

FEAR THE BANE OF HUMANITY; RATIONAL AND IRRATIONAL FEAR

Ignorance and Superstition the Factors Which Lead to Fear.

True Message of God's Word, the Only Proper Antidote to Fear, Desirable at Opening of New Year.



Brooklyn, N. Y., January 1.—Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle addressed a large congregation in the Brooklyn Academy of Music this afternoon on the importance of good courage for the New Year, from the following text:

I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.—Isaiah xlii, 1.

As usual he had a large audience and the very closest attention. He said in part—

Fear is a great calamity. It is closely related to all the sorrows of life, closely linked to all the crimes of the world! One of the blessings of true Christianity is the release it gives from fear. But alas! true Christianity, true Christian faith, and the present rewards of these are not very common even in Christendom. Few know the meaning of the Master's words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Few appreciate the assurance, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (Matthew xi, 28; John viii, 36).

Fear has its foundation in sin. We may be sure that the angels in heaven know no fear. After Adam had disobeyed the Divine command in Eden, he feared his Maker and hid from him. Similarly, fear affects all of Adam's posterity, because of the general realization that "all are sinners." God and his righteousness are, figuratively, light, and the sinner and his sins are, figuratively, darkness. There is no compromise—the darkness, hatched in the darkness. Love and reverence go hand in hand, but love and fear are opposites; we cannot love that which we fear, we do not fear that which we love.

Fear, Worry, Sickness.

Hope, pride and ambition encourage the business man and the laborer, the king and the peasant, the housewife and the maid, the leaders of the social set and the patient mother. Nevertheless, all of these have a drag-anchor of fear, which in the stress of life produces worry; worry produces indigestion, indigestion produces insomnia and nervousness which lead on to every form of disease and unhappiness. To the extent, therefore, that fear is removed, health and happiness are encouraged and aided.

All physicians recognize the fact that fear is closely related to disease. Hence the wise physician always counsels cheerful surroundings for the sick, cheerful conversation, diversion of the mind, the avoidance of thought along worrisome lines—the rest cure, etc.

It may be asked, why is it that the Master's cure is little considered today? Why are so few pointed to Christ, the Great Physician, for the rest and peace and comfort and joy which he promised to his followers eighteen centuries ago? Have his words proven untrue? Are his professed followers amongst the most anxious and troubled and overburdened and sick and sorrowful and fearful of our poor, groaning creation? If so, what is the explanation? We must concede the inference. We must admit that the four hundred millions of professed Christians are much more unhappy, much more fearful, much more nervous, peevish and sickly than the twelve hundred millions outside of Christendom.

The explanation of this peculiar situation is that Christendom is not Christian; that the name Christendom is a misnomer! Christ's Kingdom does not prevail amongst the civilized one-fourth of humanity. For centuries now Christendom has deceived itself, and has seriously misrepresented Christ, his teachings and his promised Kingdom of righteousness for which still we are praying, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth." Our standing armies, prepared to destroy each other, and our dreadnought navies, prepared to blow each other to atoms; and our submarines and our flying machines, our great cannons and torpedoes—all prove the mistake of calling this human civilization Christ's Kingdom.

Similarly, the worry, fear, strife, nervousness, etc., of Christendom all prove that the Great Teacher's antidote for fear and worry has not been taken by the masses of Christendom. We hold that the Good Physician's remedy for sin, corroding care, worry, fear, is just as effective today as it was eighteen and a half centuries ago; we hold that the real difficulty is that his prescription has not been faithfully followed. We urge that those who now have "an ear to hear" his message should accept it faithfully, and that they should not accept at the hands of anybody another prescription, said to be "just as good." We should make sure that we get the remedy which bears the endorsement of the Lord's Word, and which has the seal of "the precious blood."

The Master's Teachings Perverted. During the Dark Ages superstitions fear was encouraged; all will concede

The attempt was made to drive humanity to God. Atrocious doctrines were promulgated in the name of God, Christ and his Apostles. St. Paul denounces these "doctrines of demons" (I Timothy iv, 1). These, primarily, taught a Purgatory, to be mitigated by prayers and masses. Under the impulse of fear, millions accepted Christ and professed discipleship, in total ignorance of his real teachings, and yet so many his followers that when they were healed. Later on the Adversary partially sidetracked the Reformation Movement by leading zealous people to renounce Purgatory as unscriptural and to accept in its stead for the world at large eternal torment—a still more unscriptural proposition—a still more God-dishonouring doctrine of demons.

Fortunately for ourselves we Protestants do not take our own doctrine seriously. However much all Protestant Creeds assert that only baptized saints will reach heaven and, contrariwise, that all the unsaved will suffer eternal torture, nevertheless, not one in a hundred believes this. The most saintly, the most conscientious of them are troubled by their fears, tormented by their sympathies, perplexed to understand God's dealings, hindered from having the peace and joy which the Master promised his followers. The loss of consciousness of them stifles conscience to their own injury, gradually losing faith in the Word of God because of this error. They thus escape some of the torments of fear, but they do not attain the love, joy, contentment and peace which the Master promised his faithful ones.

Unreliable Subterfuges Harmful. There is only one Divine remedy for this harmful fear. That remedy is associated with the Gospel of Christ; but there are numerous subterfuges. Some drown their fears, disappointments and sorrows with alcohol or various narcotics. Some seek to drown them with sensuous pleasures, some with business activity, some with church activity, some with "devil-may-care" unreason. Of late a considerable degree of subterfuge success has come along the lines of deceit—denying the existence of sin, denying the facts of pain and sorrow and death and, contrariwise, affirming that everything is good, regardless of the untruthfulness of this proposition.

The result of this self-deception indeed relieves from a considerable measure of fear. To this extent it proves a solace and satisfaction; but it is a subterfuge and not the true remedy. As a proposition its influence upon the mind, upon all the reasoning faculties, is injurious. The twisting of reason necessary to this philosophy, which calls black white, and pain pleasure, and sin righteousness, is destructive of sound reasoning ability. The habit of perversion necessary to the calling of bad good and wrong right not only injures the mind, but, in attempting to sustain itself from the Scriptures, perverts the entire Word of God. With reason perverted and the Scriptures perverted, the true message of the Scriptures cannot be enjoyed. Unless fear be measurably eliminated, the proper faith, hope, joy and spirit of a sound mind are impossible.

Divine Antidote For Fear.

God's message through the Law and the Prophets, to Israel, as interpreted by Jesus and his Apostles, gives us the true antidote for fear. It does not deny sin, sickness, sorrow, death; it denies no fact, but it does hold out a remedy for all of these, an antidote, "the balm of Gilead." Moreover, it informs us that this antidote can be received only through the co-operation of our heads and hearts. It informs us that this healing is obtainable by only a comparatively few at this time, but, eventually, the Divine blessings, world-wide, shall operate toward all humanity as fully as have the penalties of sin. It applies now in full degree only to such as have the hearing ear, the eye of faith and the appreciative, responsive heart. Others may obtain a measure only of this consolation. The Great Teacher gave us the key to this deliverance from fear, saying, "Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free. If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John viii, 32, 36).

The first step toward having the Truth make you free is to have the coating of ignorance and superstition removed and this is a difficult matter. For instance, the Catholic superstition of Purgatory and the Protestant superstition of eternal torment, for practically all mankind, have been so thoroughly riveted upon their faithful that to break their bonds and get free is a difficult task. Only those who hunger and thirst after the Lord and his righteousness are in any likelihood of ever being properly freed.

Others, getting free from one error are merely steered by the Adversary into another as bad or worse. God seeketh not those at the present time; he will deal with them by and by under Messiah's glorious Kingdom, when Satan shall be bound. Now, as the Apostle declares, "God seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth." "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him and he will show them his Covenant"—he will set them free now from the bondage of superstition and fear, and by and by, in the "First Resurrection," he will free them from the body of corruption.

In other words, at the present time all humanity may receive a blessing of heart-consultation in proportion as they can come to the knowledge of Divine Truth, and each will be helped to the knowledge of the Truth in proportion to his hunger and thirst after righteousness—his honesty of soul. The dishonest-hearted are not worthy of being set free from fear. Liberty and freedom from fear for these would

not be favorable to them nor to others under present conditions. Fear is associated with alienation from God. And, as the Bible declares, "None of the wicked shall understand" (Daniel xii, 10).

Mystery of the Gospel Age.

To attain the highest blessing which God has to offer at the present time certain difficult requirements must be complied with. Sin must be repented of heartily, and, so far as possible, restitution must be made, which means that sin must be forsaken to the extent of ability. Faith must then recognize the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world"—that the sacrifice for sin was necessary, and that God himself provided it in the death of Jesus. Faith and knowledge must go further and not only see and acknowledge the death of the Redeemer, but also that God raised him from the dead and highly exalted him to spirit being again, to the intent that eventually he may accomplish for all mankind, the wonderful blessings foretold in the Law and the Prophets.

Additionally, to such will be revealed the great "Mystery" of this Gospel Age, lasting from the death of Jesus to the manifestation of Messiah in power and great glory as Michael—the "God-like One" (Daniel xii, 1). The Mystery is that Jesus is the Head, Chief, Lord, over the Church which is his Body, and that the "Body" members will eventually be glorified with the Head on the spirit plane; and that then Head and Body will constitute the great Messiah whose spiritual reign of a thousand years will result in the blessing and uplifting of mankind.

Whoever shall be thus taught of God in the school of Christ will learn also the necessity for having a share with the Master in his suffering and death. In order to have a share with him in his glorious reign. These will be taught by the great Head that "if they suffer with him they shall reign with him" and that the sufferings of this present time (if faithfully endured by them) will work out an exceeding and abundant blessing.

The Sentiment of Our Text.

To properly understand our text and, indeed, to understand the Bible as a whole, it is necessary to discern that God has foreordained two Israel—the earthly and the heavenly. Both are precious, both are "elect," both are to be used of the Lord during Messiah's Kingdom reign—the one on the heavenly plane and the other on the earthly. A mistake has been made by some in recognizing the earthly Israel and not recognizing the heavenly or spiritual Israel. Others have made the mistake of recognizing the heavenly or spiritual Israel and not recognizing the earthly Israel. "The promise of God is to be sure to both the seeds of Abraham—to that which is according to the promise, the oath—the Spiritual Seed—and also to that which is according to the Law, the natural seed" (Romans iv, 16).

The Spiritual Seed must be developed first, because the blessing will proceed from the Heavenly Seed to the earthly seed, then from the earthly seed to all nations. The blessing upon all nations will consist of the opportunity that will be offered them of becoming members of the earthly seed which, ultimately, as the sands of the seashore, will include the saved of all nations—all found worthy of everlasting life. "I have constituted thee a father of many nations" (Rom. iv, 17).

"Princes in All the Earth."

All who will come into this blessed experience of relationship to God are described in our text, "Fear not for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine." The faithful few of this Gospel Age, who have passed through the deep waters of tribulation and walked through fiery trials, have not only come off unharmed, but have been blessed, and will be abundantly blessed in the rewards of the coming Kingdom. They have naught to fear.

Similarly, Natural Israel as a people was specially favored from the days of Abraham down to the rejection of Messiah—particularly the saintly few of that people whose sure reward will be their privilege of being made Princes in all the earth by the great King of glory (Psalm xiv, 16).

Even during the Gospel Age when the nation of Israel, "Jacob," has been obliged to pass through trying experiences, "waters of affliction" and "fiery trials," the Lord has not forsaken them. He has kept them together as a people. He has not permitted them to be destroyed by their enemies. Their persistence for thirty-five centuries is of itself a miracle of Divine supervision. Without afflictions they would have disappeared as a distinct people.

As the Gospel Age (for the selection of Spiritual Israel) draws to a close, the voice of God is calling natural Israel and pointing them to the Land of Promise and reviving their hearts with the messages of their prophets.

All are to share God's blessings eventually, and then all may be without fear. Now is the time for those who know their God, to fear not. Now, those whose eyes of faith and understanding can discern God's stability stepping amongst the children of men in the drossing of the Divine Program may fearlessly rejoice. Now is the time for those to be of good courage; to fear not; to overcome the world; to be valiant for righteousness and truth; their blessings of the Lord will be in proportion to their faithfulness and courage. There is no other time in the true rest and peace to which Jesus invites. And there never can be a better time than now to accept the Lord's offer; "Come unto me."

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STEAMSHIP LINE MAY TAKE IN PORTLAND. [ENTERED UNDER TRADE MARK.] Portland, Or., Jan. 7.—It is persistently rumored in steamship circles today that the Bank Line, Limited, now operating between British Columbia and Puget Sound Ports and the Orient, will include Portland in its inland schedule. For several months the company's steamers have been coming to Portland for outward cargo, but thus far no freight from the Orient has been unloaded here. It is understood that Frank Waterhouse, of the Waterhouse Company, when in London recently took up the matter of inward service with Andrew Weir, head of the Bank Line.