

R. A. Liddle

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**Advocate**

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# THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN ADVOCATE

"Stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."

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**VOL. LXXVII**

**FEBRUARY**

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## AMONG THE CHURCHES

### DARLINGTON

Feb. 1 "Jean Ellen" came to live in the home of Rev. and Mrs. Samuel S. Ward.

The Women's Missionary Society met in the home of Mrs. Norbert Schmolly Feb. 4. The president, Mrs. Iva Graham, led the meeting. "Courage" was the subject. Bible selections on the subject were given by members. Mrs. Anna Sawyer read a paper, "Faith a Magic Wand." Mrs. Alice Watterson read an article on "Prayer" and one on "A Buried Bible." Mrs. Florence Patterson read "The Divine Invitation." Miss Stella Duncan contributed "Only This Day Is Mine." Mrs. Eva D. Nagel offered remarks on the subject and Mrs. Martha McHattie read a letter from Kentucky.

During the business meeting a resolution of respect in memory of Miss Amy Young, who went Home Dec. 26, 1942, was read by Mrs. Anna Sawyer and Mrs. Maude Watterson.

Roll call was answered by a verse of Scripture by 15 members and one visitor. An offering of \$12.75 was received. The meeting closed with group singing and the praying in unison of The Lord's Prayer.

The night of Jan. 11 the annual Congregational meeting was held in the Brick Church. Reports from all the departments were heard, and after a lengthy business meeting, the Trustees served a vegetable soup supper. Folks returned to their homes at a rather late hour, after enjoying a splendid evening of fellowship in the Lord's work.

LOIS E. DUNCAN.

## FAIRVIEW

The annual congregational meeting of the Fairview church was held on Tuesday evening, Jan. 12. A covered dish dinner was served to about 50 members at 7 o'clock, and the meeting followed immediately afterward.

The meeting was opened by singing number 219, followed by prayer by Rev. Samuel Ward, of the Darlington congregation. Earl Anderson was elected temporary chairman for the evening. Reports of the various departments were read and accepted. The election of officers was under the direction of Rev. Ward, and the following were elected: Ralph H. Davis and Dr. V. S. Watson were re-elected. The honor of Elder Emeritus was conferred upon Robert W. Hammond. The other officers elected were: Congregational chairman, Ralph Davis; secretary, Phyllis Hammond; trustees for three years, Harry Ramsey, Ralph Graham; auditor, Edna Popp; superintendent, Dr. V. S. Watson; secretary, Evelyn Graham; Cradle Roll superintendent, Mae Wolf. The congregation authorized the trustees to make all necessary repairs on the parsonage.

A committee was named to arrange for the entertainment of Synod. They were Edna Popp, Helen Watson, Mildred Ramsey and Olive Hammond.

We are having regular Sabbath services in charge of Rev. D. Porter Williams, a retired minister of Beaver, Pa.

Word has been received here of the birth of a daughter, on December 27, to Rev. and Mrs. Robert Knapp, of Bradford, Pa. Her name is Donna Claire. Rev. Knapp is stationed in California.

Communion services were held Jan. 24, in charge of Rev. Williams. One new member was added to the church roll, Lawrence Rowan, and two baptisms, namely, Lawrence Rowan, and infant son, Lyana Barclay Rowan.

Velma McGaffick, 14 year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Paul McGaffick, underwent an operation for appendicitis in the Rochester Hospital on Sabbath afternoon, January 31. She is now improving.

NOTICE! — As the time of Synod's meeting is fast approaching, we call the attention of the Sessions of all our congregations — remember the collections called for, for Missions and the Disabled Ministers' Fund. This latter is a special call this year. See recommendation 3, page 143, Minutes of Synod 1942.

## HOUSTON, KY.

Houston, Kentucky, February 1, 1943.

Dear Friends:

The routine work of the school here goes without much variation. I have had to change the day for the manual training classes occasionally because of some calls to see a patient or a special trip to Jackson which always takes a whole day (it is a five mile trip on the horse, then the 12 mile trip to town in our own car or on the bus, then the trip back about 4 p. m., and the five mile trip back up the creek). No cars or trucks are coming up the creek these days.

Yesterday I had a long horse-back ride to see a patient; it was more than 20 miles there and back. Speaking of patients, I must mention our own Miss Foster. She has been most unfortunate; late in December as she was walking along the wall below the Dormitory, a stone turned and threw her and the result was a broken rib (our diagnosis was verified at Christmas time by an X-ray taken in Cincinnati). Since our return she has had another fall from a board walk, before daylight one morning; this time she broke her clavicle. She had to have her classes come to her room for two days, but she has not missed any school work.

We had a project sponsored by the Parent-Teachers' Association, which fell back on the boys of the school and of the neighboring school, and me to carry through. I took my horse and plowed along the hillside then the boys followed up with their mattocks and hoes and we made a footpath around the side of the hill to the postoffice passable; there had been a road there before but so many slides had occurred this summer that it had become all but impassable. It took our party of 15 boys half a day to get it done.

I also spent the better part of two days getting long, hickory saplings and put up a rustic railing on one side of the bridge across the creek in front of the Dormitory; the old railing had been broken off when the bridge went down in the high water we had last summer. By the way, we had plenty of trouble getting the bridge swung back up on the new abutment that we had made earlier; and that reminds me, if anyone wants to help out in a very needy piece of work: there should be some more dirt and rocks hauled in on the abutment and it will mean a bill of about \$10 for labor. This must be done before the bridge will be secure.

We were very much pleased to have one of the preachers

from a Mission Church from nearby Cow Creek (Rev. I. H. Gabbard) to occupy our pulpit two weeks ago. He has asked us to make arrangements to have someone else take our services here while we go to his Church some Sabbath and give a missionary address to his and another Church group, for a union meeting.

Another field has just opened up for us for which we are thankful. It is a small Mission station on Elsom Creek. The people there have built their own small Church without aid from any outside Church body. They have asked me to come over and preach for them once a month; they have their meeting just enough later than ours, so that, by doing a little hard riding, I can get there just in time, after having had our services here. Last Sabbath was the first Sabbath I was there, and there were 103 people in attendance, including young and old. Miss Adams continues to go to the schoolhouse at Four-Mile every Sabbath afternoon and her class is keeping up very well.

We are depending on you to support us in your prayers for the work here.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN C. TAYLOR, SR.

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#### REPORT OF TREASURER OF HOME MISSIONS

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Friends of Home Missions:

It is with great thanksgiving that we submit the report this quarter which shows that more than \$500 has been sent to provide for the Lord's work. Special cause for our rejoicing is very readily seen when we take a glance at the record for the same period of last year. In November and December of 1941, there was not one single contribution received by the treasurer. In January 1942, there was received \$962.04. Of this amount, \$900 was a bequest. This large sum enabled us to carry on the work, and we were very thankful for it. But it did not denote general concern for the work of missions. When contributions come in a more steady way, with each congregation represented, then we feel that the cause of missions is on many hearts. This means a spiritual growth in our congregations, and the promise of advancement in the future. We are glad that even though there has been no minister there, the Women's Missionary Society and several individuals in the

Republican City Congregation have remembered the work. May the Lord take note of this response to the need of His work, and bless each one who has given, and speed His work with the gifts.

Let us notice, too, the relation of the income from contributions to the income from investments during this quarter. It is considerably more. This was true in the previous quarter. But this to my mind, is the way it ought always to be. I wish that we didn't need to depend on any income but contributions. The work of missions is not a business that can go on operating just as long as it has money. It must have money, but it must have a consecrated money that comes from those who give of their means to enable others to hear the Gospel. It must be sent on its way with prayer. We should remember that the Lord sits over against the treasury even today, and sees not only the amount of the gift, but He takes into account the place from which that gift comes.

We are still a little more than \$1,000 short of our goal for this year of \$1,756.

Finally, may I say that we would be glad to hear from any of those who love the Lord's work, and who have any suggestions for carrying on that work in the coming year.

Yours in His service,  
SAMUEL WARD, President.

**REPORT OF THE TREASURER OF THE BOARD OF HOME  
MISSIONS OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA**

Balance November 2, 1942 .....	\$1043 07
<b>Receipts from Contributions</b>	
11- 6 Third R. P. Congregation .....	\$ 100 00
11- 6 Darlington Young People's C. E. (Tuition) . . . . .	12 00
11-12 Coulterville R. P. Congregation .....	13 57
11-12 Coulterville R. P. Congregation (Designated) . . . . .	15 00
11-14 Republican City Women's Mission- ary Society .....	5 00
11-14 Duanesburgh Sabbath School .....	23 27
11-18 First R. P. Congregation .....	116 90
11-18 First R. P. Sabbath School .....	26 88
12-15 Nevin Chestnut, Republican City ...	10 00

12-15	Jas. Chestnut, Republican City .....	10 00
12-15	Wallace Benson, Republican City ....	10 00
12-15	F. A. Jurkat .....	25 00
12-17	Third R. P. Sabbath School (Tuition) . . . . .	22 00
12-21	Fifth R. P. Congregation .....	26 79
1-16	Fifth R. P. Sabbath School .....	80 10
1-16	Helping Hand Society, Duaneburgh.	5 00
1-28	Duaneburgh Sabbath School (Tuition) . . . . .	8 00
1-28	Darlington Young People's C. E.— Tuition . . . . .	12 00
Total Receipts from Contributions .....		\$ 521 51
<b>Receipts from Investments</b>		
11- 3	Columbia Gas & Elec. Co. No. M2617 \$	25 00
11- 3	U. S. Treas. Bond No. 112529K .....	13 75
11- 9	Youngstown Sheet & Tube .....	8 25
11-19	Columbia Gas & Elec. Co. ....	50 00
1-16	First Federal Savings & Loan .....	33 00
1-16	Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. ....	8 25
Total Receipts from Investments .....		138 25
TOTAL . . . . .		\$1702 83

**Disbursements**

## Salaries—

	Dr. John C. Taylor (Nov. Dec. Jan.)....	\$ 125 00
	Mary Adams (Nov. Dec. Jan.) .....	150 00
	S. J. Cunningham (Nov. Dec. Jan.) ....	15 00
	Eiva M. Foster, 11-13-42 to 2-13-43 ....	150 00
	Leona Pearson, 11-13-42 to 2-13-43 .....	150 00
11-28	Stationery and Postage .....	8 54
12- 9	Elva M. Foster (Tuition) .....	54 00
1- 4	Receipt Book .....	12 50
1-16	Safe Deposit Box Rent .....	3 60
1-16	Elva M. Foster (Tuition) .....	22 00
1-28	Elva M. Foster (Tuition) .....	20 00
1-28	Martha Ramsay (Dec. Jan. Feb.) ....	25 00
Total Disbursements .....		\$ 735 64
Balance, Jan. 30, 1943 .....		\$ 967 19

Signed, R. W. WATTERSON, Treasurer.

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 SERMONS IN THE FIELDS
 

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He loved that level Western land, the plains;  
 But when he came to minister for the men  
 And women who wrung their living from the thin  
 And stony acres of these Eastern hills,  
 He grew to love this land as well.  
 He was a farmer, too, and found sermons  
 In the very furrows his own plow turned  
 'To frosty November days, and drying April suns.  
 And so he preached to those who knew  
 The firmness of hills and their warmth.  
 There were lean years, but it was his wish  
 To serve God and His people, to comfort  
 And console those whose weathered faces  
 Revealed the wear of years in suns and rains.  
 For half a century he took his place  
 Each week in the pulpit of the old country church  
 Where elm leaves brushed the steepled roof,  
 Where summer winds brought in the sweetness  
 Of the fields, and clear sharp cold of winter  
 Touched the colored windows with silvered ice.  
 He was eighty-four when he retired—  
 Even then he would not leave the land, the earth,  
 His hilly pastorate he had grown to love,  
 Hills and people whose friendliness and songs  
 Bring him the softest of music for his quiet hours.

—LANSING CHRISTMAN.

The above poem appeared on February 4th in "The Wash-  
 ington Star." The author, a Duanesburgh, N. Y., poet, explains  
 that it is a tribute to Rev. Robert W. Chesnut of Duanesburgh,  
 who retired from the ministry last year.

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 A HISTORICAL SKETCH
 

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Some of our brethren have asked me to write for publica-  
 tion a historical sketch of the General Synod of the Reformed  
 Presbyterian Church in North America; especially, that of the  
 past 50 years. What I will write will cover two periods; name-  
 ly, from about 1792 until 1888; and second, 1888 to the present  
 time. The first is drawn from such sources as we have at hand;  
 principally, the "MEMOIRS OF THE LATE ALEXANDER Mc-



LEOD." These will be mentioned briefly, as a fuller account can be obtained by consulting the above mentioned Memoirs. The second part will contain a brief history of the General Synod as I have seen it and took part in all its actions since 1888, a period of over half a century.

The first ministers we will mention are Revs. William Gibson and James McKinney. These were soon followed by Messrs. McLeod, Wylie, Black, and Donnelly.

Alexander McLeod was born June 13, 1774, in the Isle of Mull, Scotland. His ancestry were of Danish origin. He came to New York from Liverpool, in 1792, at the age of 18 years. He ascended the Hudson River to Albany, and went directly to Princetown and Duaneburgh, lying south of the Mohawk, and west of Schenectady, and then to Galway and Milton, in Saratoga county, on the north side of the Mohawk river. Here he met some families from the Highlands of Scotland; among whom were the Glens, Burns, Spiers, Maxwells and McMillans, and others who made his coming both a pleasure and profit to all. He soon entered Union College, in Schenectady, and graduated with distinction in 1798.

Rev. James McKinney came from Ireland in 1793. Alexander McLeod's connection with the Reformed Presbyterians was among the first fruits of McKinney's ministry, as he preached in Princetown, the last of his series of sermons. He was a very forceful preacher; this last effort led Mr. McLeod to make his decision. The text of his sermon was Psalms 27:4—"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple." This wonderful sermon convinced Mr. McLeod, that he should embrace the principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

Mr. McKinney had exiled himself from his native Ireland, for the following reasons: First, sin, by polluting the consciences of men, by swearing an immoral oath of allegiance to a tyrannical government.

Second, suffer, by being perhaps shot—on the instant—on the spot—or hanged without a trial, at the discretion of a ruffian soldiery; or if trial was allowed, it was a mere mockery, under martial law, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, resulted in condemnation.

Third, to flee and exile oneself from the sepulchres of their fathers. McKinney chose the latter, and for conscience sake became an exile.

At the same time and for the same reason, Rev. William Gibson, from County Antrim, Ireland, accompanied by Messrs. John Black and Samuel B. Wylie, both graduates of Glasgow University, became exiles to the United States.

In 1798, Revs. McKinney and William Gibson organized themselves into a Presbytery; and Messrs. McLeod, Black and Wylie were received as students of theology. About the same time a Mr. King, from the Scotch Presbytery arrived in the Carolinas, and was received as a student of theology; and Thomas Donelly, from the University of Glasgow, was also so received. Mr. King soon passed to his reward, but the four other young men in due time were all licensed to preach, at a meeting of Presbytery, held in the home of Mr. Robert Beattie, at Coldenham, N. Y., June 24, 1799. They were soon all settled in their respective places; McLeod, in New York and Walkkill; Wylie in Philadelphia; Black, in Pittsburg; and Donelly, in South Carolina. The vine now planted began to grow and bear much fruit. Other recruits arrived in due time from Scotland and Ireland, and soon the Reformed Presbyterian Church was rapidly and permanently growing in the United States of America.

Although there was unity in doctrine and mode of worship, there was a lack of harmony on the matters of civil government, and due to the fact that the United States Constitution recognized no higher authority than the will of the people, discord was produced.

This defect in the Constitution, led to much contention; and, as trouble with the British government was brewing, it became necessary for every sect to declare their allegiance to the United States. A committee was duly appointed to draw up a form of oath of allegiance that would be suitable to the church and to the government. Revs. Gibson, Wylie and McLeod, were appointed a committee to inquire what security the members of this church can give to the constituted authorities of the United States, consistent with their avowed principles, that they are not to be considered, whether allens or citizens, in the character of enemies; and report thereon.

After due deliberation they were not only prepared to report to the people of the church, but to the government, the follow-oath of allegiance: (Dr. McLeod drew up the oath).

I, A B, do solemnly declare, in the name of the Most High God, the searcher of hearts, that I abjure all foreign allegiance what soever, and hold that these States and the United States are, and ought to be, sovereign, and independent of all other na-

tions and governments; and that I will promote the best interests of this empire, maintain its independence, preserve its peace, and support the integrity of the Union to the best of my power."

Note here, that the Covenanters not only swore to support the United States, but also the several States. To make the position then taken by the Covenanters clear to the present generation, we can do no better than quote Dr. McMaster, who was Synod's first Moderator. Before quoting the Doctor's statement, allow me to say, that it was the contention over the merits of this oath that led to the disruption of the denomination in 1833, and hence, two denominations of Reformed Presbyterians up to the present day; namely, the General Synod and the Synod. As to the merits of either party or their beliefs we give each side the credit of conscientiously following their own honest convictions. The writer has the highest respect for both sides in the controversy, and can only at this time lament the division, and hope that in God's own time we may eventually see eye to eye. Good people often differ in their view of things, but these differences should not stand between us and separate us as brethren in Christ. Now hear Dr. McMaster on civil relations.

The Doctor states as an alternative, what they must have intended. "Or rather," says he, "does it not appear to have been the intention of Synod, under a testimony against whatever might be found amiss in the government, to leave the people in all they found moral, to hold civil and political communion with the States?" Examine, says the Doctor, the import of this document. This Synod, it says, in the name of its constituent members, and of the whole church, which they represent, declare that they support, to the utmost, the independence of the United States, and the several States, against all foreign aggressions, and domestic factions, etc. What is a State? It is neither the soil nor the individuals, as such, that occupy the soil. IT IS THE BODY POLITIC; the community under their Constitution and laws. It is the Constitution and constitutional laws, expressed or understood, that binds the people into a community, and thus forms a State. Abolish these bonds, and there is no body politic; no State. The sovereignty or independence of the several States is recognized in this deed of the church, and a solemn pledge is given to support to the utmost, the several States in this independent sovereignty which they possess. This is much stronger and more explicit than the LEGAL oath of allegiance required.

Again, he says, the UNITED STATES are recognized as distinct from the States. The States in union, present to the mind an object distinct from that of the several States, under their own respective systems of order; and to the States, thus united, as of right, independent of all foreign nations, the pledge of support to the utmost is tendered by this deed of our highest judicatory. What is it that constitutes the several States, the UNITED STATES? Is it not the Federal Constitution? The old thirteen States were first constituted UNITED STATES by their representatives in the Congress of 1774, meeting in support of a common cause, against a common oppressor, and acting under the well known principles of that common cause, for the general welfare.

Such were the first bonds of Union. These gave place to the more specific Articles of Confederation, which, in course of time, yielded to the United States Constitution. This is the present bond of Union. It is the Federal Constitution that makes the several States the UNITED STATES. Annul that instrument, and you will find the several States, each in full possession of its primitive sovereignty, with all its prerogatives; but there will be no United States, no Federal government, no united Empire to which an oath of allegiance could be given.

To one part of the engagement your attention is particularly directed: "the pledge to support the integrity of the Union"—aye, the "integrity" of the Union; the entireness of the Union. Remember the bond that holds the States in union is the Federal Constitution. Can the entireness of the Union be preserved otherwise than by the preservation of this bond? Cast away this bond, and the Union is at an end. The oath then, obliges to support the Constitution in its true spirit and interest, as it is that which gives existence to the Union, in its present form, which holds the States in union, and without which the Union must cease."

These statements from Doctor McMaster are food for thought for the young ministers' of our church; and for a fuller statement, see *MELMOIRS*, page 136.

The contention seems to have been principally on the question, is the Constitution immoral? The Doctor reduces it to the form of a syllogism.

"To no immoral government may an oath of allegiance be given.

"But an oath of allegiance may be given to the (U. S. Government.

"Therefore, the government is not immoral." (see MEMOIRS, page 141).

In the year 1802 Doctor McLeod took the initiative in opposing the evil of Slavery, which at that time was all too common in the Northern part of the United States, and so vigorously pressed the opposition that within a few years, so far as the Reformed Presbyterian Church is concerned, slavery was a thing of the past.

In the year 1804 Doctor McLeod composed and published a little book, the Ecclesiastical Catechism, setting forth the Scriptural claim for the divine authority of the Presbyterian form of government, and procedure in rules and regulations for Church Courts. This little volume is long out of print, but should be reprinted for the benefit of the present generation.

Among the important things that took place in these stirring times was the founding of our Theological Seminary. This was about the year 1807. Rev. Samuel B. Wylie was appointed Professor of Theology. There were three prerequisites laid down as being necessary for a minister of the Gospel, viz: Piety, Good Sense and a Good Theological Education. These we believe are very proper; but, neither one alone will do, and the first and third, without the second, will not insure success. All the training that a Seminary can give, will be marred without Piety, and both ruined, without Good Sense. Piety is the fruit of the Holy Spirit; Good Sense is a natural qualification, and an Education is the product of the Seminary. All three together are excellent, but I would respectfully add one other, viz: the presentation of the body, a living sacrifice to God.

The first Synod was constituted May 24, 1809, in Philadelphia. Rev. William Gibson, Moderator of the Reformed Presbytery, presided, and constituted the first Synod. The Court resolved that this Ecclesiastical body should be known as the "Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America." The word "North" seems to have been added later; we now say "North America."

The Presbyterian Judicatories were the Northern, Middle and Southern Presbyteries respectively. The Rev. Gilbert McMaster was chosen Moderator, and Rev. John Black, Stated Clerk. The Reformed Presbytery, which had been previously the existing Court, now ceased to function.

(To be continued)

**"SIFTED AS WHEAT"**

By H. Carlyle Carson — Morning Church Service, Auspices of  
The Pittsburgh Council of Churches — Station KDKA—  
August 16, 1942

When Christ uttered these words His earthly ministry was rapidly drawing to a close. He and His twelve chosen followers had just celebrated their last Passover together. The Lord's Supper had been instituted following the withdrawal of Judas. That night He was to suffer the agony in the Garden, undergo arrest, and endure the trials, scourgings, and buffetings, which were to be ended on the morrow on the Cross of Calvary, as He was made sin for us and gave Himself—a vicarious sacrifice.

Although He had given a progressive revelation concerning His death, to the twelve, the significance of the teaching had escaped them. They were unaware of the great crisis which was at hand, of their imminent danger, when their faith was to be sorely tried and tested. So, during the discourse which followed the Last Supper, Jesus warned them of their approaching temptation in the words of the text, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat; but I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not; and do thou, when once thou hast turned again, establish thy brethren."

A study of the text reveals to us the dangerous time facing the disciples, similar to those which came into the life of every believer. This may be termed the Believers Siftings and is considered under the theme—"Sifted as Wheat." From it may be learned these three great truths: — I. His liability to them. II. His preservation in them. III. His responsibility following them.

I. Notice first the Believers liability to be Sifted as Wheat. Our Lord addressed this foremost disciple by his original name, "Simon," with its hint of weakness and unstableness. Satan, however, did not desire him alone for the original states, "Satan has obtained you, by asking, that he might sift you as wheat."

Here for a little the curtains are drawn aside to permit a glimpse into that world of spirit which surrounds us. This story is paralleled by the record found in Job II and III chapters, concerning the permission for Job's testing. When God meets Satan's challenge, "Doth Job fear God for nought?" by permitting him to try Job and see if he would renounce his God. And we remember that though Job was tried, seemingly beyond human endurance, he was sustained in his faith. From these two short

accounts we have proof that a personal Evil Spirit exists; that God at times gives over the control of His followers into the power of this evil spirit, whom we know as the devil, that the devil may try their faith, and that God limits the extent of this testing.

The devil's desire is shown very plainly. He wants to have and has asked for the disciples to be given over to him, away from God's care and keeping. He was not satisfied with the apostasy of Judas, which is recorded in the earlier verses of this chapter, but he wants to try the faith of the eleven, also. And in his boldness he asks God for them, and his request is granted.

The devil's malignant design is evident. As the mingled wheat and chaff is put into a sieve and tossed to and fro in a violent manner so that the chaff may be separated from the wheat, so he wants to sift the disciples to separate the bad in them from the good with the hope that the good will be driven away, and the evil will then predominate. Each disciple is to be sifted individually to divide the chaff within himself from the wheat. Satan will alarm them with fears, harass them by affliction, and agitate their minds with doubt. Hopeful that this will cause them to fall away from their faith and to desert their Master as when the wheat is sifted, the chaff and dust fall and become scattered and blown away by the wind. It is his wish that each will become as so much chaff, that the wheat will disappear and they will lose their value to the Christ.

As our Lord warned His disciples of this unknown danger, of this testing period; even so today His warning comes to us. Methods of sifting wheat change but the temptations to sin are the same. If we are believers and endeavoring to do His will, then the devil will be asking for us that he may put us through his sieve. That we may not be wheat fit for bearing fruit but as useless chaff fit only for Satan's refuse heap.

II. In the second place let us find the believer's preservation when he is being Sifted as Wheat. "But I have made supplication for thee that thy faith fail not." Notice particularly the strength and majesty of the conjunction—"But." By it Jesus, without any hesitation whatsoever, before being asked, presents Himself as the Antagonist of Satan. He meets the issue squarely for He is always ready to defend and preserve His own. Satan is not dealing with the disciples alone, he must cope with their all-powerful ally as well.

The record here shows that Christ made special supplica-

tion for Simon, but do not think for a moment that he neglected the other ten, leaving them to be tossed about by Satan, without any safeguard. Turn to John 17 beginning with the 19th verse and you will find His prayer for the eleven just before He is taken away. But He made earnest, longing prayer for this one. He did not pray that Simon should not be sifted, nor that he should not fall. His prayer was, that Simon's faith should not fail utterly, that it might not stop completely.

But why should there be need of special aid for him? Was this not Simon whom, upon first meeting, Jesus had said should be called Stone? Was this not Simon who, having received special revelation, made the great confession that Jesus was "The Christ, the Son of the Living God?" Simon, the foremost of the disciples? One of the three who received special privileges and opportunities? Ah, yes, this is that same Simon,, that impetuous, self-confident, self-assertive Simon who was so bold that he rebuked his Master, when He first foretold His death. Yes, this is Simon, but he is not yet Peter. He must needs be sifted, he must endure terrible trial, suffering and repentance. All of his egotism, his self-assertion, his confidence in his own strength must be driven away by the winnowing fan before he will be Petros whom Christ will use to build His Church. And because of belief in his own strength, which was his great weakness, he must have special care that his faith fail not utterly. Christ cannot permit this one whom He has chosen for a foundation stone to be sifted away as chaff. So His greatest care, His tenderest solicitude is for this weakest one, who was most liable to fall and so it ever is. Those who are in the greatest need receive the greatest help.

As believers, our preservation lies, then, in Jesus' intercession for us. He is the refuge to whom we must flee in times of sorrow and suffering. He is the Rock of Ages to which we must cling when the waves of doubt and temptation threaten to engulf us. These disciples, who were intimate associates of Jesus, when they were tried, partially failed and were only kept from complete destruction by Christ's aid. How much then, must we depend on Him who is seated at the right hand of the Father and maketh continual intercession for us.

"Where high the heavenly temple stands,  
The House of God not made with hands,  
A great High Priest our nature wears,  
The guardian of mankind appears!"

III. In the third place the text shows us the believer's responsibility after he has been "Sifted as Wheat, and do thou,



when once thou hast turned again, establish thy brethren." It is a confident Christ who speaks these words. He has no fear nor doubt of the outcome of the sifting. He has unbounded faith in the efficacy of His supplication. Satan may use his great power to its fullest extent as he tries to gain the ascendancy over Simon but it will be to no avail in gaining him as a recruit for he is sustained by an unconquerable Guardian. That Simon's faith despite the utmost violence of Satan's agitation will not fail utterly.

Was not Christ's confidence misplaced? Did not Simon fail his Master despite this special supplication? We look upon him as he denies His Lord three times, cursing and swearing that he knew not the man and we answer, yes. But let us take two more glimpses at him. First immediately after the denial, when Jesus turns and looks at him, at once the full realization of his guilt comes upon him. He goes out in great anguish of spirit and weeps bitterly. O Follower of the lowly Nazarene, when you have denied your Lord, do you go out with Simon and weep bitterly? Again, look at him after the Resurrection, when Christ appeared to seven of His disciples by the Sea of Galilee, we see a subdued and chastened Simon, who, when asked by Jesus if he loved Him, replied simply, with nothing of the old boastful, braggart spirit, "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." Though deeply grieved by the two repetitions of the question his attitude does not change, and we see Peter's restoration as he is commissioned by Jesus to feed His sheep followed by the welcome summons, "Follow Me." As we see the repentant Simon weeping bitterly for his sin, the chastened Simon restored by his beloved Saviour and as we follow his life even to his martyr's grave, we can answer most emphatically, most joyfully, NO, Christ's confidence was not misplaced. Simon's faith did not stop completely. The devil's sifting resulted not, as he had hoped, in an apostate Simon, full of chaff; but in a Simon with all the good in him moulded together to form Peter-the-Rock.

Now observe him as, having turned again, he goes about obeying his Lord's exhortation to establish his brethren. The Greek here suggests not a conversion, but simply the turning again of one who has lost faith for a little. Peter's life from now on is a living epistle which all seeing, could read and understand. There are three definite ways by which he made firm the faith of his brethren. By his ministry, epistles and death. His ministry was marked by the greatest zeal and de-

votion. On that great Pentecostal day, Peter was the first to begin the great work of proclaiming the Gospel to every creature. So effective was the witness that three thousand souls were baptized that day. In very truth Peter was establishing the faith of his brethren. He has lost his old self confidence, but it has been replaced by a new and greater confidence. He is now strong in Christ through the Holy Spirit.

We notice him again from time to time throughout the remainder of his service and we see him always laboring for his Saviour and living the finest kind of a Christian life with but one exception—when he withdraws from association with the Gentile Christians in Antioch for fear of offending certain Jewish zealots. He met Paul's very severe censure for this and from certain hints in his epistles we are assured that this was only a temporary lapse. This furnishes us with another proof of the humanity of the disciple and gives us added assurance that, having fallen, when we repent, we will be forgiven. Except for this single instance, the whole of his work subsequent to the Resurrection is most excellent. He proclaimed the "good news" constantly. He wrought many signs and wonders and performed many miracles of healing, insomuch that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and couches that, as Peter came by, at the least his shadow might overshadow some one of them. He endured scourgings, trials and imprisonments for the sake of Christ and the Gospel.

He it was, who was commissioned to be the instrument for first carrying the "good news" to the Gentiles, having been first convinced in a vision, "that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ." This might be called the crowning event of Peter's ministry, to thus have the privilege of baptizing Cornelius, the first-fruits of the great ingathering of Gentile Believers.

The second way in which Peter strengthened the faith of his brethren was by his Epistles. They were written for the purpose of bringing comfort, the strengthening of faith, a warning against temptation, the inspiring hope and giving of standards of living. Surely he had the words of this text in mind as he wrote the closing words of the Second Epistle, "Ye therefore, beloved, knowing these things beforehand, beware lest, being carried away with the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." These Epistles were writ-

ten in his old age, the second just a short time before his death, and in them we find, indelibly stamped, the character of this leader of old. From them we learn how secure and well-grounded was his own faith and his belief in those principles which he had maintained for so long and so well. Through them, he being dead yet speaketh, as was his desire, and shall continue to speak as long as time shall endure. To them the troubled one can go and learn of faith from this chief of the disciples who suffered so great a fall and made so great a recovery. And as the fallen one delves into the truths found there, from the pen of one, who, knowing the path of 'sin and the way of righteousness, is so peculiarly fitted to render help, he may find himself lifted up and his faith renewed. And amid the grandeur and sublimity of his message, there are revealed those rock-like qualities which enabled him to meet his martyr's death which was the third way in which he confirmed the faith.

What a contrast there is between the cowering, shrinking Simon as he denies his Lord before a serving girl, and the staunch, sturdy Peter, who so cheerfully and willingly suffered crucifixion as a result of his devotion to his Master. He died a martyr even as Jesus had foretold in John 21: 18, 19, and so dying glorified his Lord. What an honorable manner for so great a career to be ended. That this disciple, who of the eleven had fallen most grievously in the sifting time should by his death seal with his blood for all time a testimony that his faith had endured to the end. Oh, the power of Christ that will so transform a man from a coward into a rock, so that he will gladly suffer death for His sake. It is believed by many that he and Paul were crucified at Rome and at about the same time, Peter, with his head down, not deeming himself worthy to die in like manner as his Lord.

Those of us who have sinned deeply can find a wonderful comfort and joy from a study of Peter. That, having sinned, if we repent, we will be pardoned and restored by God, and that the rest of our days need not be spent in grief and remorse, but having been sifted in the devil's sieve, it is our duty, our responsibility, yea, our privilege to aid our fellows. This is the exhortation given by our Lord. For our sins and failures may, properly applied, be beneficial to our greater spiritual growth and will enable us to be more instrumental in benefiting others. For that person who has fallen himself, should be better able to understand the trials of another. His should be a most tender sympathy and a great compassion for the fallen one and having once trod the way himself should be a most efficient guide for others.

CONCLUSION: In this day of moral confusion and martial conflict, the message of our text comes to us with impelling insistence. Christ wants us to do His will. To turn again, if need be, for Satan tries to use the adverse situations of life to cause us to deny and desert our Lord. He needs our faithful and constant witness to proclaim the Gospel and help our weaker brothers. Only the world-wide extension of Christ's Kingdom will overthrow evil and secure permanent peace. Perhaps you feel unworthy. Someone has written of Peter's commission in Galilee, after being told to follow Jesus, in these words, "But Lord, I am so unworthy. That night when I declared I would die with you if necessary, then, when put to the test, I denied you. I suffered such remorse. I feel so utterly unworthy."

"Peter," and the Master's tones fell on his troubled soul like healing ointment on a wound, "Peter, you are not to remember that night. You are to remember only my love and forgiveness. I have called you to my service, and you are mine always and forever. Many more, after you, will forget, will stumble and feel the dark around them. Many will weep bitter tears of remorse and shame, and cry that they are unworthy. But the light of my love will always shine for my own." All of you who listen, will you not let His Light dispel your darkness? Will you not give Jesus a chance to help you?

"O what peace we often forfeit,  
O what needless pain we bear,  
All because we do not carry  
Everything to God in prayer!"

In your hour of need, look to the Saviour. Then do His will. As individuals and as a nation WE MUST NOT FAIL HIM, if we would be "more than conquerors." Believe in the Triune God and you shall know peace throughout eternity.

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