

else if a preventative is found; nothing spreads more rapidly than knowledge of a preventative or a cure. No man would try to excuse himself for failing to give information on any subject of general interest by asking, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

And it is the same with those who warn of intellectual dangers as it is with those who consider the bodily or the financial welfare of others. While farmers are dealing with the crops and the insects that attack them, while the laboring men are dealing with the things that menace the welfare of those who work for wages; while business men are taking notes of the things that make for weakness or prosperity, the leaders in the intellectual world are as quick to hang out danger signals and to spread the news of any new method that promises improvement in teaching.

WHY THIS TIMIDITY?

Why is it that timidity only manifests itself in dealing with spiritual things? Morality is the basis of society and religion is the foundation of morality; why should there be hesitation in speaking to one concerning his soul's welfare?

Is it merely a matter of religious coldness? There are degrees of religious enthusiasm, running all the way from freezing point to boiling point. Those who are just above freezing have no heat to give out; in proportion as one's religion is an active element in his life he feels the spiritual urge that compels him to utter a warning prompted by love and grounded on friendly concern for his fellows.

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren"—that is the test as to whether one has felt Christ's transforming power. And how is this love to be manifested? "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." When one is concerned as to his own condition he is naturally alert to the condition of others.

"Perfect love casteth out fear." The danger of being rebuffed will not prevent the doing of one's duty if one has a vigorous sense of duty. Just as Ezekiel was not to be "afraid of their words," or be "dismayed at their looks," so the Christian is called to do his duty regardless of the reception that may be accorded his words. The condemnation of his own conscience is more to be feared than any criticism that fidelity to duty may call forth.

THE FOUNDATION OF LIFE

Thus far our text deals with the wicked who has not turned from his way; now it turns to the righteous man who falls.

If, after starting right, the righteous man turns back and dies in his sins, his religious deeds will not be remembered.

"Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sins, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered."

Those who lay emphasis upon deeds rather than faith accept the Buddhist method of calculation.

Buddhism sets the good deeds off against the bad deeds and makes the accumulated merit a matter of mathematics. The good deeds must outweigh the bad deeds; the account can be cast up at the end of each day or week or year. If the good exceeds the evil, there is a balance to go on; if the evil exceeds the good, the balance is on the wrong side of the ledger.

Neither Christianity nor Judaism countenances the elimination of faith; it is the foundation upon which life is built. If one sins and repents, his sins are forgiven; they are blotted out and he begins life anew. By the same rule, if the righteous man turns back to sin, his good works are blotted out. It is the direction in which one is going that counts, not the distance that he has gone.

If a man is born again, turns his face toward heaven and travels straight forward, nothing in the past can mar his progress; and so, if one turns his back on God and travels toward perdition, no good that he has done in the past can save him.

EXPERIENCE PROVES GOD'S GOODNESS

One phrase of these two verses has excited criticism—"and I lay a stumbling block before him."

Some who assume to have a more delicate sense of justice than the Bible's God are very much shocked at the thought of God laying a stumbling block in one's way. They take the words out of their connection and refuse to consider the context. The beginning of the sentence

reads, "Again, when a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness and commit iniquity."

God does not lay a stumbling block in the way of the righteous; it is in the way of the wicked that He lays a stumbling block.

In the administration of justice human governments do the same thing. If a government attempted to lead an honest man into crime, it would be subjected to just criticism, but when the government lays a stumbling block in the path of the wicked it is aiding in the administration of justice. If one decides to "turn from his righteousness and commit iniquity," he has no reason to complain of a stumbling block that entraps him.

Those who defend the wicked to the extent of criticising the stumbling blocks are much in the position of the friends of criminals who become indignant when the government entraps those who are engaged in the violation of the law.

It is not necessary that a man who does not believe in God shall be convinced of the justice of the Almighty. The goodness of God need not be established by proof offered before a biased tribunal; "no thief ever felt the halter draw with good opinion of the law;" God's goodness is proven by experience—"taste and see that the Lord is good."

Those who commit their way to Him and conform to His laws will have no reason to complain of either His justice or His mercy.

HISTORY'S MOST NOTABLE DREAM

By WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

BIBLE TEXT—LESSON FOR JULY 9

(Daniel ii:36-45, 47)

This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.

Thou O king, art a king of kings; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.

And after thee shall rise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided, but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the mixed with the miry clay.

And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.

And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret.

Today we meet another of the Bible's great characters, one of the most picturesque of the great galaxy of immortal men and women who appear in its pages.

Daniel stands out as one of the greatest of the prophets, in the sense in which the word is most commonly understood. While all of the Bible characters described as prophets forecasted coming events, Daniel is conspicuous for the number and importance of revelations as to the future which God made through him.

A word first as to prophecy. It has been described as "history written in advance," and plays so important a part in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, that it cannot be eliminated without striking a vital blow at the veracity of the Scriptures.

The prophets laid no claim to superior wisdom; they did not pretend to possess an insight into the future. On the contrary, they modestly disclaimed ability to foresee. They spoke accorded as the truth was revealed to them, and gave credit for their knowledge of coming events. These communications came, not all at once, as a continuing endowment, but in response to appeals for information, or as a result of calls that came to them directly from God.

In the beginning, therefore, we must decide whether we will accept prophecy as a real thing,

or reject it as fiction. This is one of the test questions that enable us to determine the faith of Christians. An overwhelming majority of those who call themselves Christians accept the Bible as the revealed will of God; they find in it truths uttered by men divinely inspired.

There are some, however, who attempt to explain away all that is miraculous or supernatural. Consistency requires that we apply the same standard to all parts of the Bible. If one respects the miracles as inconsistent with any given line of reasoning, he is almost sure to reject the prophecies for the same reason. If one denies that God performed the miracles recorded in the Bible he usually denies the truth of all passages that deal with the supernatural. Skeptics reason that if God would not perform miracles through men He would not talk to men and reveal through them future events which are beyond the reach of the reason or the knowledge of the uninspired.

One of the proofs of the Bible's authority is to be found in the fulfillment of prophecy; the explanation of Christ's mission upon earth rests to a considerable extent on prophecy and its fulfillment. If we accept the Bible as true we must accept prophecy as not only a fact but as a fact of tremendous importance. The same logic that leads one to reject prophecy as false will lead to the rejection of practically everything else in the Bible that distinguishes it from uninspired books.

Those who question the communication of God's thoughts to man will do well to study the dreams of the Bible. In olden times the dream opened the door to the supernatural, and it may do so today.

WATER VS. WINE

The record of Daniel's life begins with his entrance into captivity. He was not only of a high family but so precocious that at the age of 12 or 15 he impressed the officers of Nebuchadnezzar's court as a boy of great promise. He and others of promise of his own race were put in a group by themselves and received special care.

The character of Daniel manifested itself at the very beginning. He and his companions were to be supplied with the rich foods and the choice wines from the King's table, but Daniel protested and asked that he and three of his companions, also of the children of Judah—Shadrach, Meshack and Abed-nego—be given the simple fare to which water was substituted for wine.

The overseer explained to Daniel that he could not do so without risk to himself, because (as he thought) they would not, if they lived upon the simple diet which they preferred, look as well as those who shared the King's meat and drink. At this day we are amused that any intelligent person would think that wine would improve any person's appearance.

Daniel asked that they be allowed ten days to prove by actual test that water and the simple food were as good as the rich food and drink from the King's table. Daniel had evidently made a very favorable impression upon the overseer, and the latter agreed to the test, with the understanding that they would obey orders if in physical appearance they were not equal to those who ate at the King's table.

This is one of the great tests of history; it won for Daniel and his companions the right to abstain from drink and to use simple foods, and 2,500 years of history have failed to disturb the verdict.

A VANISHED DREAM

Daniel began well, and he never made a misstep, thanks not to his judgment but to his reliance upon the God whom he trusted.

He was educated in all the learning of the time, and rose, step by step, until he became known as one of the wise men. Then came a dream that troubled Nebuchadnezzar. In the night a vision passed through his mind and vanished. It disturbed him, but he could not recall what he had seen in his sleep.

He sent for the magicians, astrologers, sorcerers and Chaldeans, and asked them not only to interpret the dream but to bring it forth from the darkness and present it before him, threatening them with death if they failed. It was a cruel demand, such as only an Oriental despot would make. It gives us some idea of the arbitrary power exercised by the rulers of that day.

Of course the wise men were helpless. They protested against the injustice of the requirement, but the King was unmoved.

Daniel, who was included in the decree, asked for time, and promised to comply with the King's requirement, without any doubt as to God's willingness to disclose to him both the dream and the interpretation. He called upon his three friends to unite with him in prayer to