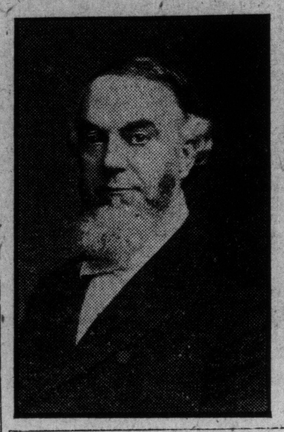
The Binding of Satan

Personality and Destructive Work of the Devil—Mankind's Release From the Bondage of Error and Judgment.

PASTOR RUSSELL'S SERMON



PATERSON, N.J., Feb. 14.—Pastor C. T. Russell of Pittsburg, Pa., preached here twice to large and attentive audiences. We report his discourse on the "Binding of Satan," from the text, "He laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the abyss, and shut him up and sealed it over him that he should deceive the nations no more until the thousand years should be finished: and after that he must be loosed for a time." (Rev. xx., 2, 3.) The speaker said:

The unscriptural views we once held respecting hell naturally led us into unscriptural views respecting Satan. When we held the thought that hell was a vast furnace of fire—we knew not where, "beyond the bounds of space and time"—we were deluded into believing that Satan was in that far-off place, master of ceremonies, and chief over a host of fireproof demons employed chiefly in causing indescribable pain and anguish to thousands of millions of the human family who passed into his control by divine foreknowledge and intention; the number of new arrivals approximating ninety thousand per day. But with Satan afar off and more than busy we could not think of him as giving any particular time and attention to the comparatively small number of humanity still living.

But when we get the Scriptural idea of hell, that sheol and hades are the names for the state of death and unconsciousness into which all mankind, good and bad, go at death, and from which both the just and unjust are to be resurrected at the second coming of Christ, it throws a different light on the whole subject. As for the term Gehenna fire, symbolically used to represent the second death—the utter destruction of the incorrigible — we find that rightly understood its flames are no more literal than those of the "fiery trials" which the Lord promised should come upon all of his faithful to consume their dross and, under divine supervision, to prepare them for the heavenly kingdom. Since then we see clearly that Satan and his fallen angels, his associates and servants, are not engaged in furnace stoking, it prepares us to note what the Scriptures have to say respecting them and their present occupation and their relationship to mankind and their future. We do well, too, to remember that we have no personal knowledge on this subject—that we are confined to the Scriptures for every whit of the information on this subject.

"A Covering Cherub."

Most distinctly do the Scriptures teach the personality of Satan and his malevolent character. Moreover, they show clearly that he is not another god who has existed from eternity, but a creature subject to Jehovah. Since the Scriptural declaration is that God's work is perfect" (Deut. xxxii., 4), it follows that he could not have created Satan in the condition in which he now is, an adversary to God and to righteousness. In harmony with this thought, the Scriptures assure us that he was created an angel of a very high order—a cherub; that he was beautiful, high in authority and wise, but that he allowed ambition, pride to enter into his heart and to seduce him from loyalty to his Creator. The time when his ambitious designs began to take shape undoubtedly was when he beheld our first parents in Eden and set about to capture them as his subjects. He is represented as saying in his heart, "I will ascend above the stars (be higher than the other angels—captain and leader). I will be like the Most High (similar to the Most High in the sense of being an independent ruler not subject to Him)." (Isa. xiv., 12-14).

When Satan beheld our first parents possessed of the quality of procreation, the power of developing a race like themselves, he discerned that this was something that neither he nor the angels of the spirit plane possessed, and that by capturing the hearts of the first human pair he could become the ruler of the world. The success of his deception need not be told. The disobedience of our first parents and the fulfilment upon them of the divine sentence, "Dying, thou shalt die," has involved a race whose numbers now approximate probably twenty thousand millions, a groaning creation, suffering under the sentence of death thru its effects upon their minds, their morals, their physical systems. Thus our Lord Jesus declares of Satan, "He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth." (John viii., 44.) He led to our first parents, and thru that deception he brought them under the divine death sentence, and thus is the murderer of the entire race.

It is not necessary for us to determine that Satan's original lie was of full determination to misrepresent. He told our first parents that he would be their real friend and guide them to greater knowledge; that God, their Creator, was selfish and that the prohibition of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was a deliberate atempt on God's part to keep them from useful and profitable knowledge because He did not want them to so closely approximate His own wisdom. It is possible that as the human mind, getting out of accord with the Lord, might deceive itself, so Satan's mind, poisoned by pride and ambition, may have reached the false conclusion that God was really working against the best interests of our first parents and their race. It matters not which view we take, in either event Satan was a liar and deceiver and thereby was our murderer, as our Lord pointed out.

"The Angels That Sinned."

Satan risked everything when he took the course that he did, which not only alienated him from God as an adversary, but separated him also from all who were loyal to the Creator. Thenceforth his entire time and energy were devoted to the building up of the human empire which he had designed. He had no authority from God to rule mankind, but by involving humanity in sin, by alienating them from their Creator, he was able more and more to gain control, because no sentence of death had been passed upon him and no impairment of his personal powers and vitality had been experienced, while mankind, under the death sentence, rapidly lost mental, moral and physical strength and ability to cope with him. During the 1656 years from Adam's creation to the flood, a certain amount of intercourse was permitted between humanity and the angels. God's design in permitting this was to teach a great lesson, and to test the loyalty of the angels. The lesson taught was that sin is very contaminating. So far from the intercourse between angels and men tending to uplift mankind, the course was downward; the influence of evil taking hold upon many of the angels, of whom the Scriptures say that they left their own habitation—that is to say, permitted to materialize and to associate with mankind, some of them, thru lustful temptation, preferred the human plane, thus sinning and transgressing the divine arrangement of their angelic nature. The account in Genesis very briefly tells us that these angelic sons of God, beholding the fair daughters of men, were enamored of them and took them for wives, with the result that a new race began to spring up in the world—"giants," "men of renown." The lesson having been taught and the angels having been tested as to their loyalty to God, that dispensation ended, the flood of Noah's day wiping out the hybrid race and all of the human family except Noah and his family; of Noah we read that "he was perfect in his generations" (Gen. vi., 9.) He and his family were of pure Adamic stock, not contaminated.

It was at this time, according to St. Peter (2 Pet., ii., 4), and St. Jude (vi), that God placed a ban upon the disloyal angels, consigning them to Tartarus, the atmosphere of this earth, mistranslated hell in our common version. The divine sentence against these angels which kept not their first estate was not, however, a death sentence, as in the case of man; it was that they should be "confined in chains of darkness until the judgment of the great day." Thus the Apostle indicates that in due time there is to be a future judgment or decision rendered of God respecting those angels—in connection with the inauguration of the millennial day, the seventh thousand epoch of the world's history. Meantime, isolated from fellowship with God and the holy angels and hindered from materializing and thus having no intercourse with mankind as previously, these fallen angels, called in the Scriptures demons (mistranslated devils), have undoubtedly had an unhappy time of it for now more than four thousand years.

Satan is spoken of as their prince or leader, tho nowhere are they mentioned as being of as high rank or order as is he, nor as responsible as is he.

It is fair to suppose that some of these fallen angels are of repentant mind and sorry for their sins and that they no longer strive against the divine regulations and hence have special opposition from Satan and the others. The Apostle distinctly shows us that the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus became a great sermon to these fallen angels, instructing them respecting the love and compassion of God for his human creatures and of his power even to raise the dead and His willingness to reward our Lord Jesus with high exaltation because of his obedience. This lesson, respecting the true divine character, became to some of these fallen angels a lesson of hope and gave them to anticipate that if they would turn from sin and manifest their loyalty to God He might in their judgment day grant them the blessing of forgiveness.

"Doctrines of Demons."

However, without knowing the proportion of those favorably inclined, we do know of the fact that there are legions of these fallen angels who, under the leadership of Satan, are the direct enemies of our human race, tempting, misleading, deceiving, putting light for darkness and darkness for light. Seemingly they enter fully into Satan's spirit and work as his associates. Not permitted to materialize in the past they have sought intercourse with mankind, have preyed upon humanity. Realizing that they would be dreaded if their real character was recognized they have personated the human dead, thus helping to further and corroborate Satan's original lie, "Ye shall not surely die." By various delusions humanity has been taught that its members, instead of dying when they appear to die, really become more alive than ever. This view was successfully propagated amongst the heathen nations, but to the Israelites God gave special instructions, that the dead were dead, that they must not be worshipped or prayed to—and the Israelites were commanded not to allow a witch or wizard or necromancer to live in their midst. They were told that their dead were really dead, and that the hope for their living again lay in the resurrection, which the promised Messiah would accomplish. They were distinctly told that the "dead know not anything," that their sons come to honor and they know it not, they come to dishonor and they perceive it not of them. (Eccl. ix., 5; Job xiv, 21.) They were told to do with their might what their hands found to do, because there is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in sheol, the grave, the state of death, hades. (Eccl. ix., 10).

Jesus Cast Out Demons.

Notwithstanding the protection of the Lord's word, the fallen angels, demons, succeeded in gaining considerable influence over the Israelites, so that in our Lord's time that form of insanity which results from obsession—from these evil spirits getting possession of the mind, the brain—was common and many of our Lord's miracles and those of his disciples consisted in the casting out of such demons, in one instance a legion possessing one poor man and making him crazy. The teachings of our Lord and the apostles in the New Testament respecting the dead is in full harmony with those of the Jewish Age in the Old Testament. Our Lord tells us that at his second coming all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth. The approved of God will come forth perfect by a life resurrection, while the disapproved will come forth imperfect that they may have a resurrection by judgments, chastenings and stripes, and assisting them up, up, up to full perfection if they will. There is no intimation here that the dead are alive, but that they are in their graves, that they are dead. Similarly when our Lord awakened Lazarus He told his sisters first that in him was the resurrection and the life power, and He did not call Lazarus from heaven or from purgatory or elsewhere, but merely from the tomb.

It was our Lord Himself who declared that no man had ascended into heaven. (John iii., 13.) It was the Apostle Peter, who, when pointing out our Lord's resurrection and how it had been foretold by the prophet David, saying, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (sheol, hades, the grave)" incidentally mentioned that "David had not ascended to the heavens but was still in his sepulchre. (Acts ii., 34). It is the Apostle Paul who declared that if there be no resurrection of the dead all mankind are perished—even those who have fallen asleep in Christ. (1 Cor., xv, 17-18.) Thus the united voice of the Scriptures is in harmony with the facts as we see them, that God's sentence upon our race was a death sentence, which has affected all, and that the hope is that as a result of our dear Redeemer's sacrifice there shall yet be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust. A resurrection of the dead implies that they are dead and not alive. Satan and the demons have worked against this truth of the Scriptures, deceiving mankind and thus fostering doctrines of purgatory and of masses for the dead, in this way leading us to blaspheme God's holy name by believing that the dead are in torment somewhere, and thus blinding the minds and hearts of the vast majority, even in civilized lands. Even the civilized fear God, and because of the misrepresentations cannot love Him. Thus has the work of Satan and his demon hosts progressed, and the wonder is that demonism has not accomplished more than even the dreadful things that we perceive. It has fostered sin of every kind, and of the immense numbers in insane asylums it is not unreasonable to believe that fully half are there because of obsession by evil spirits, the other half suffering from softening or decay of the brain and physical derangements which affect the mind.

Lifting the Veil.

Ever since the Lord began to lift the veil of ignorance and to grant enlightenment, bringing forth the invention of printing and later steam and electricity, our adversary has been kept more busy than formerly. As he is the prince of darkness and benighted conditions, so everything that has tended to lift the pall from the "dark ages" has tended to liberate mankind from the snares of Satan's ignorance, superstition and deception. We may well believe then that our adversary is extremely active and increasingly so in civilized lands and that even amongst the heathen he is necessarily more active, more vigilant.

It is our opinion, dear friends, that we are living in this particular juncture at the present time; that the Prince of Light has already begun the work of binding the prince of darkness. We are not to expect that Satan will meekly submit. Instead we should understand that while this name, Satan, applies to our personal adversary, the Devil, it covers in a general sense all the influences for evil and unrighteousness in the world, however ignorant some of his dupes. Hence, when we read of the binding of Satan, that old serpent, the devil, we should have in mind properly all the evil influences, all the sinful tendencies, all the injustices and untruths whereby mankind have been enslaved for centuries. Whatever sets free the light of truth incidentally binds in similar proportions the darkness, hence we might say that to some extent this loosing of the light and binding of the darkness has been in process for three centuries, but only in our day is the matter reaching a climax. That climax has not yet been reached by any means, but we believe will be attained in a very few years. The whole world is waking up to the evils which have oppressed it. As, for instance, opposition to intoxication is spreading not only in this land, but abroad. A wave of opposition to all injustice is also spreading, favoring the interests of all the people as in opposition to those of the few disposed to exploit the many for their own personal advantage.

The clear declaration of the Scriptures is that at the close of the millennial age the Lord will permit a brief period of liberty to Satan for the purpose of testing those who will have received knowledge and uplift to perfection thruout the millennial age, to the intent that none of the human family or others shall go beyond that time or have eternal life except as they shall be in heart obedience to the Lord and His righteous requirements. The verses following our text tell not only of the First Resurrection of the Church and of their reign with Christ for the thousand years, but also tell us how the world during the thousand years may come up to perfection of life and live in the true sense of the word at the close of the millennium. Then will come the testing time already referred to, and such as will be found disloyal to the Lord will be counted as the messengers and co-laborers with Satan and with him will be destroyed in the lake of fire, which is the second death—utter destruction.

Be Sure

Do not trust too much to your own judgment in medical matters. Consult your doctor frequently. He knows best.

Hard colds, hard coughs, severe bronchitis, weak throats, weak lungs. We wish you would ask your doctor if he knows of anything better for these troubles than Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. We believe it is the best medicine you could possibly take. But ask your doctor, and thus be sure to make no mistake. J. C. Ayer Co., Lowell, Mass.

Damage Suit Settled.

Ten thousand dollars was the amount of damages asked from the Dominion Bridge Company before Justice Mabee in the jury assizes by the widow of Willmer S. McNellis. McNellis was killed on Oct. 4 last while working on the structural iron work of the new Confederation Life Building.

After the evidence for the plaintiff was heard, Justice Mabee advised that an effort be made to effect a settlement between the parties. The solicitors consulted, with the result that the case was taken out of the jury's hands. The terms of the settlement were not announced.

Action Against Mr. Mooney.

STRATFORD, Feb. 14.—(Special.)—Writs were issued to-day against President Mooney and others of the Cartage Fuel and Ice Co. to recover $30,000, which it is claimed was improperly apportioned. The case arises out of the winding up of the company.

Militia Orders.

OTTAWA, Feb. 14.—Militia orders promulgated to-day contain the following announcements of interest in Toronto:

The following supernumerary officers are absorbed into the establishment, as stated:

Lieut. R. C. Darling, vice J. McVittie, retired.

Provisional Lieut. W. G. Jeffries, vice A. A. Miller, promoted.

Provisional Lieut. J. A. Bohan, vice W. Hamber, retired.

Lieut.-Col. A. T. Thompson's tenure of command of the 37th Haldimand Rifles has been extended to the end of December, 1908.

Authority has been granted for the organization of a battery of field artillery at Lethbridge, Alberta.

Dunnville Considering Proposition.

DUNNVILLE, Feb. 14.—The council is considering a proposition to take $30,000 worth of five per cent. bonds of the Dunnville Railway, which is capitalized at $250,000 and backed by a Philadelphia firm of bankers.

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Now, if you don't feel right, I can cure you with my Electric Belt. If you are full of Rheumatic Pains, I can knock them out. I can pour oil into your joints and limber them up. I have often said that pain and electricity can't live in the same house, and I prove it every day.

I don't ask any one to buy my Belt on speculation. I don't ask you to take any chances of a failure. I take all the chances of curing you. If you are suffering from RHEUMATISM, LAME BACK, LUMBAGO, SCIATICA, VARICOCELE, NERVOUS DEBILITY, CONSTIPATION, LOST ENERGY, resulting from exposure and excesses in young and middle-aged men, write to me. Offer me reasonable security and I will make a Man of you, and you can

PAY WHEN CURED.

"Say," said one of my patients a few days ago, "I feel so good that if I felt any better I think I would hurt somebody." That's the way you ought to feel, just chockful of youthful energy. My Belt will make you feel like that.

It builds up broken-down men, restores youth and vigor, and makes you look and feel strong. It will cure every case of Rheumatism, Nervous Debility, Weak Stomach, Kidney and Liver Troubles, Lame Back, Sciatica, and every evidence of weakness in men and women. It will not fail; it cannot fail, as it infuses into the weakened parts the force of life and strength.

One thing every man ought to know is this: Your body is a machine. It is run by the steam in your blood and nerves. When you begin to break down in any way you are out of steam. That's just what I want to give you back.

Tell me your trouble, and I will tell you honestly whether I can cure you or not. If I can't cure you, I don't want your money. I have been in this business 26 years, and I am the biggest man in it to-day by long odds, and I am growing yet, because I give every man all he pays for.

Now, wouldn't you rather wear my life-giving appliance while you sleep every night, and feel its glowing warmth pouring into you, and feel yourself taking on a new lease of life with each application, than to clog your intestines up with a lot of nauseous drugs? Surely. Try me.

Dr. McLaughlin:
Dear Sir,—Before buying your Belt I had Sciatica so bad that I was unable to walk across the floor. Being persuaded by my family to try one, although I had no faith in it myself, I consented to get one, more to stop them from bothering me, as I had given up all hope of ever being able to walk again. After using the Belt one hour I was able to walk across the room, and in three days I could walk outdoors. Now I claim I am soundly cured, giving Dr. McLaughlin's Belt all the credit. Yours truly,
(Signed) JAS. HOBBS, P.O. Box 425.

St. Catharines, Ont., Oct. 21, 1907.

MR. RICHARD THOMPSON, Uffington, Ont., says:—"Dear Sir,—I am pleased to tell you that after wearing your Belt for two months and a half it has cured me of Chronic Rheumatism in the ankles of five years' standing. Rest assured I will not fail to recommend it to any person suffering as I did. It has been a Godsend to me."

MR. THOS. JOHNSTON, Box No. 233, Deseronto, Ont., says:—"It is some five or six years since I got your Belt. I am well satisfied with it.—It cured me, and I have not been bothered since, and I have not used it since then."

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