

FLIES IN THE OINTMENT
CHANGE THE ODOR THEREOF

Spurious Additions to the Word of God Condemned.



Cleveland, O., Nov. 20.—The Wise Man declared that a fly in the precious ointment would cause it to stink. We apply this suggestion to the Word of God, the precious ointment which God has supplied. Certain flies (spurious additions) crept into it during the Dark Ages, which are now causing a loathing and repudiation on the part of many of the best and wisest people in the world. All will admit that it is sinful to tamper with the Word of God—to either add to or take from it or to twist or pervert its meaning. Why is it, then, that ministers of the Gospel, who know that certain passages of the Scriptures are not to be found in the older manuscripts, fail to show to the people the truth on this subject? And if these ministers are not fully informed, whose fault is that? Would it not be preferable that they should absent themselves from some of the fairs and festivals and social functions, in order to inform themselves?

On what pretext are the clergy a specially privileged class, except for the purpose of giving their flocks reliable information along religious lines? And what is their commission from the Lord, except that they "should feed the flock of God, which he purchased with the blood of his own dear Son?" If the flock have been feeding upon certain Scriptures supposed to be genuine, and if they have been made sick thereby, and if their shepherds now know that these Scriptures are not a part of the Divinely inspired Word, why should not God's people be informed of the facts and be stopped from eating poisonous elements introduced by the Adversary?

Poison in Our Bibles.
The more others are silent, the more we must speak. We cannot see God sheep spiritually sick without warning them respecting their spiritual food. Not only have we received many misinterpretations of the parables and symbols of the Bible, but into our Bibles themselves certain false statements have been injected—long centuries ago. All well-informed ministers of the Gospel know that our New Testament was not translated from the writings of the Apostles, but from copies thereof. These, copied over and over again, no matter how carefully, were liable to errors. And in addition, as we might expect, occasionally, a bold transcriber would add a few words to make the record conform to the better to his conception of what it ought to be. This went on for centuries before the art of printing came into use.

The New Testament was translated from the Greek into the Latin language, and was known as the Vulgate. From that Latin translation sprang our various English translations—the Douay or Catholic edition, published in 1609, A. D., and the King James Bible, or Common Version, published in 1611 A. D. The latter was merely a revised translation, to assist in which revision other previous translations were used, and we are assured that the text was diligently compared with the Greek text. But until lately there were no ancient Greek manuscripts with which to compare it. The Greek manuscripts with which it was compared numbered only eight, none of which dated earlier than the Tenth Century. Today, however, we have three very old Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, namely, the Alexandrian MS., the Vatican MS., and the Sinaitic MS. Of these, the Vatican MS. was the first to come to the attention of modern scholarship. It is in the Vatican Library, appearing on its catalogue as far back as 1475 A. D., which manuscript scholarship accredited with having been written in the fourth century. Next came the Alexandrian MS., which is supposed to have been written about the middle of the fifth century. It is now on exhibition in the British Museum. Finally, we have the Sinaitic MS., which is in possession of the Russian Government. It was found by Constantine Tischendorf in a Mt. Sinai Convent, from which it takes its name. It is accredited with a date of about 350 A. D. Of these three oldest MSS. of the New Testament known in the world, the Vatican and Sinaitic are the older.

Assuredly nothing should be considered as part of the original Scriptures that is not found in any of these three oldest MSS. Why should we not tell this to the people? Why should we not inform them that some of the most confusing texts of the Bible are not found in these old manuscripts? Is it not a sin to preach doctrines from God which have no part in these early MSS.? This is our thought. From time to time it will be our pleasure, as well as our duty, to teach the common people what the clergy already know on this subject. Moreover, the Bible Students Association of Brooklyn has arranged for the importation of copies of the New Testament bound in cloth showing the variations between the readings of these old Greek MSS. and our Common Version. The usual price of these is \$1.00; but, importing them in large quantities, they are able to supply them post-paid at 50c. each.

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Consider Now Our Text.
"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned."—Mark xvi, 15, 16.
One of the most important of these interpolations or poisonous additions engraved upon the Word of God is in the sixteenth chapter of Mark, all of which, from the ninth verse to the end of the chapter, is spurious—fraudulent. It is additional to anything that St. Mark wrote, as evidenced by the fact that these verses are not found in any of the three oldest Greek MSS.

Of course some of the items of these verses are found in other Gospels. It would never do to add a lie without a certain amount of covering of "truth to sugarcoat it." But notice our text and what a wrong thought it gives—inconsistent with the remainder of the Scripture. Its intimation is that the preaching of the Gospel to every creature will result either in his believing it and being baptized, and thus being saved, or in his disbelieving and being damned. And this word "damned" carries with it, in the light of other misunderstandings, fire and blazing, roasting and torture, shrieking and woe indescribable. This is all wrong—contrary to the authentic Scriptures.

The authentic Scriptures inform us that this Gospel Age is one in which God is gathering from the world a "little flock" of footstep followers, saintly and elect, to constitute the Bride of Christ—his joint-heirs in his coming Kingdom. They show that not all are expected to hear this message at the present time—not many wise, great, learned or rich, but chiefly the poor. They assure us that to have the hearing ear is a special favor, saying, "Blessed are your ears for they hear, and your eyes for they see." St. Paul tells us that the world in general is blind and deaf to the message now sent forth (Romans xi, 7), and the experiences of eighteen centuries corroborate this. St. Peter tells us (Acts xv, 13) that God's work in the present time is not the conversion of the world (which certainly is not being accomplished) but that he is now taking out of the world a people for his name (to bear the name of Christ, as his Bride). The authentic Scriptures everywhere teach us that the poor, blind, deaf world, which has never yet heard fully and clearly of "the only name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we may be saved," is not on this account condemned or damned. They tell us that the whole world was *born* condemned, because children of Adam and sharers in his condemnation, but that God has provided in the sacrifice of Jesus a redemption for Adam and all his race. They tell us that, as a result, in God's due time, Christ, as the true Light, the Sun of Righteousness, shall enlighten every man that cometh into the world. They explain that God is now calling out a special class while the darkness is upon the earth and the gross darkness upon the heathen, and to enlighten the whole world, will not arise until the elect Church shall first have been gathered out. They tell us that, in the New Dispensation yet to dawn, all the families of the earth will be blessed through the Christ—Jesus, the Head, and the Church his Body or Bride. They tell us that then "all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped" (Isaiah xxxv, 5). They tell us that then the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams, flooding the whole earth with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. They assure us that that will be the period of Messiah's reign, for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as in heaven." They tell us that the object of that reign will be that the world in general may have a trial to determine whether, with the light and knowledge and experience then granted, they will choose God and righteousness and the reward of eternal life, or will choose sin and its penalty, the Second Death.

Unbelievers Damned Already.
Our word *damned*, from misusage and the bad theology of the Dark Ages, has a sulphurous odor, whereas its plain, simple meaning is the same as the word *condemned*. Adam was *damned* or *condemned* 6000 years ago because of his disobedience. And all his children, by heredity, share his weaknesses and thus share his condemnation. But Adam is not condemned or damned to eternal torture nor to Purgatory. The Bible distinctly says in so many words that his sentence, his condemnation, his damnation, is to *death*. "In the day that thou eatest thereof, dying thou shalt die" (Genesis ii, 17, margin). After his disobedience, God said, "Unfit is the earth for thy sake. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread until thou return unto the ground from which thou wast taken; for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return" (Genesis iii, 17-19).
This general sentence has rested upon all of Adam's race from that day until now. As St. Paul declares, By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world and death (not eternal torment nor Purgatory) passed upon all men, because all are sinners (Romans v, 12). Jesus came to redeem two classes—the Church and the world—the Church class to be his "Bride" and to share his heavenly, spiritual Kingdom with him; the world to be blessed and restored to human perfection and to an earthly Eden, world-wide—God's footstep made glorious. The Church and household of faith, willing to walk in the footsteps of the Master in the Dark, have been called during the past nearly nineteen centuries. Soon the

worthy ones, the "little flock," will enter into the joys of their Lord, at his Second Coming. The marriage of the Lamb shall come, for his Wife will have made herself ready (Rev. xix, 7). Then the world's salvation will be due to begin. The Times of Restitution will be the thousand years of Messiah's spiritual reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. Fleshy Israel, we are assured, will then be restored to Divine favor and become the special and active agents of the Messianic Kingdom in the distribution of the Divine favors to all the families of the earth. In the end all the incorrigibly wicked, who love iniquity rather than righteousness, will be destroyed.
Thus, as the Apostle declares, the sacrifice of Jesus constitutes a satisfaction for our sins (the Church's sins) and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (I John ii, 2).
Nonsensical, Spurious Context.
Let us briefly notice another absurdity in the addition to God's Word found in the last twelve verses of St. Mark's Gospel, fraudulently added and not found in any of the oldest Greek MSS.
Notice the statement, "These signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them. They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover" (verses 17, 18). The majority of Christian ministers and their congregations seem not to be troubled by the fact that they do not have these evidences of their relationship to the Lord, and they do not attempt to heal the sick, to speak with tongues, and would not dare to drink any poisonous thing. But there are certain conscientious people, the very cream of all the Churches, who are greatly perplexed by these words because they know that they are not true in their experience. With them, therefore, it is a matter of feeling doubtful about their own salvation, or a question as to the reliability of the Bible as a whole. They need to have the relief which we now seek to give them. They need to know that these are not inspired words, but poisonous and injurious additions made during the Dark Ages. They may, consequently, look elsewhere in the Scriptures and find the proper assurances of their relationship with God being demonstrated by the fruits of the holy Spirit in their lives and in their hearts—"meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love."
Miracles in the Early Church.
This spurious passage of our text is used by many ministers who know, or ought to know, of its falsity. But they have a certain theory in their minds to the effect that the miracles and unknown tongues of the early Church were lost by reason of unfaithfulness to God, and that Christians today should seek for their recovery. Not having any Scriptures to support their claim they use this interpolation and allow their hearers and readers to believe it to be the inspired message. To what length have people gone in support of human theory! The first principle of preaching should be to preach the Truth, the whole Truth and nothing but the Truth. Every theory which requires bolstering up by spurious passages should be abandoned, and will be abandoned by those who are honest truth-seekers, "Bereans."
Our Lord performed miracles. So did his Apostles. And so did those of the early Church upon whom the Apostles laid their hands. But no others have this gift. Consequently, when the Apostles were dead and when all those upon whom they had laid hands of blessing were dead, those miracles in the Church were at an end. We all see the propriety of this. Miracles were appropriate at the beginning for the establishment of the Church and, for a time, were necessary for their encouragement. In their early meetings they had no source of information aside from the Apostles, whom they rarely saw or heard. They had no Bibles—no copies of the Gospel nor of the Epistles. They needed the very arrangement which God provided—tongues and interpretations of tongues, etc., to draw them together and to instruct them until, in due time, the canon of Scripture would be completed that, through it, the man of God might be thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work (II Tim. iii, 16, 17).
By the time the Apostles died the Church had become established, had regular meetings, pastors and teachers, the Gospels and Epistles, and some of them had begun to develop the fruits of the Spirit. Thus the early Church naturally outgrew the tongues and miracles and entered a larger sphere, just as a child loses its swaddling clothes in favor of more suitable attire. For God's people today to desire to go back to speaking with tongues, etc., such as was practiced, and very profitably, in the early Church, would be like an adult person desiring to be dressed and treated as a babe. It is our understanding that the speaking with unknown tongues in religious meetings, which is gradually spreading over the world, is a deception being practiced upon earnest children of God, who are deceived by the fallen angels—the demons of the Bible. They are thus enslaved to error and have their attention drawn away from the Truth. To what extent the ministers of Christ of today are responsible for the delusion of these poor people is not ours to determine. Had the spuriousness of the last verses of St. Mark's Gospel been duly pointed out from every pulpit, as soon as the old MSS. were known, some, at least, might have been spared from this snare—some who, under misapprehension, have been hindered from proper expectations in respect to God's Word and led improperly to expect the power of tongues and miracles suggested in this spurious passage.

will meet in Chicago. **SIDE STEPPED EXPOSITION**
St. Louis, Mo., Nov. 26.—Chicago was selected as the meeting place of the deep waterways convention in 1911 at the session of the convention here late yesterday afternoon. All the present officers of the association were re-nominated, including W. K. Kavanaugh, president. The convention side-stepped action on the rival claims of New Orleans and San Francisco for the Panama expo-

tion in 1915, and 't is improbable that any action on the matter will be taken.
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