

PEOPLE'S

PULPIT...



Sermon by CHARLES T. RUSSELL, Pastor Brooklyn Tabernacle.

The Vengeance of Eternal Fire

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them... are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7).

Lynn, Mass., August 14.—Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle spoke here twice today to large and attentive audiences. We report one of his discourses from the above. He said in part—

My text is one of the strongest of those which once we erroneously misunderstood to teach the eternal torment of the non-elect. Coming to the text with our minds filled with the wrong impressions respecting the character of the Almighty Creator and respecting his purposes toward humanity it is easy for us to misunderstand the words of St. Jude. So deeply were the erroneous thoughts impressed upon our minds from childhood that, irrational though they were, we considered them fundamental theology. In like manner we wrested to our own confusion and injury many Scriptures, reading into them what they do not say and ignoring what they do say. As, for instance, the messages of Holy Writ to the effect that "all the wicked will God destroy"; that "the wages of sin is death"; that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die"; that there is no eternal life out of Christ. All these and others we warped and twisted away from their beautiful and simple teaching, and made out of them "doctrines of devils" with which we alarmed ourselves and those committed to our instruction.

We thank God that gradually the eyes of our understanding are opening to discern the great Truth that the testing of the Church in the present Age and the testing of the world at large in the coming Age will be as to worthiness for eternal life or worthlessness of eternal death—everlasting destruction—the Second Death from which there will be no redemption, no resurrection, no recovery. As St. Peter declares, "Those who enter into it will be, like brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed—annihilated."

Sodom's Guilt and Punishment.

Sodom and surrounding cities were profligate and licentious to the extreme and Divine Justice decreed that their course must not continue, but that they should be made an example of—a lesson to others of the Divine displeasure against all such licentiousness. Accordingly we read that fire and brimstone were rained from heaven to the utter destruction of those cities, the place of which is now marked by the Dead Sea. The Sodomites were obliterated and only their name and history have come down to us. Their utter destruction by eternal fire or heavenly fire rained upon them was a complete destruction. Their experience pictures forth the utter destruction of all whom God will finally reject as unworthy of eternal life. Not that fire and brimstone would be rained upon all, but that utter destruction will come upon all disapproved by the Almighty. Who thinks that St. Jude meant that the fire that destroyed the Sodomites was an eternal one? Who ever thinks that it is still burning as a literal fire should take a look at the picture of the Dead Sea and note that there are no fires there. The thought is that the fire, which is a symbol of destruction, did its work thoroughly, completely, leaving not a vestige of these condemned to destruction.

The Sodomites all went to hell—to the Bible hell—to the state of death. But they did not go to the hell which was manufactured by our forefathers during the dark ages—a hell of eternal torture. We have Bible testimony on the subject, which we will produce. They are unconscious now like the remainder of the dead, waiting for the resurrection. And the resurrection opportunity will come to them, as well as to all the remainder of Adam's race; because they, as well as all others, are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ—by the sacrifice which he finished at Calvary. This is not speculative. We have the words of the Master himself on the subject. Let us take our information, our wisdom from the proper quarter. Then our doubts and fears will speedily flee away.

Not a Second Chance.

We will produce the Bible testimony showing that the Sodomites will be released and come forth during the mediatorial reign of Messiah to enjoy a share of the blessings then to be poured out upon Israel and the world; and to have an opportunity of coming into harmony with God and gaining eternal life. But we know that straightway somebody will say, No, Pastor Russell, that would be a second chance, and God has nowhere promised a second chance to any. Furthermore it would be belittling to the Divine Government to suppose that God, after giving one fair trial to a man and reaching a decision would conclude to give him another trial, as though Divine Justice were unable to determine the worthiness or unworthiness of the individual for eternal life in one trial or testing.

We fully agree with this sentiment, but call attention to the fact that the Sodomites did not enjoy one trial for life. They and all mankind were "born in sin, shapen in iniquity; in sin did their mothers conceive them"

...cause of the worthiness of any of these that he proposes their restitution, but because of his glorious character, for which his namesake. Let me quote to you this remarkably clear statement of the Divine purposes future; and let us notice that it is emphatically declared that the ones to be restored and blessed are the very ones who perished in the days of Lot. We read,—

"Sodom thy sister hath not done... as thou hast done... Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was to her... neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and the needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me; therefore I took them away as I saw good. [God did not see good to take them to a hell of eternal torture; but he did see good to destroy them and to make them an example of the destruction of all ultimately displeasing to him after enjoying a knowledge of his grace and an opportunity for eternal life.]

"Thou also which hast condemned thy sister nations bare thine own shame for thy sins. They are more righteous than thou as Jesus declared. When I shall bring again their captivity [bring them from the prison-house of death]... then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them; that thou mayest bear thine own shame and mayest be confounded in all that thou hast done, in that thou art a comfort unto them. When thy sisters Sodom and her daughters shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate... I will remember my Covenant with thee in the days of thy youth and I will establish unto them an everlasting Covenant [the New Law Covenant of which Messiah is the Mediator and which, under his Mediatorial Kingdom shall bless Israel and all who will come into Israel under the glorious terms of that New Covenant] (Jeremiah xxxi, 31).

"Then thou shalt remember thy ways and be ashamed when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger: and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy Covenant [not under your present Law Covenant, but under the New Law Covenant and its better Mediator]... that thou mayest remember and be confounded and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God" (Ezekiel xvi, 48-63).

Length and Breadth—Height and Depth.

How wonderful it at first seems to us to find that we really have a good kind, loving God, and not an unmerciful and vengeful one! So grossly were we deceived respecting his character, by the traditions handed down from the past, that we gave him the reverence of fear, rather than that of love and devotion. The clearer light comes to us as a fresh revelation of the meaning of the Apostolic words when he wrote about "lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love of God, which passeth all understanding."

The words of the Lord through the prophet come to our minds, "Fear not their fear, neither be afraid." "Their fear of me is not of me, but is taught by the precepts of man." "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my plans higher than your plans." Oh! Thank God that it is so! To all eternity we shall praise God that he did not allow our forefathers to make him or change his character. Yes, and he is the same yesterday, today and forever. He changes not. The great, wise, just, loving plan for the salvation of mankind which he is now carrying out was the very one "which he purposed in himself before the world was created." The plan of selecting the Church through fiery trials, through the straight gate and narrow way, for nineteen centuries, was what he purposed in advance; for the Apostle says that he foreknew the Church in Christ.

Likewise the times of restitution soon to come for the world of mankind be foreknew and predestinated, and made all the arrangements for, just as they are being carried out now. The end will be glorious. His name will shine resplendently when the mists have cleared away, and when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams, scattering all the darkness and degradation of sin and superstition. Then we'll see what God hath wrought! Then we'll praise him, praise him as we ought.

"To You It is Given."

We are well aware that only the few can see the beauties of this subject as we see them. We are aware that only those to whom "it is given to know" will understand in the sense of fully appreciating the depth of the Divine message. But we are sure that all such will rejoice more and more in the God of our salvation, as they come to appreciate his worthiness of our love and confidence and devotion.

As for those who shall under Divine tests prove themselves sympathetic with iniquity, we are glad that the Divine sentence is that they shall have from the Eternal One a destruction total, complete—one from which there will be no recovery, no redemption, no resurrection. "They shall be as though they had not been." But all the willing and the obedient shall have the blessing of the Lord unto life eternal—either on the spirit plane as members of the Church of the firstborn or on the human plane as members of the saved Israel restored to human perfection.

FIVE MILLIONS FOR M'MURRAY

Contracts if A.I. Carried Out Would Bring in Huge Sum.

CHIEF JOHNSON ON THE STAND.

Chickasaw Leader Says Eighty-Five Per Cent of His People Signed the Contracts Because They Were Impatient at Long Delay of Government in Selling Their Lands.

Sulphur, Okla., Aug. 13.—Lawyers' expense accounts running as high as \$300,000, a single fee already paid amounting to \$750,000 and contingent fees still pending that would aggregate about \$5,000,000 figured in the investigation of the Indian land affairs by the special committee appointed by the house of representatives. It was pointed out that the Indians never had secured large amounts of money due them without having to "come across" in the shape of fees, and, although they employed regular lawyers on yearly salaries, extra fees were constantly paid for the employment of special counsel. The special fee of \$750,000 was paid several years ago to J. F. McMurray and his law partners after they had prosecuted what are known as the "citizenship cases," which, it was stated, kept off the rolls 32,000 persons who wanted to participate in the claims against the government.

By the winning of this suit it was explained that the value of the property to the Indians who remained on the rolls was enhanced \$16,000,000, on a basis of \$5,000 for each of the 32,000 claimants who were kept off. The sale of the property and the division of the proceeds is still being fought for by the Indians.

Scott Secured Many Signers.

This testimony developed in the examination of George F. Scott, a Choctaw. Scott was active in securing signatures for the McMurray contracts, for the approval of which by congress, Senator Gore charges, on May 6 last he was offered a bribe of \$25,000 or \$50,000.

McMurray's contracts, Scott testified, if carried out in their entirety, would dispose of about \$50,000,000 worth of property, which on a 10 per cent "attorney's fee" basis would result in a net profit to McMurray and his associates of almost \$5,000,000. This fee, according to Senator Gore and members of the committee who interrogated the witnesses, would be paid for services that the government already had promised to give the Indians without cost.

Scott also showed in his testimony that the cost of employing McMurray would be in addition to \$30,000 now paid annually to regular attorneys. Scott's contention was that the attorneys on the regular salaries were not so active as contingent fee attorneys. Scott appeared after his name frequently had been mentioned by previous witnesses.

Sent Telegrams to Washington.

It was he who testified he had sent telegrams to Washington urging the approval of the contracts. He had been working for McMurray without any written or verbal agreement, he said, as to sharing in the fee, and had induced many Indians to sign. He worked in this respect among the Indians despite the opposition of Green McCurtain, chief of 18,000 Choctaws. In one telegram to Richard Adams, an attorney at Washington, he referred to Vice President Sherman and Senator Charles Curtis of Kansas as "understanding better than anyone else what the Indians wanted."

Questioned as to what he meant by that Scott said he understood Mr. Sherman and Mr. Curtis had long been familiar with Indian affairs, and he thought they were the ones to be appealed to, notwithstanding it had been shown that both Mr. Sherman and Mr. Curtis had protested against the 10 per cent fee. They held it to be too high and unnecessary.

Conspicuous among the witnesses called to testify before the committee was Douglas V. Johnson, chief of 8,000 Chickasaw Indians. Johnson, together with 85 per cent of his tribe, signed the McMurray contracts. He said his people were impatient at the long delay of the government in selling their lands.

DREXEL BREAKS RECORD

American Aviator Reaches Height of 6,750 Feet at Lanark, Scotland.

Lanark, Scotland, Aug. 13.—It was officially announced that J. Armstrong Drexel, the American aviator, attained a world's altitude record by rising 6,750 feet.

His barograph will be submitted to the experts of the Kew observatory at London, who will determine the accuracy of the instruments.

Drexel's flight was the sensation of the aviation meet. Ascending at 7 o'clock in the evening, he shot up into a bank of clouds and disappeared from the gaze of the anxious crowd. He landed some two hours later near a farm house twelve miles from Lanark. Charleroi, Belgium, Aug. 13.—M. Lesnyn, an aviator, fell with his aeroplane from a height of 100 feet and received injuries that probably will prove fatal.

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Distinguished Visitors.

Hon. Lew Genung and son Clyde, constituting the law firm of Genung & Genung of Glenwood, Iowa, are in the city today, and of course gave the Journal a brief but pleasant call. The Messrs. Genung were called here to defend Lawrence Stull for an assault upon his sister, Miss Monroe a few weeks since. Lew Genung is well known all over the western part of Iowa and eastern Nebraska as an eminent lawyer and rock-ribbed Democratic orator. The Journal is proud to number Lew Genung among its best friends and we are always delighted to see him.

Several Conductors Suspended.

Six or seven conductors running on the Burlington in and out of Sioux City have been suspended. One or two of the men thus dropped are old time employees of the road. It is said the story forced from a ticket seller at Sioux City, after irregularities in his accounts had been discovered, implicated a number of conductors. In at least one instance and perhaps others it is claimed that tickets sold and collected were returned to the seller for sale again. The suspension of these men has caused a sensation in local railway circles.—State Journal.

LOST—A red calf near Bach's store on Lincoln avenue, weight about 400 pounds. Finder please take care of same and notify me and I will pay for trouble. William Gillispie, 6d-w-d Mynard, Neb.

Mrs. Furlong Slightly Improved.

Mrs. Furlong who has been at Wise Memorial hospital for some time past for treatment, is slightly improved. Her son Mark will go to Omaha Monday and bring Mrs. Furlong home, as she wishes to come very much. She has been taking baths daily, but so far the physician has not given her any medicine, and she thinks she can get along now at home.

H. R. Neitzel and Mr. J. Gohery of Murdock arrived this morning and transacted business in Plattsmouth. Mr. Neitzel remained to spend Sunday with his family at the Guthman home.

William Puls and son William of Maple Grove drove in from the farm this morning and visited Plattsmouth friends for a few hours today.

Miss Kate Russel Here.

Miss Kate Russell, a former Plattsmouth young lady, who has been conducting the kindergarten department of the Ames, Ia., public school during the past year, has been the guest of Mrs. Frank Morgan for a day or two, departed for Lincoln this morning to visit her sister, Mrs. Otto Mutz. Miss Russell has accepted a position for the coming year at Clayton, New Mexico, where she will take charge of the kindergarten and primary department of the schools at a handsome salary.

Falls Down Cellar.

From Saturday's Daily. Yesterday evening just at twilight Mrs. Charles Hartford in going down the cellar steps of her residence, made a misstep and went to the bottom of the stairs, where she brought up against the wall. Although she was quite badly shaken up and sustained minor bruises, she luckily escaped serious injury.

John Melsing, Jr., traded with the Plattsmouth merchants today.

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