

Friends Of The Old-timer Are Still Active In And About The District

I started out to write, or at least finish up at the little hamlet of Lemonville, but there are four hard-working men I want to mention — Everett Barnes at Bloomington; Harvey Clendenning on Lot 1 on the Sixth of Whitchurch; William Hunt on Lot 12 on the Fifth, and George Preston on the fourth on Lot 13. These men are all alive and still working.

I don't know of any other four men alive today who have gone through more real hard work and they all live in the one township. I suppose all of them have helped to thresh when the old horsepower was used and the mill was fed by hand. I called on Everett last spring during a big snow storm. His hair was as

white as the snow that was coming down, but his memory was first class. He told me he played football with Lincolnville when they held the picnic in Alfred Baker's field north of the Baptist Church on the eighth in the year 1888 or 1889.

I was in conversation with Harvey Clendenning yesterday before the Arena meeting. Back in the year 1920 a small girl fell in to the pond at Ratcliffs and had it not been for the quick smart movements of this hard working man, she would not be alive today. My older brother told me that when Harvey was in his teens he picked up an old-fashioned barrel of salt and placed it in the box of one of those standard wagons. They

were a lot higher than the wagons of today.

I well remember when I worked on the late Truman Holden's farm, south of Stouffville. Ratcliffs bought the bush on the back fifty acres, and Harvey and the late John Nicely would be back in there skidding logs before seven o'clock in the morning. I could tell of many things Harvey did in his younger days, but if you would like to talk to this clever fellow, go to the horse-shoe pitching matches, and there you will likely find him.

William Hunt is still going strong and working on his good farm along with his son Russell. He worked, and saw-logged and threshed for years and is a first-class thresher, I know, for I

helped to thresh many a day at that time. He later bought the blacksmith shop at Bethesda. Will used to shoe horses by coal-oil lantern in the morning and use that same lantern again at night. Harvey told me yesterday that he has done that for him when he was drawing logs for Ratcliff brothers. I may write more about Will when I get over to the 5th concession, if I ever do.

Last, but not least, George Preston. I have been told and I guess by himself, that when he was a small boy in his early teens, he fired the old horse drawn steam engine for his father William, and ran the old stationary steam engine in the sawmill at Vandorf, that was situated north of the new hall where the Police Station is. The engine was fed by water from the creek that runs through the park. He later owned a Sawyer-Massey machine and threshed in nearly every barn on the 4th and 5th of Whitchurch from townline to townline.

I remember the old dancing team of horses he had — Jim and Frank, the old grey team. He also threshed in barns in Markham Twp., the late James Brodie's on Lot 35 was one of them. He now runs Preston's Park in the summer time and goes to Florida in the winter for a holiday.

I'll never forget George and a railroad engineer who had the long whiskers the time the mus-

The Sunday School Lesson

STRENGTH THROUGH TRIAL (Lesson for August 26)

Matthew 4:1-11; James 1 Golden Text—Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.—Jas. 1:12

THE LESSON AS A WHOLE

It is quite evident that this Epistle was written by one who bore the name of James, but several in the New Testament had that name, notably James the son of Zebedee and brother of John; James, the son of Alphaeus, sometimes called James the less, or James the little man; and James, the brother of our Lord. The writer of this Epistle presents himself simply as "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ," which would fit any one of the three.

While a ninth century manuscript attributes the Epistle to James son of Zebedee, this claim has little or no support. We are shut up therefore, to one of the other two.

As a matter of fact it has been contended that James the son of Alphaeus, who was one of the Twelve, and James the brother of our Lord (brother used in the sense of cousin) were the same person. This would involve considerable difficulty, including a seeming contradiction of John's statement, "neither did his brethren believe in him." (John 7:5). Apart from this problem, which we shall leave for the scholars, some support has been rallied for the belief that the Epistle was written by the lesser James of the apostolic band. The preponderance of evidence, however, seems to favor James the half brother of our Lord Jesus, and to whom He appeared after His resurrection, and who later is found occupying a place of leadership in the church at Jerusalem (Acts 15).

This Epistle is considered the earliest of all our New Testament writings. It was probably written from Jerusalem, for we have no indication of any wider ministry for this particular James. According to tradition, he died in Jerusalem, being put to death by order of the Sanhedrin after the death of Festus and before the next Roman curator arrived.

As the opening phrase indicates, it was written to the 12 tribes scattered abroad. This can hardly mean that he was writing for all Jews, for the Epistle contains no appeal to unbelieving Jews to accept Jesus as the Messiah. The phrase must be interpreted as signifying believing Jews. It is interesting to note that while Christians, they are still Jews. Although Christ became a "stone of stumbling" and was a cause of division in Israel, it should still be emphasized, particularly in witnessing to Jews, that a Christian Jew is no less a Jew. Indeed, not until a Jew believes in the Lord Jesus Christ is he a true Jew, for only thus does he enter into the promise of the fathers.

Verse by Verse

Jas. 1:2—"... count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." The temptations here are not necessarily incitements to evil, although that will be included. All situations which present opportunities for sin are in view. We need to be tried in many ways. Joy seems a strange reaction to such testings!

Verse 3—"... the trying of your faith worketh patience." Here is the reason. These tests are to prove the reality of our faith, and in the meantime new graces are being gained in the crucible—particularly patience, or staying power.

Verse 4—"... that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." Patience is needed in the maturing and rounding out of Christian character. Where patience is lacking, the other graces are not being formed.

Verse 5—"If any of you lack wisdom ... ask of God, that giveth ... and upbraideth not." Wisdom is needed in facing our temptations if we would extract good from them. It is our privilege to go to the source of all wisdom and obtain it. God does not rebuke the one who knows his need and seeks His face for its supply.

Verse 6—"... ask in faith, nothing wavering ... like a wave of the sea ... This play upon words is not in the Greek. Wavering is doubting. The in-

stability of the sea-surge is the character of the doubter.

Verse 7—"For let not that man think that he shall receive." While faith is encouraged to expect from God, unbelief has no right to answered prayer. It shuts up the storehouse of Heaven.

Verse 8—"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." This belongs to verse 7, and is a further description of the doubting soul — a Jekyll-and-Hyde sort of person, incapable of taking firm ground.

Verse 9—"Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted." The believing slave is lifted from the dung-hill and made one of God's princes. Social rank does not count in the Kingdom of God.

Verse 10—"But the rich, in that he is made low." Rank and wealth are very temporary possessions. The believer from the upper stratum must joyfully take his place with the poorest and meanest of the brethren.

Verse 11—"For the sun ... withereth the grass ... so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways." The simile is developed in this verse. For "fashion" read "face." Riches are a poor object of trust or glory.

Verse 12—"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation ... he shall receive the crown of life." Back to the subject of temptation. It not only ministers to the believer's present sanctification, but has promise of eternal reward. Life is a gift (Rom. 6:23), but the crown of life is a reward (Rev. 2:10).

Verse 13—"Let no man say ... I am tempted of God." Here temptation in the sense of incitement to evil is definitely in view. A holy God, Himself free from such enticement, will not so entice others.

Verse 14—"But ... he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." Temptation is definitely attributed to something within ourselves. Contrast Luke 4:2. The part which Satan plays in our temptations is probably exaggerated. Our big tempter is within us — our own desire, drawing, and enticing.

Verse 15—"... lust ... sin ... death." We only need to give our desire rein, and the fruitful offspring of sin will quickly appear. Sin, on its part, is the father of death. This leaves little room for boasting about our "natural goodness."

Verse 16—"Do not err ... This belongs to verse 15. The thought is: let us not be deceived about the source of temptation, which is within ourselves.

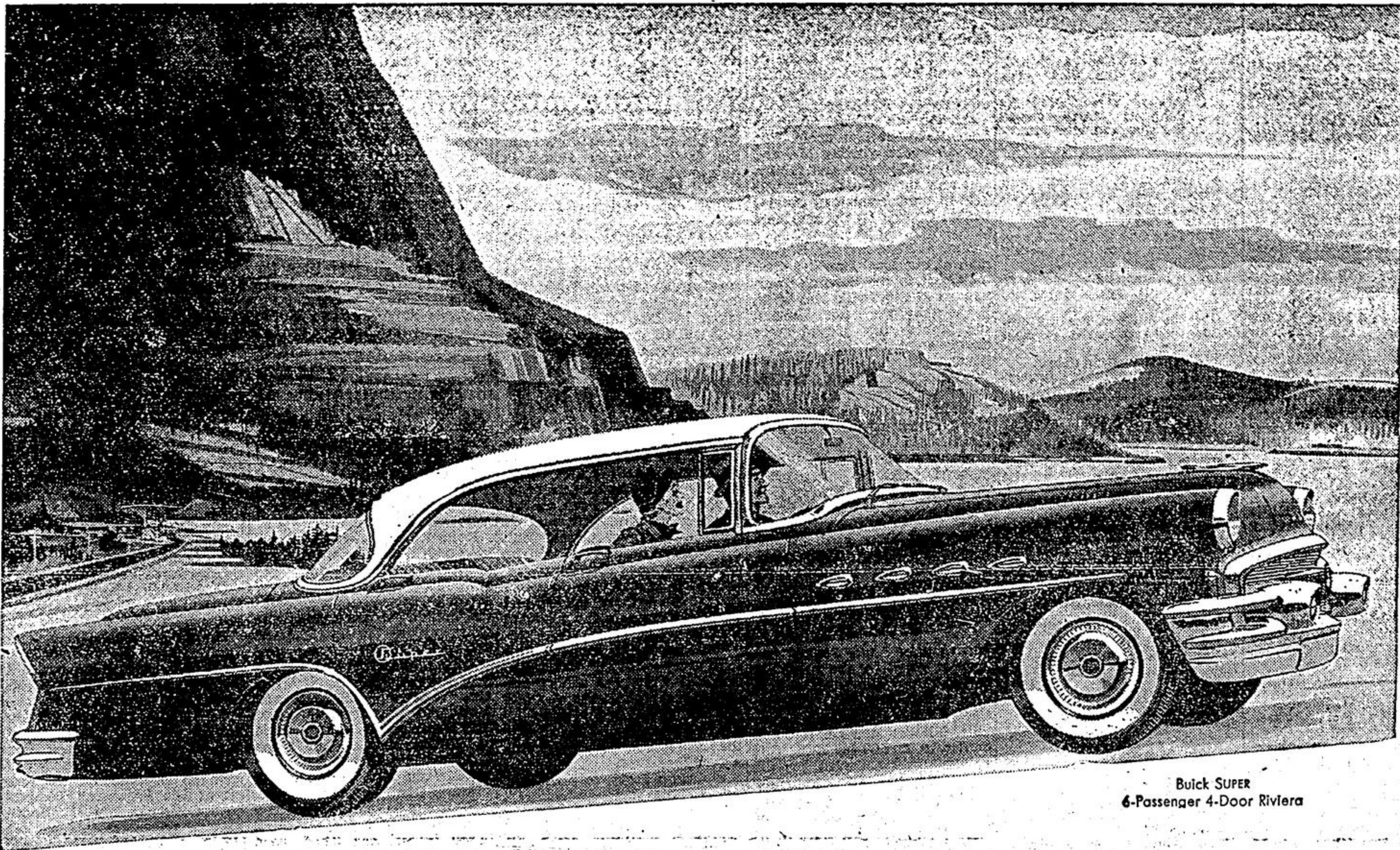
Verse 17—"Every good gift ... from the Father ... no ... shadow of turning." On the other hand, all good comes from God. The gift may be a holy desire, a pure thought, or any other blessing, but it is always from the unchangeably holy Father. Do not be deceived on this score any more than on the truth of verse 15.

Verse 18—"... begat he us with the word of truth ... firstfruits of his creatures." Sin begets death, but God begets us to eternal life, to give us a place of priority among His creatures. His instrument in this divine operation is "the word of truth." The Heart of the Lesson

Our first lesson in the Epistle of James puts the emphasis on the subject of temptation. The word is used in two senses. First testings; second, enticement to evil. The former may involve the latter, but not necessarily so. At the same time, any situation which constitutes a test means the possibility of failure, and that, of course, means that every situation which constitutes a test carries in it an element of temptation in the sense of an inducement to sin. In reading this portion we should be careful to note when the more general sense is in view, and when allurement to evil is definitely the thought. In verses 2 and 12 the more general sense is implied, but in verses 13 and 14 we have the morally evil connotation.

How are we to react when situations involve temptation coming our way? James says, "count it all joy." There must be some basis for such an attitude. The writer offers three reasons. First, these situations have a gracious purpose, that of proving our faith with a view to its being approved. In other words, while these situations may be occasions of temptation, they are also opportunities to show the

(Continued on page 7)



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