

PEOPLE'S PULPIT...

A FAMINE IN THE LAND



Sermon by
CHARLES T.
RUSSELL,
Pastor Brooklyn
Tabernacle.

Cumberland, Md., Feb. 27.—Pastor Russell of Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York, preached twice here today in our largest auditorium. He is well known here and had fine audiences. We report his discourse from the above text as follows:

Today this prophecy is fulfilled in our midst! Notwithstanding the fact that during the past century Bibles have been printed and circulated among the people by the million, and notwithstanding the fact that education has become general so that rich and poor, old and young, have the ability to read God's Word, nevertheless we are in the midst of the very famine specified by the Prophet. It seems almost incredible that we should be famishing now with Bibles in our homes, when our saintly forefathers did not famish, though education was limited. The secret lies in the fact that increasing intelligence on every hand has awakened our reasoning faculties along religious lines, and the result is the gnawing of hunger in our hearts. Our hearts and our flesh cry out for a living and a true God—a God greater than ourselves—more just, more powerful, more loving. Feeling our own impotency, we more than ever feel our need of the Friend above all others with a love that sticketh closer than a brother's.

Consequently we cannot find the rest and refreshment and comfort from the Scriptures which our forefathers derived. Consequently the young men and the purest of heart in the world are repelled by the religion of the past as represented in the creeds of all denominations. They are hungry for the Truth. They are thirsty for the refreshment which they need. Intellectually many are looking, wandering, from sea to sea desiring the bread of life and the water of life. Scanning the creeds of all denominations they find them practically alike as respects theories of eternal reprobation and damnation for all except the elect, the saints. They are faint for lack of spiritual food and drink. They even look to the heathen and examine the Theosophy of India, the Buddhism of Japan and the Confucianism of China, seeking for some satisfying portion of Truth. These are in some respects like the prodigal son—far from home. They perceive the swinish content with the husks of business, money, pleasure and politics, but their spiritual longings cannot be satisfied with the husks which the swine eat. They are thought peculiar because of their interest in spiritual things. They are misunderstood by their best earthly friends. They must learn that in their wanderings along the highways of science and world-religion they will never get satisfaction. There is a famine in every denomination, in every part of the world. No one thinks of looking to the Bible for refreshment and strength. The Higher Critics of all denominations have branded it unreliable. The Professors in all the great Colleges are reprobating the Bible and openly laugh at the thought of finding there either bread for the hungry or water for the thirsty.

This is the very picture given in our context. "They shall wander from sea to sea, from the North even to the East; they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord and shall not find it. In that day shall the fair virgins and the young men faint for thirst" (Amos viii, 12, 13).

The Bread of Life and Water of Life. These hungry hearts must learn that there is only one satisfying portion under the Sun—the living and true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent to be the Bread of Life for the world, and the message of grace from his lips to be the Water of Life. It is ours to call the attention of this Truth-hungry class to the Great Teacher who declared, "My flesh is food indeed and my blood is drink indeed; except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John vi, 53, 53). But scarcely will the intelligent of our day hearken to these words, so prejudiced are their minds by the fallacies which cloud their understanding. They see not, neither do they understand the goodness of God.

Why is this? Why are these Bibles in millions of homes, Catholic and Protestant, neglected? Because the people know not that the bread of life and the water of life which they seek are hidden therein. Why is this? We answer that conditions were very much the same in Israel at the time of our Lord's First Advent. The explanation he then gave is applicable now. He said, "Ye do make void the Law of God through your traditions"—"the traditions of the ancients" (Mark vii, 13; 1 Peter i, 18). So now, the traditions handed down from our forefathers really make void, meaningless, ungracious, the message of God's Wisdom and Love sent to us through the Lord, the apostles and the prophets. Those who still hold tenaciously to the creeds of the past are thoroughly blinded now to the true teachings of God's Word, while, alas, the majority of the independent thinkers, in reject-

would forever discredit them with their hearers. Hence they still outwardly lend their influence to the doctrines of eternal torment, which they do not believe, and feel angry towards us because we teach the people the Truth upon the subject, which they know will bring to them hundreds of questions difficult to answer or dodge.

God's Love Constraineth Us.

I ask you, dear readers, Were you constrained to become children of God and to render to the Lord the homage and the obedience of your lives through fear or through love? I am not asking you whether you never have feared; but I am asking you what brought you to the point of consecrating your life to God? Surely that was not fear! I am aware, of course, that there is a proper, godly fear, reverence, and that the Scriptures declare it—"The fear (reverence) of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Psalm cxi, 10). But this is not the fear of eternal torment, which tends to drive out love. How could we love or esteem or truly worship a God purposing the eternal torment of his creatures from before their creation?

I could give you many proofs of the power of love over the human heart, in contrast with the ungodly fear of the error. God says to us in so many words, "Their fear toward me is not of me, but is taught by the precepts of men." As an illustration: At a Bible Students' Convention not long ago in Ohio a well-dressed gentleman in attendance told me of how his heart had been touched with our presentations of the

"Love Divine, all love exceeding."

He said, "For years I have been a member of the Presbyterian Church without being really a Christian at all. Occasionally I went on sprees; sometimes I gambled and drank, etc., etc. Not until I received a knowledge of the true character of God as set forth in your 'Scripture Studies' did my heart ever come to the proper attitude of surrender to the Lord. Then I was glad to give him my little all, and wished it were more." The next day, passing from the hotel to the auditorium to a question meeting, this gentleman put a slip of paper into my hand, which I supposed was a question, and I thrust it into my coat pocket. On the platform I drew it forth as one of the questions to be answered, and to my astonishment, found it was a check for \$1,000. The man had not been asked for one cent; but the Love of God had captivated his heart and gotten control—not only of it, but of his pocket-book and all. He wished to show the Lord his appreciation of the Love Divine, the length and breadth and height and depth, of which he now comprehended, as never before.

Another case: I met with a Convention of Bible Students in Chattanooga some five years ago. A gentleman attended who introduced himself to me saying that he was from Mississippi and that he had become deeply interested in my presentations of the harmony of the Word of God. He said in substance: "Brother Russell, I will not attempt to tell you how wicked a man I was before I got your literature. My dear wife here, an earnest Methodist, said to me, 'John, John, you will surely go to hell!' I replied to her, 'Mary, I know it! I know it! And, Mary, I am determined that I will deserve all that I get. I am not going to hell for nothing.' One of your tracts came to my desk in my store. I said that this was different from anything I ever understood respecting the teachings of the Bible. It seems more God-like and more rational. I sent it to you for various Bible Students' Helps. The result, dear Brother Russell, is that the Love of God has constrained me, has conquered me, in a way that the doctrines of devilish torments could not influence me. Now I see the true teaching of God's Word. I can honor him and worship him and take pleasure in laying down my life in his service. I have made a full consecration of everything. For a time I sent you a \$50 check every month; but, Brother Russell, that was in the nature of conscience-money, because the most profitable feature of my store trade was the sale of liquor to the Mississippi negroes. Those checks stopped, because, as the grace of God more and more filled and overflowed my heart, it brought me to see that I must love my neighbor as myself and do injury to none. That is all gone now. Brother Russell, and my whole life is devoted to the service of God and my fellowmen."

Three murderers confined in the Columbus, Ohio, Penitentiary had from childhood been trained in the doctrines of eternal torment in different churches and yet committed murder. Those men, under God's providence, received some of our literature—"Scripture Studies"—and were cut to the heart when they learned of the Love of God, as expressed in the Divine Plan of the Ages. To be brief: A knowledge of the Love of God made such a change in the hearts and lives of those three murderers that the prison-keepers took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and had learned of him. By and by they were paroled and today two of them are preaching the Gospel of the Love of God, seeking to bring their fellowmen out of the condition of darkness and sin into the glorious sunlight of Divine Love and Truth. Having tried the Gospel of fear and damnation and torture for sixteen centuries; having seen that under this teaching there are more blasphemy and general wickedness than even in the heathen world, is it not due time to give the true bread and water of life to the hungry and thirsty ones who, for lack of it, are searching the earth and many of them falling into Higher Criticism, infidelity and other delusions peculiar to our day?

(1) The doctrines of Purgatory and eternal torment has not had a sanctifying influence upon mankind in all the sixteen centuries in which it has been preached. They fear that to deny these doctrines now would make a bad matter worse. They fear that if the Gospel of the Love of God and of the Bible—that it does not teach eternal torment for any—were made generally known, the effect upon the world would be to increase its wickedness to make life and property less secure than now and to fill the world still more than now with blasphemers.

(2) They fear also that a certain amount of discredit would come to themselves because knowing that the Bible does not teach eternal torment, according to the Hebrew and Greek original, they secreted the knowledge from the people. They fear that this

DEFENDANTS

Numerous In This Case Filed In Common Pleas

199 Persons Claim To Be Nieces And Nephews

And Want Share Of Distribu- tion In An Estate

Court Is Asked To Construe The Will

Other Items From The Temple Of Justice

A most peculiar suit was filed in the court of common pleas of Knox county Friday morning—peculiar on account of the large number of defendants named in the petition, there being 199 in all.

The style of the case is that of George J. Ewers, as executor of Julia A. Ewers vs. Sarah Herendene, et al. The action is brought to construe the last will and testament of Julia A. Ewers. According to one provision of the will the testatrix directed that upon the death of her husband, John G. Ewers, that the residue of the estate be divided equally among the nieces and nephews. The plaintiff states that he has in his possession the sum of \$9,832.35 ready for distribution and that the nieces and nephews of the half-blood and the grand nieces of the full-blood have made demand for their share of the distribution and that the plaintiff is unable to determine who is entitled to a share of the distribution. The 199 defendants named in the suit are nieces and nephews of the half-blood and grand nieces and grand nephews of the full-blood. The plaintiff states that he has in his possession the sum of \$9,832.35 ready for distribution and that the nieces and nephews of the half-blood and the grand nieces and grand nephews of the full-blood have made demand for their share of the distribution and that the plaintiff is unable to determine who is entitled to a share of the distribution.

The plant of the Granville Natural Gas, Fuel and Light Co. was sold by the sheriff Monday, to the Ohio Fuel Supply Co. for \$18,525, which is almost double the appraisement. The well of the Logan company on the Mrs. Leman Thrapp lease, four miles east of town, came in a couple of weeks ago with one-third million volume. It was given a shot and was shut in at about one million.

Alva Ankerman, a rig builder, fell 60 feet while tearing down a derrick near Pleasantville, and alighted in a pile of soft dirt where the forge had been. He was shocked and bruised, but was able to get out in a day or two.

The Heisey company got a dry hole on the Hardin lease northeast of Hebron, and one on the McCreary farm southeast of Granville. The North American company also got a dry hole southeast of Granville, on the Utica Jewett lease.

The magazine of the Marietta Torpedo Co. and Lancaster Nitro-glycerine Co. 1½ miles from Bremen exploded Monday morning. Gas had been turned on to prevent freezing, and 1800 quarts probably became overheated. Guy Nixon's house and Henry Heyd's barn were badly injured. Windows were broken in Bremen.

Driller Joe Stephens, who is working on the new Utica company well on the Wm. Smoots farm, said on Monday that the tools were down 1800 feet and the well would be completed in two weeks if a flood did not occur. The location is on the southeast part of the Smoots farm, on the low ground which is covered with water at each flood.

A severe explosion occurred at the pump station of the Columbus Gas and Fuel Co. near Appleton on last Friday night. The engine room filled with gas from a leak, and a spark ignited it. John Rowe was badly burned about the head and hands. James Farron was seriously burned on his head, back, legs and hands, his clothing being nearly all burned off his body. Both men were buried several feet.

The artificial gas company in the city of Hamilton, Ohio, last week cut the price of its gas from 70 cents to 30 cents per thousand, to meet the price of natural gas. Fifteen years ago the Hamilton people paid \$3 per thousand for gas. The city then put in a plant of its own, in competition, and the price went down to 70 cents and now to 30 cents. It is evident that artificial gas can be made at reasonable price, to take the place of natural, if the supply of the latter becomes exhausted.

Marriage License— George Holzworth, farmer, Harperton, Ia., and Jennie Bowman, Fredericktown. The Rev. A. B. Williams.

Deed Filed— Catherine A. McCluer to Harry E. Cassell, 2.01 acres in Berlin, \$1.

Second and Final—

William R. Wieg and H. S. Campbell, executors of Martha A. Parker, have filed a second and final account in probate showing the following: Received, \$245.48; paid out, \$282.66; due the executors, \$38.18.

Supplemental Answer—

In the case of the National Bank of Morrow county vs. N. C. Levering, a supplemental answer has been filed in the court of common pleas for the sum of \$250 with interest. Wright & Moore are the attorneys for the plaintiff.

Action for Money—

George M. Sands has commenced an action for money, based on a promissory note, in the court of common pleas of Knox county, in which he asks for the sum of \$250 with interest. Wright & Moore are the attorneys for the plaintiff.

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