

# PEOPLE'S PULPIT...



Sermon by CHARLES T. RUSSELL, Pastor Brooklyn Tabernacle.

## THE TWO SALVATIONS

"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii, 16).

Tampa, Fla., Feb. 20.—Pastor C. T. Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle preached twice here today in our largest auditorium to the "Bible Students' Convention." The large audience seemed deeply interested. He said:—

Some apply the first text only and think of the Divine Program as being merely an endeavor to rescue mankind from sin and death to righteousness and eternal life in the present time. Such as hold this view are much confused, because it must be acknowledged that comparatively little has been done, or is now being done, for man's uplift. After six thousand years it is still true that "The whole world lieth in the Wicked One;" "Darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the heathen." In order to have any confidence at all in this theory those who hold it are obliged to greatly lower their standards. They are forced to hope that God will admit millions of unfit people, crude, rude, ignorant and wicked to eternal life and happiness, or perchance provide for them Purgatorial experiences, to make them fit, righteous and acceptable for life eternal. As a whole, Christian people are greatly bewildered. The tendency of their bewilderment is toward doubt, skepticism, atheism.

The other view briefly stated is that God never intended the salvation of the world, but merely the salvation of the Church, elect according to the foreknowledge of God through sanctification of the Spirit and belief in the Truth. Those who hold this theory have great confusion also, because it seems incomprehensible that God would make no provision for "thousands of millions" of Adam's race, but arrange for them to be born in sin, shapen in iniquity, and to go down to the tomb (or worse) without a clear knowledge of God and his purposes and will respecting them.

As we have already frequently set forth, both of the described theories are erroneous. The Scriptures set forth two salvations, entirely separate and distinct. They are different as respects time, in that the one "salvation began to be spoken by our Lord" at his First Advent, and began to be applicable to his Church at Pentecost, and will wholly cease at his Second Coming in the end of this Age. The other salvation neither applied before our Lord's First Advent nor during this Gospel Age, but will apply to all mankind, except the Church, during the Millennium—the thousand years of the reign of Christ and the Church, specially designed for the blessing of the world and its uplifting out of sin and death conditions.

These two salvations are distinctly different as to kind, as well as respects their plan of operation. The salvation of the Church during this Gospel Age—since Pentecost—means not only a deliverance from sin and death conditions to eternal life, but provides that the eternal life will be on the heavenly or spiritual plane and not on the earthly or human plane of existence. Thus the Apostle declares that our "inheritance is incorruptible and undefiled and fadeth not away and is reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (I Peter i, 4, 5). Our Lord also told that in the resurrection we shall be like unto the angels. The Apostle also declares that ultimately we shall be partakers of the divine nature and like our Lord and Redeemer.

Hence, all who participate in this salvation of this Gospel Age are Scripturally spoken of as New Creatures in Christ Jesus, whose "citizenship is in heaven." These are assured that at the Lord's Second Coming they will constitute the First Resurrection class. They are guaranteed that only the blessed and holy will have part therein, and that all participating in that First Resurrection will be Royal Priests unto God and unto Christ, and reign with him a thousand years (Revelation xx, 6). They are assured that the transformation of mind which they now experience through the begetting of the holy Spirit will, in their resurrection, result in a complete transformation, providing them with spirit bodies. Thus it is written of their resurrection, "It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power; it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory; it is sown an animal body; it is raised a spiritual body" (I Corinthians xv, 42-44). Of those who will share in the Church's salvation the Apostle says, "We shall not all sleep, but must all be changed," because "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God" (I Corinthians xv, 50, 51).

The world's salvation which will follow will be wholly different from this. It will not include a change of nature from earthly to spirit nature. It will mean a rescue from sin and death to the earthly perfection of the original man, in the image and likeness of his Creator, and surrounded by every necessary blessing for his comfort. Human perfection and the Eden home were lost through disobedience to God. The Divine arrangement is that the merit of our Lord's obedience unto death, when ultimately applied for mankind, shall fully cancel the death sentence upon him. More and better than this, God has prom-

ised that the same Sin-Offering shall seal a New Covenant between himself and mankind. The blessings of that New Covenant arrangement will then immediately begin. The great Redeemer will thenceforth be the great Mediator of that New Covenant. The whole world of mankind will be fully under his supervision and government for their blessing, their correction in righteousness, their uplifting out of sin and death conditions—back, back, back, to all that was lost in Eden. All of this was the original design of the Great Creator. All of this will be outworked through the Great Redeemer. All of this was secured or surety by his death, finished at Calvary (Hebrews vii, 22).

St. Peter, pointing down to that glorious time of the world's blessing, calls it "times of refreshing and times of restitution." He tells us that all the holy prophets described the blessings of those restitution times—the thousand years, the Millennium (Acts ii, 19-21). When once we get the eyes of our understanding opened, we find the Apostle's words thoroughly corroborated by the Divine records, which describe the wonderful blessings that are to come when the earth shall yield her increase. Then Paradise Lost shall be Paradise Regained. Then God will make his earthly footstool glorious. Then the blessing of the Lord shall make rich and he will add no sorrow therewith. Then streams shall break forth in the desert and the wilderness and solitary places shall be glad. But most glorious will be the change in humanity. The Lord promises to turn to the people a "pure message"—instead of the contradiction of creeds of heathenism and Churchianity. He promises that Satan shall be bound for that thousand years, that he may deceive the nations no more. He promises that then all the "blinded eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped" (Isaiah xxxv, 5; II Corinthians iv, 4).

### Two Salvations—One Savior.

Both of these salvations, according to the Bible, result from the death of Jesus our Redeemer, who died in obedience to the Divine will, "Died, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" (I Peter iii, 18). The Scriptures clearly show not only the two salvations, but also two parts of the Redeemer's work, distinctly separating his work for the Church from his work for the world. In his death there was a Divine general provision for the sins of the whole world and a special provision for the sins of the Church. The two thoughts are frequently brought out in the Scriptures. One text distinctly declares, "He is the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins [the Church's sins], and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." His death constituted the satisfaction price. The Redeemer applied that merit for the Church's sins, "for us," long ago, eighteen centuries before we were born. Only when we became believers and entered into a Covenant of sacrifice did we obtain our share in the merit of that great sacrifice. The world has not yet received its share of that promised blessing, but the operation of the Divine Plan is sure and will bring it to them "in due time," as St. Paul declares (I Timothy ii, 6).

The drawing and calling of the Church has not been along the lines of human perfection, for all are sinners and none righteous or perfect. And many of those drawn of the Lord were by nature much more fallen and depraved than some who give no evidence of the work of grace in their hearts. The Lord's calling and drawing seem to be along the lines of justice, love of righteousness, faith, humility and obedience. These qualities will all belong to the perfect man. But all have lost them in varying degrees. Such as respond to the Lord's call now are accepted as being in the right heart attitude which, if they had perfect bodies, would constitute them perfect men. In other words, they have qualities of heart which, if brought to a knowledge of the Truth, would prove some of them to be pure in heart and such as the Lord would desire should have eternal life and all of his favors. But more are called and drawn by God's providences and the preaching of his message than he designs to save in the present salvation. He is choosing a very select class for a very special purpose and therefore makes the terms and conditions of their salvation extremely difficult. As a consequence we read, "Many are called, but few chosen"—under this "high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

### Terms of Salvation Differ.

Of course, these different salvations imply different terms or conditions. God's requirement of Adam, that he might continue to live forever and everlastingly enjoy Divine favor, his Eden Home, etc., was obedience to reasonable, just requirements. It was his violation of the Divine Law that brought upon him the sentence of death—"Dying thou shalt die"—with all that this has implied to him and his posterity of mental, moral and physical decline, weakness, death. The

requirement of God for the world of mankind during the Millennial Age will similarly be—obedience to God's just, reasonable regulations, laws. Whoever then will render obedience may with proportionate rapidity go up on the highway of holiness toward perfection at its end. Whoever refuses obedience to the extent of his ability will fail to make progress and ultimately die the Second Death, from which there will be no redemption and no resurrection.

Such obedience as will be required of mankind in the great Mediator's Kingdom will include their co-operation in the resistance of their own fallen weaknesses. It will include the exercise of patience and kindness towards their fellow-creatures, fellow-sufferers. The Divine Law of love to God with all the heart, mind, soul, strength and for the neighbor as for one's self they must learn fully. As they will realize their own blemishes and strive to overcome them and ask, not the Father, but the Mediator for forgiveness, they will be obliged to follow the Divine rule of exercising towards others similar mercy and forgiveness to that which they desire for themselves. But they will not be required to enter into the covenant of self-sacrifice, self-denial, etc. All the blessings of God on the earthly plane will be for them fully and freely to use and enjoy, in harmony with the Divine regulation.

The conditions governing the salvation of the Church are wholly different from those which will appertain to the world. The Church is called out of the world under a Divine invitation to suffer with Christ in the present life and during this Gospel Age and then to reign with Christ during the Millennial Age, participating in his Mediatorial Kingdom for the blessing, uplifting, salvation of the world. It is not in vain, therefore, that our Lord and the apostles, in setting forth the call of the Church during this Age, specified particularly and frequently the necessity for all who would share in this salvation to participate with the Redeemer in his suffering, in "his death," and consequently participate in "his resurrection" and in his reign of glory. Hark to the words, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life;" "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my Throne;" "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Luke xiv, 27). Let us remember our Lord's words to the disciples James and John, respecting a place in his Millennial Throne. He intimated that the getting to the Throne at all, in any place, would imply great humility and self-sacrifice. He asked the disciples, "Are ye able (willing) to drink of the cup that I shall drink of and to be baptized with the baptism (into death) that I am baptized with?" (Mark x, 38). Hark again: This cup of which he tells us we must drink, if we would sit in his Throne, is his communion cup. It is offered, not to the world, but to his consecrated followers. It is not another cup, but "My Cup." The invitation was, "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Drink ye all of it" (Matthew xxvi, 28, 27). It must all be drunk before the many, the world, can get their share of the intended blessing through the New Covenant, which this blood seals. And only the disciples of Christ, only those who desire to walk in his steps, are invited to drink of that cup. All of them are so invited and they will drink all of it. None of it will be left for the world during the Millennial Age to drink. It is a special privilege to drink of this cup. With the drinking of it goes the special blessing of the special salvation of this Gospel Age. Except we eat of his flesh (appropriate the merit of his sacrifice), and unless we drink his blood (join in sacrifice with him), we have no life in us—inherent life, immortality.

So far as our hearts and minds are concerned at the time of our consecration they must be fully given up to the Lord ere he will accept them. We could be no more fully consecrated if we had absolutely perfect bodies and were absolutely free from all the entailment of Adam's condemnation. But God's requirement is that no sacrifice may come upon his altar, except such as is without spot or blemish. Hence he could not accept our offering, our consecration, even though it were as completely and fully made as was our dear Redeemer's. Hence his first provision was that the righteousness of Christ should be imputed to us on account of our faith and obedience, in order to permit us to offer sacrifices holy and acceptable to God (Malachi iii, 3; Romans xii, 1).

This view of our participation in the Redeemer's merit separately and apart from the world's participation in it—by faith and imputation of merit and not actually—the Bible declares to be a "mystery," which yet many are able to discern—only the spiritually-minded—only the spirit-begotten. Those who can see and hear and understand the terms and conditions of this great salvation of this Gospel Age are specially blessed—"Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear" (Matthew xiii, 16). To see, to hear, to understand, that glory, honor, immortality, eternal life on the spirit plane, are the rewards of a few years of self-denial and self-sacrifice, is to hear of a pearl of great price, of which few know. And to know of that pearl and not to be willing to sell all that we have to obtain it would demonstrate to the Father our unworthiness of life on this high plane. We exhort so many as see and hear and appreciate, in the words of the Apostle, "Let us make our calling and election sure" by a full and hearty compliance with the gracious high calling of which we have learned and which our hearts have accepted (I Peter i, 10).

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