

## Pastor and People.

### LEND A HAND.

Are you in the market waiting  
While the world's great fields are white,  
Effortless your strength abating  
Since you use it not aright?  
Lend a hand! The work is growing,  
And the Master's service calls;  
On His fields your toil bestowing  
Ere the night inactive falls.

Hasten! Join the reapers willing  
With full purposes of heart;  
Since it is His will fulfilling,  
Cheerfully do well your part.  
Lend a hand! The work is growing,  
And the Master's service calls;  
On His fields your toil bestowing  
Ere the night inactive falls.

Faint not, though the days are weary;  
Murmur not, though they are long;  
Love will make His service cheery,  
Love will fill its hours with song.  
Lend a hand! The work is growing,  
And the Master's service calls;  
On His fields your toil bestowing  
Ere the night inactive falls.

—F. J. Stevens, in the Gospel in All Lands.

### THE DREAM OF SHEMAIJAH.

BY REV. S. H. KELLOGG, D.D.

One of the most remarkably significant religious movements of our day, especially when considered in the light of "the sure word of prophecy," is the change that has passed, and is still passing, upon the mind of the Jewish nation in regard to Jesus of Nazareth. The time was when He was regarded with bitter hatred and contempt; no slanders, with some have seemed too gross, no epithets too vile to be applied to Him. But it is undeniable that with a multitude of Jews, who are yet far enough from recognizing His full claims as Messiah and atoning Saviour, this feeling has been exchanged for a profound reverence and admiration for Him as one of the true princes of Israel.

In the *Jewish Chronicle* of October 17—the able organ of orthodox English Judaism in Britain—is published a sketch of great beauty, parts of which so strikingly illustrate the above remark, that I have been induced to give it to the readers of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN. The writer is Mr. Claude G. Montefiore, a relative—if my impression is correct—of the late venerable Jewish philanthropist, Sir Moses Montefiore—an accomplished essayist whose name will be familiar to many readers of contemporary current literature.

The peculiar interest of the article will be manifest to every reader. To appreciate certain passages one should be aware of the remarkable fact that it is the custom in the orthodox Jewish synagogues to exclude from the course of readings prescribed for the synagogue service, the marvellous prophecy of the Messiah as the suffering Servant of the Lord, which we have in Isaiah lii. 13—liii. 1. Mr. Montefiore, who represents the liberal school of Judaism, informs us in a footnote that in the Berkeley Street Synagogue, London, England, unlike most others, this part of the prophet is now read before the people. The whole article is quite too long to transcribe, but from the part which is given below, its spirit and purport will be apparent. Mr. Montefiore sets forth his views under the similitude of a dream: "The Dream of Shemajiah."

I, Isaac Bendigo, will tell thee of the dream of my master, Shemajiah, as he recounted it unto me in the bygone years. Now Shemajiah was held to be heretical and dangerous both for many other things and also because he believed and taught that, whether in private or in public, that prayer was best and most pleasing to God which was spoken in the mother tongue of the suppliant. He was wont to say that even as a child would ask its father's forgiveness in its own language and not in a strange speech, so should man ask forgiveness of our Father in heaven in his own tongue and not in another's. And again he said, that even as one who talks lovingly to his beloved upon earth, makes not use of the language of the learned, which he has learnt with pains, but of his own familiar speech, wherein his heart's desire is uttered, so should man speak to his Beloved, who is in heaven. And yet he who spoke thus was well read in the tongue of our forefathers, better than many of those who, for that their heart was fat and their ears heavy, reviled him for his words.

Now Shemajiah told me that a rumour had reached our city—that in the farthest part of our country there was a congregation of Jews who had determined to read aloud in their synagogue the words of our holy prophets in the mother tongue so that all might understand them. And Shemajiah journeyed to that congregation, and he arrived in the city where they dwelt upon the Sabbath eve. And the elders of the congregation came to visit him, and they told him that on the morrow the words of the prophet who spoke of the sorrows and the sufferings of the Servant of God would be read unto the people. Then Shemajiah was amazed because he had never heard of any congregation of Jews who read that prophecy of Isaiah liii. openly in their synagogues. When the night was far advanced, he, yet pondering deeply upon all these things, sought his rest and sleep. Then, as he told me afterwards, he dreamed that the morning had come, and he had entered the synagogue, and the building was vast and filled to its uttermost, and many were there who were not of our brotherhood, but had come to listen to the Word of God. And at the appointed time one, whose face Shemajiah could not discern, read in a soft and clear voice the story of the

Servant. But when he had ended, then another of the ministers of that congregation spoke unto the people and set forth to them the meaning of the wondrous tale. Now all he said Shemajiah could not remember, but some words that he uttered, Shemajiah, when he awoke, remembered clearly, and he told them unto me when he returned to his own home and mine. Of this remnant I, in my turn, have forgotten a part, but a part I remember; and this remnant of a remnant I, if thou care to listen, will now tell plainly unto thee.

The preacher, said Shemajiah, began to speak very gently, how that this was the first time in which the story of the Servant's sufferings and death and future glory was read in a synagogue of the Jews. "My brethren," he said, "we have not often asked ourselves what this story means, and we have not often sought to take its lessons to our heart. But we have chiefly tried to show what it does not and cannot mean, because those children of God who are not of our brotherhood, have, as we think, made wrong uses of this mystic tale. We have sought to show that the prophet was not speaking of one great teacher of our race whose life was lived in the spirit of the Servant's life and whose death was even as His. To Him"—but here Shemajiah told me that there was a murmuring in the congregation as of men questioning and in fear, and the preacher's voice was lost to him. And when he heard again, words such as these reached his ears: "Nay, my brethren, be ye not afraid. The Nazarene I worship not, nor do I bid you worship Him, goodly and gracious though He was. For to no man, but to God alone, must we bow down. Nor do I believe that our prophet was thinking of one to be born in future days when he spoke these words. But I ask you now to consider with me what we may learn from them ourselves, and to leave all else unheeded."

"It is a vain hope," said the preacher, "to think that we can wholly understand the full meaning of the prophet's words. A new and great conception was filling his soul, and ever and again he seeks for words to give it utterance, for figures in which to give it form. Now this fact he brings before us, and now another; nor is he always careful in the fervour of the present to remember the phase of his teaching that went before. Could he himself have told us in cold and clear cut phrase the exact significance of every sentence and every metaphor in his message? Upon him a mortal man, gifted indeed with powers such as few had known before Him, yet a mortal man notwithstanding, the spirit of God descended, but the greatness of the vision, and its truth must not make us forget that he who spoke it was but human like ourselves. From the past and from the present, from tales which he had heard and from scenes which he had witnessed, he built up the framework for his message, which was to contain truths not for his own generation only, but for all generations to come. And thus the immediate and local work of the Servant is fused with his future and more universal labours. The prophet expects that all the vision will soon be fulfilled; we who read his words after these many hundred years know that the fulfilment of the message is still to come.

"Thou, Israel, art my servant." Yes, that is the Servant's name. Israel it is who has to suffer before the victory is won. But who is this Israel? Does the prophet mean the Israel of his own day, or of days to come, or does he mean the generations of faithful Israelites in all the ages? He means, indeed, now one and now another of all these answers, but the Servant, of whose sufferings and death and triumph you have heard to-day, cannot be perfectly explained by any one of them. That Servant is not in truth an individual, or even a number of individuals; he is an ideal, a type; the Genius of Israel. All that was best and greatest in Israel's character; every element of nobility in the heroic teachers of the past; every feature that marked off the highest spirits of Israel as peculiar and unique, the prophet has woven together and idealized in his portrait of the suffering Servant, whose triumph must be heralded by death.

"And what of the Servant's work? What is his mission to the world? Here again we must be prepared for a fusion of the near and the far. The Servant is to play a part, and that a great one, in the restoration of the exiles to their own land, but with this more external duty is to go hand in hand, his own peculiar office of spiritual teaching, which is to culminate in the world's conversion, the moral new birth of all mankind.

"The face of the Servant was turned to the future, not to the past. He had a duty towards his own race, but the more sovereign feature of his work related to the world at large. To raise up the tribes of Israel, to restore the preserved of Jacob was all too light an office for the suffering Servant to perform. Therefore His God appointed Him 'as a light to the nations, to be God's salvation unto the ends of the earth.'"

One is tempted to comment at length, but that may be left to each reader. But surely it is no small thing that a Jew should find it in his heart to tell his people concerning the Nazarene that he was "one great teacher of Israel's race, whose life was lived even as the Servant's life, and whose death was even as His," as recorded in Isaiah liii. And though as yet the writer of the above—strangely to us—can only see in that chapter a representation of the ideal of Israel, yet one would fain hope that, if not he, yet others who shall hear it read, shall ere long perceive that Israel's "ideal"—sketched in Isaiah liii.—never attained or attainable by any other perfectly, has been gloriously realized in the life and death of the crucified Nazarene. We need not speak doubtfully of this. For although still the veil remains upon the heart of the Jewish nation, we have the promise that "when Israel shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away." And one cannot forbear to remark that evidently at such a time as this, when with so many in Israel the prejudice and hatred of other centuries toward the Nazarene is diminishing, and an unprecedented spirit of enquiry is abroad among the members of the scattered nation, the Canadian Presbyterian Church should account it a great privilege to be called to speak to Israel the Gospel of the suffering Servant, by whose death and resurrection there is pardon and eternal life for both the Jew and the Gentile.

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## Sabbath School Teacher

### INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

Nov. 23,  
1890.

### JESUS CRUCIFIED.

Luke 23:  
33-47.

GOLDEN TEXT.—The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.—Isaiah liii. 6.

#### INTRODUCTORY.

When Pilate had pronounced sentence on Jesus He was delivered over to the executioners. There was no time intervening between the sentence and its execution. He was placed under a guard of Roman soldiers. The mournful procession went from Pilate's judgment hall to Calvary, so named because in shape it bore a resemblance to a human skull. It was outside the city near a public thoroughfare. It was customary for the person condemned to carry the cross on which he was to be executed. Jesus fainted under the burden of His cross, and the soldiers compelled Simon, a Cyrenian, to carry it. When Calvary was reached, Christ and the two malefactors were fastened to their respective crosses, which were then set up in the holes dug for them. Christ's cross occupied the central position, and on either side the others were set up.

I. The Beholders.—While Jesus was on the cross He uttered seven remarkable sayings. Here we have the first of them a prayer for His murderers. The sublime self-forgetfulness of that prayer is without a parallel. No plea for Himself, but a petition for forgiveness of His enemies. He has told us to love our enemies and to pray for them that despitefully use us, and here, under the most impressive circumstances, He gives His own example. For the soldiers who are inflicting physical pain, for the indifferent onlookers, for the leaders whose hearts are filled with bitterness, He prays "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." The soldiers divided the clothes of Jesus among themselves and for the seamless tunic they cast lots, which was a literal fulfilment of a prophecy contained in the twenty-second, a Messianic psalm. Among those witnessing the crucifixion there was a sympathetic company. Mary, the mother of Jesus, and several other of the ministering women, and probably most of the disciples. With aching hearts they witnessed the sufferings of the sinless One. In sad contrast with them were the rulers gloating shamelessly over the victim of their murderous hate and the thoughtless spectators who joined in the heartless mockery with which the meek and silent Sufferer was assailed. The soldiers, too, joined in the cruel jesting in which the others indulged. Over the cross was placed a tablet with an inscription in writing. It was the custom to write over the cross the nature of the crime for which the victim suffered. Over Christ's cross the inscription was in three languages, Greek, Latin and Hebrew. The words written are given by each of the four evangelists, but in a different form in each of the Gospels though in substance the same. The form of writing did not please the bitter enemies of Jesus, but in this particular Pilate declined to gratify them. "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Even this writing in the principal languages of that time unconsciously bore testimony to the kingship of Jesus.

II. Saved on the Cross.—From the cross at Jesus' side there comes the mocking cry: "If Thou be the Christ save Thyself and us." This was what the multitude were crying, heedless of the Sufferer's agony. This poor malefactor, perhaps a hardened criminal, thought he might gain favour from the crowd for his bravery in retorting their cries. His fellow-criminal is touched with better feeling. He rebukes his railing comrade, acknowledges the justice of their condemnation, and hears remarkable testimony to the innocence of Jesus, saying: "This Man hath done nothing amiss." Turning to Jesus he prays: "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." It was the prayer of faith, an earnest prayer, which was immediately answered. Christ's response to the dying thief was: "To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise." The term paradise is derived from the Persian and signifies a beautiful park or pleasure ground. Here it denotes the blessed state of departed souls. He was to be where Christ was. The marks that accompany genuine conversion are plainly seen in the malefactor's conversion. There is conviction and confession of sin. In remembrance with his fellow-criminal he says: "Dost not thou fear God seeing thou art in the same condemnation?" What he says of the other he applies to himself; "we indeed justly," he acknowledges. He recognizes the justice of his condemnation. He admits that his deeds were evil. Then his faith is no less clearly seen. He acknowledges Jesus as Lord. He has trust in Him, for he pleads to be remembered when He comes into His kingdom. In his heart he believed unto righteousness and made confession unto salvation.

III. The Death of Jesus.—It was now about the sixth hour, about noon, when ordinarily the sun would be at its brightest. At that hour the whole scene, the whole land of Palestine was overspread with a preternatural darkness, significant of the triumph for the moment of the powers of darkness. At the same time the massive curtain that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place in the Temple was rent in two. That, too, was significant. It indicated that the way into the holiest was opened up by the sacrifice of the Great High Priest who has entered for us into that which is within the veil. The symbolism of the old dispensation had served its purpose. The reality had come. During the awful darkness that fell on the land, the mocking crowd would be hushed into silent awe. It was then that Jesus uttered the agonizing cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" And now the end has come. The last is no longer a cry of agony but of confident trust: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." "Having said this He gave up the Ghost." He also said "It is finished." The sorrowing life of humiliation is ended. The pure spirit of the Sinless One passes to His Father whose will He had done from His entrance into this world, from the time He had said to His mother: "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business." The work of man's redemption was completed. The brief triumph of His enemies was at an end. The death of Christ is to all generations the source of an endless life. There is one other testimony to the innocence of Jesus. This time it came from one who had taken part in the crucifixion. The centurion, the one in command of the soldiers, when he "saw what was done, glorified God, saying: certainly this was a righteous man."

#### PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

In the crucifixion of Christ, sin and salvation are brought out in the clearest light. Could there be a greater contrast between the coarse rivalry of the spectators and the calm endurance of the merciful Saviour?

On the cross Christ saved the penitent thief. There were two malefactors; the one mocked, the other believed and was saved.

In dying for sinners, Jesus gave the fullest possible manifestation of His love for a guilty world. That love is extended to all who sincerely repent of their sins and who believe in Him and accept His salvation.

Let us remember that if we do not avail ourselves of the offered mercy that appeals to us by Christ's sufferings and death on the cross, there remaineth no more sacrifice or sin.