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The Kind of Revival Wanted by the Church

A Prayer-Meeting Address, by C. H. Spurgeon

WHAT a company we have here to-night! It fills my heart with gladness and my eyes with tears of joy to see so many hundreds of persons gathered together at what is sometimes wickedly described as “only a prayer-meeting”. It is good for us to draw nigh unto God in prayer, and specially good to make up a great congregation for such a purpose. We have attended little prayer-meetings of four or five, and we have been glad to be there, for we had the promise of our Lord’s presence; but our minds are grieved to see so little attention given to united prayer by many of our churches. We have longed to see great numbers of God’s people coming up to pray, and we now enjoy this sight. Let us praise God that it is so. How could we expect a blessing if we were too idle to ask for it? How could we look for a Pentecost if we never met with one accord, in one place, to wait upon the Lord? Brethren, we shall never see much change for the better in our churches in general till the prayer-meeting occupies a higher place in the esteem of Christians. To mix it up with the week-night lecture, and really make an end of it, is a sad sign of declension. I wonder some two or three earnest souls in such churches do not band themselves together to restore the meeting for prayer, and bind themselves with a pledge to keep it up whether the minister will come to it or not.

But now that we have come together, how shall we pray? Let us not degenerate into formality, or we shall be dead while we think we live. Let us not waver through unbelief, or we shall pray in vain. The Lord saith to his church to-night, “Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.” Oh, for great faith with which to offer great prayers to-night! We have been mingling praise and prayer together as a delicious compound of spices, fit to be presented upon the altar of incense through Christ our Lord; may we not at this time offer some special far-reaching petition? It is suggested to me that we *pray for a true and genuine revival of religion through the world.*

I am glad of any signs of life, even if they should be

feverish and transient, and I am slow to judge any well-intended movement; but yet I am very fearful that many so-called “revivals” have in the long run wrought more harm than good. Places which have had the most of religious excitement are frequently the most hard to reach. Men’s minds have been baked hard in the oven of fascination. A species of religious gambling has fascinated many men, and given them a distaste for the sober business of true godliness. But if I would nail down counterfeits upon the counter, I do not therefore undervalue true gold. Far from it. It is to be desired beyond measure that the Lord would send a real and lasting revival of spiritual life. We need a work of the Holy Ghost of a supernatural kind, putting power into the preaching of the word, inspiring all believers with heavenly energy, and solemnly affecting the hearts of the careless, so that they turn to God and live. We would not be drunk with the wine of carnal excitement, but we would be filled with the Spirit; we would not leap upon the altar, and shout and cry, “O Baal, hear us”; but we would behold the fire descending from heaven in answer to the effectual fervent prayers of righteous men. Can we not entreat the Lord our God to make bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the people in this day of declension and vanity?

We want a revival of *old-fashioned doctrine*. Our fear is that, if modern thought proceeds much further, the fashion of our religion will be as much Mahometan as Christian; in fact, it will be more like infidelity than either. A converted Jew, staying in London, went into a dissenting chapel which I could mention, and when he reached the friend with whom he was staying, he enquired what the religion of the place could be, for he had heard nothing of what he had received as the Christian faith. The doctrines which are distinctive of the New Testament may not be actually denied in set terms, but they are spirited away: the phrases are used, but a new sense is attached to them. Certain moderns talk much of

Christ, and yet reject Christianity. Under cover of extolling the Teacher, they reject his teaching for theories more in accord with the spirit of the age. At first, Calvinism was too harsh, then evangelical doctrines became too antiquated, and now the Scriptures themselves must bow to man's alteration and improvement. There is plenty of preaching in the present day in which no mention is made of the depravity of human nature, the work of the Holy Ghost, the blood of atonement, or the punishment of sin. The Deity of Christ is not so often assailed, but the gospel which he gave us through his own teaching and that of the apostles is questioned, criticized, and set aside. One of the great missionary societies actually informs us, by one of its writers, that it does not send out missionaries to save the heathen from the wrath to come, but to prepare them "for the higher realm which awaits them beyond the river of death." I confess I have better hopes for the future of the heathen than for the state of those who thus write concerning them. The heathen will derive but small advantage from the gospel which such triflers with the Scriptures are likely to carry them. I know not a single doctrine which is not at this hour studiously undermined by those who ought to be its defenders; there is not a truth that is precious to the soul which is not now denied by those whose profession it is to proclaim it. The times are out of joint, and many are hoping to make them more and more so. To me it is clear that we need a revival of old-fashioned gospel preaching like that of Whitefield and Wesley; to me, preferably that of Whitefield. We need to believe the Scriptures must be made the infallible foundation of all teaching; the ruin, redemption, and regeneration of mankind must be set forth in unmistakable terms, and that right speedily, or faith will be more rare than gold of Ophir. We must demand from our teachers that they give us a "Thus saith the Lord"; for at this time they give us their own imaginations. To-day the Word of the Lord in the book of Jeremiah is true: "Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They say still unto them that despise me, The Lord hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you." Jer. 23:16, 17. Beware of those who say that there is no hell, and who declare new ways to heaven. May the Lord have mercy upon them!

Urgently do we need a revival of *personal godliness*. This is, indeed, the secret of church prosperity. When individuals fall from their steadfastness, the church is tossed to and fro; when personal faith is steadfast, the church abides true to her Lord. We have in and around our own denomination many true-hearted servants of Christ, who are hardly put to it to know what to do. Their loyalty to their Lord and to his truth is greater than their love to sect or party, and they know not whether to abide in their present position, and fight out the great question, or to lift the old banner, and quit their apostatizing associates. Do whichever they say, it is upon the truly godly and spiritual that the future of religion depends in the hand of God. Oh, for more truly holy men, quickened and filled with the Holy Spirit, consecrated to the Lord, and sanctified by his truth! What can be accomplished by worldly professors, theatre-going church-members, semi-infidel teachers, and philosophical preachers? Nothing but ruin can follow from a prepon-

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derance of these. Their presence is grievous to God, and disastrous to his people. Brethren, we must each one live if the church is to be alive; we must live unto God if we expect to see the pleasure of the Lord prospering in our hands. Sanctified men are the necessity of every age, for they are the salt of society, and the saviour of the race. The Lord has made a man more precious than a wedge of gold — I mean a decided, instructed, bold, unswerving man of God.

We deeply want a revival of *domestic religion*. We have been saddened at the terrible accounts of the impurity of this city; but, doubtless, one cause of this state of things is the neglect of household religion among Christians, and the entire absence of common decency in many of the lodgings of the poor. The Christian family was the bulwark of godliness in the days of the Puritans; but in these evil times hundreds of families of so-called Christians have no family worship, no restraint upon growing sons, and no wholesome instruction or discipline. See how the families of many professors are as dressy, as gay, as godless as the children of the non-religious! How can we hope to see the kingdom of our Lord advance when his own disciples do not teach his gospel to their own sons and daughters? Have we not need to repeat the lament of Jeremiah? "Even the sea monsters draw out the breast, they give suck to their young ones: the daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness." How different this from the father of the faithful, of whom the Lord said, "I know Abraham, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of

the Lord"! The surest way to promote godliness abroad is to labour for it at home. The shortest method for the overthrow of priestcraft is for every man to be the priest in his own house, and to warn his sons against deceitful men. May our dear children be so well taught from infancy that they may not only escape the common vices of the age, but grow up to become patterns of holiness! This is a great difficulty to our poorer friends in this loathsome city, which is becoming as polluted as heathendom. A good sister, who lives close to this house of prayer, came up from a country town with her little boy, and she was horrified before long to hear him use profane language, being evidently unaware of its meaning. He had picked it up in the street close to his mother's door. Where are the children of working-folks to run if they are not able to walk the streets? All around us vice has become so daring that a blind man may almost be envied; but even he has ears, and will, therefore, be vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. Good people say to me, "What are we to do?" I wish those who live in the breezy country village would stop there, and not come into our close streets, and lanes, and courts, which reek with blasphemy and dirty talk. Why do working-men so often think it necessary in their ordinary conversation, to use such abominable expressions, which have no useful meaning, and are simply disgusting? If ever Christian people should be pure, and should watch over their children with a holy jealousy, now is the time, and this is a worthy subject for daily prayer.

I would sooner have the doctrines of grace revived, individual piety deepened, and family religion increased, than I would watch a frantic crowd parading the street with noisy music, and harsh clamour. I see no special virtue in drums and tambourines. Make what noise you will to attract the careless if you afterwards give them sound instruction in the truth, and make them to know the meaning of the Word of the Lord; but if it be mere stir, and song, and swagger, what is the good of it? If gospel truth is not taught, your work will be a building of wood, hay, and stubble, soon to be consumed. Quick building is seldom permanent. Gold, silver, and precious stones are scarce material, not easily found; but then they endure the fire. What is the use of a religion which comes up in a night, and perishes as soon? Ah me, what empty bragging we have heard! The thing was done, but then it was never worth doing; soon things were as if it never had been done; and, moreover, this sham way of doing it made it all the harder toil for the real worker.

Oh, Christian men and women, be thorough in what you do, and know, and teach! Hold truth as with an iron grip; let your families be trained in the fear of God, and be yourselves "holiness unto the Lord"; so shall you stand like rocks amid the surging waves of error and ungodliness which rage around you.

We want, also, more and more, a revival of *vigorous consecrated strength*. I have pleaded for true piety; I now beg for one of the highest results of it. We need *saints*. It may be that all cannot attain unto "the first three"; but we cannot do without champions. We need gracious minds raised to a high form of spiritual life by much converse with God in solitude. These are the standard-bearers of the army: each one is as a king's son. There is an air about them, humble as they are, as of men who breathe a purer atmosphere. Such was Abraham, who, by his communion with God, acquired a more than royal bearing. The king of Sodom shrinks into in-

significance in the presence of the high-minded sheik who will not take of his lawful spoils from a thread to a shoe-latchet, lest the heathen king should say, "I have made Abraham rich." Saints acquire nobility from their constant resort to the place where the Lord meets with them. There, also, they acquire that power in prayer which we so greatly need. Oh, that we had more men like John Knox, whose prayers were more terrible to Queen Mary than ten thousand men! Oh, that we had more Elijahs, by whose faith the windows of heaven should be shut or opened! This power comes not by a sudden effort; it is the outcome of a life devoted to the God of Israel. If our life is all in public, it will be a frothy, vapoury, ineffectual existence; but if we hold high converse with God in secret, we shall be mighty for good. The Puritans were abundant in meditation and prayer; and there were giants in the earth in those days. He that is a prince with God will take high rank with men, after the true measure of nobility.

May the Lord send us many self-contained Christians, whose godliness leans on God for itself, and is not a second-hand affair! We see too many Christian people depending upon another, like houses "run up" by "jerry-builders," which are so slenderly built that, if you were to pull down the last one in the row, they would all follow. Beware of being a lean-to; endeavour to rest on your own walls of real faith in the Lord Jesus. I tremble for a church whose continuance depends upon the talent and cleverness of one man. If he is removed, the whole thing will collapse: this is a wretched business. May none of us fall into a mean, poverty-stricken dependence on man! We want among us believers like those solid, substantial family mansions which stand from generation to generation as landmarks of the country; no lath-and-plaster fabrics, but edifices solidly constructed to bear all weathers, and defy time itself. Given a host of men who are steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, and then the glory of God's grace will be clearly manifested, not only in them, but in those round about them. The Lord send us a revival of consecrated strength, and heavenly energy! May the weakest among us be as David, and David as the angel of the Lord!

As for you who are not converted to God, many of you will be caught in the great wave of blessing, if God shall cause it to break over us. When saints live unto God, sinners are converted to God. "I was converted," said one, "not by hearing a sermon, but by seeing one." "How was that?" he was asked. "My next door neighbour was the only man in the street who went to a place of worship; and, as I saw him go out as regularly as clockwork, I said to myself, 'That man regards the Sabbath, and the God of the Sabbath, and I do not.' By-and-by I went into his house, and I saw that comfort and order reigned in it, while my room was wretched. I saw how his wife and children dwelt in love, and I said to myself, 'This home is happy because the father fears God.' I saw my neighbour calm in trouble, and patient under persecution. I knew him to be upright, true, and kind, and I said to myself, 'I will find out this man's secret,' and thus I was converted." Preach by your hands if you cannot preach by your tongues. When our church-members show the fruits of true godliness, we shall soon have enquiries for the tree which bears such a crop.

Dear friends, at our prayer-meetings of late our Lord has very graciously spoken to one and another, of the unconverted among us. What a mercy that they were so

far interested as to come! We have not said very much to them, but we have been praying for them, and we have talked of the joys of our holy faith, and one after another they have quietly given their hearts to God while in the prayer-meeting. I feel very glad about it; it was all that we needed to make these meetings the gate of heaven. Such conversions are specially beautiful, they are so altogether of the Lord, and are so much the result of his working by the whole church, that I am doubly delighted with them. Oh, that every gathering of faithful men might be a lure to attract others to Jesus! May many souls fly to him because they see others speeding in that direction! Why not? The coming together of the saints is the first part of Pentecost, and the ingathering of sinners is the second. It began with "only a prayer-meeting", but it ended with a grand baptism of thousands of converts. Oh, that the prayers of believers may act as loadstones to sinners! There are a few among us who are not saved, and but a few. I do not believe they will long escape the saving influence which floods these assemblies. We have made a holy ring around certain of them; and they must soon yield to our importunity, for we are pleading with God as well as with them. Their wives are praying for them, their brothers and sisters are praying for them, and others are in the devout confederacy; therefore they must be brought in. Oh, that they would come at once! Why this reluctance to be blessed? Why this hesitation to be saved? Lord, we turn from these poor foolish procrastinators to thyself, and we plead for them with thine all-wise and gracious Spirit! Lord, turn them, and they shall be turned! By their conversion prove that a true revival has commenced to-night! Let it spread through all our households, and then run from church to church till the whole of Christendom shall be ablaze with the heaven-descended fire!

—C. H. SPURGEON

DR. G. B. VICK CONVENTION SPEAKER

Dr. G. Beauchamp Vick, pastor of the great Temple Baptist Church in Detroit, is to be one of the special speakers at the forthcoming Convention of The Conservative Regular Baptist Association of Canada to be held in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto from October 18 to October 20. Dr. Vick is America's foremost Sunday School leader. His own Bible School in Detroit has had attendance of over 5,000. On Labour Day weekend we were present at his service and despite the fact that this was the last holiday of the summer season, 4,010 had assembled for the Bible School. Those who are burdened for Sunday School work would be well-advised to set aside Wednesday, October 19 and to attend the Convention on that day. Dr. Vick will be speaking at that time on the work of the Bible School.

SUNDAY IN JARVIS STREET

There was a noticeable increase in the attendance at the Bible School on Sunday. Children and parents returned in numbers after the holiday season. Dr. Slade preached at both services. In the morning his subject was "The Second Pentecost"; in the evening he spoke on "Justified by Faith".

PRAYING FOR BLESSING

At the Sunday services the Pastor announced that every night of this week would be given over to prayer meetings in Greenway Hall. All other evening meetings were cancelled that the believers might spend each night before the throne of grace. Prayer is being made for the local work in all its departments and for fellow New Testament churches in the Association as well as for all who truly preach Christ and honour His Word. There is a definite feeling that the Lord has much in store for those who seek to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.

On Monday night the first meeting was held at 8 p.m. We have always heard that Monday is a poor night for a church service. This may be true but we do know that nearly one hundred people met in Greenway Hall last Monday for the one purpose of *prayer*. There was no lengthy message, no testimonies and little singing. The people had a mind to pray and felt that the Lord drew near. Let our readers join with us in prayer that the Lord may rend the heavens and come down to bless.

DR. KINNEY TO SPEAK

Dr. Kenneth R. Kinney, pastor of First Baptist Church, Johnson City, New York, will be the speaker on October 18 and October 20 at the Convention of The Conservative Regular Baptist Association of Canada. Dr. Kinney who is also president of the American Council of Christian Churches will deliver the Toronto Baptist Seminary Convocation address on Thursday night, October 20. We feel sure that our readers in the vicinity of Toronto will want to hear all these addresses.

CHURCH OF THE HOLY REFRIGERATOR

It is not easy to hatch chickens in an ice-house, or nurture lambs in a snow-drift; and it is equally difficult to train young converts in churches which have the atmosphere of cellars. Many a strong Christian looks back with thankfulness to the warmth of a living church which cast its protection around him when he was but a babe in Christ; while others, who were born strong and vigorous, are almost frozen to death in some "church of the holy refrigerator".

The *Golden Rule* quotes a remark made at a recent convention, that much of the discredit thrown upon evangelistic labours results from the cold state of the churches into which the new convert is ushered. Everything is warm in the revival meeting; after the revival, everything is coldly formal in the regular meetings of the church. The utmost that can be said of some churches is that they are eminently respectable. Into this atmosphere comes the young convert; and no wonder that his spiritual life-blood is congealed, and that people say in future years, "I don't believe in revivals. We had a great awakening, but where are the converts now?" The fault lies quite as much with the church as with the superficial nature of the revival. The speaker put the matter in a nutshell when he remarked, "The wise raiser of poultry does not take his chickens out of the incubator and put them into a refrigerator."

—The Sword and Trowel

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

Why I am a Preacher Rather Than a Priest

A Sermon by Dr. T. T. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, July 17th, 1927

(Stenographically Reported)

"Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin."—Hebrews 10:18.

A PRIEST is one who is set apart to minister in religious things, and who is looked upon as a medium through whom worship is offered, and through whom blessings are received — he is, indeed, a kind of mediator who ministers the things of God to the people, and who presents the worship of the people to God. The priests of the Old Testament were set apart for the offering of sacrifices for sin. They were required to be of the tribe of Levi; the high priests were of the household of Aaron. And they were consecrated to the task of presenting offerings to God. Our text tells us that we have been brought to another day when priests are no longer needed, for one offering for sin has been presented, and on the ground of that offering forgiveness has been obtained, and sins remitted, and "where the remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin."

I.

Let us turn that over in our minds for a few minutes this evening, first of all, that we may clearly understand that **THE WORK OF THE PRIEST IS ALREADY DONE**. The fact is, he is out of a job, there is nothing left for him to do; and if he is guided by this Divine Revelation he must needs find some other occupation. That is the teaching of Scripture, that one Offering for sin has been presented, and that that Offering was of such priceless value that it cannot be augmented or supplemented in any way. It has met the utmost requirement of the law of God, and there remains "no more offering for sin".

I am aware that there is a tendency on the part of so-called-Christian teachers to turn away from that aspect of the Christian revelation which represents Jesus Christ as the sin-Bearer. Once a very distinguished preacher preached a sermon from this pulpit some years ago, and he spoke of the Atonement — which he described as the "at-one-ment", taking two texts, "He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham;" joining with that, the following verse, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." He told us that there was a separation between God and man; and because man could not lift himself up to God, God had, in infinite condescension, stooped to man's low estate, and He had taken upon Himself our nature, in order that we might reach His divine nature. In this process, the preacher said, sin was in the way, and therefore He came into contact with sin; and in the exercise of this ministry, standing with man, He found it necessary to suffer, therefore He suffered! And it was impossible for Him to take upon Him-

self our nature without coming in contact with death — but in all his deliverance there was no suggestion that the law of God had been broken, that the holiness of God had been outraged, that there was any necessity whatever for expiation, for the payment of a price.

And that is the prevailing idea; and the Lord Jesus Christ is spoken of as a Great Teacher, as the Supreme Example, as of a Social Reformer, as One Who ministers in many ways to human need — in utter forgetfulness of the fact that the plain teaching of the Scripture is that Jesus Christ came into this world especially to die. It was written of Him in the beginning, all through the Old Testament His coming is predicted: He was to come to bear our sins; to carry our sorrows; that the "chastisement of our peace" might be upon Him; and that by His stripes we might be healed. John the Baptist introduced Him at the beginning of His public ministry, not as a Teacher, not as a great Reformer; but as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Jesus Christ came into this world to die. His life, I grant you, was a preparation for His death, "being made under the law" He fulfilled the requirements of the law, He lived a spotless, holy, life; but the value of the Incarnation is to be found in the fact that this Man, infinite in all the qualities of His being, was able to die the "just for the unjust to bring us to God." "He was made after the power of an indissoluble life," He was not man only, but He was the God-man; uniting in Himself the need of man and the abounding grace of our God, He died in our room and stead; and by one offering for sin He satisfied the requirements of the divine Law, and made all other sacrifices superfluous.

I know that is a simple truth, but it is a truth which no man will ever receive save by the illumination of the Holy Ghost. It is a truth that is hidden from the natural man, for men of themselves know not the requirements of God's holy law.

There is no other sacrifice for sin possible than that which the Lord Jesus offered. His sacrifice was of infinite worth. You see how closely related to this central fact is the truth of the nature of our Lord. It is true that "he took not on him the nature of angels, but took on him the seed of Abraham"; but though He took to Him the seed of Abraham, yet He retained His divine nature. He was not a man only: He was God, having a human mother, but no human father; divinely begotten, He was Himself the Infinite One. I have often said to you, but let me repeat the simple principle, that if He had been a man only, your sins would have killed Him without mine; or mine without yours. Had He been an absolutely perfect man, it is conceivable that He might have offered to the

law that which the law required for one man; but it was impossible that, as a man, He should have died for you and for me, that He should have suffered, as Spurgeon said, "the equivalent of ten thousand hells", taking upon him all our sins, and satisfying the utmost requirements of the law of divine holiness.

Let me ask you, what need is there of a priest, since He Himself died "the just for the unjust"? What will you offer to God? By what means can you increase the value of that infinite Sacrifice? Pile up your good works, make mention of all your alms-deeds, bring all your prayers and your Bible-reading, your observance of ordinances, and the performance of religious duties, hand over all your money, let it be counted by millions if you will, give all that you are, your body at last to be burned — in what respect do these human efforts augment the value of that one great Sacrifice represented by the blood which flowed from the heart of Incarnate Deity? What more can anyone do than Jesus Christ has done? Why need we therefore any priest, since we have Jesus Christ, our one great High Priest over the house of God?

Not only did He present an offering of infinite worth, but He was Himself the Offering: He was at once the Sacrifice and the Priest, He came by divine appointment, and His coming was foreshadowed by the divinely appointed types of ancient times, "Every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins." They were there doing their work over and over again — it was like a woman's work, it was never done. No place was there in the tabernacle for anyone to sit down: no seat in the outer court, in the sanctuary, or in the holy of holies. They stood as they worshipped; and the priest stood as he ministered, he was always doing it. The long line of successors were ever offering sacrifices, the remembrance of sin was ever before them — offering sacrifices that could never take away sin. "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" — His work was ended, the glorious redemption was completed, He removed the necessity for further offerings of that sort, His own blood was enough to cancel the world's indebtedness.

Jesus Christ was consecrated to this service, He ministered with divine authority: "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me), to do thy will, O God." In some quarters we hear something about "Holy orders", about the qualifications of those who exercise the office of the ministry. In the land from which I came, we used to have cemeteries, or burying places, that were described as "consecrated ground"; and no one might even conduct a funeral service within those sacred enclosures unless he could count his succession from the apostles, and all down through the ages had received authority in the things of God. I have met such ministers of whose "holy orders" I was by no means certain! I remember one of them in a place I ministered once, as we engaged in conversation about the ordinances, said, "I disagree with you." I said, "I am sorry, but I suppose our opinions are of equal value." "Not at all," said he, "I do not suppose you were ever properly baptized." "But I was; I was buried with Christ by baptism on profession of faith." "That is very good so far as it goes, but I do not know whether the person who baptized you had the authority to administer the ordinance. As for myself" — he was a graduate of a college situated in the city of Toronto — "as for myself, I was properly baptized by one who derived his authority directly from the

apostles; then, in due course, I was ordained by the Bishop; and at my ordination I was baptized by the Holy Ghost. I have authority to say what the Scriptures teach!" That is a kind of infallibility with which I have little sympathy. And then he said, "I think we will defer the conversation until a later date, and if you will be good enough to call upon me we will discuss it further; for I have a large library in my study which I should like to consult." The only library in which I was interested was under his hat — and that was a very small one, I soon discovered!

How utterly ridiculous it is that men should claim authority after that fashion! But here is One Who, from everlasting to everlasting, is God; and Who, before the worlds were made, was appointed a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek, having no successor. He offered one sacrifice for sins for ever; Himself the Offering, Himself the Offerer, He met the law's utmost requirement — and sat down.

Were I by any chance to find myself in the priesthood, I think I should soon get out of it, for with the open Bible before me it is perfectly evident to me that we no longer need a Priest, the work is completed, the price is paid, the last farthing of the sinner's indebtedness has been paid to the Divine Exchequer. The only thing that stands between us and God is our own wilfulness: "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

II.

BUT ALTHOUGH THE PRIEST'S WORK IS ENDED, THE PREACHER'S WORK HAS JUST BEGUN. The work of the preacher is to proclaim this glorious evangel everywhere, to publish abroad the good news of a perfected redemption — not doing it ourselves, but to proclaim to the world that it is already done.

That is the message that should be preached for the sake of the sinner himself. Every sinner needs to know that, that his debt has been taken account of, and that his obligation has been met by One Who was infinitely worthy and able to meet it. Just imagine some man busy day after day, from early morning until late at night, labouring, putting forth the utmost energy with the utmost faithfulness, and living on the smallest possible margin, because he is trying to save up to pay off his old debts, living at a starving rate, because of this pressing obligation which he hopes at some time to be able to discharge. What a blessing it would be if such an one should find that a friend had discovered his bankruptcy, and had taken account of his great indebtedness, and had estimated his helplessness, and had himself paid it off for the poor man! What if the man does not know it, but is working — working — working all the time? It is the same old story, you know, "Every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins." So there are people who are very religious, exceedingly religious: they say their prayers, they go to church, they do penance, they observe ordinances, they walk circumspectly, they exercise themselves to the utmost to pay off their debt — and they do not know that:

"Jesus paid it all—
All to Him we owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain;
He washed it white as snow."

The preacher's simple business is to go and tell him, to go to him and say, "My friend, you do not need to do

that; all you need is to accept that which has already been paid in your behalf." There is someone here to-night who says, "I do not understand how anybody can be sure of salvation. I am doing the best I can" — and if he is a Methodist he will no doubt say that he "hopes" to see the end of a praying life. His heart is orthodox enough, but he has not appreciated the privilege of knowing that the thing is done. There are some others here who carry their prayer books, and in one way and another, are trying to make themselves acceptable to God. You say, I am doing the best I can, but I cannot be sure" — no, my friend, and you are wise in that direction. If salvation depends upon your efforts, you may well doubt your acceptability to God; and however well you have done today, you may seriously question your ability to do so to the end. But if the thing is already done for you, if Another has done it, and the price has been paid, you may have it, and be as sure of it as heaven itself; you may have the full assurance of salvation on the ground of what Christ has done, and on the ground of what "God that cannot lie" has promised. If that is not sure, you cannot be sure of anything.

That is the preacher's business, to tell the old, old story over and over again, until at last a light breaks in upon the darkened understanding, by the illuminating grace of the Spirit of God. He comes to tell us that Christ did it all, and that salvation is in Him. Imagine a man's sitting down in some great ship, let us say, the *Mauritania*, with an old-fashioned needle, stitching away at a piece of cloth. You go up to him and say, "What are you doing, my friend?" and he answers, "Why, do you not know that ships need sails? I am busy making a sail for the *Mauritania*." "Well," you say, "that is interesting. But why are you making a sail?" "Why am I making it? To take it across the ocean." "But," you say, "surely no man would be as stupid as that!" And if he were, would you not try to get the permission of the captain to take him down to the engine-room where the mighty engines were throbbing away? "What are they for?" he would ask. Then you would explain to him that there is power inside to drive the ship across the Atlantic through the fiercest storm that ever blew, telling him it does not need sails. "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them" — not a sail dependent upon external conditions, but an inward dynamo, the very power of God inside to carry you on.

An engineer told me once when I was crossing the Atlantic — I do not know whether the record has been broken since — but he said the fastest time that had ever been made by an Atlantic liner was made against a strong headwind. "Why is that?" I asked. "Better draft for the engines" — more power inside overcoming the opposition outside. It is a good thing for the Christian to have head-winds — he gets a better draft, depends more upon the Holy Ghost.

That is a preacher's business, to tell of a ship that has engines, and does not need sails; to tell of a debt that no mortal can pay, but a debt that God Himself has paid — all finished.

Yes, and of the sinner's inheritance, awaiting the appropriation of faith. I remember being in Old London once, very anxious to get into a certain building to hear someone speak. No tickets were issued to anyone — there was just one way of getting in, and that was to stand in the queue. I stood in the queue and waited hours, not

knowing there were two doors; and while I was standing in the queue at one door, the other door was opened, and the building nearly filled. When the second door was opened, I was within three of getting in — when the door was closed. And do you know, there are some people busy trying to make keys to get God's doors open, by human efforts trying to break into the Divine Presence; and this message tells us that the door is already open ("Hallelujah!"). There are some who think the successor of Peter has the key, and that unless you go by the way of the priest you cannot get in at all; but there is One Who has said, "I am the door"; "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Even as He died, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the way was opened into the presence of God. You do not need to make a way — take the way that is made, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

I say, we need to proclaim this for the profit of the sinner, and for the praise and glory of God. In the beginning of my ministry I used to try to preach to the Lord's people Sunday morning, and to the unconverted Sunday evening. If we had a great rainstorm, or something of that sort, it usually kept the sinners away — and I found myself in the pulpit with nothing to say but to preach the gospel to saved people. I used to say, "Oh, that the Lord would send in unsaved people, sinners!" But I have since learned that there is nothing that glorifies God, or that warms the hearts of God's own people, like hearing the gospel. Have you ever noticed the interest of a man or woman when they become a grandfather or grandmother for the first time? My, how they strut about, how proud they are! Why? It recalls the beginning of family life in their own home. Have you noticed some people whose hair is gray, and who are almost tottering on the verge of the grave — but mention a wedding, and instantly they are interested — especially if it is a woman! Years pass away, but they are just as interested in that as they were in the beginning. Those who are interested in the Lord never forget the day when their debt was paid; never so long as we live, or even in eternity, shall we forget that wondrous day. I confess I would rather hear a man preach that old story than to hear anything else in the world.

My dear friend who used to be pastor of St. James Presbyterian Church, Dr. Roberts, sat one time on the platform in Massey Hall among a number of other ministers, and I was sitting beside him. A great preacher was preaching the gospel, unfolding this glorious story of redemption; and as I looked, I saw the tears rolling down Dr. Roberts' face. He clasped his hands, sometimes wiped a tear away, occasionally he took out his handkerchief — but he needed more than one — down they came, a perfect rain of tears, but he was smiling through the rain. And when the preacher was finished, with deep emotion he turned to me and grasped my hand and said, "By the response of my heart to the story of the Cross, I know that I am a Christian."

Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound. I would rather be a preacher than anything else in the world, so that I might say the same thing over and over again, just to make you happy. There are some people here to-night who want to say, Hallelujah, and yet I have not said a new thing. You would rather hear that story than anything else.

Then I should like to be sure I shall never be out of employment. It must be a wearisome thing to have

nothing to do. I often feel sorry for lawyers, for when they get to heaven they will have nothing to do! And the doctors will be in just about as bad a position, for they will be out of employment as well. But the preacher is just getting ready for heaven, for I expect to preach for ever. Certainly we shall have that "innumerable multitude" to talk to. Blessed be God, we shall all be preachers, telling over and over this story, —

"Jesus loves me, this I know
For the Bible tells me so."

That is a child's hymn, is it not? Well, you had better be a little child, and believe what the Bible tells you, because the Bible tells you that we are preparing for the years that are to come.

Let us sing to His praise to-night, hymn number three:

"Father, I stretch my hands to Thee;
No other help I know;
If Thou withdraw Thyself from me,
Ah, whither shall I go?

"What did Thine only Son endure,
Before I drew my breath;
What pain, what labour, to secure
My soul from endless death!

"O Jesus, could I this believe,
I now should feel Thy power;
And all my wants Thou wouldst relieve
In this accepted hour.

"Author of faith, to Thee I lift
My weary, longing eyes:
Oh, let me now receive that gift;
My soul without it dies."

The Editor's Corner

Fall Subscription Drive

Holidays are over! We are very frankly pleased that people are returning to the normal routine of life for we can now seek in earnest to introduce THE GOSPEL WITNESS to new friends. To that end we shall launch a great circulation drive. In coming issues of the paper we will advise our readers as to how they can help.

The Doctrines of Grace

We saw the printer just last week and we are told that the first book in the T. T. Shields' Memorial Library is nearly ready for the press. This volume is 208 pages in length; bound in a rich maroon cover with gold imprinting it will cost only \$2.50! It is made up of seventeen lectures on the doctrines of grace. Here is a book for Christians who desire to have a systematic exposition of the cardinal Scriptural truths.

Baptist Bible Conference

The Editor attended the fellowship meeting of the Baptist Bible Fellowship in Mishawaka, Indiana. The pastor of the church there (Dr. Victor Sears) is past president of the Fellowship and is a friend of THE GOSPEL WITNESS. We truly enjoyed the fellowship and were blessed in soul. It was a pleasure to meet some friends who have been subscribers to the paper for a number of years. The Baptist Bible Fellowship is a rapidly expanding movement and its dedicated pastors have been used to establish many new churches across the United States.

ANGLICANS TO PRAY FOR DEAD!

THE draft of the Anglican Prayer Book which contained some popish prayers for the dead was the subject of discussion at the general synod of that church which was held last week in Edmonton, Alberta. The newspapers inform us that the revamped prayer book was given "the unanimous general approval" of the synod. Therefore we may expect to hear Anglicans raising their voices in the futile and unscriptural exercise of praying for those who are dead and whose destinies have been forever settled.

The Canadian Press despatch quotes the Archbishop of British Columbia as saying that prayers for the dead "now are authorized but not obligatory for any priest." He further added — "What we are doing here is sanctioning what has been going on for years." If the Archbishop is correct in saying that prayers for the dead have been offered for years, then the Anglican Church is truly in a sad spiritual condition. Furthermore he confesses that the Anglican ministers (or "priests" as some prefer!) have been praying for the dead for years gone by.

The newspapers tell us that "he added the practice is not at variance with Christian truth and Anglican principles". We are persuaded that the Archbishop is wrong on both counts. First of all let him show us how prayers for the dead can be consistent with "Anglican principles". They cannot be unless he regards the popish high Anglicans as representative of true Anglicanism. Where in the Thirty Nine Articles can he find authorization for this abominable practice?

More important, however, is his unfounded statement that "the practice is not at variance with Christian truth." Has the good man ever read the Bible? Where can he find one text that could legitimately be construed to teach any such a thing? In fact the practice is absolutely anti-Christian.

We were pleased to note that one "lay" delegate from Toronto opposed this change on the ground that it represented a "distinct change in our doctrine". Apparently one person saw the implications of this veiled paganism even though the members of the "clergy" were asleep.

If this innovation is indicative of Anglican spiritual life then our readers would be well-advised to pray for spiritually dead Anglicans.

ELOQUENCE VERSUS DIVINE POWER

In our time the common trend and theme of religious leaders, the fundamentals not excluded, is, "in order to attract the people and to hold their attention we must devise new methods."

In Moody's time the most common remark heard from his audience was "Nothing new, nothing new, but what power!"

Do we call it a sheer incident or accident that St. Paul and Moody and many others who were mightily used of God share the identical ideas about the method of making the gospel effective? Paul truly had old-fashioned ideas about making the gospel effective when he said: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." (1 Corinthians 2:1-4).

—The Congregational Beacon

"Jehovah Witnesses" — Now Best Seller!

Jehovah Witnesses — The New World Society is a book that has been listed on the best seller lists for the past eight weeks. The publishers, Vantage Press, describe this book by Marley Cole as "the first authoritative account of one of the world's fastest-growing religions." We are further told that 87,000 copies are now in print. Actually the book is pure propaganda and nothing more. The author looks through his highly-coloured spectacles and sees an aurora of sanctity about "Pastor" Russell, "Judge" Rutherford and the various front organizations of the so-called Jehovah Witnesses. Let no one be deceived; this work is not an impartial account of the rise of a religious group. It is a well-written, deceptive piece of literature that could do more harm than *Awake!* or *Watchtower*. We cannot be persuaded that Mr. Cole is not an ardent sympathizer with the unbiblical Russellites.

Let it be said first of all that the author gives a clear picture of the organizational structure and methods of operation of this growing sect. The tables of figures which he presents and the array of facts and figures are both informative and alarming to a lover of the gospel of Jesus Christ. No one can deny that the Jehovah Witnesses have had a rapid expansion. This growth cannot be accounted for except one understand the native hatred of the carnal mind to the things of God. The natural man has no difficulty espousing this belief, for Russellism is simply a systematic expression of the unbelief of the carnal mind. Indeed we are persuaded that modernists could well join the Russellites for both have an aversion to Biblical truth.

Then, too, before we examine some misrepresentations from the book, we must declare that we admire the zeal of those who are Jehovah Witnesses. Their vigorous visitation program should shame Christians for the Russellites have adopted the Bible method (personal visitation) but have disregarded the Bible message. Bible believers would do well to emulate the apostolic example—"And daily in the temple, *and in every house*, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." (Acts 5:42).

We now proceed to point out some of the false statements in this best seller. We do trust that author Cole has not deliberately misrepresented the case for that would be despicable. We are inclined to believe that he has simply adopted the Russellite propaganda "hook, line and sinker."

For instance there is the vain attempt in chapter four to link the present day Witnesses with the saints of by-gone days. We are told that there is a Jehovah Witness version of an apostolic succession that can be traced right back to the Lord Jesus Christ. Now we would not deny the main teachings of this sect have had representatives in other ages for every age has produced those whose carnal minds have objected to the clearly revealed Bible truth concerning the Trinity, *eternal* salvation in Christ, the actual and real resurrection of Jesus Christ. Imagine our surprise, however, to see that the Jehovah Witnesses claim not these heretics but rather some of God's choice spirits as their spiritual forebears! Rightly they claim the unitarian Arius as one of them. Yet there is a deliberate and culpable perversion of history in their claim to Peter Waldo, Wycliffe, Huss and Luther! These are the names of mighty men of God whose fundamental teachings were

poles removed from the warmed over heresies and the carnal conceptions of the Jehovah Witnesses. The author, Mr. Cole, stresses the fact that the important thing to note about the Witnesses is their doctrinal expression. We agree. Thus let him or one of the leaders of the sect show us where any of these stalwarts agreed with any of the fundamental tenets of the modern Russellites. It is an insult to the memory of these men of God that the name of "Pastor" Charles Russell should be mentioned favourably in the same breath.

The place of "Pastor" Russell in history is, of course, grossly exaggerated. Without comment, Mr. Cole quotes "Judge" Rutherford as declaring that Russell was the "most hated and most feared one man to appear in orthodox Christendom since the first century A.D." That surely covers much ground! Mr. Cole has done no service to history by further spreading such a ridiculous and fantastic statement.

"PASTOR" RUSSELL

The picture of "Pastor" Russell presented in this book is an incomplete one. If one relied upon Mr. Cole's description he might be inclined to believe that the "Pastor" was a humble, devout and modest student of the Bible. What are the facts? Let anyone read volume 7 of *Studies in the Scriptures*, a posthumous work of Pastor Russell. Here is the author's description of himself. On page 5 of the Preface the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society (another *nomme de plume!*) declares:—

"Pastor Russell was a man of unusual modesty. Great men usually are modest. The examination of the contents of this book will disclose the fact that it deals with Revelation and Ezekiel; that the Lord long ago caused to be recorded therein, in symbolic language, a history of the Church, particularly the closing earthly experiences thereof; that therein He set forth that He would uncover the frauds, deceptions and blasphemous teachings and practices of the church nominal — both Catholic and Protestant; that in the last days He would then make bare the unholy alliance between the unrighteous ecclesiastical systems and the corrupt political elements of the earth, which religious systems have prospered and grown fat in the name of Christ; that the Lord pronounces His indignation and wrath against all such Babylonish systems and marks their utter destruction in a Time of Trouble such as the world has never known and will never again know; and that the earthly creature made prominent therein above all others is the messenger of the Laodicean Church—"that wise and faithful servant" of the Lord—Charles Taze Russell. In view of the facts stated, is it at all surprising that the Lord spared him the publication of the Seventh Volume?"

Now what does this man of unusual modesty say about *himself*? — "Pastor Russell, as a member of the great High Priest and as Christ's representative in the world, the sole steward of the 'meat in due season' . . ." (p. 483). Another Pope! This *modest* man finds himself accurately described throughout Scripture. For instance in the notes on Ezek. 3:9. (p. 383) we read:

"As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead; fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house. The forehead is symbolic of wisdom. A man of high forehead, as was Pastor Russell, is of a high type of intellect. Pastor Russell's mind was made strong against opponents of the Reform which is ushering in the everlasting Kingdom of Messiah." . . .

We solemnly state that the portrait of Russell presented in Mr. Cole's book is misleading for when judged by his writings and by the descriptions of his colleagues he is seen as a colossal fraud and an unashamed egoist of the first order. Dr. T. T. Shields declared once — "I myself have seen sermons published by Pastor Russell representing him as pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London. Thus, he dared even to appropriate the name and prestige of Spurgeon the greatest gospel preacher of all time . . . I say that was a downright unmitigated unvarnished falsehood."

In the face of this conceit of Russell's, Mr. Cole writes on page 209 of his book that Russell never advanced any claim to a special revelation! We can only conclude again that Mr. Cole never read the writings of Pastor Russell or else he cannot understand plain English.

We could proceed to point out the doctrinal falsehoods of this cult and show that it is not only unbiblical but anti-Biblical. We write these words in the hope that they will come to the eyes of some who have been misled by Mr. Cole's book. We challenge Mr. Cole or the members of the Jehovah Witnesses to deny anything that we have here written.

"TRIED IN THE FIRE"

The students of the Seminary come from many differing backgrounds and from different lands. We have noticed, however, that a number of them have come out of modernist churches. Very few are of Baptist parents! They have come to the Baptist position because of conviction and are prepared to go whithersoever the Lord leadeth. We state this because we know of many young men who are training for the ministry in modernist colleges who are "almost persuaded" to leave. Those students who have done so testify that the Lord takes care of His own and that the reproach of friends and of the world is more than offset by the approval and blessing of God.

SEMINARY OPENING NEXT MONDAY

On Monday, September 19, the students and faculty will gather in Toronto Baptist Seminary for registration and fellowship. We expect to have a fine first year class composed of men who have felt the call of God and who are persuaded of the Scripturalness of the evangelical regular Baptist position. The Seminary does not profess to be a place of training for any others for those who are trustees and those who teach have the firm conviction that the Book is the reliable source concerning *method* of evangelism as well as the message of evangelism. It is not too late to make your application! If you feel called to the ministry, simply write for information to The Registrar, Toronto Baptist Seminary, 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto 2.

THE SEMINARY — THE KEY TO ADVANCE

IF OUR land is to be saved from the twins of Romanism and modernism and souls won to the Lord Jesus Christ, gospel-preaching churches must be established very quickly. New Testament churches which honour the Word of God and exalt the Lord Jesus Christ represent a sure line of defence against the enemies of the gospel and perverted forms of Christianity. Many (though not all) of these other so-called "extra-church" ministries serve only as one-way pipelines through which converts are directed to modernist churches. Indeed those who would send babes in Christ to modernist churches are actually the unwitting tools of the enemies of the gospel.

The Lord did not give such a clear picture of what a local church should be simply that we might speculate about it. This sure word was given that Christians might obey and model their local assemblies after the New Testament ideal. At this very moment every city, town, village and rural area of our land stands in desperate need of more Bible-preaching churches. Some large centres actually have no such testimony! If but a fraction of the money and prayers that are expended upon these so-called "larger ministries" was directed toward the establishment of true churches, we might begin to see the beginning of the revival for which we long.

The Conservative Regular Baptist Association of Canada is dedicated to this task of establishing such testimonies. Especially are we concerned with the large centres of population and the rapidly increasing number of new sub-divisions. The modernist churches and the Church of Rome are quick to erect places of worship and to pour money into such local causes but evangelicals are sometimes hindered because of lack of money and men.

Where shall we turn to now for this task? This day demands men who are above all men of God who do not fear the face of any mortals. Religious hirelings and compromisers need not apply! Such persons might erect buildings but will never have a lasting testimony established to the glory of God.

We believe that Toronto Baptist Seminary holds the key to advance. Students from the Seminary have in the past been used to establish pioneer works both in Canada and overseas. Let there be a word of caution. Those who are trained in Canada's School of the Prophets have held out to them no glittering promises of pastorates, parsonages, pension plans or promotion. They do have the promise of the hatred of the world and the never-failing presence and provision of a gracious God.

In short, the Seminary especially welcomes young men who are not afraid to "rough it". Those who are ready if the Lord so wills to go out and establish new works will find the training beneficial. Since we desire to see Baptist (or New Testament) churches, Baptist training is necessary. The Seminary is unashamedly Baptist and uncompromisingly evangelical. The Seminary's association with Jarvis Street Baptist Church, its great Bible School and associated enterprises contributes to an understanding of the nature and task of the church. The fellowship of those who have gone without the camp further refreshes the soul.

Let all our readers pray that the Lord will send men of His choosing who will be prepared to spend and be spent in this glorious work.

A Devotional Study in Revelation

by Dr. R. D. Barry

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

TWO GREAT WOES

Revelation 9

AS WE proceed in the study of John's writing, we are confirmed in our view that its revelations do not primarily constitute a systematic prophetic record of the physical cataclysms or of the political upheavals which will, as in the past, continue to affect the course of human history. As is the case in the Old Testament or in the days of Jesus Christ, Revelation never loses sight of those things; but it does not give them an essential place: they are only accessorially mentioned, as a mere context to the spiritual dealings of God towards mankind.

For the great conflict between the divine truth and the natural heart of man is the main concern of Holy Scripture. A sound interpretation of Revelation must therefore be based, not on the outstanding events of secular history, but on the happenings which will influence the most the religious destiny of the world — whatever their repercussions on such history may be.

According to that principle, we have interpreted the prophecies of the first four seals as picturing the forces which, following the ascension of Jesus Christ to His royal throne, were to face one another on earth: the influence of the gospel, represented by the white horse; that of the natural heart, represented by the red horse; that of Mammonism, presented by the black horse; that of the deadly spiritual falsehood, represented by the pale horse.

Owing to its particular design, the book of Revelation neglects paganism proper whose gross conceptions and scattered forces can only offer an ill-organized resistance to the gospel, a resistance which is more easily broken than that of the organized anti-Christian systems.

Fully aware of that new situation, the Usurper, cast out of heaven and limited to an earthly war which will witness his final destruction, could not fail to intervene with new means. And that, not only by shaking the physical world and upsetting the peoples, which he had done at all times, but by provoking the individual man's resistance to the authority of Jesus Christ through masterful spiritual counterfeits.

Let us again remind our reader that in the course of history three important religious systems — and only three — have realized that perfidious design:

- (1) Fallen Judaism, represented by the first four trumpets.
- (2) Mohammedanism, pictured in the fifth and sixth trumpets.

- (3) Counterfeit Christianity (heresies, Roman Catholicism, Greek Orthodoxy, degenerate Protestantism, impostures), described after the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

We shall now study what the ninth chapter of John's writing seems to clearly teach concerning the anti-Christian enterprises of Mohammedanism in the course of history. As we have already noticed, these revelations are introduced by the extraordinary proclamation of the eagle which closes the eighth chapter:

"And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!"

The place of that vision in the trumpet series seems to imply that a substantial interval of time was to separate the first effects of the Judaistic influences from Mohammedanism, thus leaving a margin sufficient for the necessary transitions. This is confirmed by the fact that Mohammed only launched his movement in the seventh century.

In its opposition to Christianity, the history of Mohammedanism is commonly divided into two stages: the first stage witnessed the rise and success of its founder; the second one witnessed a revival of the religion under the Turks, after several centuries of stagnation. Those two distinct stages are successively described after the sounding of the fifth and sixth trumpets.

I. THE FIRST WOE (vv. 1-12)

"And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit."

We read at the beginning of the book: "The stars are angels" (1:20). In the Book of Daniel, mention is made (10:13, 20) of heavenly beings who preside over the destinies of the nations. Whatever the allusion of our text may be — to Satan himself or more probably to one of his main agents — Satan had already been presented to us in the preceding chapter (8:10) as a star cast down from heaven, burning as a lamp. We can thus interpret this new vision as a revengeful effort, either direct or indirect, on the part of him who, after the victory of the Cross, had seen the last of his heavenly prerogatives fade away.

"And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit."

Luke 8:31 reminds us that the pit is the abode of

demons. Under the obscuring action of those powers of darkness, the enlightening work of the gospel is hindered. The great orderly powers, symbolized by the sun, as well as the spiritual atmosphere, represented by the air, make way to an anarchy and a paganism favourable to the rise of a politico-religious enterprise without any historical precedent.

"And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth. . ."

In Judges 6:5, Jeremiah 46:23 and 51:27, Joel 2:4, the locusts, owing to their vast number and their destructive power, are the image of the great invasions. Nothing, in human history, corresponds better to the vision of our text than the stupendous progress of Islam in a time of spiritual decline on the part of Christianity.

For, to the dissolving effect of Judaism on Christianity, there was added the combined action of heresy, worldliness and spiritual indifference. The monstrous union between the secular power and fallen Christianity had, as early as Constantine, assumed the dominion of a disguised paganism tinged with the gospel. The barbarity of the doctrinal struggles, the dominating and dissolute spirit of the clergy, absurd idolatrous practices, superstition — all those things had transformed the sound and beneficial piety brought by Jesus Christ into a shameful religion. Mohammed, who boasted of his refusal to learn to read and write, was, when confronted with such conditions, absolutely unable to become acquainted with true Christianity. Many who have studied his life are convinced that, had he directly known Jesus Christ in his early days, and not through His regenerate representatives, he would have had a much higher ideal than that he had yearned for. But what could he desire in the face of the lamentable conditions of his day?

Born in 571 at Mecca, surrounded by the deserts of Arabia, fully trained by the trials of existence, gifted with an unique intelligence in spite of a mental deficiency probably linked to epileptic fits, endowed with an iron will, conscious that there existed a moral ideal higher than that of his day, and yet destitute of all scruples, he soon made it his ambition to reform the ideas of his people, which was then half-pagan and half-Christianized.

To his people he offered something better than paganism by doing away with its numerous gods; he brought to them something more than the degenerate Christianity by reviving certain elementary principles of order, wisdom, morality, justice and piety, sadly lost sight of by the false disciples of Jesus Christ.

But he gave his people infinitely less than the primitive Christianity, by fighting against the doctrine of the Trinity, by ignoring redemption, by leaving true spirituality aside, and by opening new roads to the carnal nature of men, offering him earthly advantages and heavenly promises utterly opposed to the spirit of the gospel.

There is some truth in the statement that Mohammed is, in certain respects, an extremist of the Eastern Christianity. It is not therefore among the pagans, but among the heretics that Dante classified him in his "Inferno". Anyhow, Islam has, in vast territories, become the most insuperable obstacle ever met by the gospel in the last hundred years. The elementary nature of its doctrine and practice has won the hearts of millions. Instinctively adapted to the natural inclinations of the unregenerate man, it requires of him an insignificant minimum of sacrifice against a maximum of privileges. The Enemy

could not invent anything better as a substitute to evangelical Christianity. Islam has brought to a standstill the thought, the morale and the spiritual ambitions of its devotees. And that in such a way that all the adherents gained among the heathens were contented with the facile progress of Mohammedanism over their former religions, unable to imagine or to desire something better still. Thus, in a supreme way, they were given over to a "strong delusion that they should believe a lie." And in the very regions which witnessed the beginnings and the greatest victories of the gospel, the deadly drowsiness of Mohammedanism has fallen.

It would have been almost inconceivable that, in a prophecy of that "which must be hereafter", an upheaval of so great an import would not have been mentioned. For the new religion did not only affect the province of the seven churches of Asia, but the whole East up to the land of France. We cannot indeed forget that, in the eighth century, the whole of Southern France was — as well as Spain which was affected until the eleventh century — under the sway of Islam. The calcined stones which are still seen in the "Arenes" of Nîmes (a Roman amphitheatre originally designed for gladiatorial shows and now used for bull-fights) bear testimony to the Saracenic occupation, when, after seventeen years, that improvised fortress was delivered by Charles Martel in 737. Up to our day, Islam has remained the most baffling of missionary problems, and for the civilized countries, the cause of the greatest political, social, cultural and moral troubles.

"And to the locusts was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power."

We have here an indication of the specific origin of that maleficent power. Initiated by Satan, it is temporarily tolerated and placed, for a purpose of warning and discipline, under the control of God Himself.

"And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads."

Those words prove that we have reference to a symbolical plague. False religions primarily affect the spiritual being of man. How comforting to learn here that the true watchful disciples are perfectly immune against religious falsehood!

The preparatory character of those calamities is established by their duration symbolically limited to the five months of the year when the invasions of locusts may take place. There is yet no allusion to death, as in the sixth trumpet. But the physical and spiritual degradation brought by this plague, will cause its victims to eagerly yearn for the artificial delights of the Mohammedan paradise, which will remain for ever inaccessible: "They shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them." And did not the deceitful power of this religious falsehood lead many fanatical Moslems to vainly seek on the battlefields after a title to the beatitude of heaven, hoping that their meritorious end would earn them such a right?

The unusual features attributed to the locusts prove in their turn that there can be here no reference to a literal invasion of such insects. It would be rather difficult to give a detailed interpretation of each of these characteristics. For the information of our readers, we shall only mention some of the hypotheses advanced by the supporters of our view. The resemblance of the locusts to horses would point to the innumerable Mohammedan cavalry. The "crowns like gold" would be an allusion to the yellow

turban of the Arab warriors. The faces like those of men would confirm that the warlike locusts are only figures for the human struggles. The "hair of women" could refer to the flowing hair of Mohammed's soldiers. The "teeth of lions" would point to the fierceness of the Mohammedan invasions — the Arabs possessing five hundred different phrases to depict the fearsome king of their deserts. The "breastplates of iron" would recall the fact that the Arabs were precursors in the use of the coat of mail and of the armour. The "sound of their wings" would figure the clamour of the numberless multitudes of the false prophet's zealots. The "tails like unto scorpions" would picture the fatal consequences of their doctrines of delusion.

Whatever the interpretation of details may be, we here behold, under the figure of those strange and formidable beings, a vision of one of the greatest obstacles ever met by the gospel in its conquering march. For we must remember that in our day Islam forbids the admission of truth to some two hundred and fifty millions of those whom Jesus Christ desired to redeem: six times the population of France! And thus, since the origin of this baleful system, at least one million women have been cruelly deprived of all possibility to know salvation, and denied liberty.

"And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon."

We find here one of the essential characteristics of that accursed system: Just as the great hosts of locusts irresistibly obey mysterious directions, in the same way, an invisible power has always ruled Islam and led it to attack paganism and the gospel. The stupendous victories won by this false religion cannot be explained by its origin, its doctrines, or its work. The skilful and persevering action of a superhuman power was necessary to bring about such evil: Mohammedanism is one of the most marked miracles of the Seducer. The advent of a prophet, Mohammed, and of a book, the Koran — such is Satan's answer to Jesus Christ and the Bible, an answer too well-adapted to the desires of the natural man to have its origin elsewhere than in the mind of the Evil One.

As no historical commotion of like nature seems to fit our text better than Mohammedanism, great credit must be given to the interpretation attempted above. But even if that hypothesis be finally proved groundless, we shall have found, in the preceding study, many reasons to attach great price to truths so fiercely fought against as are those of the gospel. It should further prompt us to show to those truths an ever-increasing loyalty. For the One seated upon His throne should legitimately reap the fruit alluded to in the word Islam, whose beautiful meaning is: "Complete submission or consecration to God."

II. THE SECOND WOE (vv. 12-21)

"One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter."

That announcement implies that a certain period of time and important differences were to separate the preceding visitation from the one to come. Now, between the set-back suffered by the primitive Mohammedanism in the eighth century and its more decisive decline at the end of the eleventh century, various preparatory events were to intervene, such as: 1. The development of the

great Eastern schism, which has until now separated Greek orthodoxy and the papacy; 2. The extraordinary anxieties caused by the drawing near of the year 1000; 3. The preparations of the Roman Church for the Crusades.

"And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God."

Just as the prayers of the saints ascended up from the altar, the horns anointed with the atoning blood speak here of the judgment which, from the four points of the horizon, was to afflict men.

"... Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates."

The interpretation according to which the prophecy of the sixth trumpet deals with the revival of Islamism after centuries of stagnation finds here its origin. For after usurping the Saracenic power, the Turks inaugurated their dominion at Bagdad, in the valley of Euphrates. That dominion could have become almost world-wide since, after fighting the Mohammedan religion, the Turks became its eager and irresistible champions.

"And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men."

Those four angels seem to be those who, in the seventh chapter, were holding the four winds of the earth. Having now received power to "hurt the earth and the sea," they preside over the execution of the celestial judgments.

The chronological allusions of our text emphasize how the divine purposes are both gradually and accurately carried out. Through ingenious calculations some commentators have determined that the precise date mentioned here is 1453 — the year of the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, and of the final downfall of the Roman empire.

According to the biblical symbolism and, to the language of the day, the destruction of the third part of men seems primarily to refer to the political and religious effects of that important event, which marked the disappearing of the most ancient power of the day and the beginning of modern history.

"And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them."

According to the way of reckoning in those days, we should more exactly read: "two myriads of myriads". Be it an allusion to the numberless multitude of the horsemen, or an approximate estimate of those who, in the course of history, have fought for the cause of Islam, we see here the tremendous importance of the predicted events. The fact that John merely declares to have heard the number lays stress on the truth and the sincerity of his sayings.

"And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them."

The first crusaders reported that they had to face armies of two hundred thousand and even three hundred and sixty thousand Turkish horsemen. For in contrast with those of other peoples, the Ottoman armies comprised a far greater number of mounted soldiers than of infantrymen. Thus we understand why our text only mentions horses and their riders.

The colour of breastplates, "of fire, and of jacinth, and

brimstone", exactly corresponds to the appearance of the many-coloured armies of the sultans. The complex images used to describe the heads of the horses give an even more fearsome picture of the conflict than the locusts-of the preceding vision.

The fire, the smoke and brimstone issuing out of the mouths of the horses may be considered as the most approximate picture of the terrible effects of the explosives, for the first time used on a large scale during the siege of Constantinople. The Eastern metropolis, which had resisted previous attacks by the Goths, the Huns, the Avars, the Persians, the Saracens and the Russians, and earlier sieges by the Turks themselves, could not endure the new plague.

The "power" possessed by the tails of the horses raises a difficult problem of interpretation. Those tails "were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt." The descriptions we possess of some of the first Turkish cannons—named "basilicks" is that of serpents.—Their power resides in their extremities, where the powder is compressed, and their deadly effects are manifested by the missiles issuing out of their muzzles. It has also been noticed that guns are always pulled with their muzzles turned backward. It has likewise been explained that, alone among the other peoples, the Turks would hang to the flags of their leaders a number of horse-tails which manifested from afar the power which was at their "head". Whatever the worth of the explanations of the details be, definite announcement is here made that the predicted invasion would "hurt", by killing the third part of men. The prophecy does not only concern the atrocious slaughters which attended the Ottoman invasions, or the famines, epidemics and other calamities which followed them, but above all the spiritual misery and self-abasement of the victims of Islam.

"And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues . . ."

We see here that the divine mercy always generously offers to the majority of sinners an occasion to repent "of the works of their hands". So that to every generation of men the following appeal is made: "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart!" Many may reject the divine appeal and be rightly condemned, but the humble and sincere sinner will welcome it and be saved.

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FOOLS FOR TIME, FOOLS FOR ETERNITY

"I trust in thy word."—Psalms 119:42.

There are many who come to this book as *sceptics*. They marshal passage against passage, and try to get Matthew and Luke in a quarrel, and would have a discrepancy between what Paul and James say about faith and works; and they try the account of Moses concerning the Creation by modern decisions in science, and resolve that in all questions between the scientific explorer and the inspired writer they will give the preference to the geologist. These men — these spiders, I will say — suck poison out of the sweetest flowers. They fatten their infidelity upon the truths which have led thousands to heaven, and in their distorted vision prophet seems to war with prophet, and evangelist with evangelist, and apostle with apostle; and if they can find some bad trait of character in a man of God mentioned in that Bible, these carrion crows caw and flap their wings over the carcass. Because they cannot understand how the whale swallowed Jonah, they attempt the more wonderful feat of swallowing the monster whale of modern scepticism. They do not believe it possible that the Bible story should be true which says that the dumb ass spake, while they themselves prove the thing possible by their own utterances. I am amused beyond bounds when I hear one of these men talking about a future life. Just ask a man who rejects that Bible what heaven is, and hear him befog your soul. He will tell you that heaven is merely the development of the internal resources of a man; it is an efflorescence of the dynamic forces into a state of ethereal and transcendental lucubration, in close juxtaposition of the ever-present "was," and the great "to be", and the everlasting "No". Considering themselves wise, they are fools for time, fools for eternity.

—T. DEWITT TALMAGE

A PARABLE OF THE FANNER BEES

It was a glorious night of midsummer — a moon at full and a host of stars. The old bee garden was bathed in soft crystalline light — and ever so light a breeze lisped in the treetops. At the door of one of the hives we came to a halt. There arose from the hive a sibilant . . . persistent . . . not unlike the sound of sea waves . . . advancing . . . retreating.

"They are fanner bees," whispered the old beekeeper. "It's their job to keep the hives sweet and fresh. They're standing with their heads lowered, turned toward the centre of the hive. Their wings are moving so rapidly that if you could see them you would think they were looking at a gray mist. They are drawing the bad air through one side of the entrance, whilst the pure air is sucked in on the other side."

Standing close to nature, listening to the bee fanners, I felt close to one of nature's wonders — the mystery of the hive life. Presently the old beekeeper stooped to the hive, holding a lighted candle in his hand. Instantly the light was extinguished by the strong air current, those infinitesimal bee wings moving in unison, making a draft so strong that the candle light was instantly quenched. Think of it!

As we stood there in the starlit garden the old preacher said, "The fanners — drawing out the bad air; letting in the fresh. Isn't that how people who call themselves Christians ought to act?" If we had enough fanners, if they were as keen on their jobs as those bees are on theirs, wouldn't the great hive of the world grow sweet and fresh?—*Selected*.

For Younger Readers

KEPT FROM THE EVIL OF THE WORLD

"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."—John 17:15.

"I grew up in Southern California, where one of the familiar trees is the pepper. Now a pepper tree may not be among the prettiest of which California can boast, but it is unquestionably one of the cleanest. Its small leaves exude a substance that makes it well-nigh impossible for dust and dirt to cling to them. Dust may fill the atmosphere about them, but it will not cling, thanks to a secret which the Creator has put within the tree itself. If that pepper tree could talk to God, it might be heard to say: 'Dear God, I do not ask that you take me where there is no dust; I only ask that you keep me from its soiling and bedraggling effect.' And God does it.

"Here is a lotus flower — easily one of the loveliest creations in the world of natural beauty. Its delicate hue and spotless texture make you gasp in admiration. But look at its setting! What a contrast! Muck and mire and scum all around it. How can it be so chastely and exquisitely beautiful in a setting like that? The answer obviously is that it has a life within it that enables it to push its stem up through oozy muck and scummy water, and blossom, not because of the filth but in spite of it, with a splendour worthy of the onlooking angels. If flowers talk to God, as they must in their own way, then that lotus must be saying: 'Dear God, I do not ask that you plant me where there are no ill-smelling weeds or foul water; I only ask that you keep alive within me that vitality which lives where death abounds and blooms in beauty where ugliness runs riot.' And God hears that prayer!"

—DR. PAUL S. REES

A FULL COURSE MEAL

Those who attend Toronto Baptist Seminary have a well balanced diet and a full course meal that can extend to two, three or four years! The course is calculated to furnish the Christian worker with a well-rounded theological education. Those who wish to read of the courses in some detail should send for the Prospectus that is described elsewhere in this issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS.

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Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 19 Third Quarter Lesson 13 September 25, 1955

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

TEMPERANCE LESSON

Lesson Text: 1 Corinthians 8.

Golden Text: "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."—1 Corinthians 8:13.

In modern times the increase in the consumption of intoxicating drinks is such that young people everywhere must be warned against this sinful and devastating practice (Prov. 21:7; 23:31; Eph. 5:18). Teachers should take every opportunity to point out the harmful effects of the drink habit upon the individual, the home, society and the nation (Isa. 5:11-14; 28:7). It destroys a man physically, mentally, morally and spiritually.

Some may think that they can partake of wines and spirits in moderation without suffering evil results. These should understand that drink creates an appetite for itself, and although in the initial stages a man may be master of his desires, yet in the end he may be mastered by them (John 8:34; Rom. 6:13-16; 1 Cor. 6:12). Lion cubs may seem playful and tame, but when grown they will overthrow the strongest man.

The Word of God clearly teaches the results of living on the fleshly plane. To be governed by fleshly appetite means to live in such a way as will result in corruption and death (Rom. 8:5-8; 1 Cor. 6:13-20; Gal. 6:7, 8). The body is to be kept in subjection, while the mental and spiritual elements of personality are to be strengthened (1 Cor. 9:27). All that we do is to be done to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17).

The strength of influence has a bearing upon this subject: we are responsible to God, not merely for our own actions, but also to a certain extent for the actions of those who follow our example. The strong man may do something without harm to himself, but, if his example would put a stumbling-block in the way of a brother who may have an inherited weakness, the strong man must curb his desires for the sake of his brother. By precept and example we are to help others, but never to harm, discourage, or ensnare them (Rom. 14:13-23). Some Christians are selfish and self-centred, seeking their own advancement, rather than the blessing of others. Anything which we might do without harm to ourselves, but which would hinder the progress of another, cause him to stumble, or wound his conscience, must be avoided.

In explaining the principle that Christian liberty is determined by the law of love toward the brethren, the Apostle Paul mentions the practice of eating meat obtained from animals which had been slain in connection with heathen sacrifices to idols (1 Cor. 10:23-33).

The Corinthians, like other ancient Greeks, were idolaters (Acts 17:16; 1 Cor. 6:10, 14), but when the Gospel was preached in their city, many turned from their idols to serve the living and the true God (Acts 18:8; 1 Thess. 1:9). These Christians were convinced that there were not many gods, but just one God (Eph. 4:5, 6), and that an idol had no power, being but an image made by a mortal man (Isa. 40:19, 20; 41:24; 45:20; 46:6). Among them, however, might be some who were not proof against the associations of the old life. To them, meat obtained from an animal slaughtered in the heathen sacrifices was not ordinary meat (1 Tim. 4:4, 5), and to partake of it would mean complicity with idolatry, from which they had been redeemed. If by the example of one brother, another brother would be encouraged to eat the meat to the detriment of his Christian testimony the stronger brother must refrain from eating it. To sin against a brother is to sin against Christ (Matt. 25:40).

Teachers of younger scholars might like to illustrate the principle of this passage by a story, such as the following, which has appeared on a number of occasions, and is repeated, since a number have found it helpful in teaching a

lesson which may at first sight seem rather removed from the life of the children. In far-away Africa there lived a boy John, whose father was a missionary. John's chum was a little black boy, Sammy, who had formerly worshipped idols, but hearing of Christ, had believed on Him, become a Christian and given up his idols. One day some natives brought the carcass of a sheep to the missionary, and Sammy was staying for tea that evening with his chum. As the meat was brought to the table, the native servant told the family that this was one of many sheep which had been offered in sacrifice to the heathen gods the previous night. Sammy shivered. If he ate the meat, it would seem to him as though he were again in the power of those gods, and that he was once more bowing down to the images and dancing around the altar in the wild, weird, native fashion to the beating of drums, as the priests killed the animals for sacrifice. He looked at John to see what his friend would do. John knew that there was only one God, and that he would be able to eat the meat without any such distressed feeling about it as was manifest in Sammy's face. But he also knew how terrible it would be if Sammy should be tempted to worship idols again, so he said, "Mother, for Sammy's sake I do not want to eat this mutton. Will you please let us have some of that cold beef which is in the cupboard?"

The conduct of the Christian is to be governed by the law of love — love toward God and love toward his fellow-men. Since we are one with Christ, we must seek in all things to glorify Him (Matt. 5:16; John 15:8; 1 Cor. 6:20; 1 Pet. 4:11). Since we are united by spiritual ties to other believers, we must seek their good (Rom. 15:1-3).

Daily Bible Readings

Sept. 19—God Forbids Drunkenness Eph. 5:1-21
 Sept. 20—Christ Cautions Against It Luke 21:34-38
 Sept. 21—Drunkenness a Work of the Flesh Gal. 5:13-21
 Sept. 22—Drunkenness is Debasing Isa. 28:1-8
 Sept. 23—Drunkenness Insures Poverty Prov. 23:19-35
 Sept. 24—Drunkenness Excludes Christian Fellowship—
 1 Cor. 5:1-13
 Sept. 25—Drunkenness Bars One From Heaven. 1 Cor. 6:9-20

Suggested Hymns

Standing by a purpose firm.
 Christian, seek not yet repose.
 Onward, Christian soldiers!
 Sound the battle-cry!
 Yield not to temptation.
 Oft in sorrow, oft in woe.

FOOD FOR THE BODY

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SMALL CROSSES

Some shrink from bearing their crosses because of their insignificance, as well as on account of their heaviness, in other cases. I remember hearing of a person who was always trying to do some great thing for the Lord, and because he could not do a great thing, he never did anything. There are a great many who would be willing to do great things if they could come up and have their names heralded through the press. Your cross may be an humble one. Don't slight it.—MOODY.

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