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## A Door of Hope in the Valley of Trouble

By W. S. Whitcombe

"And I will give her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt."—Hosea 2:15.

ALL of us are only too familiar with the barren and unlovely region of the valley of Achor, which, being translated, is the valley of trouble. Hard by there is the tributary valley of Baca, that is, of tears, through which few mortals have not passed at some time or another. Not all of us have made it a well nor have we found that the rain has filled the pools, as it came to pass for the blessed man described by the psalmist. In this same desolate country there is a certain scrubby juniper tree under which the ground was well worn by the prophet Elijah and which has been only too often the resort of other prophets and saints since his day.

There is no need, alas, to argue the existence of these forlorn valleys and of the desert wastes of which they are a part, for the experiences of life compel us to lend assent to Job's dismal wail: "Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." The statesmen of the world weary themselves and us too in telling us that we live in a time of the breaking of the nations, as if we did not already know it. Worst of all they have no remedy for the ills they lament. Each of us has his or her tale of sorrows and trials, and when we multiply our little cup of bitterness by the millions of earth's inhabitants it makes an ocean deeper and wider than man's imagination can fathom.

God alone has a complete knowledge of the sorrows of mankind and He alone hates their sins with a perfect hatred, yet He is full of compassion, gracious, long-suffering and plenteous in mercy and truth. His Word promises that even the valley of Achor will become a door of hope. The very music of the phrase entrances burdened souls, and those who toil and moil in the gloom of the valley of the shadow pause and lift up their eyes, eagerly searching for the way of escape graciously set before them.

The first ray of light in the darkness is this: it is God himself who has led His people there. Does this seem cruel to our poor human understandings? Yet how much better it is to wait in this confidence than to conclude with bitterness that we suffer from the unreasoning and unloving hand of blind chance! We walk by faith and not by sight and hence we rely upon the loving wisdom and care of our Heavenly Father even when it is not given to us to see the fulness of His high design:

I dimly guess from blessings known  
Of greater out of sight,  
And, with the chastened Psalmist, own  
His judgments too are right.

And so beside the Silent Sea  
I wait the muffled oar;  
No harm from Him can come to me  
On ocean or on shore.

Let us call to mind that even our Saviour was driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan. If our glorious Lord, though he were a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which He suffered, shall we as children of God oppose our little wills against His infinite wisdom and so refuse to enter the school of suffering? What if this kindest of all Teachers have some lessons to teach us there that we can learn in no other place? We acknowledge the good hand of God when the showers of prosperity fall upon us, shall we not do as much when He chooses to lead us through the dark valley of adversity? There are times when God in His mercy hedges up our ways with thorns and makes a wall in order to prevent us from following after what appears to us to be the best path. He strips from us the seeming blessings of life, as Hosea describes God's dealings with Israel, in order to show us from whence all good gifts

really come: "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her." If we must, go into the wilderness, only let us be sure that God is leading us, and then we can say,

I had rather walk in the dark with God  
Than walk alone in the light.

Historically the valley of Achor was the place where the sin of Achan was punished and the camp of Israel cleansed from its fatal defilement. The surgeon's scalpel and the operating room are never anything but an ordeal for a patient, even for a patient who is fully aware of his great need of them. Yet the time comes, when oppressed by the weight of our disability we choose to endure a light affliction which is but for a moment, in order to live a fuller, freer life afterwards. Sometimes the Great Surgeon in His kindness leads us to the place of suffering in order that He may do us good and render us more fruitful.

The valley of Achor speaks of humiliation and defeat, for when there was sin in the camp, the people of God fled in ignominious defeat from before the face of their enemies. Thus they learned the lesson of repentance, and casting themselves afresh upon God they found new strength in the presence of the Great Commander to sweep their erstwhile conquerors before them. Trouble may teach us, as nothing else could, that in wrath God remembers mercy, and that though once defeated we may still be led in triumph by our Gracious Saviour:

With mercy and with judgment  
My web of time he wore  
And aye the dews of sorrow  
Were lusted by his love;  
I'll bless the hand that guided,  
I'll bless the heart that planned,  
When throned where glory dwelleth  
In Immanuel's land.

Men instinctively search for a way of escape from affliction, yet that is not precisely what our text offers. It is at once something better and yet something less attractive: "I will give her . . . the valley of Achor for a door of hope." That is to say the very affliction which we had feared is itself transformed into a door of hope. The old alchemists tried in vain to transmute base metals into gold and silver, but God is able to change our afflictions and trials into instruments of blessing, for which we shall learn to bless His name. Our Lord taught us to pray that we should not be led into temptation, as He himself prayed in the Garden that the cup might pass from Him. Yet we too must add, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." If we are called upon to walk through the valley of the shadow of death, yet it will be enough to know that the Good Shepherd is with us and that His rod and His staff comfort us. Are we not taught to "glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulations worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed." Tribulation is literally the act of passing the ancient threshing instrument, the *tribulum*, over the grain to separate it from the straw and husks. It is another picture of the way in which God employs for His glory and our good that which seems to us to be harsh and cruel. Oh that all His children had grace to believe that our gracious loving Father meant nothing but good for His loved ones, and to believe it not only as a fine theory when the sun is shining but to believe it while we are passing through trouble and tribulation.

## The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

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### A NEW YEAR'S PRAYER

"This God is our God for ever and ever: He will be  
our guide even unto death."

—PSALM 48:14

For Thy mercy and Thy grace,  
Faithful through another year,  
Hear our song of thankfulness;  
Father and Redeemer, hear.

Lo! our sins on Thee we cast,  
Thee, our perfect sacrifice,  
And, forgetting all the past,  
Press towards our glorious prize.

Dark the future; let Thy light  
Guide us, Bright and Morning Star;  
Fierce our foes, and hard the fight;  
Arm us, Saviour, for the war.

In our weakness and distress,  
Rock of strength, be Thou our stay;  
In the pathless wilderness  
Be our true and living way.

Who of us death's awful road  
In the coming year shall tread,  
With Thy rod and staff, O God,  
Comfort Thou his dying bed.

Keep us faithful, keep us pure,  
Keep us evermore Thine own;  
Help, O help us to endure;  
Fit us for the promised crown.

So within Thy palace gate  
We shall praise, on golden strings,  
Thee, the only Potentate,  
Lord of lords, and King of kings.

AMEN

**ABOUT DR. SHIELDS**

Dr. Shields was progressing favourably but slowly until last Tuesday night, December 22nd, when there was a change in his condition, which on Wednesday developed into pneumonia. He was taken to the hospital and since that time has made unusually good progress. His temperature is now normal, but his doctors have said that the one thing indispensable to recovery is complete quiet and they have therefore forbidden all visitors. We are happy that we can report his progress is now satisfactory.

At the present time it does not seem within the bounds of possibility that Dr. Shields will be able to share the great New Year's morning meeting with his people in Jarvis Street as he so ardently hoped, but he has already selected a text for a New Year's motto for the church, in accordance with his custom of long standing. The whole church family is continuing instant in prayer for its beloved pastor and in this they are joined by other friends in various places as far as this paper carries its weekly message. Dr. Shields is deeply touched by the news that so many are bearing him up at the throne of grace and wishes us to express his gratitude to them.

—W.S.W.

**MISSIONARY RESIGNS FROM THE OLD  
CONVENTION ON ACCOUNT OF  
MODERNISM**

The Church News column of the *Toronto Star* of Monday last carried the following brief item. We are happy to know that after more than twenty-five years of the progressive infiltration of unbelief into the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, known as the Old Convention, there was still left one faithful missionary who walked in the old ways, and who had the courage of her convictions in breaking with an organization that has repudiated the great doctrines of revelation.—W.S.W.

**Baptist Missionary Resigns**

Bessie E. Turnbull, for 30 years a missionary in the Canadian Baptist mission in India, who recently resigned, has written a statement to her friends in which she explains that her action was because of "modernistic" tendencies in the Baptist convention of Ontario and Quebec. She says she is following the example of Spurgeon.

**Do Not Miss**

**THE NEW YEAR'S MORNING MEETING**

An Institution in Jarvis Street Church  
For More Than a Century

**GREENWAY HALL**

**10.30 o'clock**

**NEW YEAR'S DAY**

The Pastor has already selected a motto for the New Year which will be given at this meeting.

All friends, old and new, are welcome at this great meeting for praise, prayer and fellowship.

**THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION**

"Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?"—Psalm 85:6.

It is well known that many Christians have come to have a distaste for the word "revival" when used with reference to religious work. To some extent I share that distaste. There has been so much transient profession, that we cannot wonder at the revulsion which many sober-minded Christians feel when they hear the very word "revival". We believe that all got-up revivals are bad. You cannot organize a true revival; we cannot treat spiritual influences as fixed quantities; as the wind bloweth where it listeth, so, often, is that sudden, profound, and irresistible impulse which rouses the Church, and breaks in beneficently upon the deadly slumber and delusive security of the world. As a matter of fact, there have been extraordinary visitations of divine influence; there have been seasons when the Holy Ghost has made the earthquake, the fire, the rending wind, and the stormy tempest his ministers, and when men have been shaken with a wholesome fear, not knowing the way, yet feeling the nearness of the Lord. There have been great birth-days in the Church, days on which thousands have been crucified with Jesus Christ, and multitudes have begun to sing loudly and lovingly his praise. There have been days of high festival in the sanctuary, when the silver trumpets have sounded, when prodigals have come back to sonship, when shepherds have returned with recovered flocks, when women have found the piece that was lost, and the dead have risen to immortal life. There have, too, been times when the people have realized with special vividness the personality, and life-giving power of the Holy Ghost; when they have had the keys of interpretation wherewith to unlock the boundless treasures of the divine word; when prayer was as the speech of love that never wearies; when the Sabbath shed its sacred glory over all the days of the week; when God's house shone with heavenly lustre, and all life throbbed in joyful harmony with the purposes of God. We refer to these things as to matters of fact, and in doing so we wish to know whether such delights cannot be more permanently secured. At the same time let it be clearly said that we could not bear the strain of an ecstatic life; we are not constituted for constant rapture; we have to contend with the deceitfulness of the flesh; we have to fight and suffer upon the earth when the spirit would gladly escape on the wings of the morning to untroubled and hallowed scenes. Still, there is danger in supposing that because we cannot always live at the highest point of spiritual enthusiasm, we may be content with low attainments, or with a neutrality which attracts not attention to itself. Now there is something between the flame of a blazing ecstasy and the grey ashes of a formal profession; there is a steady and penetrating glow of piety, there is a fervour of love; there is an animated intelligence, a zealous affection a godly yearning for personal progress and social evangelization, which, when found together, make up a life of delight in God and blessed service for men.

—JOSEPH PARKER

"The day of wrath, that dreadful day  
When heaven and earth shall pass away,  
What power shall be the sinner's stay,  
How shall he meet that dreadful day?"

—SIR WALTER SCOTT

# The Jarvis Street Pulpit

## A Jarvis Street Church Motto

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, January 5th, 1930

(Stenographically Reported)

"And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep:

"And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps which are upon the top thereof:

"And two olive trees by it; one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.

"So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord?

"Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No my lord.

"Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel," saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.

"Who are thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shouting, crying; Grace, grace unto it.

"Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

"The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you."

—Zech. 4:1-9.

**N**OT by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." It has been for many years, as you know, the practice in Jarvis Street for the Pastor, at the New Year's Service on New Year's morning, to suggest a motto for the year. On Wednesday morning I felt led to suggest the verse which I have now read as a text. I spoke a few words on it then, and I shall more particularly expound its principle, for our instruction and inspiration, I trust, this morning.

The history immediately surrounding the text is a record of one of the greatest revivals of history. The people of Judah had been seventy years in Babylon, and at the expiration of that time, by the decree of Cyrus, they were permitted to return to their own land. Zerubbabel was the leader of the first caravan of returning captives; and the work of rebuilding the house which had been destroyed was almost immediately begun. But it had not progressed far before the enemy intervened, and work on the building was caused to cease. About sixteen years later, through the prophecies of Zechariah and Haggai, under whose ministry the people were greatly prospered, the people were moved to renew their endeavours to reconstruct the house. Again the enemy intervened, and complained to king Darius. Investigation was made respecting their report that the restoration of the house had been commanded by the decree issued by Cyrus; and when the matter was examined, the report they had made was found to be true to fact; but instead of hindering the work, it had the effect of leading Darius to issue a decree by which those who had conspired to prevent the building of the house were commanded to use the resources of the king to execute the original decree of Cyrus. Thus, God made the wrath of man to praise Him, and the rebuilding of the house went forward.

In this chapter we have a picture of a seven-branched lamp, with a central bowl or reservoir, from which, by pipes, the oil was conveyed to the seven branches of the lamp. On either side the candlestick were growing two olive trees, and, apparently, without human intervention, the olive trees supplied oil to the reservoir, and from the reservoir to the lamps. The angel who showed this picture to the prophet asked him if he knew what it meant, and he said he did not. The answer given was, "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

It is impossible to dissociate this representation of the seven-branched candlesticks from the picture of the church given to us in the first chapter of Revelation where John saw seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks One like unto the Son of God. While beyond doubt, primarily, this vision had application to Zerubbabel's own case, and was a promise that by the power of the Spirit, through him, the temple should be rebuilt; it is equally certain that the prophecy relates to the mission of the church of Christ.

The promise abides for us, because all that was typified in the tabernacle and in the temple finds its fulfilment in the ministry of our Lord and in the ministry of the church of which He Himself is the Head. Our Lord said of Himself, "I am the light of the world"; and He said to us, His disciples, "Ye are the light of the world." What He is, we are; and His light is to shine through us. We are to hold forth the Word of life in the midst of "a crooked and perverse nation"; among whom we are to "shine as lights in the world". Our ministry, then, as individual believers, and collectively as a

church, is to give to this dark world the light of God, the light of the gospel, the light of truth.

How are we to do it? How is the church to do it? How is each individual believer to exercise his ministry? The answer is given in the principle of the text, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

### I.

WE ARE NOT TO ENDEAVOUR TO DO OUR WORK MERELY BY ORGANIZED HUMAN EFFORT. It is true that when men are united in an enterprise the power of each is greatly augmented, and the principle finds illustration that while one may chase a thousand, two may put ten thousand to flight. It is possible to bring great things to pass by pooling our human resources of intellect, of wealth, of human energy of every sort. We see that in the world about us, in the world of industry, in the world of commerce. A man with a thousand dollars cannot do very much, but if a few thousands of people can be brought together who will each take a thousand dollars' worth of stock in some great company, you will have a colossal financial combination before whose power it is difficult for any individual competitor to stand.

The same principle is illustrated in every walk of life. In political life, for example, what great things can be accomplished when men are brought together in a piece of co-operative endeavour, where each one augments the energy of the other. In such case it is difficult for anyone to withstand their onslaught.

It is not surprising therefore that men should expect to accomplish in the religious realm, by the same methods, that which is accomplished in other departments of life. It is not surprising that men should organize religiously. Such organized effort is made in the individual church. No one who has any connection with this place will charge us with underestimating the value of proper organization. I believe in it with all my heart. We could not have or operate our great Sunday School without organization. In its place, organization is legitimate, and effective. You cannot have a family of a couple of thousand and accomplish anything without organization. I read only yesterday of a certain man in the United States who is the proud father of eighteen children, of whom sixteen are still living. He said, "My family is an institution, and it is thoroughly organized. Every member of the family has his or her own particular piece of work to do—and does it." I think he is wise. I should think a family of that sort needed some organization! I should think father and mother needed some co-operation, too, to make ends meet properly!

Even smaller households need organization. It is wise to effect a system by which things can be effectively done. Do not understand me to say that organization is in itself an evil. I know some men who take that position. I know a certain important preacher, I mean a man of prominence, who is a very dominating, self-willed, man. He cannot work very happily for any length of time with anybody. He has never had a committee or a board which he has not reduced to splinters in a little while. He has therefore reached the conclusion that organization is wrong. He is like a certain politician who was recently interviewed in Toronto, a member of the House at Ottawa. He was asked, "Who is the leader of your party?" He said, "I am." And so he is. Apparently he is the whole party himself.

The minister to whom I refer preaches ably, but because he cannot order his work, or delegate a task to anybody else, he decries organization.

That is wrong. It is right that we should organize, but we must remember that no sort of human machinery can ever effect the work that is the sovereign prerogative of the Spirit of God. We cannot by an army do that which only God can accomplish. It is useless in a church to expect to do a definite spiritual work by mere, human, organization. It is beyond human power to achieve it.

Of course it is possible in a Sunday School, and in various auxiliary organizations, to get a great company of people together, and to make a show of success; and yet utterly to fail in real spiritual accomplishment. It is possible for a church to erect a great building, and so to organize its forces as to pay for it; and then to gather great companies of people together in a religious service, and to carry on year after year; and judged by worldly or carnal standards, to be eminently successful; and yet to fail to shed a ray of spiritual light upon "this world's darkness." I fear that is true of some churches. Is it true of us?

You have another illustration of the principle in Ezekiel's vision, when he saw the valley full of bones. They came together, bone to his bone, flesh came up upon them, and they were organized; for, after all, the most complicated and perfect organization in the world is the human body. It is more than an organization, however: it is an organism, and it can function only as it is vitalized, as it has life within it. When Ezekiel saw this organization, this coming together of bone to his bone, and sinew to sinew, and flesh came up upon them, he observed "there was no breath in them."

It is possible to have a great Sunday School class, composed of hundreds of people, yet to have no light, nor life, spiritually. It is possible for us, in this School, to have great classes, a great aggregate attendance, and accomplish nothing of permanent value; for if the Spirit of God be not with us, no darkened mind can be spiritually illuminated, no soul dead in trespasses and sins can be quickened. It is not by organization, by any system you can devise, that men and women are to be brought into vital contact and fellowship with the Lord Jesus. Let us remember therefore that the church that gives itself to doing—doing—doing, all the time building up new organizations, devising plans by which human efforts may be brought together—the church that gives itself to that exclusively is outside of God's plan; it is not by an army that God's work is to be done.

That is true also of the larger groups of churches sometimes called denominations. I do not want to say anything that would be offensive, but I do not believe the world has ever seen a more barren movement. I mean a movement more barren of spiritual results, a movement issuing in less spiritual light and life, than the great Church Union movement in Canada. I attended the meetings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church whenever I had opportunity. I attended also some meetings of the Methodist Conferences, and listened to the debates. I listened to the debate in London, Ontario, more than twenty years ago in the First Presbyterian Church, when the General Assembly was held there, a debate that lasted, I believe, for two or three days. In my judgment it was as far removed from the scriptural conception of things as anything could possibly be. It was a plea chiefly to effect a great or-

ganization, a great institution that would have great wealth, great learning, and great social influence; and that would effect financial economies, especially in the great plains of the West. But the idea of the presence and power of the Holy Ghost in the midst of God's people being absolutely indispensable to effective Christian service was scarcely ever recognized. In the United Church you have to-day a mammoth organization in which no single minister can make himself heard in behalf of the truth, or in protest against error, a huge hierarchy that is the very antithesis of everything that the New Testament teaches respecting the church of Christ. Of course, I know there are individual churches and ministers who "testify the gospel of the grace of God." I say only that the mammoth organization as a whole is the antithesis of the New Testament churches.

Carry that principle forward, and what have you? I do not know how many of you read the papers from the Old Land. I do want you Jarvis Street people to think outside of Jarvis Street more often. Do not imagine that this is the kingdom of God. Do not imagine that God has no interest in anything outside of Toronto or Ontario. If we are Christians, we are to relate ourselves to the Lord's work even to the uttermost parts of the earth: We are to study to see how God is moving among His people; and how organizations called Christian are, in many instances, arraying themselves against the truth of Scripture.

There is a movement in England toward what is called Re-Union, the bringing together of the free churches, and the Anglican establishment, when we are all to accept holy orders at the touch of the bishop! I am just as much a bishop as the Archbishop of Canterbury this very minute. I would not accept a "commission" from him, although he is a very excellent man, I have no doubt. But the idea of "tactical succession" has been prominent in the English discussions over Church Union. There is also the high Anglican party, or the Anglo-Catholic party; it is a movement in the English church toward Rome. Some there are, too, who suggest the inclusion in the "reunion" of the Eastern or Greek Orthodox Church. Thus, they seem to think, that if they can get the Established Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Greek Church all into one big organization, something will be done!—Especially if the Free Churches are thrown in!

How dark are the understandings of men who talk that nonsense! How utterly foreign to Scripture the whole programme is! And yet you have men of great learning who are leading in this movement toward the so-called Union of Christendom, which is nothing more than an effort to organize an army to do, by sheer human might, that which can be done only by the Spirit of God.

Let us be careful, then, that we hold these principles in moderation; and that we recognize that our organizations are useful in their place only as they are under the dominance of, and inspired by, the Spirit of God. Ezekiel saw some wheels, great wheels; they were so high that they were dreadful. But he observed that as they revolved they went everyone straight forward. Along the shining track he looked, and saw at the end the appearance of a throne, and the appearance of a man above upon it. But the distinguishing characteristic of those dreadful wheels was that the Spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. It was an organization, it was a machine; but it was driven by a superhuman power, it was moved

by the Spirit of God—not by an army, not by organized human effort, not by power, nor by any sort of human effort.

## II.

"NOR BY POWER"—by force or might of any sort.

*Much can be done where there is great wealth.* It is easy to erect buildings. It is easy to command a certain kind of service if you have the money to pay. Wealth beyond doubt is power. If you meet a man of great wealth, if you have discernment at all, you will not need to look at his bank account to know that he is a man of wealth. You will not need to be told, nor to judge him by the clothes he wears; there is something about the man, there is a power, there is a commanding attitude, that tells you that man is accustomed as he goes through life to get what he wants; not because he is better than other people, but because he can pay for it. The man who has behind him great resources of wealth becomes a man of power:

I read, I think only last week, of the Geneva Conference which is to be held shortly, and the question was asked as to what influence Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan would exercise in the Conference. He is not an official of the state: he is purely a private citizen. Why should a man without official position, without official rank, have any particular influence in an official conference? Simply because he is largely at the head of the American banking system, and because behind his word are uncounted millions and billions of money. It is the man of wealth, very often, who is the man of power.

A man of wealth in a church, if his money is consecrated to holy uses, may be a mighty power for good. Sometimes a rich man can make it very uncomfortable for a pastor of a church. He may be tempted, because he commands in the business-world, to assume that he has a right to command in the church. I do not mean to suggest that such an one deliberately lords it over people, but the exercise of authority becomes second nature to him. If he goes into a store everyone makes way for him. The shopkeeper says, "What can I do for you, Mr. So-and-So?" They do not bring anything cheap to show him, but the most expensive things in the store. He walks about as though he were monarch of all he surveyed. When he comes into church, unless he is a Christian with much grace, he expects every one to make way for him.

But, my friends, you may build great buildings, and, for a while at least, you may get people to go where there is great wealth; but you cannot thus invoke the Spirit of the Lord. There will be a great church opened in New York in a little while. They built a church on Park Avenue, New York, a very few years ago, which was the finest ecclesiastical mausoleum I ever saw! It is a place where orthodoxy is interred, and it is a costly burial place. When Dr. Fosdick became the minister, he insisted they must have another building, and they are spending millions in its erection. But money cannot change human hearts, except for the worse; it cannot effect "a new creation". Gold has its limitations. Some day it will find its proper place when it paves the streets for the feet of the redeemed to walk upon.

Meanwhile, wealth has tremendous power. It were folly to discount it; or to say you are wholly indifferent to the rich man. Most people are subject to his influence every day. It requires grace from on high to live independently.



But there is one place where money cannot buy anything. That trickster of Samaria, Simon the sorcerer, had made a great deal of money with his tricks, and when he saw that by the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he came to the apostles and offered them money, saying, "Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God . . . I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." Ah, you cannot buy the ministry of the Holy Ghost. "Not by might, nor by power"—not by the power of wealth.

What is wealth but a concrete representation of human life and energy? All the thinking of a man's mind, the energy of his body, all that he has, he transmutes into gold; and he says, "This is my strength, and I am going to do something with it." And so he may. But in the spiritual realm he is as impotent as a babe. His wealth counts for nothing at all. You can build a temple and line it with gold itself, but no matter how elaborately it is furnished, wealth cannot command the power of God.

Nor by your learning. What an example we have had of that! Schools have sprung up everywhere in the last hundred years. (We have one of our own. May God always keep us like little children at His feet.) But of late years it has been assumed that by the power of human learning the work of God may be accomplished in the world, and from our universities and seminaries we have turned out men by the hundred, and by the thousand, with all their academic degrees, doubtless men of great learning, not simpletons by any means. But some of the most learned men in America preach to empty pews, and accomplish nothing for God by all their learning.

A friend of mine told me that he went to hear the great Canon Driver lecture in Oxford. He had heard of his fame throughout the world, and he expected that great things would be apparent. He found the great scholar lecturing to his class—and his class consisted of just one student!

There are theological seminaries in the United States to-day that have about as many professors as students. There are theological seminaries with large endowments that would give much for the student body of the Toronto Baptist Seminary. Why? For the simple reason that it is being demonstrated—it has been demonstrated—that human learning, of itself cannot bring a single soul to Christ, nor cause the work of the Lord to prosper.

And so I might go on and enumerate other elements of human power, but whatever they are, learning, eloquence, social position, all these things are utterly futile in this great work to which we, as Christians, are committed. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

Let me speak to you teachers. I have said it before, but I must say it again and again—and say it to my own heart: You will each come next Sunday morning to teach your class. Unless your teaching is energized by the power of the Holy Spirit you might just as well stay at home. It is important to understand the text of the lesson and to know exactly what to say; but it is far more important that you should go before God with the prayer that every word of yours may be set

on fire by the Holy Ghost. Only thus will your words burn their way into heart and conscience and effect a new creation, a transformation of life.

### III.

THE WORK IN WHICH WE ARE ENGAGED AS A CHURCH IS A WORK WHICH ONLY GOD CAN ACCOMPLISH. *There is no substitute for the power of the Holy Spirit.* My brothers and sisters, may I ask you very earnestly and very solemnly, with what thought did you rise this morning, as you contemplated coming to church? Did you stop to ask, "I wonder what the pastor will have to say to-day? I hope we shall have an interesting message." Did you think of me? Well, if you think rightly of God's messenger, that is all to the good; but if you would rise and say, "My pastor today has to go before men in behalf of God, and speak of things which men cannot see, which 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man'. He is sent upon a task which angels might covet, but which neither man nor angel can accomplish unless God be with him." If you meet the morning of the Lord's day with that simple thought, and then rise to say, "The great question for me is, Will God be in Jarvis Street to-day? I will not think of the pulpit, I will not think so much about the pew; but the one great question in my heart is, Are we sure that this morning the Holy Ghost will be present: and that He will exercise His ministry, breaking the rocky heart, consuming the dross, speaking the word of life to souls that are dead?" If thus we were to meditate, it would bring us all to our knees. How we should pour out our hearts before God not so much for the preacher as a man, nor for each other merely as brothers and sisters beloved, but for the presence and power of God the Spirit, so that in the singing of our hymns, in the reading of Scripture, in the offering of prayer, and in the hearing of God's word, in everything, there should be a spiritual accompaniment which will compel people to recognize that God is in this place.

How can we have that, my friends? How can we have it? How will the Holy Spirit come? Dr. Stockley read it to you this morning: "If I depart, I will send him"—Is that what Jesus said? No! He said, "If I depart, I will send him unto you." "Unto you"! "And when he, the Spirit of truth is come"—Come where? "Unto you"! When the Spirit of truth possesses God's people, then He will reprove the world, through them, of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

You will remember how that promise was fulfilled at Pentecost. "Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Where did the Spirit come? It is true He became the very Atmosphere of the place where God's people were assembled; but He came unto them; He possessed the church once and for all; on that occasion the promise that He would baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire was fulfilled. Never again is there a solitary word in Scripture to indicate that believers should seek the "baptism" of the Holy Ghost. I believe it to be an error to teach that we should be "baptized" with the Holy Ghost. The church was once and for all baptized with the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, "in one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" when we believe; and

if you and I open our hearts to the Holy Ghost. He will come in, as surely as if you open these windows the air will come in from outside. The Holy Ghost is here. We can receive Him in His fulness this morning. You do not need to wait until after dinner. He is here. We are commanded to be "filled with the Holy Ghost", not to "grieve" the Holy Ghost; not to "quench" the Holy Spirit. But never, anywhere in Scripture, is there a word to indicate as our Pentecostalist friends say, that we are to seek the "baptism" of the Holy Ghost. The ascended Lord poured out His Spirit, He immersed the church, overwhelmed her with the Holy Ghost; and from then until now He has been here as the very air about us is here. We are to open our hearts and receive Him in His fulness, and abide in His power.

But He will come to the world, and to those about us, only as He first comes to us. When He is come to you, He will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, of judgment. Let our prayer be, then, not so much that the Holy Ghost may come, but that our hearts may be opened to Him, and that we may be yielded to Him, that our lives may be flooded by His light and power. As thus we do, as that becomes our experience, we shall every one of us be fruitful branches of the Vine; and we shall be as a branch of the candlestick, fed with oil from the reservoir giving a true light. There will be a savour of Christ about us, and men will believe that the tabernacle of God is with men, and that He does actually dwell with them.

And as for you who are unconverted, salvation does not consist merely in a retrospective look, in a look back to the historic Jesus. It is true that He died on the cross, that He was buried, that He rose again, and is in the glory, and that some day He will come again. But He is our living Saviour at this very moment, and He has sent the Holy Spirit as the Executive of the Godhead to abide with His church forever. As we receive Christ as our Saviour, we should receive the Spirit as our Sanctifier. It is for us to yield to His dominance, and we shall grow up into Christ in all things. May He bless His word to His own people, and to the salvation of such as are not saved; for His name's sake!

Let us pray.

O Lord, help us to-day that without reserve we may yield our all to Thee once again. If any have wandered away, and have taken back that which they have dedicated to the Lord, we pray Thee to recall such to fellowship with Thyself, and to Thy service to-day. Bless us now as we sing our closing hymn. Fill the heart of every believer here with a desire to see others confessing Christ; and wilt Thou lead those who do not know Thee, or who have confessed Thee, in this hour publicly to avow their allegiance to Thee. For Thy name's sake, Amen.

*In response to the invitation some came seeking salvation, and then hundreds came forward, filling the space at the front of the church, and all the aisles, and others who could find no room to move in the gallery and elsewhere, raised their hands, together indicating their solemn determination to depend wholly upon the power of the Holy Ghost.*

#### ARE YOU MOODY OR SANKEY?

There was a certain old lady whose declining days were brightened by the companionship of her canary, which sang beautifully, and was always cheerful and active. She called the canary Sankey: "Because," she said, "it was not Moody".

## ELIJAH UNDER THE JUNIPER TREE

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto,  
Sunday Morning, August 18th, 1929

(Stenographically Reported)

"And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time.

"And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there.

"But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

"And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.

"And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.

"And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee.

"And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days, and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God."—I. Kings, 19:1-8.

#### Prayer Before the Sermon

O Lord, we rejoice in Thee this morning, for though Thou wast angry with us Thine anger is turned away, and now Thou dost comfort us. Thou hast smiled upon us in the person of Jesus Christ, and we have seen the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in His face. We thank Thee for Thy holy Word, for this perfect law of liberty into which we may look and behold ourselves as we really are.

We pray that Thou wouldest have regard to the need of this congregation this morning, and minister to us out of the treasures of Thy Word. Each one of us is different from all others. We each need Thy special care, Thy peculiar attention. We thank Thee that it is written in Thy Word of the Good Shepherd that He calleth His own sheep by name. We thank Thee that Thou knowest us as individuals, that we are not lost in the mass, but that Thou dost know us each for himself or herself. And we pray that Thou wilt come near to us this morning, and minister to us according to our souls' requirements.

We believe there are some here to-day who are in special need of a divine visitation. It may be there are some who have almost reached the end of human endurance; there may be some, greatly troubled souls here this morning, who need divine comfort, some who have been tempted and tried so severely that they anticipate the future with fear and almost with terror. It may be there are some who carry in their hearts a deep and inexpressible sorrow. The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with its joy. We thank Thee that Thou art no stranger to us. So we pray that Thou wilt draw near and speak in such a way this morning that everyone of us may know that God is in this place. There may be some stranger here from a great distance, someone whose name nobody here knows but himself. Yet he may need some special visitation from Thyself. We pray that the Spirit of God may find him and minister to him. When we go from this place this morning may we go with the conviction that the Lord God has been in the midst of His people! We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

IT IS now a long time since I have attempted to "preach a sermon". A true minister ought to be a messenger of God, to present to God's people a message from the Skies; and I have found again and again when the Lord has laid some special message upon my heart that there was someone in the congregation for whom it was espe-



cially designed. I desire that everyone here this morning should feel that God cares for him, that He takes account of all your experiences, that He does "not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Ours is a very gracious God, infinitely tender: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."

I shall talk to you for a little while this morning about a man who had a strange experience, and who, in his dejection, sat down under a juniper tree. You have been there yourself! The grass is pretty well worn under that tree! It is a favorite resort for many people, even many of the Lord's people. The finest text book on psychology that ever was written is the Bible, because it is the word of God; and He knows the constitution of our human nature: "He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." He knows what "stuff" we are made of; and He knows that the bravest of us are not made of steel or of iron, that we are just flesh and blood, full of weakness, subject to many limitations.

Strangely enough, this story has to do with one of the most heroic characters of history. There never was a braver man than Elijah the Tishbite. There is no record, I think, apart from that of our Lord Himself, of any character in history who learned more perfectly how to stand alone for God. You remember how it was said of him by the prophet Elisha, his successor, after he saw him go home to glory, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." Elijah was so great in his eyes that he was more than all the chariots of Israel and their horsemen. Yet he comes before us this morning as a crying child, bitterly complaining to God, and, if one might credit what he says, almost on the verge of suicide, a man who has lost all his joy, and prays that God would take away his life. What is the explanation of it? Let us look into the story a little, for it is full of inspiration for everyone of us.

### I.

Elijah had lived a victorious life, and yet I would remind you that: NO VICTORY IS ABSOLUTE; there is always something left undone. The prophets of Baal may be slain, and Ahab may be moved to repentance; but there is still some Jezebel to reckon with somewhere. You remember that significant passage in the Book of Judges to this effect: "Now these are the nations which the Lord left, to prove Israel by them, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan; only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof." Another generation had arisen who knew nothing of the cost in blood and treasure which had been paid for possession of the promised land; and some nations were left in order that succeeding generations might learn war, and know that life is perfected through conflict and struggle.

When Elijah has accomplished that marvellous victory on Carmel, Jezebel sends him a message threatening his life. If you have had your Carmel victory I congratulate you, for I believe it is the privilege of believers to live victoriously. But the war in which we are engaged consists of more than one battle, and no matter what victories you have to your credit, there still remains something to be done. There are other battles to fight, there are other enemies to face; and though you rejoiced in

conquest yesterday, you may get a letter from Jezebel today!

That is true in all departments of life. *It is true of our individual conflicts, of the inner struggle.* Do not flatter yourself that the "old man" is dead, for there is a bit of the "old man" in everyone of us—or if not, then of the old woman, and that is just as bad! If Ahab is not there, Jezebel is; and you may have your choice; but the old nature will reassert itself, and you will have to fight another battle yet.

It is true of *the work of the church collectively.* It has never had a complete victory: it never will until the Lord Himself shall come down the skies. Even Jezebel will be out of the way when the millennium comes, but until then there will always be something or somebody to trouble us.

Even the Apostle Paul, with the abundance of the revelations that were given him, had a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure. You had a hard time in your business last week? Toward the end of the week you said, "I am thankful that is straightened out, that that tangle is unravelled; I shall have clear sailing now." I do not want to be a gloomy prophet, but I warn you, you will have another knot to untie next week.

It comes into *the domestic sphere.* "The children were sick," someone says, "but they are better." Then let us be thankful. May they continue well! But do not be surprised if there should be something out of joint again next week. That is the rule of life whether you like it or not. In this life there is always someone to trouble a prophet, to trouble every servant of God. If it is not Jezebel, it will be someone else. "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." And he will never want for appropriate instruments to accomplish his purpose of harrying the saints of God.

Someone may say, "That is a gloomy prospect, is it not? Is that what you call a ministry of comfort, to tell us that we are going to have more trouble to-morrow?" No, I am only warning you—and you know it is true.

Look at the condition of Elijah. Try to understand it. Elijah runs away, apparently, from the face of Jezebel; he leaves his servant and goes a day's journey into the wilderness, and happens upon the juniper tree. He casts himself down and tells the Lord that it is all over: "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. Let me die."

Did you ever feel like that? I know there are some people who will set themselves up in a doctrinaire fashion and say, "I never did." Well, I am sorry for you if you have not—and I greatly suspect that you are not perfectly frank when you boast of your unacquaintance with the juniper tree, for most of us at some time or another have had Elijah's experience. I have to confess that I know the path to the juniper tree all too well! I should not be honest if I did not admit that I am perfectly familiar with Elijah's experience, and have prayed his prayer many, many times. You say I ought not to have done so? Perhaps some of you would be very happy this morning in reading discouraged saints a lecture. You would talk down to them and say, "Elijah, I am ashamed of you. Do you not know that you are dishonouring God? You have no right to say that." On the contrary, if you knew yourself better and human nature better you would not talk such nonsense.

## II.

Let us examine THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THIS STORY this morning. When you meet a man on Saturday, before you are competent to judge him, you must know the life he has lived during the week, and very probably for years before. Let us find out a little about Elijah. Where has he been? What has he been doing? He steps out from some unknown place of converse with Jehovah; he appears on the scene, a stern, unbending, almost merciless character, and thunders in the ears of apostate Israel; "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." And they laugh at him!—until they find that every cloud is driven from the sky. Week succeeds week, month after month passes by, and there is no dew, there is no rain, and the brooks dry up at last. They live on the surplus they accumulated last year—but the second year comes, and still there is neither rain nor dew. Elijah is fed by the ravens, and afterward by a poor widow. Every brook is dry; every growing thing has withered; the parched earth gapes and gasps, and cries to heaven for drink; granaries are empty; birds are dead by the side of the road; cattle are dead in the fields; and people are dying of famine—and one man for three and a half years stands alone for God.

Perhaps during that time he often said, "Has not the time come, O Lord, for the termination of this dreadful chastisement? May I not now pray that rain and dew may come?" But he is forbidden so to pray until the nation is reduced to the last extremity of need, until gaunt famine stalks through the land. Thus Elijah with no one to help him, no one to comfort him, no one to stand at his side, stands alone for God three and a half years. Could you do it? He took no vacation. His spirit was tense, his mind alert; he was a kind of bridge of communication between earth and heaven.

He stands alone until one day he is told to go and show himself to Ahab. He finds Obadiah and says, "Go and tell your lord, Behold, Elijah is here." "Oh," said Obadiah, "what have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee; and when they said, He is not there; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the Spirit of the Lord shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth. Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the Lord, how I hid an hundred men of the Lord's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water? And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold Elijah is here: and he shall slay me." But Elijah said, "As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely shew myself unto him to-day."

And you know how, when Elijah met Ahab, Ahab said, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" And Elijah answered, "I have not troubled Israel. The dry brooks and gaping earth and empty granaries are not caused by me. They are on account of your sin,—thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim. Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount

Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under; and call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken."

When the prophets of Baal had called from morning to evening, and there was no answer, Elijah "built an altar in the name of the Lord: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. And he said, Do it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water."

Then he prayed. He did not need to pray from morning until evening. He told the Lord about it in a few sentences, and said, "Let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again."

Then fire from heaven came down, and consumed the sacrifice upon the altar, and when the people saw it they fell on their faces and said, "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

After that Elijah gave his terrible order, and the prophets of Baal were slain. Then he went alone with his servant and prayed, and the heavens were as brass before him—you remember the story. He said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times." At last the servant said, "Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand." "All right," said Elijah, "go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not." There was a sound of abundance of rain, the clouds rolled up until the heavens were black with storm; and there was a great rain.

The three and a half years are ended! Elijah, relaxing, collapses and goes all to pieces; he is almost staggering. I can see him now. He gets the letter from Jezebel and says to his servant, "Come, let us get away." Then he goes a step further and tells the Lord all about it. Do not judge Elijah until you have spent three and a half years as he did, and then you will be competent to judge him.

Let me make application of the principle. There is a mother with the children. It is not quite Elijah's experience perhaps—she is not Elijah; she could not stand what he has stood. But she has her three and a half years of trial, day after day, day after day, the burdens

of family life—you mothers know what they are. The end of the day comes, and that poor mother's nerves are on the outside of her skin. She is overwrought, she has reached the limit of human endurance. Do not dare pass judgment upon what that woman says when she is in that condition. Or, it may be a man in business. God only knows what the poor fellow has had to endure, how he has staggered under the load. It may be a professional man. A doctor told me of his experience after a weary winter and spring. He said he had been driven almost to death, day and night, day and night, going all the time. He said, "When springtime came I was ready to explode at the slightest touch, and my wife was in the same condition." I know that you can lecture people in a condition like that and say they ought not to be petulant, they ought not to be short-tempered, and all the rest of it; but when you have passed through their experience you will be just as difficult to get on with as they are.

And this man was a preacher! We frequently have preachers here, and after a while what I say this morning will go into print and be read by two or three thousand ministers. I will take a minute therefore to talk to preachers. My brother, Sunday night is a pretty difficult night with you, is it not? It is with me, and has been for many, many years. A man needs to be very careful what he does—but more about that presently—in these periods of recation, when the three and a half years, or it may be the twelve hours, are ended, for he is only flesh and blood.

I remember hearing a great preacher once talk to preachers, and he told this story. He said, "I once heard one of the world's most famous preachers preach. I knew him personally, intimately. He always carried his hearers into the seventh heaven, but that day he seemed to break all altitude records and we got up to the throne itself. It was on a week-day, on a conference occasion, and the preacher had preached to several thousand people. As soon as the sermon was over the great company of people flocked to the platform to shake hands with the preacher. I myself was on the platform and tried to talk with him, but he said, 'No, not here. Let us get away from here! If you want to talk to me, come with me,' and he walked quickly away. We walked until we got out into the country. Turning to me he said, 'Now, Mr. So-and-So, excuse my abruptness. What was it you wanted to say?' 'I wanted to tell you that I have never heard anybody preach like you can preach, and I never heard you preach as you did this morning.' 'I know it,' he said, 'that was why I was afraid.' Very tenderly he put his hand on my knee and said, 'The greatest gift that God ever gave a preacher is an understanding friend before whom he may safely make a fool of himself. We cannot go into heaven without coming back again, and I wanted to get away from the people.'"

Before you pass judgment upon anybody's hasty word, find out the experience through which that man or woman has been passing. He may be like Elijah, at the end of his three and a half years.

Let us see what Elijah did. "When he saw that, he arose, and went for his life"—that is what he thought he was doing—"and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there"—do not forget that—"but he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness". Elijah instinctively knew that there was no one on earth who could safely be trusted to keep him company just then. "I have got to be alone; you stay there,"

and away he went into the wilderness. We make the mistake, when in our periods of depressions, of calling in our friends to talk to them. That is the very time you ought not to talk to anybody. Get away, be by yourself, be alone with God. If Jezebel could only have heard what Elijah said under the juniper tree, how she would have rejoiced! Elijah was divinely guided so that he might offer that prayer at a place where there was nobody but God to hear it. We ought to talk to God, but do not tell your neighbours about it; do not confer with your most intimate friend when those difficult hours come.

It is the most natural thing for a preacher, when the day's work is done, to say to some member of his congregation, "Come home with me." If he is a wise man he will do nothing of the kind. I knew a man once, a man of very tense disposition, a great preacher. I have heard him preach in such a way that I did not know whether I was in heaven or on earth. When it was over I have heard him, in the privacy of his own home, as playful as a kitten. His reaction was not one of depression, but of mirth. He was full of fun and jesting. Sometimes a man in that condition allows someone to hear him, and some long-faced brother says, "Can it be possible that the man who is now so irresistibly funny is the same preacher that I heard preach so solemnly an hour ago? Shocking! Shocking!" And the poor preacher neutralized his influence by allowing somebody who did not understand to be present when the reaction came. The one to whom I refer was perfectly innocent, for he was one of the godliest men I ever knew, but he made the mistake of taking somebody with him. We might far better go into the wilderness and have it out with God.

Look at poor Elijah. You cannot understand Elijah when he is standing alone, can you? Nor can I. What a splendid figure! What a moral and spiritual giant he is! But I can get nearer to him when he is prone on the ground under the juniper tree! He and I are comrades at last! He sat under the juniper tree and said, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers." We have all prayed like that. If you have had any definite experience of the grace of God, you have prayed that prayer after being used of Him. I repeat, I have offered Elijah's prayer scores and scores of times—and usually on a Sunday night when I had no reason so far as I know. Possibly many had had a blessing. But in all probability some Jezebel had happened along. It does not happen here! Jezebel does not come here, nor Ahab either—or, if they do, they do not come more than once!

### III.

WHAT CAN BE DONE FOR A MAN LIKE THAT? What will God do with a man who prays after that fashion? What did God do with him? He did what any mother does with a tired child. Have you not seen a mother with a little babe in her arms, just comforting him? He is crying, and someone asks, "Is he ill?" "No," she replies, "he is just tired." She holds him for a little while, and presently the eyes are closed; while the tears are still on his cheeks he smiles in his sleep, and mother lays him quietly on the bed. She knows that all the little fellow needed was a good sleep. And we are only God's little children.

I have no doubt that some of you, had you been near enough to do so, would have read Elijah a lecture, or

you would have said to somebody else, "I think you had better go and visit Elijah. He is very depressed in spirit. Go and talk with him. Try to cheer him up." Even God did not do that. He said in effect, "Go to bed! Go to bed and sleep!" There are a great many people who need a good sleep more than they need a good sermon. That is why, if I see people sleep in church Sunday morning—as people will do sometimes—I never try to waken them; as I think the sleep will do them more good than my sermon! Do not try to spiritualize that: take it as it stands. When Elijah had prayed that prayer—he did not mean it, although he thought he did—when he had prayed that prayer he went to sleep. He was tired out, flesh and blood had reached the limit of endurance; and in the reaction in the wilderness he went to sleep.

Mr. Spurgeon preached in Crystal Palace to twenty-three thousand people, many years ago, back in the sixties, somewhere, on a Thursday morning. He went home, went to bed, and went to sleep. He slept all Thursday afternoon and Thursday night. Friday morning he was still soundly sleeping. His wife watched him carefully, but recognized that nature was restoring the depleted stores. He slept all Friday forenoon, all Friday afternoon, all Friday night, and all Saturday forenoon; and wakened Saturday afternoon. He always spoke of that Friday as his "lost day": Why did he sleep so long? He had poured out his soul to twenty-three thousand people. When he had completed his sermon a reaction set in, and God put him to bed and gave him a good sleep.

There are many people who need a vacation more than anything else. If I were a doctor I would send some people to bed—and would send some other people away. I do not know which you need most. But literally a good sleep is often better than a sermon. So, when your wife has had a hard time, wait until to-morrow to talk that thing over, wait until she has had a good sleep—and until you have had a good sleep! The difficulty of the night will have vanished in the morning.

Then somebody touched him, and Elijah opened his eyes, and behold, an angel! God could not trust a man to minister to Elijah, so He sent an angel to look after him, to cook him a meal: "He looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head." And the angel said, "Arise and eat. Breakfast is ready. Get up, man."

Elijah got up—and the angel did not lecture him. You could not have been trusted to do that. You would have given him the breakfast, but you would have added a little wisdom to it, and spoiled the flavour! The angel simply said, "Arise and eat." He did not lecture him; he did not scold him; he did not exhort him. When Elijah had had a good meal he rubbed his eyes and said, "I do not feel as if I had had my sleep out yet" — and went back to sleep. We read of a city where there is no night, but I should not like to be where there is no night, now, would you? What a blessing it is to us all, when all is quiet and we drop off into unconsciousness and go to sleep. Mrs. Browning describes it most beautifully in her poem:

"Of all the thoughts of God that are  
Borne inward unto souls afar,  
Along the Psalmist's music deep,  
Now tell me if that any is,  
For gift of grace, surpassing this—  
He giveth His beloved, sleep?"

"What would we give to our beloved?—  
The hero's heart, to be unmoved,  
The poet's star-tuned harp, to sweep,  
The patriot's voice, to teach and rouse,  
The monarch's crown, to light the brows.—  
He giveth His beloved, sleep."

"What do we give to our beloved?—  
A little faith, all undisproved,  
A little dust to overweep,  
And bitter memories, to make  
The whole earth blasted for our sake.—  
He giveth His beloved, sleep."

"Sleep soft, beloved!" we sometimes say,  
But have no tune to charm away  
Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep;  
But never doleful dream again  
Shall break the happy slumber, when  
He giveth His beloved, sleep."

"O earth, so full of dreary noises!  
O men, with wailing in your voices!  
O delved gold, the wailers heap!  
O strife, O curse, that o'er it fall!  
God makes a silence through you all,  
And giveth His beloved, sleep."

"His dews drop mutely on the hill,  
His cloud above it saileth still,  
Though on its slope men sow and reap,  
More softly than the dew is shed,  
Or cloud is floated overhead,  
He giveth His beloved, sleep."

"Yea, men may wonder while they scan  
A living, thinking, feeling man,  
Confirmed, in such a rest to keep;  
But angels say—and through the word—  
I think their happy smile is heard—  
He giveth His beloved, sleep."

"For me, my heart that erst did go  
Most like a tired child at a show,  
That sees through tears the jugglers leap,—  
Would now its wearied vision close,  
Would childlike on His love repose,  
Who giveth His beloved, sleep!"

"And, friends, dear friends,—when it shall be  
That this low breath is gone from me,  
And round my bier ye come to weep,  
Let one, most loving of you all,  
Say, 'Not a tear must o'er her fall—  
He giveth His beloved, sleep.'"

Oh, how our gracious God understands us! I love that word, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him"—listen—"for he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."

Then Elijah was wakened a second time. The angel said, "Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee." And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God." I think he had a good meal that day. I think the angel helped him the second time! I think the angel said, "Elijah, you have not had enough. This may be the last meal you will get for a while." I do not know what you will get to-morrow, but God sometimes gives enough one day to last for many days. God may send you forty days on what you get to-day.

Someone may enquire, "Do you then justify Elijah in his complaining?" No, I do not. It is all wrong, but it is natural; and God pities all of us when we do wrong, or it would go ill with us. God chose a time to speak to Elijah. He went forty days unto a cave, and the Lord said, "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the

Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

And the Lord answered in effect, "Nonsense, Elijah! You think you are the only one, but I will show you. I have left seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." But He did not tell Elijah that under the juniper tree! He did not scold him there! He gave him two good meals and two good sleeps; and when he was rested and refreshed God spoke out of heaven. He said, "Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shamphat of Abel-mejolah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room." God could do without even Elijah!

And this man who is reported to have prayed, "Take away my life," did not die at all. Is not that wonderful? "Oh, let me die," says Elijah. And I can almost fancy I see the Heavenly Father smile as He says, "Poor child, you are the one I have selected to be the type and symbol of the multitudes whom no man can number, the multitude of the redeemed, living and dead, that will be raptured when the Lord comes down the skies." Then there came the day when the skies opened and the chariot appeared, and Elijah went up to heaven in the whirlwind—and he did not die at all! "Let me die," said Elijah. "No," said the Father, "I will send a chariot to bring you home." That is how God answers our foolish prayers. There is no reason why you should not complain to God if you must, but do not complain to anybody else. Go into the Divine Presence, go into the wilderness and pour out your heart, and He will forgive you. Is there anyone here who has not this God?

How different with Jezebel! She was thrown down by the walls, and the dogs licked her blood. I would rather be Elijah under the juniper tree than Jezebel upon a throne.

Let us ask God for His blessing:

O Lord, many of Thy children, we are sure, have been very tired. We pray Thee to bless this simple meditation this morning, and help us to think of God as One Who understands us. Let Thy blessing be upon any who know not Christ, and bring them to Thyself. Bless us everyone, for Thy name's sake, Amen.

### GOD, THE FATHER

There is, therefore, a very real sense in which we may give thanks for God's holy anger. Our friends smile upon our sins, and so help to nourish them. They are tolerant with our stains, and so keep us from purity. But God loves us in such wise as to be intolerant of everything that would destroy us.

—J. H. JOWETT.

### ENDURANCE.

A Message for Days of Depression

WRITERS in many periodicals speak as though spring were coming to the business world, as though what we have called the "depression" must inevitably move on as winter does as the sun's rays increase in power. Not a few seem to have adopted a kind of commercial Cuckism, saying over and over again to themselves, "Every day, in every way, I am getting better and better."

We would be the last to stop the birds from singing; nor would we utter a word which could make men more gloomy, or less cheerful. On the other hand, we fear the exhortation to "cheer up" may possibly be overdone. We must not forget that "hope deferred maketh the heart sick". A heavy snow storm in early spring is sometimes more distressing than in mid-winter, because the popular mind has adjusted itself to an expectation of spring's coming.

The proverbial danger that lies in the frequent cry of "Wolf! Wolf!" may be found to reside in a too laboured attempt to raise men's spirits. Certain stimulants have their value in a cardiac crisis. But stimulants too often administered are likely to lose their power to stimulate. It seems to us therefore that it would be a much wiser course plainly to face facts, and adjust one's self to them. By universal consent the present distress is unprecedented in its extent if not in its intensity.

When the late Lord Kitchener became Secretary of State for War during the Great War he did not promise that the war would be over in two or three months, but immediately summoned the Empire to prepare for a war of at least three years. And what weary years they were! There were great battles, the casualties of which were too horrible to contemplate. There were great victories. But the many victories—and the ultimate victory—were made possible not by brilliant military tactics, but by sheer endurance. Millions of men who went through it still remember their long periods in the trenches, when all they could do was to hang on, merely to endure.

And so has it ever been: Victory is dependent upon qualities of endurance. It seems to us that Christian people nowadays must, for their own spiritual health's sake, face once more this principle: the present distress will not be relieved by any brilliant manoeuvre on the part of one or more governments. We have no doubt it will pass. Relief at last will come. But we are of the opinion that it will not come as a result of political measures effected through the discernment and determination of unusually acute economists. Relief will come like the spring, in God's time, and by the operation of His laws. Distress will depart just as the winter departs, as the ice breaks up, and the rivers flow again. All will come about by the operation of laws which are beyond human control.

Meanwhile it becomes a Christian duty to endure. We ought to prepare to endure as one prepares for a long and hard winter. What contribution can our holy religion make to this quality of endurance? We are admonished to "endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ". Paul said he endured all things for the elect's sake. Our Lord said, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." Therefore do we need to pray for grace to walk and not faint.

It is not easy to be happy in rough weather, or amid adverse circumstances. It is said of Him Who is our great Example that He *endured* the cross. So must we learn to endure the ills we cannot escape, and the privations we cannot mitigate. We need therefore afresh to



take unto ourselves the whole armour of God, to take full advantage of all the exceeding great and precious promises whereby are given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness. As Christian men and women we had better dig ourselves in.

We have heard some inexperienced young soldiers mock at the exhortation contained in the familiar hymn, "Hold the fort." We have heard them bravely say that the proper thing to do is to storm the ramparts of the enemy, to push the battle to the gate, and press on to victory. All that is true, and very easy of acceptance—theoretically. But those who know something about the mud of the trenches, and the discomfort of the dugouts, know that it requires a pretty brave spirit sometimes merely to hold the fort.

Thousands of men are applying that principle to their businesses just now. There are a few men who might, conceivably, liquidate sufficient of their assets to provide themselves and their families with bread and butter were they content to close their establishments and turn all their employees adrift. But for the sake of others dependent upon them, and in the hope that commercial relief may some day come, they are holding on, making no progress perhaps, but merely "holding the fort".

This principle must apply not only to the individual Christian, but to the church, and to each individual church. Perhaps it has never been more difficult for some churches to keep their doors open than now. Expenditures of all sorts have had to be curtailed. We trust our brother pastors will not allow themselves to be discouraged because they are unable to report that they have pushed their frontline trenches forward into the enemy's territory, and taken many of the enemy prisoners. Only be sure, brother, that despair or despondency is not allowed to make a prisoner of you. Set your teeth, metaphorically. Cast yourselves upon God once more. Resolve that if you cannot make headway, there shall be no retreat. Determine that no matter what the hardships may be, no white flag shall be waved, but that until reinforcements arrive you will "hold the fort".

#### DWELLING WITH THE ROSE

A Persian fable says: one day  
A wanderer found a lump of clay  
So redolent of sweet perfume,  
Its odor scented all the room.  
"Who art thou?" was his quick demand,  
"Art thou same gem from Samarcand,  
Or spikenard in this rude disguise,  
Or other costly merchandise?"  
"Nay I am but a lump of clay."  
"Then whence this wondrous sweetness—say?"  
"Friend, if the secret I disclose,  
I have been dwelling with the Rose."

—Selected.

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#### THE REAL HEART OF THE MATTER

LONG ago a wise man, divinely inspired, admonished, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

That, everyone will instantly recognize, is true of the physical organ. One may break a leg or an arm, and if it is properly set, the bones will knit at the point of fracture, and become as strong as ever; or, if such a member be so badly fractured or diseased as to make repair impossible, it may be amputated, and the man may live with one or more members missing. The same is true of an eye. Delicate and useful as that organ is, one may pluck it out and cast it from him, and, having only one eye, still live.

These are organs of the body which have well-defined and unmistakable functions which may be similarly treated; and if one be removed, the remaining organ will take up the slack and do extra duty.

But nobody has more than one heart. Why it throbs, why it continues to send the blood coursing through our veins, science has never discovered. The original motive power which set it going in the beginning, and which keeps it going, we vaguely call life; but nobody really knows what "life" is. But we do know that "out of it are the issues of life". A man may be as expert a marksman as Nimrod, as strong as Samson, as courageous as David, as fleet of foot as Asahel; but if his heart is impaired in any way, the whole body feels it, and the man's special physical expertness ceases. Therefore one must needs keep the heart with all diligence. One can strain a muscle, weary the back, and even do violence to the stomach, and recover from it; but only a foolish man will trifle with his heart.

But how manifestly true this is of our moral and spiritual natures. It is of the moral centre of our being particularly the wise man speaks—the seat of the conscience, the intelligence, the affections, the will. If "with the heart" we believe unto righteousness, and if thereafter Christ shall dwell in our hearts by faith, the issues of life will inevitably bear a characteristic Christian quality. But where the reverse is true, the issues of life will ultimately reveal the character of the impure fountain from which they spring.

That is true of that body which is composed collectively of regenerated people, and which the New Testament calls the church. The heart of the church is its distinctively spiritual nature, within which the Lord of glory, in His fulness, dwells. That is the seat of the affections, of the intelligence, of the conscience, and of the will. If thus a church has a vigorous heart, its life will issue in Christian service. It will be beneficial to men, and glorifying to God. But when the spiritual quality of a church declines, its serviceableness is, to that extent, impaired; and its capacity for blessing men and glorifying God is diminished.

Our next proposal would perhaps, by many, be denied; but we are sure we are right. Our Lord said, "Ye are the salt of the earth"; "Ye are the light of the world." The church may be a little member, it may be but a little flock; but as a little leaven leavens the whole lump, so a little salt may preserve a great mass; and as a single candle set on a candle-stick may give light to all in the house, so the church's spiritualized standards of intelligence will shine as a light in the world; and a really vital church will make the issues of a nation's life, from which it springs, to partake of the qualities of that righteousness "which exalteth a nation". But if the church be



without moral and spiritual authority, if the Word of God be displaced, and the power of the Holy Ghost be withdrawn, that which is called a church becomes but as salt which has lost its savour, and which is "thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men".

Only this week a gentleman told us of a conversation he had had with a certain minister who reported that on a recent Sunday he had taken as a subject of discussion, "What does the church stand for?" He enunciated many things which ought to be characteristic of any truly Christian church, with which he said the modern church had nothing to do. He concluded his address by telling his people that if any of them knew what the church really did stand for, he would be obliged to them if they would inform him; that as for himself, it appeared to him to stand for nothing.

That, of course, must be true when Christ and His Word are no longer at the heart of it. So in our day the modern church, in so many instances, has ceased to exercise even a moral influence, to say nothing of its having ceased to be a spiritual power. It makes no contribution to the public conscience. It permits iniquity to abound without opposition. It suffers the Word of God to be rejected, and the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ to be repudiated—and offers no word of protest.

That being true of the nation, it applies to international relationships. The dissemination of doubt in respect to the Word of God, and therefore of God Himself, removes the fear of God from men's eyes; and, having destroyed all confidence in Him, men soon lose confidence in each other, and like individuals and small communities, nations become suspicious of each other — and the fear of man supplants the fear of God, and produces the snare of the present world paralysis.

### THE BIBLE ON LABOUR AND CAPITAL

In the South of France at harvest time, a colporteur came upon a farmer and his men eating their lunch in the field. The colporteur offered his books, but the farmer replied, "It is no use trying to sell us such books. In the day time we have no time to read them and at night we are too tired."

"Well then," said the colporteur, "may I sit down for a moment? Perhaps you would allow me to read you something from my book while you are eating your lunch?"

The colporteur opened his New Testament at the third chapter of the letter to the Colossians, verse 22, and read: "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God."

Leaping up, the farmer cried out, "What, does that book say that? It must be a good book. My hired men do not work the way they ought to work. I will buy a copy of that book."

Without saying another word, the colporteur continued to read as far as the first verse of the following chapter: "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven."

Now it was the turn of the workers to prick up their ears, and one of them exclaimed: "Our master has told our faults, but does he give us our due? We too should like to have this book!" And the colporteur sold several copies of the New Testament during the lunch time.

—Translated from *Le Lien Fraternel*.

### EARNESTNESS IN PREACHING

If a cripple do but unlap his sores, and show you his disabled limbs, it will move you without words; and will not the case of souls, that are near to damnation, move you? O happy church, if the physicians were but healed themselves; and if we had not too much of that infidelity and stupidity against which we daily preach in others; and were more soundly persuaded of that of which we persuade others; and were more deeply affected with the wonderful things wherewith we would affect them!

Were there but such clear and deep impressions upon our own souls; of those glorious things which we daily preach, oh what a change would it make in our sermons, and in our private course of life! Oh what a miserable thing it is to the church and to themselves, that men must preach of heaven and hell, before they soundly believe that there are such things, or have felt the weight of the doctrines which they preach! It would amaze a sensible man to think what matters we preach and talk of, — what it is for the soul to pass out of this flesh, and appear before a righteous God, and enter upon unchangeable joy or unchangeable torment! Oh, with what amazing thoughts do dying men apprehend these things! How should such matters be preached and discoursed of! Oh the gravity, the seriousness, the incessant diligence, which these things require! I know not what others think of them; but for my part, I am ashamed of my stupidity, and wonder at myself that I deal not with my own and others' souls, as one that looks for the great day of the Lord, — and that I can have room for almost any other thoughts or words, and that such astonishing matters do not wholly absorb my mind. I marvel how I can preach of them slightly and coldly — and how I can let men alone in their sins — and that I do not go to them and beseech them, for the Lord's name, to repent, how ever they may take it, and whatever pains or trouble it may cost me! I seldom come out of the pulpit, but my conscience smiteth me that I have been no more serious and fervent in such a case. It accuseth me not so much for want of ornaments or elegancy, nor for letting fall an unhandsome word; but it asketh me, "How couldst thou speak of life and death with such a careless, sleepy manner? Dost thou believe what thou sayest? Art thou in earnest or in jest? How canst thou tell people that sin is such a thing, and that so much misery is upon them and before them, and be no more affected with it? Shouldst thou not weep over such a people, and should not thy tears interrupt thy words? Shouldst not thou cry aloud, and show them their transgressions, and entreat and beseech them as for life and death." Truly, this is the peal that conscience doth ring in my ears, and yet my drowsy soul will not be awakened.

—RICHARD BAXTER

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# Bible School Lesson Outline

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

## DAVID AND JONATHAN

Lesson Text: 1 Samuel 20:1-18.

Golden Text: "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."—Proverbs 18:24.

The friendship between David and Jonathan has become proverbial. Jonathan delighted much in David (1 Sam. 19:2), and loved him as his own soul (1 Sam. 18:1, 3; 20:17; 2 Sam. 1:26). A loyal friend is a gift from God. Teachers should point out to scholars the importance of choosing as friends those with whom they may walk in the ways of God so that both are strengthened and encouraged in holy living.

The story of the friendship between David and Jonathan supplies us with lessons concerning the duties and privileges of friends, but it also furnishes us with many illustrations of the relationship existing between the Lord Jesus Christ and His saints. For example, Jonathan, the king's son, loved one of his father's subjects, even as our Saviour has bestowed love upon the subjects of His Father's kingdom (1 John 3:1, 2). Again, Jonathan put upon David his own royal robe, even as Christ has bestowed the holy garment of His righteousness upon the believer (2 Cor. 5:21). Moreover, this glorious friendship was confirmed by a solemn covenant of mutual trust (1 Sam. 18:3; 20:8; 23:18; Heb. 8:10). As Jonathan conducted David into the presence of his father, Saul (1 Sam. 19:7), so also does our Saviour escort us to the very throne of His Father (Rom. 5:2; Heb. 2:10). Again, David had found grace in the eyes of Jonathan (1 Sam. 20:3; Eph. 2:8), to whom the father would reveal all his plans (John 5:20).

"A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity" (Prov. 17:17). David's exploit of slaying Goliath brought into play Saul's bitter and unwarranted jealousy (1 Sam. 18:6-8), but, on the other hand, the hatred of the king provided an opportunity for the ripening of this strong friendship between David and Jonathan. Thus, while Satan's darts are invariably aimed at the man or woman who dares to stand to the front in the Lord's service, God will give His blessing to the one persecuted for righteousness' sake (Matt. 5:10-12; 1 Pet. 4:14), and what greater earthly blessing can be desired at such a time than the comfort and companionship of a Christian friend, one whose love will give a just interpretation to our actions (Prov. 27:19)?

The Lord remained with David when he was forced to flee from the angry king and gave him protection, using as His instruments the king's son (1 Sam. 19:1-10); the king's daughter (1 Sam. 19:11-17), the king's messengers (1 Sam. 19:20-22) and Samuel (1 Sam. 19:18, 19, 23, 24). The season of fellowship with Samuel in Naioth strengthened David for the trials which were yet to come (verse 1). The Lord had indeed prepared a table before David in the presence of his enemies (Psa. 23:5).

David poured out his complaint and his fear in the sympathetic ears of his friend (verse 1); secure in the knowledge of Jonathan's love and loyalty, the fugitive felt free to share with him the sorrow of his heart. Their friendship was based on mutual love, admiration and confidence (verse 9). The Christian has a Friend Who will sympathize with him and help him in every time of need (Heb. 4:14-16). Earthly friends may deceive us, "one day soothe, the next day grieve us"; they may despise and forsake us, but Christ the Lord will ever be faithful (Heb. 13:5, 6).

Jonathan encouraged his friend with the words "Thou shalt not die." While facing the truth of the danger, Jonathan reminded David of the king's attitude toward his son, which meant that Jonathan would be informed of any real threat to the life of David. Thus, he strengthened his hand in God (1 Sam. 23:16). It is the privilege of a friend to encourage his brother in adversity by reasonable arguments from the Word of God (2 Tim. 1:16-18).

Jonathan offered his services, wholeheartedly devoting himself to the cause of David (verse 4). By so doing he took his place beside the banished youth in the wood (1 Sam.

23:16; Heb. 13:12), entered into his sufferings (verses 34, 41, 42; 1 Pet. 3:18), endured the king's wrath (verse 30; Isa. 53:4, 5; Rom. 5:9), and exposed himself to death on behalf of his friend (verse 33; Rom. 5:6, 8), reminding us in all these particulars of the Saviour's atoning work on behalf of men.

David requested that Jonathan intercede with his father Saul on his behalf (verses 5-8, 27-29). It is a great thing to have a friend at court (1 Tim. 2:5). We have an Advocate, an Intercessor, Whose advocacy is always successful, and Who has brought about a perfect, permanent reconciliation (Rom. 8:33, 34; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1), in contrast to the failure of Jonathan's well-meaning efforts (verses 25-31; 1 Sam. 19:4-8). God has provided adequate means whereby His banished may return (2 Sam. 14:14).

Jonathan devised a plan whereby he might learn the truth concerning his father's intentions and protect David, if possible (verses 12, 13). Love will hide a multitude of sins (1 Pet. 4:8), and the true friend will do his best to shelter and protect the beloved one, yet without compromise. Our Saviour provides shelter and deliverance for us from sin, sorrow and death (Psa. 61:2; 62:1, 2; 71:1-7). He will stand between us and our enemies, protecting us from their wrath (Psa. 102:2; 118:6; 137:7).

Jonathan counted it a privilege to pray for his friend in the time of need (verses 12, 13). This was, perhaps, the greatest contribution he could make to the welfare of the future king of Israel. Let us be faithful in praying one for another (1 Sam. 12:23; Job 42:10; Rom. 15:30; Eph. 6:18). David was thus enabled to depart in peace, with a benediction from the Lord resting upon him (verse 42).

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Jan. 4—The Covenant of Love	1 Sam. 18:1-14.
Jan. 5—The Intercession of Love	1 Sam. 19:1-10.
Jan. 6—Jonathan's Plan	1 Sam. 20:14-24.
Jan. 7—Jonathan's Intercession	1 Sam. 20:25-34.
Jan. 8—David Departing in Peace	1 Sam. 20:35-42.
Jan. 9—David Encouraged	1 Sam. 23:9-18.
Jan. 10—Christ Jesus Our Friend	Heb. 2.

### SUGGESTED HYMNS

Behold, what love! What a Friend we have in Jesus! I've found a Friend. Jesus, what a Friend of sinners! One there is above all others. There's not a Friend like the lowly Jesus.

### SHALL WE HAVE A NATIONAL GRUMBLING DAY?

"How it would revolutionize life if we could agree to have one day a year for murmuring and complaining, for letting out the flood of pent-up annoyances and grudges and slights, and be thankful the rest of the time! How much better than to try to be thankful one day by law and grumble by impulse for three hundred and sixty-four! Let us today sound a thankful note to ring through the year." —MALTBIE D. BABCOCK

### BOOKS AND BOOKLETS By DR. T. T. SHIELDS

"The Plot That Failed"	2.00
"Other Little Ships"	\$2.00
Special Illustrated Number of Sept. 28	.25
"Russellism or Rutherfordism", 71 pages	.25
"The Papacy in the Light of Scripture", 26 pages	.25
"The Oxford Group Analyzed"	.05
"Does Killed in Action Mean Gone to Heaven?"	.05
"The Christian Attitude Toward Amusements"	.05
"The God of All Comfort"	.05

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