better myself." But God's work will stand the most minute inspection, no matter what you examine. I wish I could have five or ten years off, and live to be a bit older, so that I could work with the microscope, for I believe if

the better for it. What wonders are stored in this world!

It may be that the ninety and nine are other worlds unfallen, that have never departed from the truth. Who knows but that the lost sheep is a lost planet that has wandered away from God? Or to what glories we shall be admitted when we have got back again into our inheritance? When you have examined all that this world can disclose to us, and when you have pushed your investigation through the infinite spaces and examined world upon world in the regions beyond—all this material universe put together does not reveal the mighty power of God as it was revealed in the Cross at the place called Calvary. That is the supreme glory; that is the supreme achievement. It is in that God finds His profoundest satisfaction: in going out after His sheep until He finds it,—

"God in the gospel of His Son
Hath all His mightiest work outdone."

If you are Christian workers, take hold of your sword afresh, take hold of your plough afresh, "forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord". We are certain to triumph even as He triumphed, to overcome even as He overcame, and to sit down with him in His throne at last.

Then I think another element in this divine joy is *the joy of possession*. Some people are very fond of possessing things. There are some people who never give anything away. How they hug everything to their bosom! I remember once a little boy when I was at a certain camp. He was the echo of his father. If he saw a hammer he said, "That is mine." If he saw a chair he said, "That is mine", or "That is my father's". Whatever he saw was "mine". There is a legitimate joy in possessing things. This woman had a piece of silver, and she lost it; and she resolved that she would find it—and when a woman resolves, well, you know the rest! (Laughter).

This woman swept the house until she found it. She regained possession of her lost treasure.

What has sin done? The little "white lie", "the fib", that slight departure from the line of righteousness, that thing for which we make allowance, but which in God's sight is abominable—what did sin do? It attempted to rob God. It impoverished Heaven. It destroyed His handiwork. May I reverently say it: it made God poor. That is what sin did. It threatened to thwart Him in the accomplishment of His supreme purpose. "God hath made all things for himself." Everyone and everything must glorify God at last. But sin would have robbed Him of His revenue, would have taken something away from God, it would have robbed Him of His authority, of His sceptre, of His throne, of His crown, and of His kingdom. That is what it would have done. And God set out, in the person of His Son, to regain that of which the thieves of the pit had deprived Him.

Every time a soul is saved He regains possession of a piece of His lost property. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." Whenever a soul, touched by the power of God, does really repent and believe, and is made partaker of the grace of eternal life, Heaven declares a dividend; it enriches God; He gets back His own. That is salvation.

I wonder are there some men of business here? I wonder do you look at the preacher as a man who has a little job on Sundays, that he does because somebody has to do it? Of course, you go to the bank! You are a big

man of business are you not! You examine your balance sheets, and all the rest of it; and by and by you will reckon how much profit you have made for the year. I would not change jobs with you for a million a year. What is the mere getting of dollars and cents? I am in bigger business than that. That is only a little office boy's job.

It is God's business to find His lost coin, to repossess Himself of His lost property. And when at last He has it,—well, the coin did not know it; but the Owner knew it. And sometimes you may be doubtful, trembling, like our good old Methodist friends who used to speak about "seeing the end of a praying life"! You say it tremblingly as though it would not be proper to say even that with assurance, as though it were a sign of humility. But whatever your estimate of your salvation, if it is what the Lord has done in you and for you, then the Lord says, "It is mine. I have found my sheep which was lost."

I do not know whether that woman tied her money in the corner of her apron after she found it, but I am certain she never lost it again. Our Lord said, "I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. They are mine. When the day of reckoning comes, and I make up my jewels, they will all be there; not one will be missing." Hallelujah for a conquering Saviour Who will never be defeated.

But there is something better than that. Another element in this divine joy was *the joy of fellowship*. It could not be experienced by a sheep. The sheep knows its shepherd, and I know that figure is frequently employed—and, after all, we behave like sheep. But we are more than sheep. "How much then is a man better than a sheep?" our Lord said. You cannot represent all there is in grace by the finding of a lost coin or a lost sheep. In these two parables you have an exemplification of the power of grace: seeking the sheep, and finding it; seeking the coin, and repossessing it. But in the third parable you have an illustration of the attraction of grace, in the story of that lonely young man in the far country—shall we ever get to the end of it?

Charles Dickens was once asked what, in his judgment, was the sublimest thing in all literature. He said, incomparably the parable of the prodigal son. He said there was nothing like it anywhere so true to universal experience. This young man was at the end of everything, envying the very beasts, coveting their husks, apparently alone, until one day a word escaped his lips that he had not uttered for many, many years—in utter want and destitution, in the land where no one knew anything about grace, for "no man gave unto him", somehow, he knew not how or why, there came to his lips a phrase he had not uttered perhaps in many decades: he said, "My father"; "In my father's house." And he was turned from the swine troughs with a new desire, and a new purpose, and a new direction in life, and he moved toward home.

What had happened in his absence? The house had been silent. There had been no music, no merriment; the harps, if harps there were, had been suspended on the willows or some other drooping tree. The servants had gone about their tasks with no gladness, the smile had left their faces, for the master of the house was plunged in gloom. A shadow had fallen upon everything. Plenty was there, fulness of everything; but no light, no gladness, no merry-making of any sort.

What did sin do? I think it silenced the harps of angels. I think it took the song from the lips of seraphim. I think it cast a shadow on the throne of God itself, and from the heavenly watchtower wistfully and earnestly and longingly did the great fatherheart of God look—yes, look, for we see with our hearts and not with our eyes—until at last he came for whom He longed. And He fell on his neck and kissed him, and fellowship was restored.

I was in a home recently, a beautiful home where there appeared to be everything to minister to the comfort of life. But the shadow had fallen, and I stood with weeping friends as the master of the house, now cold and still, was borne from the door and carried away to be buried out of sight. I said to myself, And he built the house, and he intended to live in it. Every comfort, every joy, awaited him—but death came.

When God said in the beginning, "It is not good that man should be alone"; His own heart spoke. That is why He made you and me. O wonder of wonders! That is why He created a race out of which His Son should have a bride to be His companion forevermore. And when a soul is saved that broken fellowship is restored; men are brought back to God again. Our Lord Jesus said—let me put it familiarly, and almost colloquially. I can almost imagine His saying, "I wish you could get a glimpse into heaven's gates; I wish your ears were keen enough to hear what I can hear as these sinners come to my Father." Long before this radio was discovered by man, there was communication between heaven and earth, and Christ never lost the echo of the heavenly strain. I think, on that day when He said to a certain woman, "Hath no man condemned thee?" She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more"—I am sure He heard the angels sing! I think He said, "Thine accusers are wrapped in the silence of their prejudices; they are out of tune with heaven's rapturous melodies. The function of religion is to retune men to the heart of God. In all this I greatly rejoice to-day."

The religion of Christ is something better than laboriously trying to imitate a pattern. It is something more than saying prayers, however good they may be. It is something more than the intellect laying hold of truth and saying, I am saved. That is all in it, but it means the reception of Jesus Christ into heart and life, even as we are received by Him as sinners.

If there was joy in the Shepherd's heart, there must have been some sort of comfort at least in the heart of the sheep in feeling the warm, strong shoulders of the Shepherd under his weary form. Do you know what it is to be saved—really to know it? Not to be a church member only, not merely to be baptized, not to live a morally respectable life. If you are a Christian you ought to do that. But I mean, to feel that you have been brought into living union with God Himself; as the sheep was secure on the warm, strong shoulder of the shepherd, to be able to say, "The eternal God is my refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

There is a hymn we sing about heaven, but I think we could sing it about our earthly experience as well:

"Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on His gentle breast,
There by His love o'er-shaded,
Sweetly my soul shall rest."

That is what it is to be saved.

And the joy of possession? Would you not like to be owned by somebody? I remember meeting a very distinguished man once. I have met a few! They do not come my way so often now: they are afraid of me. But I have met a few. This man had his wife beside him—an equally distinguished lady, a beautiful character. As he introduced her to me he said, "And this is the little woman who owns me." I shook hands with her and said, "I am honoured and delighted to have the opportunity of meeting the proprietress!" He did not look as though he were sorry to be owned, to be possessed by somebody. And as for his wife, she looked as I imagine a costly jewel might feel—if it had feelings—when safely sheltered by some strong arm. It must be a joy to be worth being owned.

Some years ago I preached in a certain place where there was a man they used to call "Pater". I will give you his name, Henry Sharp, of Winnipeg. I preached there a few Sundays, and we became very much attached to each other. One day I was standing on a street corner, waiting for a street car or other vehicle to pass, when suddenly two strong arms were thrown around me from behind, and a voice said, "I have you. Nobody shall hurt you while I am around." I looked around, and here was this great father in Israel. I can feel his arms about me yet! It is a great thing to be owned by somebody. The one thing for which I am profoundly thankful is that I have become the property and possession of Jesus Christ my Lord ("Hallelujah!" "Praise the Lord"). I know He will look after me.

And as for the fellowship of it, I cannot describe it, can you? When the day is done, and the daily toil is over, and you go to your home and there find refuge from all the storms that have beaten upon you, what a satisfaction it is to enter into fellowship with those who know and love you! But better still to have access by one Spirit unto the Father, to know that He has put on us the best robe, and that He has prepared the banquet, and sometimes to look at His special love token, the ring on our hand! Then we can say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His for ever." Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

Let us pray:

O Lord, forgive us if we have ever complained, and help those of us who are Thy children to revel in the luxuries of divine grace. We are children of a King. Help us to behave as princes, to show forth the praise of Him Who has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light. Is there a weary prodigal somewhere who has heard this message by radio—in a garage, in a restaurant, at home, in a camp, somewhere where prayer is seldom offered? Yet God has spoken. Oh, Thou sovereign Saviour, stretch forth Thine almighty arm and take that man, save that woman; cause them to hear Thy voice. And here in this building: should there be any without Christ, help them to receive this message. This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them. He will receive us to-night. The Lord bless us every one, for His name's sake, Amen.

DR. SHIELDS' ILLNESS

Dr. Shields' condition continues to show improvement, though the road to complete recovery is proving to be slow as was to be expected after two operations within one week. We commend him to the prayers of THE GOSPEL WITNESS family as we give thanks to God for his faithful ministry and for the goodness and mercy that have long been vouchsafed to him. In his name we would express our gratitude to a great host of praying people who have borne him up before the throne of grace.—W.S.W.

WHEN ALL CREATION SINGS

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto,
Sunday Evening, July 12th, 1931

(Stenographically Reported)

"He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

"Remember these, O Jacob and Israel, for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.

"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.

"Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel."—Isaiah 44:20-23.

Prayer Before the Sermon

We draw near to Thee, O Lord, this evening, making mention of the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. We cast ourselves afresh upon Thy mercy, remembering that Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and that Thou canst not look upon iniquity. We hide ourselves beneath the wings of the cherubim overshadowing the mercy-seat. We present our prayers where the blood is sprinkled, and on the ground of the merit of Him Who is the Mediator of the new covenant in which Thou hast sworn to receive all who come unto Thee in His name, we confess, not only our waywardness, but our inherent sinfulness. All have sinned and come short of Thy glory. We know not what holiness is. We cannot, of ourselves, determine that which is righteous, because sin hath blinded our minds, and we are without a knowledge of conditions which obtain in Thy holy dwelling-place.

Therefore we pray that the Holy Spirit may minister to us this evening a knowledge of those things which our human reason cannot discover, and which we are prevented from understanding by our inherent depravity. We have been so far and so long away from home, all of us, in the far country, that we have forgotten the language which Thou didst create us to speak in the beginning. We have forgotten the divine idiom.

We know not what grace is until Thou dost disclose Thyself to us. We pray, O Lord, for admission to a realm of truth from which we are, by nature, excluded, and which the carnal mind cannot, of itself, apprehend. May the Holy Spirit Himself reveal to us even the deep things of God!

We beseech Thee, Lord, to deal with all who are in this congregation this evening. Speak to heart and conscience, and bring us everyone into the closest possible relationship to Thyself. Restore the backslider to fellowship with God. Bring in those who are dead in trespasses and in sin. May the life-call, the life-speaking word of the Lord Jesus be heard by many such, and may Thine own believing people be led to rejoice with a joy unspeakable and full of glory as together we contemplate the marvellous works of Thy redeeming grace.

Bless, we pray Thee, those who are invisible to us, those in remote places who share this hour of worship with us. Be especially gracious, we beseech Thee, to those who are afflicted bodily,—in hospitals and sanitariums, or perhaps at home. We pray that some word of comfort may come to such this evening. Where it can be Thy will, grant to them physical healing and complete recovery to health and strength. Where it is Thy will that they should, by and by, and perhaps soon, change worlds and enter into that larger life to which belongs this beautiful city of which we have been singing, we pray that everything may be in readiness for their departure, that they may know that to leave this life is to be with Christ which is far better! Oh, let salvation come to many who are stretched on beds of pain to-night. May the Divine Physician heal the soul, and quicken into newness of life!

We pray for the careless hearer this evening, for some who hear as it would appear to them, by accident, having but little interest in religious matters, ordinarily turning their backs upon every mention of God. Yet Thou canst find them. We pray Thee so to do. Arrest those who are in the

way of destruction, calling it the way of pleasure and prosperity, and turn their hearts toward Thyself. If there are any who are asking, Oh, that I knew where I might find Him, any who desire salvation, and long have sought it, may the way of life be made so simple and so plain this evening that everyone who hears, desiring salvation, may receive it.

Bless us now as we open Thy word. Lord, we confess our utter inability to understand, much less to interpret, the thoughts of God. May the Spirit of God, by Whose inspiration this Holy Book was written, direct our thought, reveal to us the hidden mysteries, and make known to us the wisdom of God in the cross of Christ! Bless us every one, and glorify Thyself, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

THROUGHOUT this chapter God asserts His own incomparableness. "Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God. I know not any." And a picture is drawn of the idolater; the folly of putting anything in the place of God is exhibited; and it is implied that all who thus turn aside lay up for themselves a store of disappointment. All sin is a kind of idolatry: "Covetousness is idolatry", the New Testament says; and all sin leads to disappointment, bitter and deep.

In contrast to that path of deepening shadows and increasing bitterness, the chapter presents the growing brightness of the gracious life, leading to the realms of gladness and of glory, where—

"The whole creation joins in one
To bless the sacred name
Of Him who sits upon the throne,
And to adore the Lamb."

This evening, therefore, I shall speak to you of the *deceitfulness of sin*; the *enlightenment of grace*; and the *joy of salvation*.

I.

Let us weigh well this principle THAT SIN IS ESSENTIALLY DECEITFUL.

In the end of the day it is true of every sinner, "He feedeth on ashes." He is represented as choosing from among the trees of the forest, material upon which to show his skill. Highly skilled in the use of tools he carves for himself a figure according to the beauty of a man. With the same material he kindles a fire, and makes bread. With part he prepares his food, and with part he warms himself, and saith, "Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire." But with "the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god."

The folly of it all is summed up in this, "He feedeth upon ashes." Even his god is of the same material, and is reduced to ashes at last. The great truth involved is, that the spirits of immortals are seeking to nourish their immortality on things which are reducible to ashes.

What are all sensual enjoyments, the gratification of any fleshly appetite, but feeding on ashes? And what are all sensual delights, the pleasure of seeing, the enjoyment of hearing, the luxury of rest and ease, the finding of satisfaction anywhere—and I am not speaking of illegitimate things, but of the finding of satisfaction anywhere and anyhow on the purely natural or carnal plane? Upon what do we feed? To what do we look for our pleasure and satisfaction? All that occupies our thought, in the last analysis, may be reduced to ashes. All the pleasant things of life are but that.

Nor is it otherwise in the intellectual realm. This idolater puts intellect into his work. There is a rude and elemental art in his production—even the beauty of

a man. But the utmost that he can do is to give new forms to that which is elementally only ashes.

We saw it on a large scale in the late Great War, when magnificent cathedrals and works of art of priceless value were everywhere turned into heaps of ashes. There was a day, not so very long since, when Germany looked with contempt upon the rest of the world, when she prided herself upon her superiority, upon her intellectual quality. But, after all, what did her scholarship—or all human scholarship—at last accomplish? What was the result of all human philosophies and sciences and the last product of the human mind but simply to pile heaps of ashes?

Universal human experience is summed up in these four words, "He feedeth on ashes". In those things to which his life is given, how pleasant, and attractive, and promising, soever they be, there is no spiritual, vital, principle; there is no spiritual nutriment; there is no crumb of the bread of heaven mixed. These temporalities may be attractively wrapped, "pleasant to the eyes, and to be desired to make one wise," but they are only sweetened ashes; and the soul that is thus fed must perish in the using.

The cause of this is a deceived and deceitful heart. As in certain forms of delirium the diseased imagination inverts the natural order, so that the patient's best friends are regarded as enemies, and everything is falsely coloured, and its shape distorted, so it is of the very nature of sin to pervert the judgment, and becloud the understanding, to the utter confusion of all moral values.

A kind of moral delirium is an invariable accompaniment of the disease of sin; and, like some patients in insane asylums who would eat anything if allowed, the sinner in his madness "feedeth on ashes".

There is no difficulty in recognizing this moral blindness in certain cases which are the more manifest because of their physical accompaniments. The drunkard who spends his all on his cups is the only one who does not see that he is heading straight for the precipice. The same is true of any other form of sin which is committed against the body. The doctor knows it, his friends know it, everybody but the poor deluded victim of vice knows that he is preparing for himself, not even a dinner of herbs, but a meal of ashes.

But the forms of sin which are less gross are just as deadly. The appalling fact is that men do not know it. The awful truth is that many of you do not believe what I say. You insist that you are dressed in the height of fashion, on the way to a royal banquet; whereas the truth is you are clothed in filthy rags, feeding on an ash-heap: "A deceived heart hath turned him aside."

This leads me to explain the logical sequence of it all, *that no man can save himself.* He cannot find his way home. He is like a drunken man bereft of his senses, so far as knowledge of spiritual things is concerned: "He cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

The right hand here represents the utmost of human desire, of concentrated resolution, the strength of the whole life, and it is—what? Only a lie! He says he is righteous, and God says he is a sinner; he says he is revelling in luxury, and God says he feedeth on ashes; he says he is on the way to heaven, and God says he is going to hell; but he does not know there is a lie in his right hand! How therefore can he deliver his soul when he does not know he needs deliverance?

That is the picture God draws of the sinner: all his powers are engaged in the accumulation of ashes. Like the wild asses who "snuffed up the wind", he is feeding his soul upon nothing. With the lie in his right hand, he is committing soul-suicide.

II.

What a mercy, therefore, is involved in THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF GRACE!

The beginnings of grace in the soul are recognized in an enlightened understanding. Grace does not overbear, or magnify any faculty of the mind. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature"? Yes; but he is a new creation. And every faculty is a sharer in that new creation, and by the natural exercise of its function is called into co-operation with the Divine Spirit in the transformation of character and life. As the new-born child holds commerce with the vital air, and exercises its breathing function with a cry, so the newborn soul responds to its new-atmosphere, the vital Spirit, and all the faculties of the soul fulfil weakly, but harmoniously, their proper functions in obedience to the new life.

Hence such a word as this: "Remember these, O Jacob." O sinner—you who hear me in this building, and the larger circle who hear me over the air—no word of mine can reach you to undeceive you, to awaken you from sin's illusionment. Your sleeping, sin-benumbed, faculties will never answer call of mine. But, O Spirit of God, come and help us! "Come from the four winds, O Breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live"; "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord"; "Awake, thou that sleepest and rise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light"—"Remember these, O Jacob."

O man, at God's call, think. Ponder the path of thy feet; consider whither thou art going. It is not in vain, if God the Spirit will be pleased to make me His mouth-piece—I say, it is not in vain I call. Grace quickens the conscience, enlightens the understanding, informs and clarifies the judgment, purifies the affections, and enfranchises the will. And if thou dost discern these evidences of divine renewal within,—a growing distaste for all that is of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—it is an infallible sign of a spiritual awakening. The Lord thy God calls thee away from thy feeding on ashes: "Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me." You are required to exercise your spiritual senses to discern good and evil; to see the folly and wickedness of sin; to turn from idols, to worship the true God.

And now I have a comfortable word for the soul which is keenly sensitive on account of sin. You see the evil of it all, but how to escape you know not. In the name of the Lord I will tell you. May He enable you to receive the truth!

Last Sunday evening I spoke to you upon a kindred text: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." There the figure was the blotting out of a record in a book: here the same word is used, but a different aspect of sin is represented. Sin is not represented as a record in a book, but as a cloud that obscures the face of the sun.

It is important, too, to notice how sin is here classified. The word, "transgression", represents sin in its positive aspect. It means trespass, rebellion, treachery, stepping across the line—literally, transgression; the betrayal of trust, and affection, and privilege. It speaks of antagonism toward all that is holy, both toward the law and the Law-giver. The word, "sin", is negative. It means missing the mark, failure to run the race, to attain to a standard, to fulfil the divine expectation. Here, then, the ten thousand failures, and shortcomings, and delinquencies, of life are gathered into a cloud; and the multitude of transgressions—ten thousand times ten thousand, like vapor particles, have overcast the sky as "a thick cloud".

What a picture of sin! It turns midday into midnight. It obscures the sun by day and the stars by night. It robs the lily of its beauty, the landscape of its splendour. It silences the music of the feathered singers of the forest and the field. And it is thus sin hides the face of God, and obscures the light of heaven, and mars the beauty of the earth. It wraps all the world in darkness and in the shadow of death. Verily, sin—your sin and mine—is as a thick cloud covering the face of the sky—a cloud of our making, like the fog of London, obscuring the light of day, so that a man knoweth not at what he stumbleth.

If that be sin, *who can dispel that darkness?* Who can dissipate the clouds? Who can deal with the thick clouds of your sin? "Canst thou lift thy voice to the clouds?" "It is high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea."

Do you not see that none but God can blot out sin? The clouds can never be dissipated from the earthward side: they must be dispelled from Heaven.

But ere they vanish for ever, my friends, grace has thrown the rainbow across the thick cloud; the glory of the Lord appeareth even in this cloud—

"Thus e'en thy murkiest storm-cloud
Is by His rainbow spanned,
Caught from the glory dwelling
In Immanuel's land."

Do you ask how this cloud is blotted out? Ah, it might have poured out vengeance on your head. But its lightnings were drawn by the Cross of Christ. It was emptied of its wrath by Calvary—

"The tempest's awful voice was heard,
O Christ, it woke 'gainst Thee!
Thy open bosom was my ward,
It braved the storm for me:
Thy form was scarred, Thy visage marred,
Now cloudless peace for me."

But there is a wonderful doctrine involved here. When the sun in all his might and glory looks upon the cloud, when the concentrated rays of the sun pour down upon that mass of dense vapor, its darkness is riven by the light, and its water particles are evaporated. The cloud is dissipated, or "blotted out"; and there remains only the glorious sun in a cloudless sky. It is thus all the powers of Deity are concentrated upon your sin: His justice, His righteousness, His truth, His mercy, His love, His might, His holiness—or to sum up all attributes in one grand word—His grace poured its rays upon your sin and blotted it out from your sky!

"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud thy sins; *return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.*" That is the logic of the gospel's appeal:

not, "Return that thou mayest be redeemed", but, "Return because thou art redeemed." Oh, that is the difference between grace and works. Your sins, my radio hearers, are atoned for. Therefore, return.

When the prodigal returned, he found he was already forgiven. I have told you of Sinai to-night, which turneth everything to ashes. We have read of the far country where a prince would fain have fed on husks. But what is the alternative of husks and ashes? Who will give beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness? It is not Sinai with its ashes, nor the far country with its husks, which can constitute the great appeal: it is Calvary, with its voice of pardon; the Father's house, where there is a welcome, and bread enough and to spare. Oh, I beg of you to return. There is no reason to stay away. You are redeemed: come and claim your inheritance in Christ, "in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

III.

Ere I close I would say a few words about THE JOY OF SALVATION. But how can one speak of a "joy unspeakable and full of glory"? When the winter of our discontent is ended, when the day of darkness and of storm is over, when the sky is clear, and the heavens opened, and God "who commanded the light to shine out of darkness" shines in our hearts, "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ", how shall we utter all our joy? When spring-time comes to the soul, how shall we speak our gladness?—

"O day of God, thou bringest back
The singing of the birds,
With music for the hearts that lack,
More musical than words!

"Thou meltest now the frozen deep
Where dreaming love lay bound,
Thou wakest life in buds asleep,
And joy in skies that frowned.

"Not yet may almond-blossoms dare
A wintry world to bless;
Still do the trees their beauty wear
Of glorious nakedness:

"But the clouds are riven with the light
Of old unclouded days,
And Love unfolds to longing sight
His sweet and silent ways."

"Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it."

The heavens do sing, but they celebrate only the praises of the Lord: The heavens declare the glory of God. The stars in their courses fought against Sisera, but they will not publish his fame. The morning stars sang together at creation's birth, but they sang in praise of the Creator, not of the creature: It was not for Joshua, but for Jehovah, the sun and moon stood still. It was not for Ahaz, but for God, the shadow returned on the dial. And the wise men were never wiser than when they said of the heavenly guide, "We have seen his star." "His star"? Yes; all the stars are His—His ministers to do His pleasure; His choristers, to sing His everlasting praise.

But they are silent in view of all human achievements. They sing only when "the Lord hath done it". And when our sins are blotted out, "the Lord hath done it." When the prodigal turns from his husks to his Father's table; when his filthy rags are exchanged for the best robe; and the wastrel is shod, and has a ring on his hand, it is "the

It is important, too, to notice how sin is here-classified. Lord who hath done it." And earth cannot contain the joy of that occasion. The heart of the redeemed must cry, "Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it"—

"Saints and angels joined in concert
Sing the praises of the Lamb,
While the blissful seats of heaven
Sweetly echo with His name:
Hallelujah!
Sinners here may do the same."

Even the lower orders of creation share the joy of a soul's conversion. I remember a most devoted Christian man, who, prior to his conversion, had been a very depraved and vicious character. He used to say that the first creature to know of his conversion was his dog, for when, on the night of the great change, the dog came to meet him on his return home, instead of a vicious kick the dog received a tender caress. The man insisted that his dog felt the change conversion had effected. The principle is true. A man's horse, and dog, and all creatures, have reason to shout when he is really and soundly converted.

"Break forth into singing, ye mountains." Let your lofty peaks catch the music of the skies; let your ribbed and rocky slopes, your mighty canyons, acclaim the mystery of grace; let your purling streams, your myriad wild, instructive voices accompany the song of angels in celebration of redeeming love. "Break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." Let the wind that bloweth where it listeth play upon thee, and wake every murmuring pine, and every feathered melody, and every tremulous leaf, in praise of the Redeemer's name!

What does it mean, but that if all the universe could suddenly become animate and vocal, the joy of salvation would still be unspeakable and full of glory!

"Oh for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break!
And all harmonious human tongues
The Saviour's praises speak!"

"For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." Grace has devised means to make the creature's good and the Creator's glory mutually to consist in each other. That is the stupendous, the transcendent wonder: Grace giveth beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning; and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

What shall we do with a salvation that is offered us without money and without price? a redemption that is of grace, and of grace alone? My radio hearers, let me plead with you this evening. We have all had ashes enough. There is nothing in it. They cannot nourish the soul. I beg of you to come home, to come back to God. You will find the Father's house fully prepared for your reception, the banquet ready, and the best robe offered for your adornment.

Have done with feeding upon ashes. Return unto the Lord, and to the home of cloudless skies. Get ready for the day when every creature that is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in them, shall be heard saying, "Blessing and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever"!

Let us pray:

We thank Thee, O Lord, for a completed redemption. We thank Thee that the price has been fully paid, and that there remains nothing for us to do but to receive that which God hath done for us. May the word of Thy grace be made effectual in the lives of many, that they may pass from darkness into light! We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

PILTDOWN SKULL, FAMOUS FOSSIL, FOUND TO BE FRAUD

After Years of Renown It's a Hoax

By JOHN HILLABY
New York Times Service

London, Nov. 22—Part of the skull of the Piltdown man, one of the most famous fossil skulls in the world, has been declared a hoax by authorities at the British Natural History Museum.

It is now stated that the jawbone associated with the skull is that of a modern ape, probably an orangutan, that has been doctored with chemicals to give it an aged appearance.

In addition, it is said that the cap of the skull is genuine but far more recent than had been believed—50,000 instead of 500,000 years old.

This declaration in the current issue of the museum's bulletin has been made after 20 years of rumour and uneasy speculation among European paleontologists about the authenticity of the bones.

The report, signed by Dr. J. S. Weiner, Dr. K. P. Oakley and Prof. W. E. Le Gros Clark, said: "The faking of the mandible (jawbone) is so extraordinarily skilful and the perpetration of the hoax appears to have been so entirely unscrupulous and inexplicable as to find no parallel in the history of paleontological discovery."

Paleontology is the science dealing with the life of past geological periods. It is based on the study of fossils.

The relics of the so-called first Englishman were unearthed in a gravel pit in the hamlet of Piltdown in Sussex, 45 miles south of London, in 1911.

The first bone was handed to Charles Dawson, a local lawyer and amateur geologist, by workmen who had apparently mistaken the skull for a petrified coconut and smashed it into pieces.

Dawson took the find home but apparently thought little about it. Several years later he found other portions of the skull some distance away and realized that he had found fragments of a "very thick-headed man."

The bones were taken to the Natural History Museum in London, where the keeper of geology, the late Sir Arthur Smith Woodward, pronounced them to be a portion of an ancient human parietal bone, part of the skull.

Within a year the Piltdown man was famous. The gravel pit was combed for other bones. Dawson found the right half of a jawbone at the same spot where the skull pieces had been turned up. Some teeth believed to be human were also found.

Sir Arthur Keith, famous British paleontologist, spent more than five years piecing together the fragments of what he called a remarkable discovery. He said the brain case was "primitive in some respects but in all its characters distinctly human."

The Piltdown man was named *Eoanthropus dawsonii*, or Dawn man, in honour of its discoverer, and paleontologists throughout the world handled it with reverence.

Although the fossil was generally accepted as the earliest known specimen of sapient man, as opposed to the apeman of China and Java, many research workers reserved their opinions about the disputatious jawbone.

Skeptical British paleontologists said it was probably a relic of another specimen that had been found in accidental conjunction with the Piltdown cranium.

The late Franz Weidenreich, who unearthed the Peking man, said bluntly that the jaw was that of an orangutan, a statement that puzzled paleontologists here since no anthropoid apes are known to have inhabited Britain.

Although the name Piltdown became a landmark in the history of man's search for his earliest ancestors, the skull itself was placed in 1939 in what the British Museum politely called a "suspense account."

Meanwhile Dawson had died.

The first serious doubts about the authenticity of the skull were voiced in 1949. Chronologists reviewed the remaining evidence at the site said that neither the skull cap nor the jaw was particularly old.

These doubts were finally resolved by Dr. Oakley, who tested all the bones for their relative content of fluorine absorbed from the soil. He found they contained very little fluorine, a circumstance suggesting that the relics were relatively recent.

Now the opinion of comparative anatomists and further tests by chemists have established that the jaw is that of a modern ape treated with potassium bichromate and iron salt, giving it an aged appearance.

It has also been established that the teeth have been pared down so that they could have been associated with the jaw of a primitive man.

The cranium is believed to be genuine but about 50,000 years old. This age brings the first Englishmen into line with scores of early men found in Europe and elsewhere.

But it is assumed that the jaw was "planted" at the gravel pit.

By whom? The writers of the museum bulletin are not prepared to say categorically that it was Dawson, the venerated lawyer and geologist of Sussex.

They say, however, that if the hoaxer were proved to be Dawson "it would be but one more instance of the desire for fame (since money was certainly not the object) bringing a scholar into dishonesty."

This abrupt devaluation of the Piltdown man means that the oldest skull of sapient man found in the world is the relic from Swanscombe, on the south bank of the Thames Estuary. It is about 200,000 years old and was found in conjunction with many datable flint hand axes.

Paleontologists who have spoken eloquently about its antiquity are doubly thankful that it has been shown to be genuine by Dr. Oakley's telltale fluorine technique.

Making Monkeys Out of Scientists

The following paragraphs are taken from the report of the same matter appearing in *The Toronto Daily Star*:

London, Nov. 21—(UP)—The British Museum said today someone used the jawbone of an ape to make monkeys out of scientists.

Museum researchers said most of the skull of the Piltdown man, long studied in world textbooks as a prehistoric specimen, is the "deliberately faked" jawbone of a chimpanzee or orang-outang.

Scholars later searching for more of the skull found the ape's jawbone and assumed it to be that of the Piltdown man.

Although some anthropologists previously had suspected the Piltdown man's jawbone and tooth were those of an ape, they considered them bona fide fossils at least 50,000 years old.

"I expect some changes will have to be made in the textbooks now," a museum spokesman said. "It is a major discovery."

The investigators said their exposure "clarifies very considerably the problem of human evolution" because the odd shape of the Piltdown jaw had long baffled the experts.

They urged that experts taken in by the fraud should not be too hurt about it.

EVOLUTION: "FANTASTIC FRAUD" "UNSCRUPULOUS HOAX"

EVOLUTION is one of the dogmas of modern thought which a man denies at the risk of being a laughing stock of the intelligentsia. Evolution is the explanation of all things under the sun and of the sun itself and all the host of heaven. Theologians have climbed on the band-wagon of this all-pervading modern philosophy and have not only ridiculed the Genesis account of creation as a long-exploded myth, they have ventured to explain the Bible and religion as a product of the evolutionary process and some have even dared to blaspheme the Holy Name of God by calling Him a result of the evolutionary process. Scientists have produced their "missing links" that allegedly bound man to the animal kindred in order to deny that he came from the hand of God. Paleontologists have pontificated about the age of man and have boldly moulded the forms of prehistoric forerunners of our race with no other clue than that found in fragments of bones and a few teeth. Laymen in science were compelled to stand back in amazement as these high-priests of evolution dogmatized about the age of man and the long slow ascent of the race from primeval slime through the jungle to the "Dawn Man" and finally to the present stage of development. They delighted in the occasion their scientific theories gave them of pouring scorn upon the Bible story of creation and of its morals and doctrines, outmoded and disproved long since, as they boldly assured the world.

It is our devout hope that these scientists, or rather the pseudo-scientists who indulge in such wild flights of imagination, are endowed with a strong sense of humour. We have grave doubts on this subject, for if they had, the wild luxuriance of their own vividly fanciful descriptions of the evolutionary process and of the ancestors of man would have given them many an occasion to laugh at their own vain imaginings. The evolutionary philosophers ought to be amused by the account of "the faking . . . so extraordinarily skilful and the perpetration of the hoax . . . so entirely unscrupulous and inexplicable as to find no parallel in the history of paleontological discovery." However, if they are not able to laugh at it, we are fully persuaded that any jury of twelve good men and true would be immensely amused by the almost incredibly funny story of this giant hoax that so completely deceived scientists that it took them twenty years to disentangle themselves from its ensnaring meshes. And we may add that it is also our conviction, that any jury of ordinary men would throw out of court in contempt the self-asserted authority in matters scientific of the paleontologists who did not know the difference between the jawbone of a modern ape and the bones of a "Dawn Man" whom they supposed to be 500,000 years old. These wiseacres who were so clever as to construct the whole anatomy of the "first Englishman" from parts of his skull (supposed) and the jawbone of a modern ape, have been proved to be such simpletons as not to know that the bones they studied were not much older than their own. Talk about thick skulls! Think of learned scientists who could not discern between the results of the slow aging of 500,000 years and the rapid chemical processing of pickling an ape's bones in acid. Men who dared to reconstruct the whole body of one of their imaginary forebears did not know that the teeth they held in their hands had been pared down so as to associate them with the jaw of a primitive man. A village dentist could have done better than that,

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or had he failed they should have sought the assistance of any busy mother who has worried through the strain of teething a large family.

The most apt word to describe this learned ignorance, this wise folly, are the well-known sentences of the Apostle: "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

The exposure of this hoax is another reminder, or rather a demonstration, that the evolutionary hypothesis belongs to the realm of speculation rather than of pure science. It is a philosophy or rather a faith that has been constructed in order to usher God out of His own universe in the name of so-called science. Darwinianism was eagerly snatched at by speculators who supposed they had in his theories a way of explaining design in the universe without admitting a Designer. Succeeding generations of scientists have dismissed Darwin's suppositions but still the evolutionary hypothesis is cherished with an implicit faith that persists in believing in spite of all the evidence to the contrary, as well as in the lack of evidence in support. A case in court that required the clumsy fabrication of such crude witnesses as an ape's jaw treated with chemicals would be dismissed with the contempt it richly deserved. The press dispatch refers to other paleontologists who are "doubly thankful" that their ancient bones (a mere 200,000 years old) have been shown to be genuine by the "tell-tale fluorine technique". The fantastic fraud of the "Piltdown Man" does not call in question merely the ages of a few bones, it casts a shadow upon the whole "science" of paleontology, or rather it throws out of court the "scientists" who have pontificated with a more than infallible assurance upon the age and structure of bone fragments and of the supposed ancestors of "homo sapiens". It shows the folly of relying for proof upon the other "men" these learned gentry have constructed from a few bone fragments.

There is an old pleasantry to the effect that when a lawyer makes a mistake, he charges his client; when a doctor makes a mistake, he buries it, but when a preacher makes a mistake, nobody knows. We gladly pass along this professional joke to those who ply the trade of paleontology, with the sole reserve that in the course of twenty years' time, these learned ignoramuses may discover the error of their ways.

The newspaper report does not hesitate in describing this unscientific error of the scientists to use the strong terms of "hoax", "fraud", "deceit". One of the great arguments for evolution has been the remarkable scientific discoveries and inventions of our modern age, coupled with the alleged integrity of the men of science who are motivated by a pure and unalloyed love of the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. We do not know whether to be more shocked at the unscrupulous fraud perpetrated in the name of science or to be more amazed at the gullibility of the so-called scientists who were so deceived by it as to employ this supposed "Dawn Man" as one of the infallible proofs of evolution. Any case that requires such shaky evidence as this must be in a bad way indeed. Scientists are not always scientific,

and evolutionists who dogmatize will live to find themselves made monkeys by the jawbone of an ape. When scientists begin to speculate and philosophize on religion, they are no longer scientific but men subject to passions and prejudices that sway their conclusions and render them untrustworthy.

Convinced evolutionists will not suffer any diminution of faith in their espoused hypothesis. Other "missing links" will doubtless be found, or manufactured. Evolutionists parade such specimens before the eyes of the unwary, especially of students in colleges and universities as convenient ways of seeming to demonstrate the plausibility of the theory that they had already accepted as a matter of pure faith. Even if the "missing link" between man and monkey, or one of the latter's distant relatives, could be established, there would still remain a thousand thousand other missing links in the chain that are far greater than the gap that separates man from the beasts. There is the great yawning chasm between matter and life, even if the evolutionist is willing for the sake of convenient argument to begin with the former. There is the other great leap from life to mind, and again from that to consciousness and on again to conscience.

It is not a question of one "missing link" but of thousands of them, which neither science nor philosophy are capable of supplying. For our part we find it requires much less faith to accept the sublime account of the creation which starts with these majestic words, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

—W.S.W.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ENDANGERED AGAIN!

Missionaries in Colombia, South America, Are Ordered to Leave

The Associated Missions of the International Council of Christian Churches has been advised that one of their member Mission Agencies, The Association of Baptists for World Evangelism with headquarters in Philadelphia, Pa., has been notified, along with other mission agencies in the same category, that the Government of the Republic of Colombia under an official order dated October 19, 1953, has instructed Protestant Missionaries to close their churches, shut down their Missions and leave their fields.

This action of the Colombian Government, so prejudicial to religious liberty and freedom of missionary enterprise, appears to be also a violation of their own Constitution and Covenant of Human Rights.

Protests from responsible religious leaders and Protestant Mission organizations are already pouring in to the State Department of the United States and also to representatives of the Colombian Government here and abroad.

These recurrent eruptions of religious intolerance in South America do not help either our Good Neighbor Policy or our efforts in this country toward fair and practical application of the principles of religious liberty and freedom, so well thought of throughout most of the world today.

The Associated Missions of the International Council of Christian Churches joins in urging the Government of Colombia to clear this unfortunate and unfair situation which threatens the continuation of religious liberty and Protestant Missionary work in Colombia.

"THE BLOODIEST PERSECUTION IN ALL HISTORY"

A CALL to battle against the "bitterest, bloodiest persecution in all history" has been issued by the Roman Catholic bishops of the United States. But what, according to this august body of prelates, is the "bitterest, bloodiest persecution in all history"? Is it the slaughter of the Albigensians in the South of France in the early Middle Ages, when successive papal crusades engaged in the systematic extermination of hundreds of thousands of "heretics"? Was it the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day when the flower of French thought and Christian devotion were treacherously stabbed to death by prearranged plan, which was duly celebrated in the Vatican as a great victory? Was it the bloody expulsion of a million French Huguenots for no other offense than that of worshipping God after the dictates of their own conscience? Was it the crime of burning alive godly men and women at Smithfield in London, which gained that devout Catholic Queen of England the sobriquet of "bloody" Mary? Or if these "bitter, bloody persecutions" be too far removed in time to stir the Roman bishops to remorse, what of the persecution that is now being waged against Protestants in Spain, a land that has just signed a concordat with the Vatican in which it is stipulated that Romanism is the sole religion of state and that other religions are to be given short shrift? Or are their lords the bishops moved by the organized beatings and mob rule, issuing in murder, that have taken place and are still going on in Colombia? These disgraceful tactics of the Roman bishops in Colombia have come to the notice of the Roman prelates in North America. But they are not in the least moved by such things, though they weep copious tears over the fate of their fellow-bishops behind the Iron Curtain.

Romish "Toleration"

We do not mean to defend or excuse in any way the ruthless tyranny of Communism. We abhor it as sincerely and wholeheartedly as the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Indeed, we may say with truth, that our hatred of it is profounder than that of the priests of Rome. They object to it merely because it touches the interests of their own ecclesiastical organization, while we protest against it on principle in the name of freedom of worship and of speech. The same persecution which the bishops find so hateful in Russia, they impose upon Protestants in Spain and Colombia and defend it in their works on Moral Theology as the inalienable right of their church to inflict on heretics. It is not genuine sincerity that inspires such a protest on the part of the Roman Hierarchy, it is their own selfish advantage.

Lord Macaulay has well described the "toleration" practised by the Roman Catholic Church in these words:

"The doctrine which, from the very first origin of religious dissensions, has been held by all bigots of all sects, when condensed into a few words, and stripped of all rhetorical disguise, is simply this: I am in the right, and you are in the wrong. When you are the stronger, you ought to tolerate me; for it is your duty to tolerate truth. But when I am the stronger, I shall persecute you; for it is my duty to persecute error."

Paganism With a Veneer of Christianity

The statement issued by the bishops speciously identifies Romanism with Christianity. They say: "Shep-

herds of the flock of Christ are hunted down, imprisoned, debased, tortured and slain . . . When will men in the free world come to realize that the crisis of to-day is first of all a crisis of religion, that the Communist debaser of man is essentially a hater of God, that his long-range and his short-range purpose is the destruction of Christianity?" This plea of course makes no reference to the Protestant martyrs to the Communist ferocity. Bands of Bible-loving people in all these lands have already survived centuries of similar bitter and bloody persecution. The chief change is that these men who now trouble them have changed the colour of their shirts from black to red, and instead of being directed and inspired from Rome as they have been for centuries, their persecutors now receive orders from Moscow.

There is no doubt in our mind that within the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church there are priests and people who are genuine children of God, who have met Christ in spite of the errors of their Church rather than through its ministrations. But to call every Roman priest a "shepherd of the flock of Christ" and to identify the Church of Rome with Christianity is utterly contrary to the truth. The Prophet Ezekiel inveighed against the false shepherds of his day in these words: "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds: Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased ye have not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and cruelty have ye ruled them."

The Church of Rome is essentially a pagan organization overlaid with a thin veneer of Christianity. Its dogmas are utterly contrary to the teachings of Scriptures and it perverts the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ into a worldly political organization based on superstition and human traditions. If the great masses of the people within the orbit of Communism were sincerely and genuinely in love with the church of their forebears, the Iron Curtain would be torn down over night. But the greed and selfishness of the Roman Hierarchy has disgusted the people of these lands and they have lost all confidence in the Vatican. They know that the pope eagerly seized upon the opportunity of making pacts with both Hitler and Mussolini. They are well aware that the agents of the Vatican were responsible for the slaughter of thousands upon thousands of innocent people who by reason of race and religious affiliation stood athwart the schemes of Romish aggrandizement. In these Iron Curtain lands, the Roman Catholic Church is hated not only because it is a wealthy organization that was proprietor of huge estates, but also because it allied itself with the landowners who oppressed the people for their own profit.

Why Communism Succeeds in R.C. Countries

Communism had succeeded in lands that were formerly Roman Catholic because it has come in the guise of a liberator of enslaved peoples with fair promises of land for a hungry and oppressed peasantry. Its great swelling words will shortly prove to be as void of blessing as those of the Roman Catholic priests. In saying this we explain in part Communism's success, while we condemn its heartless cruelty and its "bitter, bloody persecution"

as the Roman Catholic bishops well name it. Romish excesses and rapacious greed do not excuse the heartless treatment the Soviet slave masters have inflicted upon the hapless victims now in their power.

How good it would be if the Roman bishops of the United States were converted by the eloquence of their own declamation against persecution to include in their sweeping condemnation the "bitter, bloody persecution" waged by their brethren in Spain, Colombia and Italy against the Protestant minority in those lands. But of this we can harbour but small hope. This oracular utterance of the Roman bishops bears all the marks of being fabricated strictly for home consumption in lands where the Church of Rome enjoys all the liberties that Protestants have.

How sad it is to think of the war-torn lands of Europe and their teeming millions of troubled souls still playing the role of puppets in the game of power politics waged by their cold-blooded masters in the Vatican and in the Kremlin. If the Roman priests had put the Word of God in the hands of these people, they would not have fallen easy victims to the unscrupulous tyranny of Communism. They would have a hope for this world and for that which is to come. But the false shepherds failed to nourish them with the truth of Scripture and so left them defenseless against their enemies. —W.S.W.

PRIESTS CONVERTED TO COMMUNISM

AFTER a visit to the pope in Rome, three French cardinals publicly announced at Paris last week that there would be a radical change in their project of "worker-priests". This programme was instituted about ten years ago with a view to winning back to the Church of Rome great masses of French workmen who had deserted it for Communism. The "worker-priests" laboured in factories as ordinary workmen in order to gain the confidence of their fellows and woo them back to the fold of Rome. It now appears that instead of converting the workers back to Romanism, many of the priests were themselves converted to Communism. So it is said in an Associated Press dispatch from Paris. Last August certain "worker-priests" signed a document accusing a Roman Catholic union of betraying the cause of labour by giving the order for a return to work before the approval of the C.G.T. was obtained. The worker-priests thus lent their name to a document sponsored by a labour body under Communist inspiration. Rumours at once gained currency that the Roman Church would put an end to the whole "priest-worker" movement and as a first step in that direction the seminary where they were trained was closed.

Since that time the leading three prelates of the Roman Church in France have consulted their chief in Rome and have transmitted his orders to their subordinates in the free and democratic republic of France. Thus are we confronted with the spectacle of Frenchmen who take orders for the conduct of their fellow citizens from a foreign dictator in order to combat the machinations of certain other Frenchmen who are also under the orders of another foreign tyrant. Freedom-loving Frenchmen have justly resented the servile submission of French Communists to their master in the Kremlin. It has been evident that the red Russian pope subordinated the interests of France to that of his vast Communist empire. Frenchmen were ashamed that their fellow-citizens would stoop to accept orders from abroad for the conduct of a

movement that was alleged to be French. But there is no essential difference on this score between the red Communists' party leaders who would betray France for the greater glory of the Kremlin and the black-robed Roman Catholic prelates whose first loyalty is to Rome, when they seek in all humility their directives for the conduct of an organization that claims the submission of millions of Frenchmen.

It is not to be greatly wondered at that Roman Catholics who are accustomed to the yoke of one foreign dictatorship should be easily persuaded to bow themselves to another. Romanism is not a bulwark against Communism, as the formidable Communist party in Italy demonstrates, it is a preparatory school for it. Romanism is a dictatorship of the masses for the profit of a highly organized oligarchy whose traditional allies are the political reactionaries, those institutions and individuals whose interests are served by keeping the masses in ignorance and submission. When it suits her plans, Rome protests her love for the people but she does nothing to prove it when it is within her power to do so. It is not surprising that priests who sincerely desire the amelioration of their fellow-citizens would be disgusted with the duplicity of their own hierarchy and accept the golden promises offered by Communists. In due course they will be disillusioned by the ruthless cruelty of the Kremlin tyrants, whose bloody record shows they have no more care for the masses than the dictator in the Vatican.

This incident provides another proof that the imposing structure of the gigantic Roman Catholic organization has serious fissures behind the impressive facade it loves to present to an undiscerning public.—W.S.W.

HIS BLOOD WILL I REQUIRE

By Rev. J. R. Boyd in *The Berean Ambassador*

Wherever the Lord's hand falls in justice we see Him dealing in consistency with the ancient and holy standard expressed by the law which required, "An eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth; a life for a life." When He laid upon Christ our guilt He did not treat Him as being merely Adam's representative; but He "laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Because Christ was our substitute He was treated as if He had been exclusively and entirely responsible for all our sin and evil-doing. So too when the unsaved sinner stands at last at the judgment he will give account of his every sin, no matter how often he has asked and found pardon from men. If his sins are not all forgiven for Christ's sake, they are all awaiting judgment and merciless punishment yet. Even when God used the words found in the title of this article, though He was speaking to one of His own choice servants, He made no excuse for sin. The words are part of God's solemn charge to Ezekiel, when He declares that He had set Ezekiel as a Watchman to watch and warn His people Israel. In chapter 33, verses 7-9 God says, "So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."

I do not know just what that means, or how God requires the blood of others at my hands when I fail to warn them. I only know that when God sets out to collect compensation for a human life, He does not accept any easy bribe. If one life is worth the whole material world, I shall not have much left after God has collected for even one which I have failed to warn.

"His blood will I require." Could it be that God sometimes takes our life for that of the neglected? Does He sometimes take those that are dear as life itself to us? How terrible an eternity awaits unsaved ministers and priests who never properly warn their people. Men who today fail rightly to warn against drunkenness, unbelief, and so-called innocent worldly pleasures, ministers who dance and drink with their people to the Hell they deny, will find the joys of earth poor compensation, when God presents His bill for the souls they damned.

How terrible is the suggestion here that each watchman stands as if he were the only one responsible for his own God-given duty. He cannot escape his duty or the consequences of failure by praying that someone else will warn his people. Furthermore, he cannot escape this penalty by pleading that the wicked would not have heeded it anyway. He is to give God's Word whether they obey or disobey. He must warn though it cost him his popularity, his position, or even his life for doing so. He must warn when called of God to do so whether he is appointed and supported by men or not. We might as well face the fact that we must lose our lives in one of two ways. We must lose our life for God, or lose it at His hand of judgment. If we lose it day by day in loving self-sacrifice, we shall find it again with rich dividends. If we refuse thus to serve, we shall lose all we have and all we ever might have had and still will be eternally indebted to that Justice which requires the blood of the unwarned at the watchman's hands.

Dear friend, if God has called you, as no doubt He has, do not neglect His call. No matter how the love of peace, or the pleadings of friends or denominations may induce you, do not become in any way a party to the deception or neglect which today lulls so many to sleep. Cry aloud yourself; support only those who faithfully sound God's alarm, and rid yourself at all cost of the blood of the perishing hosts to whom God sends His message this moment.

FOR ORDINARY PEOPLE

First of all, if you feel that you are ordinary, thank God that you are not extraordinary. I am tired and sick, and bored almost to death with extraordinary people. They take all their time to tell us how very extraordinary they really are. You know as well as I do, my brother and sister, that the most useful work of the world is done by unpretentious people who toil right on—by people who do not get much approval, and no one seems to say, "That is well done." Phenomena are of but little use. Things that are exceptional cannot be depended on. Better trust the smallest planet that swings in its orbit than ten comets shooting this way and that, imperilling the longevity of worlds attending to their own business. For steady illumination better is a lamp than a rocket.

Then, if you feel that you are ordinary, remember that your position invites the less attack. Conspicuous people—how they have to take it! How they are misrepresented, and abused, and shot at! The higher the horns of a roebuck the easier to track him down.

—T. DE WITT TALMADGE

"WOE!"

"Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them.

"And the harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe and wine, are in their feasts: and they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands."
—Isaiah 5:11, 12.

An illustration and exemplification of the above text will be found in the following shocking news dispatch, which tells of rivers of poison that are now flowing across the Atlantic and the greater floods which will come after them, according to the hopes of certain cold-blooded exploiters of human weakness and misery. The astronomical figures of gallons consumed will give some idea of the fabulous profits involved for the long chain of dealers in this accursed stuff. But the sordid gain made in this death-dealing stuff is cursed, and it will eventually spread wide-spread ruin not only in lands where it pours its evil floods but in those lands where it finds its source, by stealing bread from the mouths of women and children. The callous calculations of the speculators in this wretched business are totally devoid of all moral and spiritual considerations, but that will not avert the just judgment of God upon all who make merchandise of the souls of men.

The eternal principles enunciated in the Bible are still valid: "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." That is as true of the United States, Great Britain and Canada to-day, as it was of Tyre and Sidon or of Israel when the anger of the Lord broke out upon them of old. News dispatches of this sort, spell afresh the prophetic words of warning to God's ancient people: "Woe!"

TV INCREASES FLOW OF WHISKEY TO HOMES OF U.S., IMPORTER SAYS

London, Nov. 3—(Reuters)—Liquor importer Harry L. Lourie has arrived here to make sure Scottish distillers produce enough whiskey to keep up with the home-drinking boom in the U.S. inspired by television.

Lourie, executive vice-president of the Association of Alcoholic Beverage Importers, wants the Scotch Whiskey association to increase the flow of scotch across the Atlantic by 25 per cent. in the next six years.

Stores Doing Well

"There are 45,000,000 families in the United States — just think of the difference to our industry if they would drink just one bottle of scotch each year," he said.

Lourie told newspaper men that in such cities as New York drinking habits have shifted with TV development so much that instead of bars and clubs selling 70 per cent. of the total liquor trade, they now sell 30 per cent. Stores have taken over a big slice of sales, he said.

He said the United States now consumes four times as much scotch as 20 years ago—about 4,000,000 cases yearly. He hopes to have Americans drinking 5,000,000 cases by 1960.

Scotch is not selling at the expense of other whiskeys, Lourie added. He said Canadian whiskey has made even bigger strides than scotch in the United States and most drinks are increasing sales yearly.

Even vodka, which Lourie said "is just alcohol and sugar and has not much to commend it"—now is selling 2,000,000 proof gallons yearly.

"A backsliding state is manifested by indifference to prayer and self-examination; trifling or unprofitable conversation; neglect of public ordinances; shunning the people of God; associating with the world; thinking lightly of sin; neglect of the Bible; and often by gross immorality."

—CHARLES BUCK.

Bible School Lesson Outline

Volume 17 Fourth Quarter Lesson 10 December 6, 1953

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

SAUL'S PRESUMPTION

Lesson Text: 1 Samuel 13:1-14.

Golden Text: "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."—Hebrews 10:4.

I. The People's Plight: verses 1-7.

For many years Israel had been ruled by judges, and Samuel, the last of the judges, must hand over the reigns of government to the new ruler. Before doing so, he delivered a farewell message to the Israelites, in which he gave an account of his stewardship and exhorted them to serve the Lord in truth with all their hearts (1 Sam. 12:1-12). The retiring leader also placed before the people their responsibility to the Lord (1 Sam. 12:13-22). While the direct rule of God, the Theocracy, prevailed, the Lord Himself had been responsible for their welfare, but now they had rejected Him, and had chosen to be governed by an earthly monarch. They must henceforth bear the burden which resulted from their wilful choice (Matt. 27:22-25). The prophet Samuel would continue to pray for them (1 Sam. 12:23, 24). Thus was Saul publicly proclaimed as King.

The Philistines had been left in the land to try the children of Israel (Judg. 3:1-4), and Saul had not been reigning long before Jonathan's defeat of the Philistine garrison at Geba precipitated war between the two nations. Our enemy Satan is never far away; he watches for a convenient season in which to launch his attack upon the believer (Luke 4:13; 1 Pet. 5:8).

This was not the first occasion on which the Israelites had been called upon to face superior forces, but whenever they had relied upon the Lord, they had always been victorious (Josh. 11:4-6; 1 Sam. 7:3, 13). Surely they had forgotten the power of the Lord or they would not have been so distressed, but, as it was, they fled in panic. The believer has an anchor that is steadfast and sure, and which will hold firm in times of stress and storm (Josh. 1:9; 10:25; Psa. 112:4-8; Prov. 16:20; 18:10; Heb. 6:16-20).

Samuel had made an appointment with Saul to offer a sacrifice unto the Lord in Gilgal and invoke the Divine blessing upon the armed forces of Israel (Josh. 10:7, 8). Without the blessing of God they would be helpless (Josh. 7:12, 13), but with Him at their head they would be mighty (Lev. 26:3-8; 1 Sam. 14:6). In the time of crisis earnest Christians do not ask, "Is the Lord on our side?" but rather, "Are we on the Lord's side?"

II. The King's Pride: verses 8-14.

Saul proved to be sadly lacking in power. Had he been strong in faith, the Israelites would have rallied around him, and had he encouraged them by reminding them of the promises of the Lord. (Deut. 28:1-7), they would not have scattered from him. Wise leaders can do much to uphold the spirits of their people and to keep their morale high.

Saul was lacking also in patience (Psa. 37:7; 40:1; Isa. 40:31; Heb. 10:36; 12:1, 2). Samuel the prophet was a trustworthy man and came, even as he had promised, but the king was hasty and fearful, when he should have been calm and brave. Had he waited a short time longer, everything would have turned out well. God's time is always the right time.

King Saul lacked piety. Due reverence for the Lord and for His ordinances would have made him hesitate before intruding into the holy duties of the priesthood (Exod. 28:1; Numb. 16:1-3, 39, 40; Heb. 5:4).

The trouble was that Saul's life was centred in himself, rather than in the Lord (Luke 11:16-21); the pronoun "I" was much too prominent in his confession to Samuel. Fear for his personal safety clouded the issue, and his pride was hurt when he saw that he was unable to check the flight of the panic-stricken people (Prov. 16:18, 32; 18:12). In desperation, without waiting to call upon the Lord, he forged ahead with his plans, regardless of consequences (Isa. 28:16).

Presumptuous pride was the sin of Satan himself (Isa. 14:9-17; Ezek. 28:12-19).

There is a suggestion in the narrative that Saul did not consider that his supplication to the Lord would avail, unless accompanied by a formal sacrifice. Ordinances have their function (Matt. 3:15; 1 Cor. 11:26), but they can never take the place of heart worship (Eccl. 5:1; Isa. 1:11-20; Hos. 6:6).

Saul acted foolishly in disobeying the word of the Lord, and so do all who act in self-will and presumption (2 Sam. 24:10; 2 Chron. 16:9). Because he failed to glorify the Lord and to sanctify Him before the people (Numb. 20:12, 13; Ezek. 36:23), and because he disregarded the warning which had been given him, he would himself be rejected (1 Sam. 12:14, 15; 15:11, 23).

Although men may fail Him, the Lord's purposes do not fail (Isa. 40:28; 42:4; Acts 15:18). The thought that no one of us is indispensable should solemnize our hearts. Joshua took Moses' place (Deut. 34:9; Josh. 1:1-5), and Elisha followed Elijah (1 Kings 19:16). The Lord had already chosen David, a man after His own heart, to succeed Saul (Psa. 89:20; Acts 13:22), and in years to come the perfect Leader and King would appear, even the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose Kingdom would be for ever (2 Sam. 7:16; Isa. 9:6, 7).

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Nov. 30—The Prophet's Testimony 1 Sam. 12:1-5.
Dec. 1—The Prophet's Exhortation 1 Sam. 12:6-15.
Dec. 2—The Miraculous Manifestation 1 Sam. 12:16-25.
Dec. 3—The Enemy Spoilers 1 Sam. 13:15-23.
Dec. 4—The Presumption of Cain Gen. 4:1-15.
Dec. 5—The Presumption of Korah Numb. 16:1-33.
Dec. 6—The Presumption of Aaron's Sons Lev. 10:1-11.

SUGGESTED HYMNS

More holiness give me. Take time to be holy. Not all the blood of beasts. Will your anchor hold? When we walk with the Lord. Oh for a faith that will not shrink!

SPURGEON ON THE "ANTI-CHRIST"

C. H. Spurgeon, who was often referred to as the "Prince of Preachers," stated in a sermon these memorable words:—

"Moreover, I have noticed, dear friends, that when we ask for any deliverance as for Christ, we may pray very earnestly against an evil without any bitterness mingling with the prayer. It is the bounden duty of every Christian to pray against Anti-Christ, and as to what anti-Christ is no sane man ought to raise a question. If it be not the popery in the Church of Rome and in the Church of England, there is nothing in the world that can be called by that name. If there were to be issued a hue and cry for anti-Christ, we should certainly take up those two churches on suspicion, and they would certainly not be let loose again, for they so exactly answer the description.

"Popery anywhere, whether it be Anglican or Romish, is contrary to Christ's gospel, and is the anti-Christ, and we ought to pray against it. It should be the daily prayer of every believer that anti-Christ might be hurled like a millstone into the flood and sink to rise no more. But if we can pray against error for *Christ*, because it wounds *Christ*, because it robs *Christ* of His glory, because it puts *sacramental efficacy* in the place of His atonement, and lifts a piece of bread into the place of the Saviour, and a few drops of water into the place of the Holy Ghost, and puts a mere fallible man like ourselves up as the vicar of *Christ* on earth; if we pray against it, because it is *against Him*, we shall love the persons though we hate their errors; we shall love their souls though we loathe and detest their dogmas, and so the breath of our prayers will be sweetened, because we turn our faces towards *Christ* when we pray. We are to pray *for Him*."

How to Say

Merry Christmas

52 Times a Year

Have you friends and relatives who love the glad sound of the good news? Send *THE GOSPEL WITNESS* to their door FIFTY-TWO times next year as a reminder of your good wishes. Or do you know of some persons who you think might be specially benefited and blessed by its weekly Gospel message? Or do you know of others who ought to be informed on the great issues of Protestantism? Does your pastor receive this paper? Or have you missionary friends who would like to receive it, but cannot afford to pay for it?

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