

# PEOPLE'S PULPIT...



Sermon by CHARLES T. RUSSELL, Pastor Brooklyn Tabernacle.

## Sin's Small Beginnings

Suggestions—Craving—Desire—Yielding—Absorption—Destruction.

Sandy, O., Aug. 15.—"Man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1, 14, 15).

In proportion to our intelligence we all know that sin abounds in the world; and more than this, that there are tendencies toward sin in our own flesh. The Scriptural declaration is, "I was born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51, 5). The explanation of these conditions is found only in the Bible, which tells us that the beginning of sin was in Eden, and that its painful influence has descended from parent to child until now, and that there was but one complete remedy for it, which is beyond our power, but provided for us by our Creator through his glorious Son, who redeemed us.

### Doctrines of Devils.

The Bible is God's message to all those who are desirous of learning the Divine standard and choosing and fighting a good fight against the wrong, against sin wherever found; but especially against sin and weakness toward sin in ourselves. The more truly we discern the true philosophies for sin and the Divine remedy, the better we are prepared to resist it—forewarned we are forearmed.

However it may be explained, the fact remains that the world of mankind, heathen and civilized, realizing sin, feels conscience-stricken and anticipates punishment of some kind for violation of recognized laws and principles of our being. Ignorance, superstition, mental unbalance and theory, supported by priestcraft, have led mankind, heathen and civilized, into a fearful and eternal torture as a punishment for sin. This the Apostle calls, "Doctrines of demons" (I Timothy 4, 1). And no doubt the demons were responsible in some measure for the deduction of this doctrine of eternal torment; because fear is one of the most powerful influences they can bring to bear upon fallen humanity as they seek to captivate them to sin. Those who have had much to do with Spiritism (thinking that they were communicating with their dead friends, but really fellowshiping with fallen angels, called demons in the Scriptures), tell us that at the beginning these "lying spirits" gained control of their wills by telling them that they should pray much, even while presenting to them alluring, sinful suggestions (I Timothy 4, 3). As a later step they tell them that everything is glorious and everybody happy "in the spirit land," and that sins of the present life are unimportant matters. Later on they prick their subjects' conscience and work upon their fears and tell them that their case is hopeless and that they will soon have them fully in their power and torment them forever. With despair come utter abandonment and a willingness to treat with the "evil spirits." This is sometimes followed by obsession and not infrequently reason is entirely dethroned and the victim becomes an inmate of an asylum.

The safeguard against all of these delusions and misrepresentations is found in a correct understanding of God's Word. In proportion as His teaching is understood and followed the mind is relieved of those "doctrines of demons" and given a rational understanding of what sin is and of what its real penalty consists. Obedience to His instructions brings proportionate measures of harmony with God and righteousness and results in love, joy, peace and a holy spirit or disposition.

"The Wages of Sin is Death." Many experience great difficulty in ridding their minds of the "doctrines of demons"—that the wages of sin is eternal torment. They find it difficult to believe the Truth on the subject, which the Scriptures present, namely, that "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6, 23). God's proposition is that all sinners against His just laws, after full opportunity, shall be "utterly destroyed" (Thessalonians 1, 9; Acts 17, 23). The power of eternal life resides in God, and He assures us that He will not give it to any except those who come into harmony with Him. Eternal life has not been thrust upon our race. It is entirely contrary to the Scriptures to assert that man must live somewhere to all eternity, either in joy or anguish. The Scriptures assure us to the contrary of this—"All the wicked will be destroyed."

Our Lord declares that God is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. He who alone has the power of eternal life has made no provision whereby sinners can obtain it and thus injure themselves and discredit the Divine government to all eternity. The gift of God is eternal life, and that gift will be bestowed only upon those who demonstrate a heart desire in harmony with God and acceptance of His provisions for their recovery from

sin and death through his Appointed Way—Jesus Christ the Lighteous. Thus we read, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but THE WRATH OF GOD ABIDETH ON HIM" (John 3, 36).

### Our Text Illustrated.

The experience of our first parents well illustrates the lesson of our text. Mother Eve's desire for knowledge should have confined itself to the Divine limitations; but she permitted it to wander disloyally. Evidently she turned over in her mind how wonderful must be the wisdom of God, and how she would like to possess as much as the serpent suggested she might have, if she would but disobey God and eat the forbidden fruit. We can imagine that she had qualms of conscience—that she hesitated to disobey. But to even stop to consider the pleasures, the advantages, the desirability of transgression was to leave her mind open to a fresh assault. The serpent's next move was to suggest to her a reason why her Creator had forbidden the eating of the fruit, namely, that God knew that this would make them wise as himself, and that he did not wish for equals in knowledge, but desired to keep them in a condition of mental slavery through ignorance. Such a suggestion should have been spurned by Eve, and was, no doubt, rejected at first. No doubt she brought forth arguments to prove the merciful kindness and generosity of the Creator and that such an evil, selfish and ignominious spirit as the serpent suggested could not possibly belong to her Creator. But the wrong was in giving the least countenance to these suggestions of disobedience. They should have been promptly set aside. Stopping to expostulate or reason is merely opening the door for further beguilement. In the language of our text, she was "drawn away by her own desire and was enticed;" then, when desire had conceived, the sinful act of eating the forbidden fruit resulted.

How does desire conceive? We answer, The mind entertains the desire, warms it, vitalizes it, reflects upon what advantages or pleasures would result; enters into and enjoys those forbidden pleasures mentally. Thus Mother Eve reflected that no doubt the forbidden fruit was specially delicious to the palate, luscious; more than this, that the enlightenment of mind would bring to her vistas of thought far beyond anything she and Adam had ever previously imagined. Thus her desire for knowledge conceived and gradually, perhaps in moments, perhaps in hours, perhaps in days, developed more and more the thought of the joys and pleasures to result from the act of disobedience—until practically the whole of life was absorbed in this one desire, and everything else of her glorious and proper blessings on every hand was practically forgotten and ignored. Finally the irresistible moment came. She took the fruit. She ate it; sin was born, and the wage of death would follow in due course.

The main thing to be noticed is that the admission of evil desire into our hearts, into our wills, is the beginning of sin—the conception of sin. After the conception it is only a matter of time until it shall be born, unless in some manner that sinful desire is quenched, be killed. Even then it will be with serious consequences that the wrongly conceived sin will be gotten rid of. The lesson is, as the Apostle suggests in the text, the keeping of our hearts, our minds, so the desires shall not conceive therein. This means a loyalty to God and to the truth and to righteousness, about which the world in general knows little. It means that many kinds of desires and ambitions may be begotten in the heart and lead on to one kind or another kind of sinful development. Let us then hearken to the Lord, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4, 23).

Eternal life or eternal death is the issue, not eternal happiness or eternal misery. True, under God's provision, all who get eternal life will thereby get eternal happiness; but all who fail to get the eternal life or happiness in God's provision will get eternal death, the Second Death, utter extinction. As St. Peter declares, they shall be "as brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed" (II Peter 2, 12). And St. Paul says, "They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord"—not with everlasting torment (II Thessalonians 1, 9).

Divine Forgiveness of Sin. We have seen how sin entered, and that its wage or penalty of Divine decree is death—extinction. And we have seen that mental, moral and physical imperfections are merely elements of our dying process. If this were all that the Bible had to tell us, it would be valueless to us, for why philosophize over a fact if it could not in any sense or degree be avoided? If there were no hope, as the Apostle suggests, we might as well eat, drink and be merry and make no attempt specially to strive against sin, and thus to bring ourselves into conflict with the weaknesses of our own natures and our evil environment. But,

as the Scriptures declare, "There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared" (Psalm 136, 1). The very fact that God has provided the forgiveness and made possible an escape from the original death sentence and return to his favor—eternal life—makes life worth living and puts a new ambition, a new hope, a new energy into all those who come to an understanding of it.

If we were dealing with fallen men like ourselves instead of with God, we might say that some men would change their word and others would not. But when we think of the unchangeable God we feel convinced that the sentence he once pronounced must stand. The great Supreme Judge of the Universe, in the findings of his own court, will not retract his just sentence, "Dying, thou shalt die." Hence we would not be inclined to expect eternal life from him who declares against us as a race that "the wages of sin is death."

That philosophy once seen is convincing to the last degree. Briefly stated, it is that "No one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," because all except the first man were sinners by heredity (Romans 5, 12). In other words, the sentence of death was pronounced only against Father Adam. Everybody else who dies merely shares in his sentence under the natural laws of heredity. Then God condescendingly explains to us the philosophy of how that one man's sins being met, the merit can be made applicable to all of his posterity, so that the death of one righteous man could satisfy the claims of justice against the race as a whole.

### The Wonderful Story.

But we inquire, where could the one man be found who would be willing to surrender his own life for that of Adam and his race? And if such a generous man could be found how could he, as a member of the condemned race, be acceptable to justice as man's Ransom Price? The Scriptures again explain that no such man could be found amongst Adam's race, and that therefore God so loved the world that he gave his Son to be our Redeemer. Then the query comes, Would it be just for God to give his Son? And the answer is Scripturally given, that He set before his Son a great joy, a high reward, and that the Son, fully in accord with his Father, delighted to do his will—"For the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame" (Hebrews 12, 2). We are assured that the reward for this great transaction is a great one. The Apostle, after describing how our Lord, our Redeemer, first left the glory of the heavenly estate and humbled himself to take the human nature and was then found obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, then adds, "Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2, 9-13).

### "Ye Must Be Born Again."

As we were all born in sin as the children of Adam, all must be born again if they would become the children of God. Many have failed to notice the Scriptural teaching that out of our race God intends to produce two families of sons on different planes of being. The one class, begotten and born of the spirit, will be resurrected, be born spirit beings, like unto the angels. The other class, begotten again to human conditions, will experience resurrection (Acts 13, 19-21) factors, by which they will be recovered from sin and death conditions and ultimately come to human perfection and righteousness. These will not be like unto the angels, but be like unto Adam in his sinless condition before the condemnation. The curse will be removed not only from these, but also from their earthly home, which will then become as Eden, the garden of the Lord—Paradise restored. Our Lord pointed out the time of the world's regeneration, in full harmony with St. Peter's words above cited, saying to his disciples, "In the regeneration ye that have followed me shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19, 28). The regeneration time, or resurrection time, has not yet come; hence the apostles are not upon the thrones of Israel; but instead, the twelve tribes are still under the Gentile domination. And Gentile domination, in Scriptural language, means the times in which Satan is the Prince of this world, "Who now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience."

The apostles are not to sit upon the twelve thrones of Israel until the Second Coming of our Lord and the binding of Satan and establishing of the Kingdom; hence the time of Resurrection, or times of Regeneration, for mankind are yet future. When that happy day shall have fully dawned it will mean a sweet release of the world from the power of sin and death, to which all but the saintly few are now in slavery. In the Jewish order of reckoning time, night came first and day afterward. Thus the world has already been passing through a night time of darkness, ignorance, superstition and sorrow, the results of sin and death. But the redeeming merits of Jesus have provided the Millennium Day, which will soon be ushered in and chase away forever the shadows of sin and death. No wonder the poet sang,

"O, hail happy day  
That speaks all sorrows ending!"  
The Psalmist refers to the same glorious day, saying, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

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## DIED WITH PICTURES OF FRIENDS AROUND HIM

Fresno, Cal., Aug. 20.—Mark A. Austin disrobed himself in his room in George Babcock's residence this morning at about 10 o'clock, sat on the edge of the bed, put his foot on the trigger of a double-barrel shotgun and blew his heart to pieces.

Prior to the awful act he had gone to the trouble of arranging all of the photographs of his friends in a circle before him, then addressed several notes and letters to friends and to the public, in none of which he assigned any cause for the suicide.

He was a member of the Masonic lodge of this city and for several years had been one of the trusted employes of Holland & Holland's grocery store, who attribute his suicide to ill health.

## Proposals for Furnishing Supplies for the Oregon School for Deaf Mutes.

Proposals for furnishing supplies to the Oregon School for Deaf Mutes, for the term ending December 31, 1909, will be received at the office of the superintendent till Wednesday noon, September 1.

All bids must be signed by bidder, state unit price, and be extended to reject any or all bids in whole or in part. Quality being equal, preference will be given goods of Oregon manufacture:

- 500 pounds small white beans.
  - 40 dozen canned corn.
  - 15 dozen gallons tomatoes.
  - 3000 pounds dry granulated sugar, cane.
  - 30 barrels flour.
  - 2 1/2 tons bran.
  - 8 dozen oysters (sample.)
  - 100 pounds dried peaches.
  - 300 pounds Italian prunes in 50-pound boxes.
  - 50 gallons vinegar.
  - 1000 pounds salt, F. L. in 100-pound sacks.
  - 3 dozen Zan Brothers' brooms, No. 1.
  - 7 cases Pyramid washing powder.
  - 7 cases Ivory, large cakes.
  - 8 cases Silver gloves starch.
  - 80 pounds baking powder, Schilling's.
  - 5 cases toilet paper.
  - 200 pounds coffee.
  - 200 pounds Oregon full cream cheese.
  - 600 pounds cream rolled oats.
- For blank forms and additional complete list of minor groceries, meats and lard, hardware and school room supplies, apply to  
E. S. TILLINGHAST,  
Superintendent.  
8-21-e. o. d. Sept 1.

### Soldier Barks Death Plot.

It seemed to J. A. Stone, a civil war veteran, of Kemp, Tex., that a plot existed between a desperate lung trouble and the grave to cause his death. "I contracted a stubborn cold," he writes, "that developed a cough that stuck to me in spite of all remedies for years. My weight ran down to 130 pounds. Then I began to use Dr. King's New Discovery, which restored my health completely. I now weigh 178 pounds." For severe colds, obstinate coughs, hemorrhages, asthma and to prevent pneumonia it's unrivaled. 50c and \$1 Trial bottle free. Guaranteed by J. C. Perry.

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