

The Sunday School Lesson

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14th

LOYALTY UNDER PERSECUTION
Golden Text. He that faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life. Rev. 2: 10.

Lesson Text. Rev. 2: 8-11; 7: 9-17
Exposition. 1. Message of our glorified Lord to the Church at Smyrna, 2: 8-11.

These are words of praise and encouragement but not one word of criticism for the church in Smyrna. The Lord Jesus appears as Divine, the First and the Last (cf. Isa. 44: 6; 48: 12), but also as real man (one who died, but now lives again). The church was being persecuted and was consequently in "tribulation." The church was poor in worldly possessions but rich with the real and enduring possessions. The financially poor churches are usually the richest in things which are of real and lasting worth (Jas. 2: 5), and the rich churches are almost invariably the poorest. Still greater hardships were just ahead but there was no occasion for fear. These hardships patiently and loyally endured would bring a crown. There are doubtless great persecutions just ahead for real believers today but we should not dread them but rejoice in them, since patiently endured they will bring us a crown and a throne (Matt. 5: 10-12; 2 Tim. 2: 12).

II. The Tribulation Saints in Heaven, 7: 9-12.

In these verses we have a picture of something going on in heaven during "the great tribulation" here on earth. There is to be a great multitude who are gathered in heaven at that time. There is to be no company of the saved. This is a multitude so vast that "no man could number it." They are Gentiles, they are "out of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues." They have immediate access to God, they "stand" i.e. are there in a place of acceptance and recognition "before the throne." This throne is the throne of God in heaven (ch. 4: 3-11). Jesus is with the Father on the throne. In standing before the throne, they also stand "before the Lamb." The title by which the Lord Jesus is spoken of here is significant "The Lamb." This is a Johannine name for Jesus and is one of the many indications that this book was written by the author of the Fourth Gospel. He is spoken of as "The Lamb" because He is an atoning sacrifice for sin, the paschal lamb (1 Cor. 5: 7; Jno. 1: 29).

They are "arrayed in white robes," symbol of purity and with "palms in their hands," symbol of victory. They have overcome their enemies. They are very earnest in their expressions of praise and thanksgiving, "they cried with a great voice." The cry is poetical in its form, and is apparently a loud song or chant. They ascribe all the honor for their salvation to God, "which sitteth on the throne," and also "unto the Lamb" by whose atoning blood their salvation was purchased, the Lamb which God Himself has provided (Gen. 22: 8). There were there also a great multitude of angels, "all the angels," these too were standing but not before the throne, but "around about the throne." The elders are the representatives of the church.

The angels and the elders and the living creatures all fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God. Seven things are ascribed unto God as they worship Him. "The blessings, and the glory, and the wisdom, and the thanksgiving, and the power, and the might." Both the A. V. and R. V. omit the "the" before blessing, glory, etc., but it is in the Greek and ought to be in the English. This glory is ascribed to God. "Forever and ever." The Greek words translated "Forever and ever" mean literally "Unto the ages of the ages." It is the strongest possible representation for endlessness, by picturing ages which are themselves composed of ages, in endless procession. This expression or nearly the same expression, is used twelve times in this book of the existence and the glory of God, of the future blessedness of the righteous, and the endless conscious suffering of the beast and the false prophet and the finally impudent.

III. One of the Elders Explains, 13-17.

God Himself has interpreted for us who this great multitude are. He has explained it through "one of the elders." This elder first addresses John and asks him, "These which are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and whence came they?" John frankly admits he does not know, saying, "My lord, thou knowest." Then the elder explains who they are. "These are they which came out of the great tribulation." The A. V. make it "Out of great tribulation," but the R. V. has the correct translation, "Out of THE great tribulation." They had not only passed through tribulation as all believers shall but they had passed through "tribulation," this is the time of tribulation that is coming upon this earth after the rapture of the church, when the anti-Christ will be fully manifested. (Jno. 16: 33; Ac. 14: 22; Matt. 24: 15-21).

SPEEDING

The Canadian Press records that a Toronto park squirrel opened a tough hickory nut in 14 seconds. A Quebec beaver cut through a branch two inches in diameter in 50 seconds. See if you can beat that.

DRIVE AND LIVE LONG

Winter adds measurably to the hazards of driving, and some of us, who have not yet satisfied ourselves with a promised new car, have those hazards somewhat increased. But reasonable care is still the best safeguard whether your car be new or old.

For instance, winter increases the hazard of carbon monoxide and aging cars cooperate to make it worse. Still a little headwork may offset these disadvantages. The National Safety Council has offered some suggestions. Open the garage door before starting the motor. Resist the impulse to warm the motor up in seclusion. Such a practice tends to make seclusion a permanent matter. Never crawl under a car while the motor is running. See that combustion is as complete as possible by frequent inspection, adjustment and repair. Remember manifold, exhaust pipe or muffler may leak. So never drive with all the windows closed and don't follow another car too closely.

It is wise to keep in mind too that snow and ice increase the distance needed for braking three to twelve times over that needed on a dry pavement, so give yourself that margin. Chains will offset this but only to a degree. The wise motorist will carry some sort of spare as a protection in case of possible breakdown.

Remember 65% of accidents happen on snowy or icy roads. Joseph List or Rutledge.

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BUGS WILL INHERIT THE EARTH

A little while ago a nature photographer from Buffalo, N.Y., told the Royal Canadian Institute in Toronto some facts about bugs. "Two thirds of all living creatures are insects," he said, "and it would take you thirty years, memorizing 50 names a day, to go through the list of those already catalogued." Alas, his gloomy prophecy has somewhat more immediacy than he seems to suggest. At least the United States Bureau of Entomology advises that insects destroy each year on this continent more than three hundred million bushels of stored grain. A starving Europe needs only a third of that amount to start on the way to recovery. J. L. H.



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BURLINGTON

Miss Mary Holby, a missionary in India, returned home on Friday to spend a year's furlough here with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. E. Holby.

Advice has been received from Ottawa by Mr. and Mrs. Harold Wilson, regarding their son Flying Officer Bill Wilson, missing since February 1944. Word came through the Investigating Officers of the Missing Research and Enquiry Service on the continent that Flying Officer Wilson has been located in a communal grave, the cemetery of Gohre, twenty-eight miles north east of Magdeburg, Germany. Examination was carried out and with the rest of the crew he was given a burial individually in a British Military cemetery, where the grave will be cared for by the Imperial War Graves Commission. — Gazette.

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A PRODUCT OF SWIFT

RECOLLECTIONS OF ACTON

BACK IN 1897

Taken from the Issue of The Free Press of December 9th, 1897

The hockey club was re-organized at a meeting on Monday evening. A committee was appointed to make arrangements for a rink. At the regular monthly meeting of Acton Camp No. 62, Canadian Order Woodmen of the World, the following were elected to office—W. H. Storey, Isaac Francis, Harry Jones, George Agnew, James Wilson, Geo. Vincent, Geo. Statham, Ed Ryder, A. S. Elliott M.D.

Mr. Fred Ryder has been promoted to a position on the road for Messrs. W. H. Storey and Son. He is working east this week.

Miss Maggie Wallace received last week a diploma as graduate of Guelph Business College. She won the highest honors of the Institution.

A very interesting and instructive lecture on the "Higher Physical Culture for Women" was given in H.H. Hall on Tuesday afternoon by Miss Ford of Toronto. This young lady showed her ability to discuss the subject both in address and illustration. The object of these lectures is to promote the health, purity and happiness in the home.

Last Friday, Mr. John Cameron met with a serious accident at his plant and when his thumb was amputated at the first joint.

Mr. R. Agnew sent three fat hogs to the Christmas Fat Stock Show. They weighed 225 lbs.

MARRIED

HARBOUR THOMPSON At the residence of the bride's mother on Wed. Evg. 1st, by Rev. R. Loewie, Mr. Wm. Harbour, to Maud, daughter of Mrs. George Thompson, all of Erin.

BACK IN 1927

From the Issue of The Free Press of Thursday, December 15, 1927.

The new lighting fixtures on Mill Street are quite an improvement.

Mr. C. B. Swackhamer has opened a new store on Willow Street just south of the post office and will conduct an undertaking business, and furniture and hardware.

The annual commencement of the Acton Continuation School was held Friday evening. A lecture was given by Professor A. E. Dale of Toronto University.

Guelph's oldest resident Hiram Wallace, who resides with his son George B. Wallace, celebrated his 97th birthday, on Monday.

BORN

KENNEDY At the Helen Meinke Hospital, Detroit, to Mr. and Mrs. John E. Kennedy (nee Eva M. Johnson) a daughter.

DIED

GRAHAM At Detroit, on Thursday, December 8, 1927, Charles Benjamin Graham, brother of Miss Betha Graham, Acton, aged 63 years.

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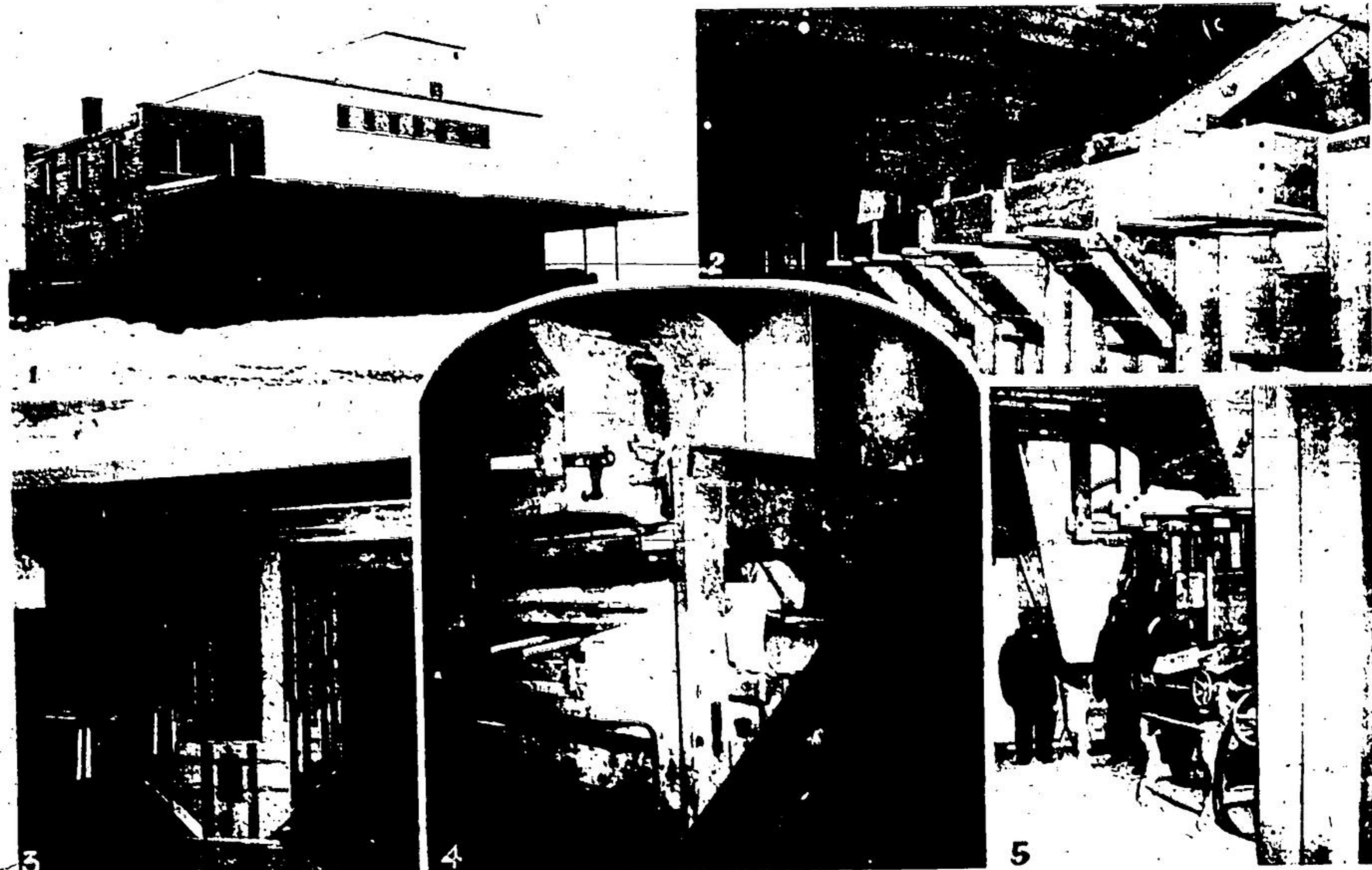
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OPEN NEW CO-OPERATIVE BUILDING FOR MILTON DISTRICT CO-OPERATIVE



Situated in the centre of Halton's farming district, Milton District Co-operative's new building and manufacturing plant was officially opened on Monday, December 8th. Photo 1, shows the exterior of the building. 2, a portion of the huge bins, which will hold nearly 10,000 bushels of grain. The horizontal tube contains special augers which transport grain to the different bins and mixer. The mixer is located on the same floor in the background. 3, the basement showing base of the bins and elevators to raise materials to the chopping bins. 4, is the large cleaning machine, the first of its kind to be placed in use in Ontario. 5, The first floor, including tubes, roller and bagging hopper. Included left to right are, Alfred Barton, yard manager, Jack Elliot, general manager, and Thomas Kennedy, millwright who was responsible for the installation of the mill. —Photos by Ross Pearen