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## WHY DOES THE CHURCH OF ROME ADVANCE?

ONE of the arguments frequently used by the Roman Catholic Church in support of its fantastic claims is that the Church has continued to grow and expand from the day of the first "Pope" Peter until the present hour. In a large Roman Cathedral we saw a chart which illustrated the history of Christendom in a graphical form. The emergence of the various Protestant "sects" was traced and the chart showed that, despite these defections, the Roman Catholic Church was still numerically the strongest body. This argument is a powerful one to anyone who is not more fully acquainted with *all* the accompanying considerations. Nothing succeeds like success! The unthinking individual will say—"Since the Church of Rome has experienced such a phenomenal growth, then it must be the true Church." This is exactly what the papal church wants us to think.

Let us be careful that we do not fall into a trap at this point. *The solitary fact of success does not carry with it the guarantee that any movement or teaching is true.* Success in a work grounded on the truth is a powerful confirmation to those in the work but success in and of itself does not necessarily mean that the movement is grounded on truth. If we do concede to the Romish argument then we must reason further—Communism is a much newer system than Romanism or evangelical Christianity; Communism has made sensational gains and now controls more people; *therefore Communism is true.* We might add that evangelicals could be well advised to guard against this "success measuring stick" for the counting of heads does not settle the truthfulness of any system or method.

The measuring stick which we must employ in all spiritual matters is the Word of God. To the great tribunal of Holy Writ we bring all teachings and systems. If they are condemned in that light then we care not how successful they are for they are unscriptural and doomed to failure.

Still, the question remains — if the Church of Rome is condemned in the light of the Word of God, how do you account for its gains and its advance in Canada and elsewhere? As we pondered this question, several thoughts came to our minds and we felt that there is no one reason that accounts for Rome's "success"; rather several important factors make their contributions.

### The Very Nature of Roman Catholicism

Some will declare that Romanism is not a supernatural religion. If by that, they mean that it is not of God, we heartily concur. We know however that Roman Catholicism has an origin other than earthly. From the Word of God and observation, it is evident that this system had its origin neither in heaven nor on earth—it is right from the pit of hell. This renders it the more dangerous for it has the temporary and dubious benefit of the aid of the ruler of the princes of this world. Furthermore its originator has cleverly presented for the admiration of men an attractive counterfeit of true Christianity. Hence the Church gives a lip service and a creedal acceptance to certain tenets of the faith but distorts the simplicity which is in Christ. No one can satisfactorily explain Rome's gains if its satanic origin is overlooked.

### Its Appeal to the Carnal Mind

Romanism appeals to the natural man for it caters to all his desires and makes the minimum number of demands on him. From start to finish it is calculated to appeal to the tastes of those who are depraved. This can be easily understood if we accept the fact that Romanism has its origin in the pit of hell. "The whole world is seated in wickedness" declares the Roman Catholic Douay version of 1 John 5:19. Satan appeals to this natural inclination of man and presents for man's acceptance a religion that is tailor-made for his enjoyment.

Need we further elaborate? Is it not perfectly obvious that many of the services of the Church of Rome which are beautiful and solemn are calculated to appeal to the eye and the ear rather than to the soul? Are the sacraments of Rome not calculated to render assurance to men who have no real ground of assurance? Is the priesthood not a convenient system whereby the individual shifts his own spiritual responsibilities and problems upon a fellow sinner rather than upon the great Sin Bearer?

We have no difficulty in seeing that these factors make Rome to appear beautiful in the eyes of those who are dwellers in the City of Destruction. This religion merely confirms them in their sin and encourages them in their state of rebellion against God.

#### Rome's Insistence Upon Authority

Men must have some source of authority. The great question of the hour in theological circles is—What is that final authority?—the Bible, the Church, the depraved mind, or a Pope? Rome answers in no uncertain terms—the Pope and the Church! While Rome thus answers with confidence the great majority of Protestants so-called mumble and mutter and point men to no authority. Modern Protestantism has no infallible Bible and no infallible Christ. Every man is left to himself. In the midst of this anarchy the voice of Rome is raised and men are told that the Pope and the Church provide the needed authority if mortals will only turn to them.

We candidly confess that while we have no sympathy with the Church of Rome, we have more real respect for her note of authority (false though it is) than we have for a multitude of "Protestant" divines of the modern breed. In this age men are looking for something firm upon which they might stand and so the Romish pretensions are embraced and taken at face value.

How this consideration should rouse believers! Let us cease from speculation and take up the Book with its infallible declarations and point men to its central Personage. Rome's growth should serve as an incentive to us to go out to rescue men from the pit of hell and from the clutches of this diabolical system.

#### COMMUNISM HASN'T CHANGED — RELIGION STILL "THE OPIUM OF THE PEOPLE"

Some modern preachers and politicians would try to convince us that the Russian bear has become domesticated and even religious! Apparently we are to forget all the blasphemous utterances of Communism, all its bloody deeds and broken promises and to believe that suddenly Communism is respectable. While some western zealots are busy telling us of this change of heart, the Russian Communist secretary has forgotten his lines and in a short despatch in *The Toronto Telegram* of September 23 he is reported as giving the official view of the Russian government toward all religion:—

#### STILL ATHEISTS

...MOSCOW—Communist party secretary Nikita Khrushchev said the Soviet Union can now tolerate religion because the power of the state has grown so great. "But you must not draw the conclusion from this fact that Communism has changed its point of view toward religion," he said. "We remain atheist and we do everything we can to liberate a certain part of the people from the opium attraction of religion which still exists."

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#### TELL YOUR CHILDREN HOW TO DIE

"All thy children shall be taught of the Lord."  
—Isaiah 54:13.

A dying son said to his father, "Father, you gave me an education, and good manners, and everything that the world could do for me; but, father, you never told me how to die; and now my soul is going out in the darkness."

Oh, ye who have taught your children how to live, have you also taught them how to die? Life here is not so important as the great hereafter. It is not so much the few furlongs this side the grave as it is the unending leagues beyond. O eternity! eternity! Thy locks white with the ages! Thy voice announcing stupendous destiny! Thy arms reaching across all the past and all the future! Thy heart beating with raptures that never die, and agonies that never cease! O eternity! eternity!

Go home and erect a family altar. You may break down in your prayer. But never mind, God will take what you mean, whether you express it intelligently or not. Bring all your house into the ark. Is there one son whom you have given up! Is he so dissipated that you have stopped counselling and praying? Give him up? How dare you give him up? Did God ever give thee up? Whilst thou hast a single articulation of speech left, cease not to pray for the return of that prodigal. He may even now be standing on the beach at Hong Kong or Madras, meditating a return to his father's house. Give him up? Never give him up! Has God promised to hear thy prayer only to mock thee? It is not too late.

—TALMAGE

# The Jarvis Street Pulpit

## Revival of a Carnal Man

A Sermon By Dr. T. T. Shields

(SECOND IN A SERIES ON REVIVALS OF THE BIBLE)

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Thursday Evening, October 31st, 1929

(Stenographically Reported)

"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

"And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

"And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

"And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.

"And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

"And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.

"And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." Gen. 32:24-30.

**F**OR our study this evening we shall turn again to the book of Genesis. Last week we observed that even Abraham, the father of all who believe, found some detours on the road, that he was turned aside from the path of straight and continuous progress in his spiritual life, and that he had to come back again out of Egypt "unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abraham called on the name of the Lord."

It is wonderfully instructive to study these divinely-inspired biographies of the children of God. It is a great art to write the life-story of any man, to set different incidents, and different qualities of mind, in their proper relation, in their proper proportion, and to be withal absolutely truthful in one's representations of the character to be recorded. What is written in the Bible of different men of God is a record of fact: it is absolutely true to their life's history, and in that it differs from every other kind of biography.

Isaac was an entirely different character from Abraham. He never rose to any very great heights — nor did he descend to any great depths. He pursued the even tenor of his way, accomplishing not a great deal, but fulfilling his place in the plan of God. I think if you read Isaac's record you will find that important as he was as a link in the divine chain, he owes his distinction chiefly to the fact that Abraham was his father, and that Jacob was his son.

Jacob was a much more pronounced and positive character; and Jacob had, as our proverbial phrase puts it, "the defects of his qualities", the very qualities which made him great in some directions, made him somewhat difficult to live with in others.

We used to have a great musician here in this church. He really was a great musician, a great leader. I have heard a few, but I have never heard him surpassed. He was temperamentally a musician — he was somewhat peppery. One had to be a little bit careful what he said,

and how he conducted himself when this man was around. Yet he was a great man, and for years I laboured with him with the greatest joy, praying that he might have a more spiritual conception of things. But I remember once saying to some friends who were his critics, "I have read that although Vesuvius has erupted a great many times, and the lava has rolled down its sides wiping out the villages that had been built there; but when the lava had passed the folks went back and rebuilt their villages right on the slope of Vesuvius. They say that in that neighbourhood there is one of the finest climates in the world. Well, if you want to live on the slopes of Vesuvius you must put up with the lava! And if you want to have a great musician, sensitive in every pore, you must not come too close to him, but leave him alone in his glory!" That principle, I think, is at the base of that proverbial saying that a certain person has the defects of his qualities. And so had Jacob.

"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

There is great encouragement for most of us in the life-story of Jacob. I remember at the close of one of his great lectures a group of ministers gathered about Dr. Russell Conwell, who was one of the greatest men I have ever been privileged to meet. One of them, rather

a pompous man, said, "Dr. Conwell, how do you prepare your sermons when you have so much to do?" The great preacher smiled and said, "Oh, I just feel ashamed of myself, and go on. I gain great comfort and inspiration out of my sermons, for if the Lord can bless my sermons He can bless anything." If the Lord can make a prince out of a man like Jacob, then He can make a prince out of anybody; and there is no reason why we should not all find inspiration in his life's story.

### I.

Our chapter opens by telling us that as Jacob went on his way the angels of God met him. I SHOULD LIKE YOU TO LOOK A LITTLE AT THE RECORD OF THIS MAN WHOM THE ANGELS MET ON THIS OCCASION. WHAT SORT OF MAN WAS HE? Let it be remembered that conversion is only the beginning of the Christian life; it marks our birth into the divine family. After that we must "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ". Conversion synchronizes with justification; it is an act of God instantaneously exercised, when the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the penitent sinner who believes. He is esteemed righteous for Christ's sake; he is complete in Christ Who is the Head of all principalities and powers. Sanctification is the word used for the education of souls which begins with conversion, and is never perfected until we are "presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy". As believers we ought to be going on with God, growing up into Christ in all things, learning something of Him every day, putting off the old man, putting on the new, and becoming increasingly conformed to the image and likeness of Christ.

When a child comes into the family father and mother begin to plan that child's future, and one of the big tasks is to provide for his or her education, for the thorough equipment for the work in life that child will have to do. We are children of God by virtue of our birth from above by the power of the Holy Ghost. Being children of God, God has a great deal to do with us to bring us up in the proper way — and He has a great many awkward children. They are not all equally good-looking, nor are they all equally good-tempered either!

I remember my father's telling me that as he was going home from a business meeting once he said to a fellow-official, "You know, I sometimes have difficulty in believing that Mr. So-and-So, who was so awkward in the meeting to-night, knows very much about the grace of God." Said the other man, "Pastor, if you had known him when I first knew him, you would not think so. He is bad enough now, but if you knew what the Lord had to do with him in the beginning, you would not think that now." I used to have a deacon to whom I playfully said sometimes, "Deacon, I think you are all gold, I think you are the real thing — but I think you are one of the most awkward nuggets I ever saw in my life! The stuff is in you but you are all corners and points, and it is difficult for anyone to live with you." And yet he was a man of God.

Jacob was a man like that, and if divine grace could triumph in the case of a man like Jacob, then the Lord can do what He wills to do with us, however stiff and stubborn and stiff-necked we may be.

If you go back in Jacob's record you will find that he was a very tricky sort of gentleman, and could even be, as I heard someone say, "economical with the truth". In other words, he was not always straightforward, he

was not always truthful. In the New Testament I read a passage like this: "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour." Supposing I were to borrow the phraseology of some people, and address a congregation after this fashion, "Quit your lying" — what would you say? You would think that was pretty rough would you not? It would be, but there is a possibility of even the Lord's own people being grievously wrong at this point. I have known a great many people who were called Christians, whose word needed corroboration before it could be depended upon. And when Jacob came and said, "I am thy son Esau", what did he do? I heard a preacher very ingeniously trying to explain that Jacob told the truth. But that will not do, my friends; I will tell you what Jacob did: he lied! There is no use saying he did not; that is what he did. He was Jacob, not Esau; and he deliberately deceived his father however God may have overruled it.

It is a good thing God overrules some things, or we should be in a bad way, all of us. That is one thing that the Lord has to take out of us, if we are disposed to be careless in respect to the facts of a case. I heard of a certain professor who had a reputation for being absolutely truthful; he was so careful that he would never make a statement that could possibly be construed as other than the truth. It was a passion with him. Some of the students made up their minds that they would catch their professor. One of them was to go and talk with the professor in his study, and then another one was to come to the outer door, and ask to see his fellow-student. While the professor went to the door, the student inside who was supposed to be talking to the professor was to jump out of the window. So the plan was all laid. Student number one came to see his teacher, and was shown into the professor's study. While they were engaged in conversation someone came to the outer door and knocked, and the professor said, "You will please excuse me a minute, there is someone outside." He went to the outer door and someone said, "Is Mr. So-and-So with you, Professor?" "Well," he said, "He was just a moment ago when I left the room." Thus they failed to catch their professor.

That is a fine reputation for any man to have, when his word can absolutely be depended upon. Jacob's could not. And this story tells how God dealt with Jacob to take that, among other things, out of him; and to make him a truthful and faithful servant of God.

Another characteristic of Jacob's was that beyond all question *he was an intensely selfish man*. If one contrasts, on the natural plane, the characters of Jacob and Esau, I frankly confess, if I had to live with either of them, I would rather live with Esau than Jacob. When Isaac wanted savoury meat such as he loved, of whom did he think first of all? To whom did he make his request? Not Jacob, but Esau; Esau, who makes no religious profession at all, was the man who was considerate of his father. I have no doubt he had shown the old man many kindnesses. I have no doubt he was a man who was thoughtful of other people, considerate of other people's needs and desires. It was perfectly natural therefore for Isaac to say to him, "You go and make me savoury meat such as I love."

There are some professing Christians, I grant you, who, in the beginning, suffer by comparison with those who make no profession at all. Jacob was a hard bargain-driver. He knew how to look after number one!

He was like a man to whom someone paid the doubtful compliment of saying that a guiding principle of that man's life was that every element in life should be made to contribute the greatest good to the greatest number—the greatest number always being "number one"!

There are people who live for themselves, and for themselves alone. I have known many ministers like that — many ministers, and hundreds of professing Christians who seemed not to know what an unselfish action was. I travelled with two ministers once — I will not tell you who they were. One was supposed to be an orthodox man; and the other, well, he was orthodox then too, but he got off a bit afterwards. But the orthodox man seemed to believe that the sun rose in the morning especially for his benefit, and that it was engaged all the day long in looking after this important man, that the stars came out at night to bid him welcome, and to look after him! It was the duty of everyone, everywhere he went, to remember that he was present, and to provide for him. He was a great man. When preaching, I have heard him move literally thousands. But he always behaved himself as though he expected all the thousands to spend all their time looking after him. We travelled in England, these two men and I, and the one always had a rug to wrap about the other. The unselfish man was so thin that you could almost blow him away, while the other man was pretty well wrapped up without any rug at all! I have seen him sit down in the corner of a railway carriage while this other man would take a robe and wrap it all about him, like a mother wrapping up a baby. My lord would take it all with a smile, and say, "You are *too good* to me." But he never objected to it! He always took it!

There are a great many people like that. Jacob lived for Jacob. Did you ever hear of Jacob's giving anything away in those early days? If there had been a church collection where Jacob was a member, his beneficence would not have swelled it very much. I have known many orthodox people who were as stingy as they were orthodox! I know some people who glory in the gospel, but they are like what some people say of the Scotch, that the reason the Scotch are so religious is that religion is free! Well, they think it is free!

I knew a pastor who preached in a country church, who, one Sunday morning, made a desperate effort to get the people to contribute to a missionary offering of some sort. When the service was over and they counted the offering, he met the deacons, a company of farmers. They were all well-to-do farmers. They said, "Sorry, Pastor, but we are a little short on that offering." "How much?" "Well, not so very much, but we are short. We took up an offering among ourselves afterward, and we are now just fifteen cents short." "Oh," said the Pastor, "I think I can make that up." He had already given, but he handed them out twenty-five or fifty cents, I forget which it was. "Oh," they said, "we shall not need that amount; we shall be over our aim." So they redistributed the balance among themselves!

I was Vice-Chairman of the Home Mission Board of the Convention of Ontario and Quebec for some years, and it seemed to me that half the members of our churches were Jacobs! I do not believe there is blessing in the life of any man who is stingy. That is one of the things that divine grace ought to take out of us. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to pov-

erty." Jacob was the type of man who would have made a good Chairman of a Finance Committee — to tell other people how to do it, while doing nothing himself. Never a thing did he do. If we let that spirit dominate us, we can expect that God will have something to do with us before we get through.

*Jacob was a bit of a coward too.* He did an unbrotherly thing with his brother Esau, and then he ran away, and refused to face the consequences of his trickery. There are a great many of the Lord's people who seem to have no backbone at all, no courage of any sort. I think I have told you of what I said to a brother in my vestry. He came to see me before the First Avenue Convention. I said, "Brother So-and-So, you and I have been friends for more than twenty years; we know each other pretty well, do we not?" "Yes." "Well, I often wish you and I could take a trip together, a kind of vacation." "What for?" he enquired. I said, "I should like to go to Rochester." "What do you want to go there for?" "Well, there is a famous clinic there." "But you are not sick, are you?" "No." "Well, I am not." "No, but I should like to take you there, and have them open up that place down your back where your backbone ought to be, to see if by any means they could put one in! You would be a magnificent fellow if only you had a little bit of moral courage." And so he should. He is a splendid fellow, but, as my friend Dr. Norris would say, he has a potato vine where he ought to have a railroad iron. You can bend him, or do anything you like with him.

Jacob was anything but a heroic spirit when he ran away from the consequences of his own untruthfulness and double dealing. But this chapter says that the angels of God met Jacob. He had had a good deal to do with the angels — or at least his family had, for the angels had written his family history. And the angels are always roundabout God's people: "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Even when Jacob was going away from home he met the angels. It was Abraham who entertained angels unaware. It was an "angel" who promised the coming of Isaac. When Abraham had lifted up his hand to slay his son, it was an angel who said, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad." Rebecca was brought to Isaac by the ministry of the angels, for you remember when Eliezer went away into the far country to find a wife for Isaac, he was rather afraid of the job. I never blamed him for that! He said, "Oh, that is a difficult task." And Abraham said, "The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spoke unto me, and that swore unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee." It was "the angel of the Lord" who went before Eliezer, and the angel of the Lord brought Rebecca to Isaac. Jacob's whole history was what it was because angels had always ministered to him.

If only we knew it, angels have been about our houses, and about our families, these many years. If only we could visualize these invisible ministers how thrilled we should be to know we are never left alone!

## II.

When Jacob was going away so meanly, guilty of such an unbrotherly act, as he lay down on the ground that night with a stone for a pillow, he slept and dreamed a dream, and in his dream he saw a "ladder set up on the earth, whose top reached to heaven"; and he saw angels

ascending and descending upon it. Then you remember how Jacob loosened up a little bit when the angels came to him; he made a very generous proposal; he said, "of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." Was that not fine? It was as far as the poor man could go just now, but we shall see how God will take the stinginess out of him by and by.

There are some people who need a special visit from the angels in that particular, because they have not given a tenth yet. Many people are startled with the idea of giving a tenth of their income to the Lord. Well, if you do not, you are guilty of robbery, that is all. You say, "I do not give a tenth." If you do not give a tenth, you are not even honest with God. That is the minimum; God has a right to that. That is not giving: that is simply paying what the Lord required in the ancient times. And that is as far as Jacob has gone yet!

Oh, I wish some other people could have dreams! I wish some other people could see the ladder. We must put up some new buildings here to make room for our growing Sunday School, and I think we had better all pray that everyone may become a dreamer and see the angels, and be ready to say, "I will give at least a tenth." If this church were to give a tenth — now mark my words — if the members of Jarvis Street Church would simply get as far as Jacob got when he said, "I will give you a tenth," if the members of Jarvis Street would do that for one year, we could build the biggest Sunday School equipment in the entire Dominion of Canada, and have every dollar of it paid for inside of twelve months. We talk about being spiritual people, and looking for spiritual blessing! My dear friends, if the members of this church would tithe, if they would give a tenth of their income to the Lord, the Lord would open the windows of heaven, and give us such a blessing there "would not be room enough to contain it". Then we could use the tithe to build a bigger place! So let us pray that the angels will wake Jacob up.

And that is not going very far, you know. That is only the first step. A man has to be honest before he can be generous; and every one of us, I do not care if your income is only one dollar per week must be honest before we can be generous; and a tenth of what we have belongs to the Lord. That is the arithmetic of faith, that ninety cents will go further than a dollar when God has been recognized in the tenth. There is no doubt about it. Now you pray over that.

Well, Jacob went on his way. I shall not detain you by detailing the story of his sojourn in Paden-aram, and his relationship with Laban; but I will tell you he was a pretty difficult gentleman. I think there are a great many people who are living with Laban still, and who are up to all kinds of tricks. I should not like to say they are not the people of the Lord, but they need a good deal of drilling and disciplining.

During the time, perhaps twenty years or more, that Mr. Jacob was away, he got on. It is an evidence of divine grace that God should have condescended to bless a man so mean as Jacob. That is what he was. He was a wretch, he really was, living for self, always living for himself. But he had promised the Lord that he would give a tenth, and the Lord blessed him. The Lord has said, "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Notwithstanding all his defects, at that

one point at least, Jacob took God into partnership, and he said, "A tenth belongs to the Lord." And you know how God blessed him. Laban at last said, "I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake." When Jacob's wealth had been greatly multiplied God came to him again, and told him to go back home. As he came on his way the angels of God met him.

Let me point out this one thing in contrast with Esau. I told you that Esau was apparently a very generous man, a kindly dispositioned man naturally, a man whose character was at many points far more admirable than that of Jacob. But the New Testament describes Esau as a profane person — which does not mean that he used profane language, but rather that there was no sacred enclosure in his life. His heart was like the ground outside of the temple, across which any vagrant feet might wander: there was no place in Esau's life reserved for God. When you study his record, you will find that Esau never built an altar; he never prayed; he never recognized God at any time, anywhere. Esau did not know an angel when he saw one. He never recognized the spiritual at all. He had no commerce with the spiritual realm; he was of the earth, earthy. His world was bounded by time and sense, and he had no sense of the reality of spiritual things. Jacob, in spite of all his natural defects, had a place in his heart for God. Jacob had seen the open heaven, and he had learned how to pray. Jacob had built altars, and had called upon the name of the Lord. When the angels came he saw them, and recognized them. And now, as he is returning to Esau, when the angels of God met him he said, "Ah, I know who they are: this is God's host."

We are all thronged with angels, with heavenly ministers. They are not always spiritual visitors in the sense that these were; God may make a man an angel to you. But the difference between Esau and Jacob is to be found in this, that if we are of Abraham's seed in the sense that Jacob was, we shall recognize the angels when they come. Have you an ear for the heavenly music? Listen: "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound." Do you know it? When you hear the gospel, do you say, "My heart responds to that"?

I know a man who was Pastor of St. James Presbyterian Church some years ago, early in my pastorate in Jarvis Street Church. We were sitting in Massey Hall one night when Dr. Chapman was preaching a glorious gospel sermon. This dear friend, Dr. Robertson, sat beside me, with tears rolling down his cheeks. He was rejoicing in the gospel, and when it got to one point he could contain himself no longer. He said to me, "Give me your hand". He gripped it and said, "By the response of my soul to that, I know I am a Christian."

Esau did not know "the joyful sound", but Jacob did. "My sheep hear my voice". God's sheep sometimes wander far away from Him; but if they are really His sheep, when He calls, they recognize His voice; they recognize His word. Jacob returned — and he prayed.

### III.

I must hasten. Jacob was still living pretty much on the carnal plane, and he said, "I will pay Esau off. I will send him gifts. He will have it in for me, I am sure, for what I did to him. I should have had it in for him if he had treated me that way." Jacob supposed that Esau had been nursing this grudge through all the years, so when he heard that Esau was coming to meet him he

divided his company into two bands, and sent one out saying, "When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose are these before thee? Then thou shalt say, They be thy servant Jacob's; it is a present sent unto my Lord Esau: and, behold, also he is behind us. And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him."

There are many people who think other people can be bought. I do not know how many Jacobs we have had to deal with in the controversy we have had in the last few years. They thought they had only to treat a man in a certain way, to send him a present, and he would be sure to be good! They were after the present themselves, and they could not understand why anyone else could not be bribed. If it was not "a present", it was a "D.D.", or something like that, anything in the world to bribe someone into an acceptance of their position.

Jacob, filled with fear, gathered his wives and his children, and sent them over the brook—and Jacob was left alone. He had met angels before, but it was not an angel now. "There wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." And I think that Man, Who was the Man of all men, must have said to Jacob in effect, "Jacob, these many years I have been waiting for this occasion, and we are going to have it out to-night; we are going to find out who is going to be master in your life. It is going to be settled right here and now before you meet with Esau." It does not say that Jacob wrestled with the man, but "there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." If you are a Christian, if you are genuinely the Lord's. He is going to have His way with you. Sometimes we may postpone the great decision for many a day, and many a year, but if we are really His, He is going to compel submission to His rule: "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

Some people have come to me and said, "Well, Pastor, I had been going on more or less carelessly, and then the Lord came to me, and I wanted to know more of His grace and power. I tried to make a surrender of myself to Him, and from that hour everything has gone wrong." Are you surprised at that? "There wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." If the Lord did not love you, there would be no discipline in your life. It is the love of God that leads Him to bring us sometimes under the rod, for if we are genuinely His He will not let us go. I hold fast by the doctrine of eternal salvation, and when the Good Shepherd sets out to find His sheep, He finds them; and, having found them, He saves them; and, having saved them, He will keep them, so that He can say "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost. I have them every one."

But it means something to be one of the Lord's sheep. And, my brother, by application of the same principle, it means something for a church to be really the Lord's. "Why," somebody says, "Look at such a church. There is no gospel in the pulpit; there is no consecration in the pew; there is plenty of money in the treasury; they never have any difficulty at all. It seems as if they are carried along on a wave of prosperity. I do not understand it." Somebody here to-night representing some little church somewhere says, "We have had all sorts of difficulties in our little church. We have to almost live on our knees all the time." The reason that other church

has no difficulties at all is that it is being left alone. It is not the Lord's church. But if a company of people do really love the Lord, and do really seek to honour Him, we may expect, as a church, to have His rod upon us; we may expect that just as Jacob was met by the angels of God, and there stood a man across his path and said, "I have got an old score to settle with you," so may we expect God to deal with us. Do not let us be discouraged if sometimes things apparently go awry; it may be the grip of the Almighty Wrestler that has some other thing to take out of us in order to use us the more in His service, and for His glory.

"And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him." Poor Jacob became a cripple.

Do you know that to command God, in the sense that some of our modest friends would teach us, is utterly unscriptural? Somebody says, "It is your privilege to have a whole body. Now then, demand it. Command God. Here is a promise, you can see exactly what it means. Send in your order, and say, 'We give no authority to substitute; we will have that or nothing. We must have the blessing of God.'" That is not the spirit of prayers: that is the very antithesis of prevailing prayer. "He saw that he prevailed not against him". And Jacob wrestled with Him until the Almighty's finger touched his thigh, and all the wrestling was taken out of him, and he could wrestle no more.

The Angel, who was none other than the Angel of the Covenant, an Old Testament manifestation of our glorious Lord Himself, said, "Let me go, for the day breaketh". And the day does break when the Lord has had His way with us.

"And he said; I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." How does a little boy get that cookie out of the pantry? How does he get it? By coming up like the lord of creation and saying, "I want it"? No; he just holds on to mother's skirts, and says, "Mama, please." He simply says, "Please" — and he gets it. What the wrestling Jacob could not do, the clinging Jacob accomplished. "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. You have taken all the wrestling out of me, I can wrestle no more; but I can cling."

"Nothing in my hands I bring,  
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

The Angel said, "What is thy name?" You must be prepared to have questions asked, and be prepared to answer them when you ask for a blessing. "What is thy name?" "Jacob. Supplanter! I am well named! If there is any doubt about it, please ask Esau. We will tell you! And if his testimony is not enough, go and ask Laban, and he will tell you!" Ask anyone that ever had anything to do with Jacob, and he will tell you that Jacob had the faculty of getting in some one else's way—and getting there first! He had a faculty for supplanting someone all the time. Did you ever see people like that? They always "get there first". If there is a bargain-day downtown they are right up against the door, and as soon as the door is opened in they go — when someone else comes the bargain is gone. "Jacob!"

When you come to God for a blessing you had better bring the record of your life and say, "It does not make good reading, but the pages are all open." Jacob turned over the pages; year after year; Jacob! Jacob! Jacob! The same old Jacob; he had made no progress at all. And

the Angel said, "I will give you another name. Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

So you see, we can lose that old name and become "Israel" at last by God's grace. The way to have power with men is first to have power with God. We must plead with God for men before we plead with men for God. If we are to have power on earth, we must first of all have power in heaven.

Then Jacob turned the tables and said, "Tell me, I pray thee, thy name." And the Angel said, "Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name?" Someone else did that later: "Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name seeing it is secret?" "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Do not ask too much, but be ready to answer all the questions that God will ask you. Then you will get blessing.

If you read on through the rest of the chapter, you will find that when "he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh", and he lifted up his eyes and saw Esau coming. But instead of coming with a sword, Esau ran to meet him and fell on his neck, and they wept. "And Esau lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant." He brought all his family and introduced them to Esau, and Esau asked, "What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? Glad to meet your wives and children, Jacob, but what about all this cattle." "Oh," he said, "they are to find grace in the sight of my lord." Esau said, "I have enough, my brother; keep it. I do not need it. I am glad to see you so prosperous, but I do not need it. Just keep it."

But here is the wonder — oh, here is the wonder — and you miss the point of the whole story if you fail to see this. Jacob said, "Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me. Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough" — now listen, here is the miracle, listen with both ears — "and he urged him, and he took it." "He urged him"! He not only offered; he did not say, "Won't you have it?" He did not even say, "Will you have it?" He said, "Take it"! He pressed it upon him; urged him to take it.

You cannot receive the Spirit of God into your heart, and allow Him to dominate you, without becoming a generous person. I want to be just as plain as I know how to be. I believe it is absolutely impossible for any man or woman to be yielded to the Spirit of God without being made thereby liberal and generous. Our God gives; it is His very nature to give; He is always giving, always enriching someone else. It is of the very nature of love to communicate itself. It is bound to give, it cannot help it. If the Spirit of God comes in and takes possession, instead of Jacob's meanness and scheming to get the birthright and everything else, he will take the very best he has, and when all reason for fear is removed, and even after his generous brother has put his arms about his neck and kissed him, and they have wept together, and Esau has said, "Jacob, I am so glad to see you so well off with your wives and children," if it had been the old Jacob he would have said, "Here is a way out" — like a

person who is up in the front seat when the collection plate is passed, and someone is going to see him, he gets very generous and picks out something to put on the collection plate, but if the usher passes him he says, "Well, I escaped that time!" No; that is not the way — "He urged him." He might have escaped, but he said, "That is yours. I should not be comfortable otherwise; I want you to take it." And "he urged him" to take it.

I believe that if we can accept these principles, and apply them to ourselves, there is not one of us who will not have in some measure a great revival in his own heart. May the Lord help us so to do!

## A DUBIOUS COURAGE

HOW easy it is for a preacher to condemn a sin which only recently remotely affects those whom he addresses. We doubt very much if schoolboys near the equator have to be reprimanded for throwing snowballs. Therefore the teacher who delivers a scathing address about the evils of snowball-throwing to some in the Belgian Congo might be commended on his oratorical display but the address is surely not needed. We could more admire the good man's courage if he spoke of this evil in some part of the world where snowballs could be made.

It is easy too for some preachers to rant and rave with great gusto about sins which are not likely to affect the hearers. For instance, it is very fashionable today to ridicule fundamentalists and to disparage those who contend for the faith. When this criticism comes from the enemies of the faith, we understand their malice. Indeed we would be very suspicious if their attitude were otherwise. What does hurt however is the unwarranted and "brave" utterances of some evangelicals as they ridicule fundamentalism and fundamentalists while they themselves are warming their hands at the fires of the modernists.

We are fully aware of the mistakes of fundamentalists in times past and we are aware of our own sins. We do contend for the faith and make no apology for our stand and we may sometimes be guilty of an unlovely spirit. Those who point out such instances to us do us a favour and we thank God for their concern. We realize that none of us is infallible.

Do the mistakes made by fundamentalists justify any evangelical in attacking fundamentalism *as such*? These attacks are even stranger when one realizes that such an evangelical is usually very, very quiet about the hellish system known as modernism. In modernist company, it is very easy to launch full scale attacks against those who by the grace of God contend for the faith. Modernists love to hear sermons about "lack of charity" for they pride themselves that they are the walking embodiments of charity and hence they think that the message has no application to them. Its application, they believe, is to the despised fundamentalist. We want to emphasize that not much courage is required to attack a sin of which those addressed are not guilty (or think they are not guilty). Let us hear such preachers attack the modernism and Christ-denying teachings of the majority of pulpits and we shall be more inclined to believe that they preach with the fear of God before their eyes rather than the fear of man and the love of the esteem of those who are declared enemies of the gospel. Courage is needed in the pulpit but it is the courage which in the name of God rebukes sins that exist and are the pressing evils of the hour.



# A Devotional Study in Revelation

by Dr. R. D. Barry

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### THREE DECISIVE DEFEATS OF SATAN

#### Revelation 11:15 to 12:17

OUR preceding study brought us to the time of the end and to the consummation of the last judgments of history. That is confirmed by the sounding of the seventh trumpet, as the great voices in heaven cry out: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." (11:15). And in their turn the elders fall upon their faces and worship God in a song of praise and thankfulness: "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets."

In the open heavens, there now appears the temple of God and the ark of His covenant; that new vision, together with the lightnings, the voices, the thunderings, the earthquake and the hail, represent the divine answer to the appeals of the saints who invoke the throne of grace and cry for justice.

Those final things thus predicted, the vision once again goes back to the causes of that great upheaval. Chapter twelve of the book of Revelation therefore deals with the origin of the conflict.

Let us pause here to observe the logical gradation of the apocalyptic prophecies. Let us first remember that the vision of the seals was mainly a picture of the conflict of *ideas* which, throughout the Christian economy, must confront gospel truths with spiritual falsehood: that conflict ends with a vision of *peace*. On the other hand, the trumpet-series was mainly a vision of the conflict of *persons* which must bring face to face the witnesses of the gospel and the hostile human organizations: that war logically results in a vision of *victory*.

The scenes of chapters 12 to 14 do not confront us any more with ideas or persons, which are but instruments in the course of the hostilities. They directly acquaint us with their *authors*. Extending well beyond the Christian dispensation, a stupendous war, at once accursed and holy, had pitted both in heaven and on earth, the eternal God against His great Adversary. Of this gigantic struggle, the opposition of anti-Christianity to Christianity is but the last episode. The issue of the conflict is depicted in chapter 14, vv. 14-20, where we behold the scenes of *retribution* under the figures of the harvest and grape-gathering.

Chapter twelve will therefore describe, in impressive images, the summary of that deadly war which will be transferred from heaven to the scene of our world. Only by grasping the enlarged scope of these hostilities and by taking our own place in them, shall we avoid the misfortune and the folly of believing that we fight only for ideas and against men. We have to understand that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Our study of the twelfth chapter of Revelation will thus reveal to us that, in this conflict, God has chosen to fight His Adversary, not directly but through the action of intermediaries. We shall see the gradual downfall of Satan as he is successively in opposition to the Son of God, then to the archangel Michael, finally to redeemed men.

#### I. SATAN'S DEFEAT AT THE HANDS OF THE SON OF GOD (12:1-6)

"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered."

Most of the commentaries identify the mysterious woman with the people of God. Isaiah 54 describes it under feminine features, whereas the great promise of Genesis 3:15 concerning the Redeemer refers to Him as the seed of the woman. It goes without saying that the present vision does not involve the act of incarnation, entirely divine in its origin and its fulfilment. But, in a particular sense, the Son of Man is certainly the Father's answer to the anguish and prayers of those waiting for a spiritual deliverance.

It seems therefore that the scene described here at once carries us to the beginning and to the ending of the eternal purpose of God towards His own. And thus the woman appears in a twofold state of majesty and suffering.

A state of *majesty*: she is clothed with the symbol of supreme authority, the sun; she rules over the moon, a figure for the lesser authority; her crown of stars symbolizes all the other powers. Such is the destiny of the kingly people.

A state of *suffering*, as also predicted in various Scriptures: "I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, and the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, the voice of the daughter of Zion, that bewaileth herself (Jer. 4:31) — "... The kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem. Now why dost thou cry

aloud? is there no *king* in thee? for pangs have taken thee as a *woman in travail*. Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail . . ." (Micah 4:8-10). And in the context of the latter passage is found the prophecy of the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem. To acquaint rebellious mankind with an absolute Master, such is the ungrateful but high calling of the true people of God.

"And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads."

The faithful works of the symbolical woman have their origin in heaven, and in the same way, the forces hostile to her came from heaven, by virtue of a mysterious divine permission.

The formidable being mentioned here can be easily identified as Satan by the context of the following scenes. His dragon-like appearance symbolizes his threatening designs. His red colour seems to emphasize his ferocious instincts. His seven heads figure his intelligence and his ten horns his power. His seven crowns tell of his universal prestige.

"And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born."

In connection with previous allusions made to the instruments used by the Satanic powers, we read that their tails "were like unto serpents" — which would seem to indicate that through seduction the Father of lies drew after him from heaven a multitude of the celestial beings symbolized by the stars, thus increasing his means of action.

The dragon's attitude toward the Child reminds us of that of Pharaoh against the newly-born Hebrews and of Herod against the Son of God. The Enemy knows the loss he will suffer through the seed of the woman who will bruise his head. And unable to act more wickedly, he prepares to bruise his heel.

"And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron."

This is naturally a symbolic picture. For instance, Mary was only the instrument through which the long expectation of the coming of the Son of Man was realized. As a representative of what was best among the servants of the God of Israel, she gave birth to her Son through the power of the Holy Spirit, and in answer to the prayers of those who had longed for His coming with an earnest heart. In the same way, during the present economy, the Christian people have been called, like the apostle Paul, to "travail in birth again, until Christ be formed" in the saints (Gal. 4:19).

Revelation 2:27 throws light on the quality of the threatened child: "He that overcometh . . . shall rule the nations with a rod of iron . . . even as I received of my Father." For what must characterize the Son of God is His matchless and decisive authority, an authority first exercised without limitation over the Christian's heart, and finally triumphing over all the adversaries of the gospel.

"And her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne."

Our Saviour's career, that one long and victorious conflict with the dragon, is sufficiently described in the Gospels. Our text, therefore, designedly omits depicting

it, only mentioning its miraculous beginning and end. We thus reach here the events told in the fourth and fifth chapters, that is, the enthronement of Jesus Christ and the opening on earth of the Christian era.

"And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days."

This is a striking picture of the condition of the people of God throughout Christian history. To "flee" has always been the very legitimate means of safe-guard for the representatives of Jesus Christ: "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another" (Matt. 10:23).

The place of refuge is at once a "wilderness" and a "place prepared of God", that is, a condition of suffering, and of safety. It is also the seat of divine Providence, which as long as necessary provides for the needs of the persecuted ones. The oasis of the desert of Shur, with its twelve wells of water and its threescore and ten palm trees (Ex. 15:27), is here repeated.

This 1,260 days' period of exile takes us back to our preceding remarks concerning the similar duration of the persecution of God's witnesses in chapter eleven. Let us again remind our readers that those three and a half years — a broken seven — refer to the *limited* and measured length of God's Israel's stay on earth.

## II. SATAN'S DEFEAT AT THE HANDS OF THE ARCHANGEL OF GOD (11:7-11)

"And there was war in heaven."

We need not marvel at the earthly hostilities if we see in them the continuation of much more amazing and much more important war, that waged in Heaven itself.

The great mystery is not so much the existence of sin on earth as its appearing in the heavenly places. Thus, the seriousness and the power of evil are brought out with an infinitely greater vividness when considered in their bearings outside of the terrestrial scene.

"Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels."

The conflict between good and evil has therefore a superhuman origin. The importance of such a conflict is stressed by the high position of its main participants: Michael, the only known archangel, and Satan, now a rebel, but possibly or even superior to his adversary before his revolt. The importance of the conflict is further emphasized by the participation of allied forces. The commotion mentioned here may have then caused the fall of myriads of accomplices well-equipped for their guilty enterprises.

"And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven."

The inevitable has happened. God who, from the beginning, could have crushed the Satanic forces with a flip of His hand, first pleased to set up against them opponents of comparable station. Later, He temporarily set in opposition to Satan the lonely Jesus, whose means had been purposely reduced. But He now desires to make his presumptuous Adversary's defeat more humiliating still by setting up against him such insignificant champions as men are.

"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

The person and the evil designs of the Enemy are too clearly described here to necessitate any word of com-

ment. We shall therefore only lay stress on the fact that, from this time on, the scope of the activities of Satan and his angels had been limited to earth. For the heavens are now free from all impurity.

The phrase "cast out" indicates the sudden, total and final character of that unparalleled downfall, which had been foreseen by Jesus: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven!" (Luke 10:18).

"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."

What rendered the position of rebellious men dangerous was that, until then, God was as it were bound to listen to the unceasing accusations of the Adversary. But, in order to reduce him to silence, Jesus Christ had to accomplish His atoning work. And thus the Accuser had to make room for the Advocate. How comforting to know that not a single word will ever be spoken against us to the divine judge, either in heaven, whence the Enemy is finally banished, or from earth, for the Seducer's perfidious denunciations will never reach heaven!

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

Two instruments are here mentioned, which will allow the victory: the atoning work, and the testimony of God's elect. Thus, two forces which would be of no avail if acting separately, are together fully effective.

The conclusion of the verse clearly shows that the spiritual conflict of the Christian must indeed be considered as a matter of life and death.

### III. SATAN'S DEFEAT AT THE HANDS OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD (12:12-17)

"Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

There exists a perfect correspondence between the relief of heaven and the peril of earth. Most serious thoughts urgently command our attention as we become aware of the danger constituted by the concentration in our tiny world, and only for a little time, of all the fearful forces of an enemy much older than mankind.

"And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child."

We here find a further explanation of the flight of the people of God into the wilderness, already described in verses 5 and 6 of the same chapter.

"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place. . . ."

We thus learn, in that striking picture, that the symbolical woman's flight was made easier by a miraculous intervention from above. He that has prepared a place for us will always provide the means to reach it.

" . . . where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent."

During this long, yet limited, period of time, the people will be perfectly preserved, through separation and suffering.

"And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a

flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood."

It seems that we have here a counterpart of the Saviour's action when, opening His mouth, he taught the truth. After attempting the destruction of the people of God through fierce persecutions, the Enemy, changing his method of attack, resorts to the misguiding action of error and of the doctrines of demons.

"And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth."

The earth represents mankind which, owing to the influence of the gospel, is in many respects immunized against some of the Enemy's grossest arms. For the Christian civilization has gradually rendered certain forms of persecution and certain seduction ineffective or impossible.

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Unable to continue its opposition against Christianity at large, Satan turns his fury against individuals who distinguish themselves by a particular faithfulness to the spirit, the doctrines and practices of the gospel. If we remember that his unlimited field of action has now been restricted to earth, then especially to the professing people, we can well imagine the much-threatened position of the "remnant" which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." But the present perils of the faithful champions of the Lord will some day be their crown of glory. And let us bear in mind the threefold defeat of our Adversary and keep in memory the essential teaching of that twelfth chapter: "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony."

The three vast episodes of this chapter are well made to encourage any one who has not truly taken side in the conflict, for, as Jesus Christ Himself declared, "He that is not with me is against me."

It would be indeed "a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God", in the company of His vanquished Enemy; but a blessed advantage is presented to us, as the "Captain of our salvation" grants us a last opportunity to enrol in His ever-victorious armies. For His atoning work can perfectly justify us from our past defeats and give us full share in all the privileges of His triumph.

"CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE!"

### THE THREE "R's" OF THE GOSPEL

The old-fashioned saying: Ruin by the Fall; Redemption by the Blood of Christ; and Regeneration by the Holy Ghost—is true, profound and most important. Calvin used to remark that there are three great chapters in Scripture, each a third chapter; the third chapter of Genesis, showing us man's fall and sinful condition; the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, revealing propitiation by the atonement of Christ; and the third chapter of the Gospel of John, teaching us regeneration by the Holy Ghost. Unless we know what guilt is, we do not feel the need of atonement: unless we know the utter sinfulness and helplessness of man, we do not feel the need of the Spirit to enlighten and persuade our hearts to accept Christ.

—REV. ADOLPH SAPHIR, D.D.

## Romanizing Protestants

**I**T WAS four hundred years ago that so many Protestant worthies met their death in England. The persecutor was the Roman Church which was determined to stamp out Protestantism. The stories of how these men went to face death must cause all Christians to rejoice and thank God. The names of Hooper, Cranmer and Ridley bring to the mind thoughts of profound gratitude.

What of the situation in England four hundred years after these men dared to defy the tyranny and anti-Christian teachings of Rome? Does the Church of England stand as a bulwark against the papal absolutism? Unfortunately there are signs that the Church of England is itself being Romanized to an alarming extent. The "high church" party which would foist the teachings and superstitions of Rome upon the national church is increasing in size and in influence.

*The Canadian Register*, the English language Roman Catholic weekly which is published in Kingston, Ontario, carries a column by Mr. Douglas Hyde of England. In the last issue of the paper this column bears the heading, "Anglican Ministers Coming Into The Church In England." The story proceeds and tells of a number of Anglican clergymen who have of late joined the Roman Catholic Church.

We print here the first three paragraphs of this article by Mr. Hyde in order that our readers may be aware of the serious nature of the case:

Into the Church in England at this moment there is coming a steady trickle of Anglican clergymen. Most prominent of them so far is Rev. Walton Hannah, Secretary of the influential Annunciation Group which organizes some 2,000 clergy who are opposed to their church's Pan-Protestantism.

He is the fourth "Anglo-Catholic" Anglican clergyman in the past three or four weeks to come into the Church. A number of others are now under instruction and still more are in the process of making the difficult break.

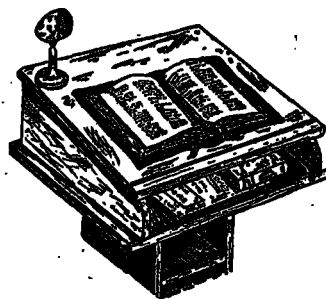
Mr. Hannah himself estimates that some 20 or 30 of those with whom he is at present in touch will come between now and Christmas. And there are other prominent Anglicans on the way who may well bring a larger following of laymen and women as well as clergy.

—*The Canadian Register*, Sept. 24, 1955.

We shall assume that all the facts given by Mr. Hyde are true and that there is a turning toward the Church of Rome. What alarms us most is not that some twenty, or thirty clergymen are leaving the Church of England. True Protestants should be devoutly thankful that those who are Romanists at heart are going to their own place. The alarming feature of this report is that there are apparently hundreds of other ministers in the Church of England who are Roman Catholics at heart who will remain within the bosom of the national church.

For "high Anglicanism" we must profess that we have a profound contempt. It is simply Romanism in a thin Protestant garb. Having all the trappings of the papal church, it struts about and exists within a church that is in name a Protestant body.

What of the situation in Canada? We should like to know how many of these semi-Romanists are carrying on their underground activity. Perhaps we would be alarmed if we saw a reliable table of figures.



## English Bible Course

FIRST LECTURE

in the

ENGLISH BIBLE COURSE

TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY

By Dr. C. D. COLE

September 22nd, 1955

### THE SIN AND DOOM OF THE APOSTATE

Hebrews 10:19-39

**I** ASSURE you that Mrs. Cole and I are happy to be back in Jarvis Street. I am deeply humbled by the kind words of Dr. Slade.

And now after an extended holiday we resume our studies in the Epistle to the Hebrews. We shall have before us the closing and practical section of the book which begins at verse nineteen of chapter ten.

The style and structure of this Epistle fit in with the design of the writer. The object of the writer is to prevent the professing Hebrews from reverting to Judaism and the ritual of the Old Covenant. To do this he shows the superiority of Christianity to Judaism and to do that he proves from the Old Testament scriptures that Jesus Christ is superior to all who were in any way connected with Judaism and the Old Covenant.

In chapters one and two he proves that Christ is superior to prophets and angels. In chapters three and four he shows that Christ is better than Moses and Joshua. And then from chapters five to the end of the doctrinal portion he discusses the Old and New Covenants in their priesthood, proving that Christ is a better priest than Aaron and that Christianity's priesthood is superior to that of the Levitical order.

#### No More Offering for Sin

In this interesting epistle we have in the opening chapters exposition and exhortation alternately. In chapter five to the end of the doctrinal portion we have a series of uninterrupted expositions. And in this closing section we have a series of uninterrupted exhortations. The writer concludes the doctrinal portion and finishes arguments with two positive statements or assertions. First, that by one offering Christ hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. And second, that under the New Covenant there are the spiritual blessings of regeneration and forgiveness of sins and that where remission of these is there is no more offering for sin. When Jesus Christ offered Himself without spot to God, offerings by divine appointment came to an end. And to offer the blood of bulls and goats is to reject the one and only offering that can take away sins.

I.

#### The Blessing of the New Covenant (19-25)

Now in verses nineteen to twenty-five we have the blessings and privileges of the New Covenant with a

threefold exhortation to appropriate the blessings and to enter into the privileges.

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near . . . Let us hold fast . . . Let us consider one another."

### The Open Door

Through the blood of Jesus a way to God has been opened. There is an open door into the very presence of God. Under the Old Covenant the worshipper could not even enter into the place where the emblematic presence of God was manifested. Under the Old Covenant the worshipper was kept at a guilty distance from God because the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin. But under the New Covenant, ratified by the blood of Christ, the worshipper in spirit can come into the very presence of God and find acceptance, and worship toward His great and holy name. Under the Old Covenant the worshipper, I repeat, was kept at a distance but under the New Covenant the believer is *made nigh* by the blood of Christ.

This way of access to God is called a new and a living way. It was a new way because the Lord Jesus Christ had recently been slain. And it was a living way because Jesus Christ Himself is the way as He says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." There will never be any other way of access to God in peace except through Jesus Christ. The New Covenant is the everlasting covenant and there will never be any going back to the weak and beggarly elements of Judaism and the Old Covenant. Solomon tells us in Proverbs fourteen twelve that, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." This new and living way was made through the veil, that is to say, His flesh. This means the same as His blood for it refers to His body which was crucified. Historically, that way to God was inaugurated more than nineteen centuries ago. But in our experience it is kept fresh day by day. I think it was Luther who said that it seemed that Christ was crucified but yesterday. And the death of our Saviour should be kept fresh in our memories; as the Bread of Life, He is fresh and new every day.

### The Great Priest

Another blessing of the New Covenant is that we have a Great Priest over the house of God. In the original it is a Great Priest rather than a High Priest. In Hebrews nine twenty-four we read, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." The heavenly tabernacle has forever superseded the earthly tabernacle which was made with hands. We have a Great Priest over the house of God. This house of God is made up of living stones, a spiritual house, over which Christ as a Great Priest ministers even now. He is a Great Priest as the Son of God. He is a Great Priest as being heir of all things. He is a Great Priest as being the perfect representation of Deity. He is a Great Priest in His work of expiation. He is a Great Priest in His exaltation. He is a Royal Priest, a King Priest, a Priest on His throne, a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec who was both king of

Salem and priest of the Most High God. He is a Great Priest because He is mighty to save. Mr. Pink finds an illustration of our blessings in Christ in the story of the prodigal son. The prodigal said, "I will arise and go to my father, and he arose and went." And where do we find him? Outside the house knocking to get in? No! At the window looking in? No! We find him in the house. The preventient grace of the father's eye had seen him afar off and sovereign grace had admitted him and welcomed him. And on the inside we read nothing about his past sins. They're not even mentioned. That would have been incongruous with the father's grace and love. On the inside the story is about the father's joy and the happiness among the servants. On the inside there is the best robe to supplant his rags. On the inside of the house there is the ring for his finger as a token of the father's love. On the inside there is the fattened calf and much merry-making. The only sour note came from the lips of the elder brother who was jealous and self righteous and would not come in even at the father's entreaties. So Jesus Christ our Great Priest has "brought us to the banqueting house and his banner over us is love." In Christ there is nothing against us, nothing for us but the Father's blessings for we are assured that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. We may, like the prodigal, talk about our unworthiness but at the same time enjoy the Father's blessings remembering always that they are ours through Christ, and that we are high-priced people.

Now in verses twenty-two to twenty-five we have a threefold exhortation based upon the blessings and privileges we have in Christ.

### Let Us Draw Near

"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

[This is an exhortation to enter upon our privileges, an exhortation to draw near to God in worship. And we must come with a true heart. We must worship in spirit and in truth. We must have heart exercise. Our heart must be in our worship. It is not enough to sit in a pew. It is not enough to sing with our lips. The inner man must be sincerely engaged when we draw near to God in worship. We must come in full assurance of faith. This means that our hearts must be relying and resting upon the finished work of Christ as that which is all sufficient to make us acceptable to God. This means that there must be no doubting as to the value of the blood of the Son of God to cleanse us from all our sins and to make us perfect judicially before the eyes of the Father. The sprinkled heart and the body washed with pure water must speak of spiritual blessings that we have in Christ under the typical terms which obtained under the Old Covenant order. The allusion is to the consecration of the priests as recorded in Exodus 29 verse 4 and Exodus 30 verse 20 and Exodus 40 verse 30. The priests were consecrated, cleansed for service by blood sprinkled and by washing of water. These typical terms speak of justification and sanctification by the blood of Jesus Christ who is made unto us righteousness and sanctification and redemption. Most of the writers think that water refers to baptism. But Dr. A. T. Robertson, the great Greek scholar, the greatest perhaps of his day, doubts that there is any allusion to baptism but says if there is it is only

used as a symbol of the cleansing power of the blood of Christ. The heart must be sprinkled from an evil or a guilty conscience. In worship there must be realization of justification and sanctification by the blood of Christ. A guilty or uneasy conscience is a bar if not fatal to true worship. We may feel our unworthiness and mourn our inward corruption but no guilt must be allowed to rest upon our hearts when we draw near to God in worship. We must come in full assurance of faith in the blood of Christ to cleanse from sin.

#### Let Us Hold Fast

Now the second exhortation is to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. This should read the confession of our hope. However there is little difference between faith and hope. The only difference that I can recognize is with reference to the objects upon which they terminate. Faith terminates in justification and hope in glorification. Justification by faith is the present aspect of our salvation but we hope to be glorified. Hope may be thought of as faith in exercise concerning the promise of glorification or complete salvation. So we are to hold fast our hope because God is faithful who has promised complete salvation. Because God is faithful to His promise to glorify us we can hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

We have in this threefold exhortation the three abiding graces of faith and hope and love. The first exhortation deals with the heart, the second with the mouth, and the third with conduct. The first has to do with God, the second with the world, and the third with the church.

#### Let Us Consider One Another

The third exhortation is to consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. We are to be interested in the spiritual prosperity of our brethren. We are in a very real sense our brother's keeper. I must not only watch my step but I must watch my brother's step, not for destructive criticism but to stir him up to a life of love and good works. So for this purpose we are exhorted not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the custom of some is. This language suggests to me that there must have been groups among the Hebrews that had ceased to hold meetings. Their places of worship were closed. The doors of the church were not open. But he says to forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, but exhort one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. This exhortation was given in view of an impending disaster. At the time this letter was being written there was restlessness and signs of war between the Jews and the Romans and there were forebodings of coming disaster. The letter was written just a few years before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 to which it must have had immediate and primary reference. But to us in this twentieth century for practical purposes the day that is approaching is the day of our Lord's return. There is a striking parallel between what happened at the destruction of Jerusalem and what will happen when the Lord Jesus Christ comes in judgment. At the destruction of Jerusalem the Christians took heed to the warning of Christ and fled to Pella and escaped with their lives. And when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in Person the second time the believers will be saved from the wrath of that day by being caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

## II.

### Warning Against Apostasy (26-31)

Now verse twenty-six brings us to something that is unspeakably solemn. Here is a warning against apostasy, or turning away from Jesus Christ. Here the sin of unbelief is described and the doom of the apostate is pictured in awful colours.

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

Does this mean that if one sins after his conversion, sins knowingly, that he is forever doomed? It cannot mean that for several reasons. First, that would preclude the salvation of anyone for there is none of us without sin. For John says that if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. God has graciously provided for sinning saints so that John again says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." My friends the sin of this passage is the particular sin of unbelief, the sin of apostasy, the sin of departing from the living God, the sin of drawing back unto perdition, the final abandonment of all hope in Jesus Christ. The person who deliberately and continually turns away from the sacrifice that Christ made on the Cross will not be able to find any other sacrifice that will avail. If any Jew turned away from Christ to animal sacrifices he would find that there was no divine appointment for these sacrifices any longer and discover in the day of judgment that those sacrifices could not avail.

#### The Sin of the Apostate

Now the sin is described as trodding under foot the Son of God. The adverb "willingly" tells how the sin is committed rather than what it is. There is a threefold description of this sin. First, it is trodding under foot the Son of God. To trod under foot means to desecrate. Trodding under foot is a figurative way of saying that Jesus Christ is not worthy of trust and confidence. Trodding under foot is a way of saying that Jesus Christ is worthless as Lord and Saviour. Unbelief regards the blood of Christ as of no more value than the blood of any other man. Unbelief thinks of it as just common blood. I am sure all of us here tonight agree with Peter when he calls it *precious blood!* I am sure all of us are in harmony with the writer when he says that the blood of Christ speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. Abel's blood cried out for vengeance against his murderer, but the blood of Jesus Christ cries for pardon on behalf of sinners. Now the third description of unbelief is that it does despite to the spirit of grace. The Holy Spirit offers salvation through Christ and to reject Christ is to sin against the Holy Spirit. The apostate, the unbeliever in the rejection of Christ sins against all three persons of the Godhead. He sins against the Father in rejecting His Son. He sins against the Son in despising His blood. And he sins against the Holy Spirit in spurning the offer of salvation through the gospel. We need to realize that persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark of a real saint. In the case of every professor there will be perseverance in faith or there will be drawing back unto perdition. There are those who believe much in the doctrine of the divine preservation of the saints. But some of them do not have much relish

for the doctrine of human perseverance. Both doctrines are true. God preserves us but we persevere. The Book of Hebrews addresses itself to human responsibility and therefore in this Epistle the emphasis is on human perseverance rather than upon divine preservation. It is true that God preserves us. We are kept by the power of God but it is through faith, not because of our faith, but through faith. And we can only know that our faith is the faith of God's elect by our persevering in it. Saving faith is persevering faith not temporary faith. In John eight thirty-one our Lord said to some Jews who had professed faith in Him, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." We may argue this point from analogy. God gives faith to the sinner in the beginning but it is the sinner who exercises the faith. We do not preach that because God gives faith to the sinner that the sinner is under no obligation to believe. We preach that he that believeth not shall be damned. Just so, the fact that God preserves us in faith does not mean that we have no responsibility to persevere in faith. And so we preach that he who does not endure to the end shall be lost. Remember the stony ground hearer who endured for a while and was lost in the end. The Book of Hebrews is a continuous appeal to persevere in faith with the warning that if any one turns back God's soul will have no pleasure in him and he turns back to his ruin.

Apostasy is unbelief but all unbelief is not apostasy. An apostate is one who starts out in the Christian race but does not continue. He falls by the wayside. These Hebrews had started out in the Christian profession but the writer seems to sense a threatened defection and warns against drawing back unto perdition.

#### The Doom of the Apostate

The punishment of the apostate is described as "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries". This does not mean that the judgment is sure but rather indicates a certain kind of judgment. Just as we speak of a certain man or a certain city the judgment of the apostate is a certain kind of judgment. It is a fearful looking form of judgment in which the soul is seized with awful fear. And it is a fiery judgment. About the most terrible pain is that caused by fire and so hell is described as a place of everlasting fire. Call what the Bible has to say about hell and everlasting fire figurative language if you will, but you haven't lessened the severity of the punishment one whit. If it is figurative language the reality will be equal to the figure. Figurative language in the Bible is never exaggeration. The punishment of the apostate will be more severe than that for breaking the law of Moses. The man who despised Moses' law died without mercy at the mouth of two or three witnesses, but the Christ-rejector will meet with more severe punishment. It is more dangerous to reject the gospel than it is to break the Ten Commandments. Gospel times are dangerous times! Tampering and trifling with the gospel is wicked and dangerous business.

#### III.

#### A More Cheerful Note

Now in the closing section of the passage before us the writer is more cheerful and confident concerning the Hebrews. He thinks of their past faithfulness as evidence of their genuine conversion and he uses that to call them back and to cheer them on. He calls them to remem-

brance of former days. He calls them back in memory to the time of their first love. He reminds them that they began their Christian career in suffering. Upon their profession of faith they became targets of the enemy; suffering for Christ was nothing new to these Hebrews. And we are told that these sufferings were partly in their own persons and partly in their sympathy and partnership with others. These Hebrews had not been exposed to wild beasts in the arena. None of them had been burned at the stake. But they had been made a gazing stock, a theatrical show by reproaches and afflictions and they had suffered in sympathy with other Christians who had suffered unto death. The writer himself acknowledges their sympathy for him in his bonds remembering how they had suffered loss of their goods and had been supported by the realization that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Beloved, the life we lose on earth in suffering for Christ will be found in heaven. Cast not therefore away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. Let us hold fast to our confession of hope for He is faithful that hath promised. Don't throw away your faith or your confidence in Christ for it will bring grand returns. Hope to the end for the blessings that are sure to come.

#### The Need of Patience

Then the writer tells these Hebrews that they need patience, endurance until the will of God has been done concerning them. Then the thing promised will be in their possession. He is telling them that all the sufferings and afflictions that they are experiencing are within the secret and mysterious will of God and that they are to have patience until the will of God concerning them has been accomplished. And he encourages them by saying that their sufferings will soon be over. There is nothing that supports people in time of trouble like the thought that it will soon be over. Just as a general tells his soldiers that the war will soon be over and they can return home to their loved ones provided they hold on a little longer. So the writer is appealing to and encouraging the Hebrews to hold on, hold fast the confession of their hope without wavering. He reminds his readers that the Lord will shortly come to deliver them. At this point the author makes a free quotation from Habakkuk. In the days of Habakkuk the prophet's circumstances were quite similar to what they were in these days of the Hebrews. And the Lord assured Habakkuk that deliverance would come without delay. Now the author of this Epistle by inserting the article identifies the deliverer spoken of by Habakkuk as the Messiah, the coming One. I think this promise has a wonderful application. To the suffering Hebrews it meant that their deliverance would soon come in the fall of Jerusalem. The overthrow of Jerusalem, and the Temple with its worship was the official end of Judaism. The destruction of Jerusalem ended the persecution of the Christians by the Judaizers. When Titus destroyed Jerusalem the Christians were delivered from persecution by unbelieving Jews. There must also be an ultimate reference to the second coming of Jesus Christ. When He comes to judge the world His people will rest and be at the end of all their troubles. Second Thessalonians, chapter one verses six to ten are explicit here.

"Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming

fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints."

The author ends this section with the assurance that he did not think the Hebrews were apostates. He says, "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." The apostle warns against apostasy and describes the sin and the doom of the apostate. But he labels nobody as an apostate. The "we" is very emphatic. We have nothing to do with this business of drawing back. We belong to them who believe to the saving of the soul. Salvation here is not present aspect of salvation in justification, but salvation in its final and full and complete sense. The writer does not say "who have believed", but "who believe", who will persevere in faith until the full and final and complete day of glorification. The writer wants to keep these Hebrews as far away from apostasy as he possibly can.

A great man once advertised for a coachman for his wife. The road she travelled for recreation and pleasure ran by a deep ravine on the mountain side. And to the several applicants for the position he asked this one question. "How close to that precipice would you drive or can you drive without danger to my wife?" One answered that he believed he could drive within six feet of that precipice without danger. Another said that he was sure he could drive within three feet without danger. And a third said that he felt sure that he was so skilful as a driver that he could drive within one foot without danger. But one man said, "I will keep as far on the other side as I possibly can for the sake of your wife's safety." It does not require any-intellectual acumen to know which of these applicants got the job.

Apostasy is a great precipice and our author is seeking to keep his readers as far away from it as possible. May the Lord bless the truths we have tried to bring from this portion of His blessed Word.

## Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 19 Fourth Quarter Lesson 2 October 9, 1955

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

### SEPARATION FROM APOSTASY

Lesson Text: 2 Corinthians 6:1-10, 14-18; 7:1.

Golden Text: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."—2 Corinthians 6:17.

#### I. The Exhibition of Christian Grace: verses 1-10.

We are called to be co-labourers with God (1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor. 5:18, 19). The work and the workers belong to Him (Matt. 21:28; John 15:16). It is His to command and empower, ours to obey and trust (Matt. 28:18-20; John 20:21). We are to be workers, not shirkers (John 5:17; 9:4; 2 Thess. 3:11); the work of God demands "blood, sweat, toil and tears."

God has a sovereign purpose in bestowing grace upon men (Eph. 2:4-10; Tit. 2:11-14). How solemn the truth that we may receive His grace in vain (Rom. 6:1; Gal. 2:21), by failing to appropriate it to ourselves, or by failing to live it out! A prisoner who refuses offered pardon remains a prisoner (Heb. 2:1-3). Then, the grace of God may be in vain as far as our testimony to others is concerned, if it does not

bear fruit in our lives. Many deny the faith by their conduct; their actions neutralize the effect of their words (1 Tim. 5:8; Jude 4).

The Lord had heard the cry of the Corinthians and had saved them; that was the day of grace for them (Psa. 69:13; Isa. 49:8; Luke 4:19). Now is the time for all who would be saved to call upon the Lord (Exod. 3:1; Heb. 3:12); tomorrow may be too late (Prov. 27:1; 29:1; Isa. 55:6; Luke 13:25; John 7:33).

The Apostle had every right to exhort the Corinthians to holy living, since he first set them the example. He gave no occasion of stumbling, and his ministrations could not be blamed (Rom. 14:13; 1 Cor. 10:33). It was through no fault of his that the Corinthians had fallen into sin; his conduct had been consistent.

Paul commended himself to the Corinthians in four ways: (1) By his attitude in the time of suffering. He had exhibited patience and steadfastness amidst trials—tribulation (2 Cor. 11:26); necessities (2 Cor. 12:10-12), straitened circumstances; amidst persecution at the hands of men—stripes (2 Cor. 11:23, 24), imprisonments (Acts 26:22-24), uproars (Acts 13:50; 14:5, 19); amidst sorrows connected with his ministry—labours (Rom. 16:12; 2 Cor. 11:28), sleepless nights (2 Cor. 11:27) lack of food (1 Cor. 4:11; Phil. 4:11-14). (2) By the exhibition of the gifts of the Spirit; he lived in the atmosphere of purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, sincere affection, truth and power. (3) By his Christian conduct. He had put on the panoply of God (Rom. 13:12; 2 Cor. 10:4; Eph. 6:11-17), and he was unharmed by the praise of his friends or the slander of his foes. (4) By his Christian character. His enemies spoke of him as a deceiver, yet he was true (1 Cor. 4:12, 13); to outsiders he was unknown, but to the saints he was well known and understood. He was dying daily as to the flesh, but he was living in the Spirit (Rom. 8:36; 2 Cor. 4:10-12). He profited by the discipline of God (Psa. 118:18). He knew both sorrow and joy (2 Cor. 7:4), poverty and wealth (2 Cor. 8:9).

#### II. The Exhortation to Christian Holiness: verses 14-18; 7:1.

Paul exhorted the Corinthian Christians to separate themselves from all complicity with evil, from all close worldly associations and from all harmful practices. An unequal yoke is hard to bear; it causes difficulty and friction, while it also hinders progress (Deut. 22:10; 1 Cor. 1:9; 10:21). One should not enter into a partnership where full co-operation is impossible because of lack of unity in the things of the Spirit. Believers are righteous, justified by faith, but unbelievers are unrighteous (1 Cor. 6:9-11); believers are children of light, but unbelievers are the children of darkness (Eph. 5:7-11). Believers are the children of God, while disbelievers are the children of Satan (John 8:44).

Idolatry was very prevalent in the ancient city of Corinth, hence the believers were warned against that sin (1 Cor. 10:7, 14). They must remember that their bodies were the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16). The Lord must have the supreme place in our thoughts and affections (Matt. 19:16-22), for we are not our own (1 Cor. 6:19, 20).

Immorality was another sin which was rife in Corinth (1 Cor. 5:1, 13). The Corinthians were exhorted to separate themselves from all that was unholy and unclean, all that would pollute them (John 17:15; 1 Cor. 10:8; 1 Tim. 5:22). Such an exhortation is greatly needed in our own day. On the positive side, God calls us to a life of holiness (1 Thess. 4:3; 2 Tim. 2:22; Heb. 12:14; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16).

The result of separation from sin and separation unto God is the consciousness that we belong to Him. Fellowship with the Lord is possible only when sin has been confessed, cleansed and put away (Isa. 59:1, 2; 1 John 1:9). Then, and then only have we the right to expect the Lord to manifest Himself unto us as our Father (Exod. 29:45, 46; Lev. 26:11, 12).

#### Daily Bible Readings

Oct. 3—The Law of Separation .....	Deut. 7:1-11
Oct. 4—The Appeal for Separation .....	Heb. 13:1-14
Oct. 5—The Necessity for Separation .....	2 Tim. 2:20-26
Oct. 6—The Blessing of Separation .....	Jer. 31:1-9
Oct. 7—The Reward of Separation .....	1 John 1
Oct. 8—The Demand for Holiness .....	Heb. 12:11-17
Oct. 9—The Call to Holiness .....	1 Pet. 1:15-25