

MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE DARK AGES

"Gnashing of Teeth" Merely Bible Hyperbole.

SCRIPTURES MISINTERPRETED

Pastor Russell Says the Bible Does Not Substantiate Horrible Teachings of Dark Ages—Classes the Spirit Mediums of Today With the Witches and Necromancers of the Past.



Philadelphia, Pa., June 16.—Pastor Russell delivered two discourses here today. In one he chose this text: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, and ye yourselves thrust out."—Luke xiii, 28.

Bible students in the past, resting under a terrible fear of an eternity of torture after death, were inclined to twist the statements of Scripture into supports for their misconceptions. We are now breaking loose from some of those horrible nightmares of the Dark Ages, finding that the Bible, rightly interpreted, does not substantiate them. The hobgoblins and demons of torture, cloven hoof, forked tail, malignant glance, pitchforks and tongues of flame came down to us, not from the inspired Word of God, but from the pens of misanthropic poets and the brushes of ambitious painters who revelled in the portrayal of blood-curdling scenes and endeavored to make them more awful than the tortures of the Inquisition chambers of their own day.

So far from describing Satan and his demon hosts as torturers of the dead, the Bible tells us plainly, that the dead are "asleep" and will know nothing of joy or sorrow until the awakening time in the dawning of the Messianic Kingdom, and that Satan and his demon hosts of fallen angels are not far off stoking fires, but near by us, "powers of the air." It tells us also that these seek to oppose the Divine Program and to ensnare our race by personating the dead; using as their channels deceived spirit mediums as they used witches, wizards and necromancers in the past.

Satanic Influence Near.

St. Peter, so far from believing that Satan is far off stoking fires, described him as a roaring, angry lion, going about amongst men seeking whom he might devour—deceive, involve in sin. St. Paul forewarns us that Satan and his agents are crafty and are to be expected to present themselves as angels of light—leaders in advanced truth. We are assured that this dreadful, injurious agency has been deceiving the whole world for centuries. The Divine promise is that Messiah's Kingdom shall bind or restrain Satan for a thousand years that he may deceive the people no more until Messiah shall deliver up the Kingdom to the Father.

The Scriptures specially forewarn us of great activity on the part of the evil spirits in the end of this Age, and intimate that they will have much to do with the great Time of world-wide Trouble which will precede the inauguration of Messiah's Kingdom. It is time for us to be on the lookout for those wonderful manifestations of diabolism which for a time will seem to make many of our poor race madly insane, brutal, inhuman, diabolical. This is the real danger from the demons—in the present life, and not in the future.

They will deceive and torture humanity to the limit of their permission, when they will be restrained by the King of Glory and the bright shining of the Sun of Righteousness, which will usher in the New Day of earth's blessing and restitution.

The words "weeping and gnashing of teeth" represent, not new conditions amongst men, but those which may be witnessed every day—sorrow, heartache, grievous disappointment; and this is the use of this expression in the Bible. We should dismiss all thought that the experiences mentioned will be after death and the result of tortures inflicted by demons.

Jews' Bitter Disappointment.

In our text the Lord graphically pictures the disappointment of the Jews when they shall find out how great was their mistake in the rejection of Jesus and His Message. They will find that the glorious opportunity offered to them of becoming members in the Bride of Christ was the highest favor that Divine mercy could offer them as the children of Abraham. They will become aware of their loss of the heavenly portion and also of the earthly portion of the Divine promise. They will then come to understand that the promise to Abraham dealt with two seeds, one heavenly, the other earthly, and that the faithful ones of past Ages, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the holy Prophets and other faithful ones of their nation, will be rewarded with the highest positions of honor in the earthly phase of Messiah's Kingdom, while they, who had the opportunity of entering the still higher, the spiritual phase of that Kingdom, failed because of un readiness of heart to receive the Redeemer. They will find that some

whom they esteemed as publicans and sinners and Gentiles, by accepting Christ and becoming His disciples, became heirs of the highest promise made to Abraham—became Abraham's spiritual Seed—members of the Messiah, of which Jesus is the Head and the Church His Body.

Alas, poor Jews! Our hearts may well go out to them in sympathy in their chagrin and disappointment when they shall learn the truth on the subject, when they shall learn that they have lost not only the heavenly glory but also the honorable place of being Messiah's earthly representatives. Most assuredly there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, and contrition of heart and penitence, we trust, toward God, which will bring them into the right condition to be amongst the first of humanity to be blessed under the New Order of things. Very soon, we believe, the blindness is to be turned from Israel—just as soon as the elect spiritual Seed of Abraham shall be completed. St. Paul tells us (Romans xi, 25-33).

Then favor will return to the natural seed of Abraham: "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy." Their eyes of understanding will open; mentally "they will look upon Him whom they have pierced." They will mourn for Him, and the Divine promise is that God will then pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication.

Other Similar Texts.

All Bible students will recall several other passages of very similar language to that of our text. But when we get the right focus upon them we perceive that they all belong to experiences in the present life, that none of them relate to incidents beyond the tomb. A greater care in the study of the Bible might have protected us from the thought that any of these references apply to the dead, because the Scriptures not only tell that they are sleeping and waiting for the morning, but they also particularly inform us that "the dead know not anything;" "their sons come to honor and they know it not, to dishonor and they perceive it not of them;" and that "there is neither work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave [sheol]"—whither all go.—Ecclesiastes ix, 5, 10; Job xiv, 21.

This expression, "weeping and gnashing of teeth," is found also in the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins. The context tells us that this parable applies in the end of this Gospel Age, at about the time for the second coming of Jesus—not as a sin-bearing Sacrificer, but as the King of Glory. His consecrated, saintly people are likened unto ten virgins—five wise and five foolish.

The parable does not relate to the world at all, but merely to the saints. They are all virgins, all pure, all justified, all sanctified ones. The difference between them is in respect to their wisdom or unwisdom. The wise saints of God in the end of this Age, guided by the Divine Word, will walk very circumspectly, very faithfully, searching the Scriptures in respect to all they believe and striving to conform themselves to the Divine will in all that they do and say.

Because of their watchfulness, alertness, devoutness and loyalty they are wise and will be in a special position of advantage and knowledge in respect to the things of the Harvest time of this Age. The Master, the Bridegroom, will lead these; and gradually, one by one, they shall go through the door of death into the marriage, experiencing the glorious change promised, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." They will complete the Bride Class, to which none can be added, because it is a foreordained and predestinated number. With the end of our Age the door to glory and immortality will close, never to open again, because there is to be but one Bride and her membership is limited by foreordination.

The Foolish Virgins.

The "foolish virgins" will miss their glorious opportunity by reason of unwisdom. They will be so overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches and the attempt to have the favor of the world as well as the favor of the Lord that it will hinder them from proper Bible study and from faithfulness in walking in the footsteps of Jesus. Because of this they are styled foolish, unworthy of God's highest favor—the divine nature.

The parable shows them as finally, in the very close of the Age, obtaining the light which they should have had sooner had they not been overcharged with earthly cares and ambitions. As soon as they obtain the light they realize the situation and ask for admission as members of the Bride of Christ, to which they were called; but the answer is that it is complete, that the Bridegroom can know only one Wife and cannot recognize them thus. Then to them will come weeping and gnashing of teeth, sorrow, disappointment, chagrin, that they have failed to obtain through their own carelessness this highest Prize, to which Divine mercy and love had invited them.

At that time will be great tribulation in the world, such as never was since there was a nation, and these "foolish virgins" will have their portion in it—with the hypocrites. The "time of trouble" will be specially upon the hypocritical or "tare" class of Christendom, which has pretended loyalty to God as His Church when in reality their hearts were far from Him. The "foolish virgins" are not hypocrites, but true saints; nevertheless, on account of not living fully up to their privileges, they will fail to gain the Prize and be given a portion in the great trouble time with the hypocrites.

This is the Master's own description of the matter. A little later on (Revelation vii) He tells us more on the subject, that only Bible students may fully appreciate and understand. He

tells us that after the completion of the Church, spiritual Israel, the 144,000, a great multitude will "come up through great tribulation and wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb." These will be honored with a place before the Throne, while the "elect," as the Bride, will be honored with Immanuel in His Throne.

This multitude will be granted palm branches, representing a *sin* victory, but they will never be granted the crowns of victory, which will belong only to the elect, "wise virgin" class, the Bride upon the Throne. The Bride class will be the Temple, composed of living stones; but the Great Company, the "foolish virgin" class, will not be stoned of that Temple, but will serve God in the Temple. An honorable place will thus be granted the "foolish virgins," who finally get the oil and finally cleanse their robes in the time of trouble, but never will they attain the portion of the Bride.

In Psalm xiv we have a description of the Church in glory, the Wise Virgin class. She is pictured as a Bride, all glorious within and clothed in raiment of gold and fine needlework. The Heavenly Bridegroom will present her faultless before His Father, the Great King; and then we read, "The virgins, her companions, shall follow her; they shall be brought into the presence of the King." How glad we are that in Divine providence their weeping and gnashing of teeth and sorrow and disappointment at losing a place in the Bride Class will eventually work out for them a contrition of heart and a demonstration of loyalty which God can reward with a blessing upon the Heavenly plane!

Waiting in Outer Darkness.

Another text dealing with "waiting and gnashing of teeth" deserves consideration here. It occurs in connection with the parable of the Wedding Garment. That parable pictures the closing time of this Age, when under Divine blessing God's most saintly people will be given greater light on His Word and be enabled thereby to more fully appreciate the lengths, breadths, heights and depths of His Love and its wonderful providences.

These consecrated ones are represented as being gathered into a great banquet hall, radiantly beautiful. In it they tarry, waiting to be ushered into the banquet proper, in an adjoining apartment. The light of these apartments is in the parable vividly contrasted with the darkness that prevails outside, which darkness represents the condition of the world and all of God's people who have not yet come into the light of "present truth."

The parable is given specially to show the necessity of the "wedding garment"—that none may enter into the marriage feast except he acknowledges and uses the "wedding garment." On such festival occasions in ancient times it was customary that all guests should be furnished with the host with garments of white which would cover their own garments, and for the time being, as his guests, this placed them all on the same footing, whatever their ordinary station in life. Thus we have pictured the justification which all God's people receive as a gift through the merit of their Redeemer. Being justified by faith the consecrated have not only peace with God, but they have access to this figurative "marriage supper."

The parable is laid in the end of this Age and points out that at this time an inspection of the Church may be expected. "When the king came in he beheld a man who had not on a wedding garment." The implication is that the man had put on the wedding garment, else he could not have gone in at all; and his appearing later on without a "wedding garment" implies that he had rejected the robe provided by his host.

Thus he represented a class of Christians in this our day who, after believing in the merit of Christ's sacrifice, and accepting it as the passport to favors and privileges, ultimately reject it and count it common or unimportant. The parable shows what is to be expected now, namely, that the Great King will command that such as ignore the merit of His sacrifice be cast into outer darkness.

Outer Darkness General.

But let us note carefully that the "outer darkness" is not something beyond death, but that it prevails everywhere, all around us. "Darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the heathen." The only ones who are in the light are the ones whom the Lord has specially received and specially enlightened and specially privileged because they wear the "wedding garment" of Christ's righteousness. The casting out of the one without the "wedding garment" into "outer darkness" therefore would mean merely that such a one, despite his struggles and desire to remain in the light, would by Divine providence be forced into the darkness common to the whole world and lose those special privileges which he had enjoyed as one of the children of the light and heirs of glory.

About the time that the faithful will be ushered into the marriage the great "time of trouble" will break upon the world, and all who are in darkness will have "weeping and gnashing of teeth" as they behold the collapse of those things upon which they have set their hearts and affections—the things of the present Order. Thank God, their weeping and gnashing of teeth may ultimately be turned into joy, because there is a silver lining to the dark cloud which is about to envelop the world! It will be the dark hour preceding the dawning of the New Dispensation and the blessing of all the families of the earth by Messiah and His Bride, to a place in which, by the grace of God, dear hearers, let us strive to make our calling and election sure.

BARGAIN WEEK!

Giving away Millinery—Hand-Made Hats for—

\$2.50, \$4.50, \$6.50

Light Summer Coats—Poplins and Silks. Also in blacks, fine embroidery, will be sold for—

\$5.00, \$7.00, \$9.00

Just received a lot of White Pique Skirts in different Patterns—worth \$3.00 to \$4.50, will be sold from—

\$2.19 Up to \$3.25

Jaunty New Styles of Tailored Suits—will be sold at

One-Third Off

from the regular selling prices!



Saturday morning we received a large line of

J. C. G. CORSETS

of fashionable type. During this week they will be sold from

45c TO \$3.00

Men's and Young Men's Suits

\$6.95, \$9.75, \$13.50, \$15.00 and \$18.00

Cloak and Suit Department!

In order not to carry over any of our Cloaks, Suits and Dresses, we decided to offer them to the public at a very big discount:

Ladies' Dresses, from— **98c Up**
Children's Dresses from— **48c Up**
Ladies' Wool Dress Skirts, worth from \$5 to \$12, will be sold from— **\$2.75 Up**

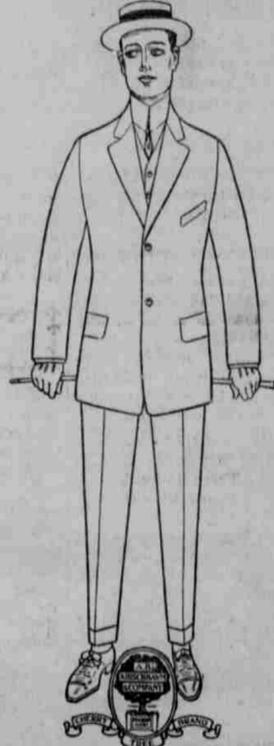
Saturday Only from 3 to 4 p. m. fine grade Calico for **3½ yd Cash!**

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SCHOOL TEACHERS SHOULD BE WELL PAID

If There Are Any Persons Who Should Be Better Paid It Is the School Teachers.

During the summer months, while the school teachers of the country are out of employment and watching anxiously for an opportunity to make sure of work for the coming winter, a general agitation seems starting for better wages for this class of workers. The demand is meeting with some opposition on the part of those whose duty it is to employ teachers for the youth of the country. Looked at from an impartial standpoint it seems that this unwillingness to pay better wages to the people who are devoting their time to teaching is a mistake. For it must be admitted that the teachers of today are one of the most poorly paid classes in the entire country. Statistics show that the average wage paid to teachers is under \$500 per year, and that the increase in

wages in the past few years has by no means kept pace with the increase in cost of living. Further it is shown that the annual cost per capita in this country for education is less than \$5.

It is decidedly the proper thing to laud the teacher and preacher as leaders and pioneers in the advance of civilization. Possibly the very acceptance of these two classes as pioneers is what makes everyone willing to see them struggle along on scarcely a living wage, averaging less than what is considered just for unskilled day labor and only a fractional part of what a bartender would receive. But at the present stage of civilization does it not seem reasonable to expect that these leaders be given more recognition and more substantial returns for their invaluable services?

The Journal is a friend of the teachers of Cass county, and were we a member of the next legislature we would introduce a boom in that body that would result in much better pay for the teachers of Nebraska.

The Journal office carries all kinds of typewriter supplies.

Submit to Examination.

In the case of Amelia Monroe vs. C. Lawrence Stull, the defendant obtained an order from the court Saturday requiring the plaintiff to undergo a medical examination at the hands of a board of three physicians, composed of Dr. J. S. Livingston, Dr. H. D. Gummis and one of two Omaha physicians on questions of hearing, seeing and nervous condition. The test is to be made Wednesday or Thursday of this week at the plaintiff's home, the expense of the examination to be defrayed by the defendant.

Mrs. Wiley Improving.

Mrs. William Wiley of Murray, who has been seriously ill since the death of her husband, is reported as improving right along and able to be about her home part of the time, which her many friends will be pleased to learn Mrs. George Parks of this city, who has been with her mother during her illness, expects to be able to return to her home in this city in a short time.

Mrs. William Wurga was a passenger to Omaha on the morning train today.