

ONLY ONE JUDGMENT.

REV. DR. TALMAGE DISCUSSES A CHIMERICAL EXPECTATION.

He Says There is No Reversal of Judgment in the Next World—The Verdict is Based Upon Our Earthly Lives—The Final Chance.

BROOKLYN, June 17.—Rev. Dr. Talmage, who is now on his round the world journey, has selected as the subject for his sermon through the press today "Another Chance," the text being taken from Ecclesiastes xi, 3, "If the tree fall toward the south or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth there it shall be."

There is a hovering hope in the minds of a vast multitude that there will be an opportunity in the next world to correct the mistakes of this; that if we do make complete shipwreck of our earthly life it will be on a shore, up which we may walk to a palace; that, as a defendant may lose his case in the circuit court and carry it up to the supreme court or court of chancery and get a reversal of judgment in his behalf, all the costs being thrown over on the other party, so, if we fail in the earthly trial, we may in the higher jurisdiction of eternity have the judgment of the lower court set aside, all the costs remitted, and we may be victorious defendants forever. My object in this sermon is to show that common sense as well as my text declares that such an expectation is chimerical. You say that the impatient man, having got into the next world and seeing the disaster, will, as a result of that disaster, turn, the pain the cause of his reformation. But you can find 10,000 instances in this world of men who have done wrong, and distress overtaken them suddenly. Did the distress heal them? No; they went right on.

"That man was flung of dissipation. "You must stop drinking," said the doctor, "and quit the fast life you are leading, or it will destroy you." The patient suffers paroxysm after paroxysm, but under skillful medical treatment he begins to sit up, begins to walk about the room, begins to go to business. And, lo, he goes back to the same grogshop for his morning dram, and his evening dram, and the drams between. Flat down again! Same doctor! Same physical anguish! Same medical warning! Now the illness is more protracted, the liver is more stubborn, the stomach more irritable, and the digestive organs are more rebellious. But after awhile he is out again, goes back to the same dramshops and goes the same round of sacrilege against his physical health.

Suffering Does Not Always Reform. He sees that his downward course is ruining his household; that his life is a perpetual perjury against his marriage vow; that that broken hearted woman is so unlike the rosyate young wife whom he married that her old schoolmates do not recognize her; that his sons are to be taunted for a lifetime by the father's drunkenness; that the daughters are to pass into life under the scarf of a disreputable ancestor. He is drinking up their happiness, their prospects for this life, and perhaps for the life to come. Sometimes an appreciation of what he is doing comes upon him. His nervous system is all a-tangle. From crown of head to sole of foot he is one aching, rasping, crucifying, damning torture. Where is he? In hell on earth. Does it reform him?

After awhile he has delirium tremens, with a whole jungle of hissing reptiles let out on his pillow, and his sermons horrify the neighbors as he dashes out of his bed, crying, "Take these things off me!" As he sits pale and convalescent the doctor says: "Now, I want to have a plain talk with you, my dear fellow. The next attack of this kind you have you will be beyond all medical skill, and you will die." He gets better and goes forth into the same round again. This time medicine takes no effect. Consultation of physicians agree in saying there is no hope. Death ends the scene.

That process of inebriation, warning and dissolution is going on within a stone's throw of you, going on in all the neighborhoods of Christendom. Pain does not correct. Suffering does not reform. What is true in one sense is true in all senses and will forever be so, and yet men are expecting in the next world purgatorial rejuvenation. Take up the printed reports of the prisons of the United States, and you will find that the vast majority of the incarcerated have been there before, some of them four, five, six times. With 1,000,000 instructions all working the other way in this world, people are expecting that distress in the next state will be salvatory. You cannot imagine any worse torture in any other world than that which some men have suffered here, and without any salutary consequence.

Prospects of Reform. Furthermore, the prospect of a reformation in the next world is more improbable than a reformation here. In this world the life started with innocence of infancy. In the case supposed the other life will open with all the accumulated bad habits of many years upon him. Surely it is easier to build a strong ship out of new timber than out of an old hulk that has been ground up in the breakers. If with innocence to start with in this life a man does not become godly, what prospect is there that in the next world, starting with sin, there would be a scrup evolute? Surely the sculptor has more prospect of making a fine statue out of a block of pure white Parian marble than out of an old black rock seamed and cracked with the storms of a half century. Surely upon a clean white sheet of paper it is easier to write a deed or a will than upon a sheet of paper all scribbled and blotched and torn from top to bottom. Yet men seem to think that, though the life that began here comparatively perfect turned out

badly, the next life will succeed, though it starts with a dead failure.

"But," says some one, "I think we ought to have a chance in the next life, because this life is so short it allows only small opportunity. We hardly have time to turn around between cradle and tomb, the wood of the one almost touching the marble of the other." But do you know what made the ancient deluge a necessity? It was the longevity of the antediluvians. They were worse in the second century of their lifetime than in the first hundred years, and still worse in the third century, and still worse all the way on to 700, 800 and 900 years, and the earth had to be washed and scrubbed and soaked and anchored clear out of sight for more than a month before it could be made fit for decent people to live in.

Longevity never cures impenitency. All the pictures of Time represent him with a scythe to cut, but I never saw any picture of Time with a case of medicines to heal. Seneca says that Nero for the first five years of his public life was set up for an example of clemency and kindness, but his path all the way descended until at 68 A. D. he became a suicide. If 800 years did not make antediluvians any better, but only made them worse, the ages of eternity could have no effect except prolongation of depravity.

Many Wrongs Do Not Make a Right. "But," says some one, "in the future state evil surroundings will be withdrawn and elevated influences substituted, and hence expurgation and sublimation and glorification." But the righteous, all their sins forgiven, have passed on into a beatific state, and consequently the unrighteous will be left alone. It cannot be expected that Dr. Duff, who exhausted himself in teaching Hinduism, who gave his life in the evangelization of China, and Adoniram Judson, who toiled for the redemption of Borneo, should be sent down to educate those who wasted all their earthly existence. Evangelistic and missionary efforts are ended. The entire kingdom of the morally bankrupt by themselves, where are the salvatory influences to come from? Can one speckled and bad apple in a barrel of diseased apples turn the other apples good? Can those who are themselves down help others up? Can those who have themselves failed in the business of the soul pay the debts of their spiritual insolvents? Can a million wrongs make one right?

Poneropolis was a city where King Philip of Thracia put all the bad people of his kingdom. If any man had opened a primary school at Poneropolis, I do not think the parents from other cities would have sent their children there. Instead of amendment in the other world, all the associations, now that the good are evolved, will be degenerating and down. You would not want to send a man to a cholera or yellow fever hospital for his health, and the great lazaretto of the next world, containing the diseased and plague struck, will be a poor place for moral recovery. If the surroundings in this world were crowded of temptation, the surroundings of the next world, after the righteous have passed up and on, will be a thousand per cent more crowded of temptation.

From Freshman to Senior. The Count of Chateaubriand made his little son sleep at night at the top of a castle turret, where the winds howled, and where specters were said to haunt the place, and while the mother and sisters almost died with fright the son tells us that the process gave him nerves that could not tremble and a courage that never faltered. But I don't think that towers of darkness and the spectral world swept by sirocco and euroclydon will ever fit one for the land of eternal sunshine. I wonder what is the curriculum of that college of inferno where, after proper preparation by the sins of this life, the candidate enters, passing on from freshman class of depravity to sophomore of abandonment, and from sophomore to junior, and from junior to senior, and day of graduation comes, and with diploma signed by satan, the president, and other professional demons, attesting that the candidate has been long enough under their drill, he passes up to enter heaven! Pandemonium a preparative course for heavenly admission! Ah, my friends, satan and his cohorts have fitted uncounted millions for ruin, but never fitted one soul for happiness!

Furthermore, it would not be safe for this world if men had another chance in the next. If it had been announced that, however wickedly a man might act in this world, he could fix it up all right in the next, society would be terribly demoralized, and the human race demolished in a few years. The fear that if we are bad and unforgiven here it will not be well for us in the next existence is the chief influence that keeps civilization from rushing back to barbarism, and semibarbarism from rushing into midnight savagery, and midnight savagery from extinction, for it is the astringent impression of all nations, Christian and heathen, that there is no future chance for those who have wasted this.

Multitudes of men who are kept within bounds would say: "Go to, now! Let me get all out of this life there is in it. Come, gluttony and inebriation and uncleanness and revenge and all sensuality, and wait upon me! My life may be somewhat shortened in this world by dissoluteness, but that will only make heavenly indulgence on a larger scale the sooner possible. I will overtake the saints at last and will enter the heavenly temple only a little later than those who behaved themselves here. I will on my way to heaven take a little wider excursion than those who were on earth plains, and I shall go to heaven via gehenna and via sheol." Another chance in the next world means free license and wild abandonment in this.

The Post Mortem. Suppose you were a party in an important case at law, and you knew from consultation with judges and attorneys that it would be tried twice, and the first trial would be of little importance,

but that the second would decide everything, for which trial would you make the most preparation, for which retain the ablest attorneys, for which be most anxious about the attendance of witnesses? You would put all the stress upon the second trial, all the anxiety, all the expenditure, saying, "The first is nothing; the last is everything." Give the race assurance of a second and more important trial in the subsequent life, and all the preparation for eternity would be "post mortem," post funeral, post sepulchral, and the world with one jerk be pitched off into impiety and godlessness.

Furthermore, let me ask why a chance should be given in the next world if we have refused innumerable chances in this? Suppose you give a banquet, and you invite a vast number of friends, but one man declines to come or treats your invitation with indifference. You in the course of 20 years give 20 banquets, and the same man is invited to them all and treats them all in the same obnoxious way. After awhile you remove to another house, larger and better, and you again invite your friends, but send no invitation to the man who declined or neglected the other invitations. Are you to blame? Has he a right to expect to be invited after all the indignities he has done you? God in this world has invited us all to the banquet of his grace. He invited us by his providence and his spirit 365 days of every year since we knew our right hand from our left. If we declined it every time or treated the invitation with indifference and gave 20 or 40 or 50 years of indignity on our part toward the banquet, and at last he spreads the banquet in a more luxurious and kingly place, amid the heavenly gardens, have we a right to expect him to invite us again, and have we a right to blame him if he does not invite us?

Only One Offer. If 12 gates of salvation stood open 20 years or 50 years for our admission, and at the end of that time they are closed, can we complain of it and say: "These gates ought to be open again. Give us another chance?" If the steamer is to sail for Hamburg, and we want to get to Germany by that line, and we read in every evening and every morning newspaper that it will sail on a certain day, for two weeks we have that advertisement before our eyes, and then we go down to the docks 15 minutes after it has shoved off into the stream and say: "Come back! Give me another chance! It is not fair to treat me in this way! Swing up to the dock again and throw out planks and let me come on board!" Such behavior would invite arrest as a madman.

And if, after the gospel ship has lain at anchor before our eyes for years and years, and all the benign voices of earth and heaven have urged us to get on board, as she might sail away at any moment, and after awhile she sails without us, is it common sense to expect her to come back? You might as well go out on the highlands at Navasink and call to the Majestic after she has been three days out and expect her to return as to call back an opportunity for heaven when it once has sped away. All heaven offered us as a gratuity, and for a lifetime we refuse to take it, and then rush on the bosses of Jehovah's buckler demanding another chance. There ought to be, there can be, there will be, no such thing as posthumous opportunity. Thus our common sense agrees with my text, "If the tree fall toward the south or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth there it shall be."

You see that this idea lifts this world up from an unimportant way station to a platform of stupendous issues and makes all eternity whirl around this hour. But one trial for which all the preparation must be made in this world or never made at all. That piles up all the emphases and all the climaxes and all the destinies into life here. No other chance! Oh, how that augments the value and the importance of this chance! Alexander with his army used to surround a city and then would lift a great light in token to the people that if they surrendered before that light went out all would be well, but if once the light went out then the battering rams would swing against the wall, and demolition and disaster would follow. Well, all we need do for our present and everlasting safety is to make surrender to Christ, the king and conqueror—surrender of our hearts, surrender of our lives, surrender of everything. And he keeps a great light burning, light of gospel invitation, light kindled with the wood of the cross and flaming up against the dark night of our sin and sorrow. Surrender while that great light continues to burn, for after it goes out there will be no other opportunity of making peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Talk of another chance! Why, this is a supernatural chance!

No Chance in the Next World. In the time of Edward VI, at the battle of Musselburg, a private soldier, seeing that the Earl of Huntley had lost his helmet, took off his own helmet and put it upon the head of the earl, and the head of the private soldier uncovered he was soon slain, while his commander rode safely out of the battle. But in our case, instead of a private soldier offering helmet to an earl, it is a king putting his crown upon an unworthy subject, the king dying that we might live. Tell it to all points of the compass. Tell it to night and day. Tell it to all earth and heaven. Tell it to all centuries, all ages, all millenniums, that we have such a magnificent chance in this world that we need no other chance in the next.

I am in the burnished judgment hall of the last day. A great white throne is lifted, but the judge has not yet taken it. While we are waiting for his arrival I hear immortal spirits in conversation. "What are you waiting here for?" says a soul that went up from Madagascar to a soul that ascended from America. The latter says, "I came from America, where 40 years I heard the gospel preached and Bible read, and from the prayer that I learned

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CITY WARRANTS. Notices is hereby given that I have in my hands, funds applicable to the payment of all warrants of the city of Salem, drawn on the "general fund," and "endorsed" before April 21st, 1894. Also warrants numbered 456, 457, 458 and 459, drawn on the "building fund." Interest will cease on said warrants from the date of this notice. E. J. SWAFFORD, City Treasurer. Salem, May 31, '94.

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