

THE PULPIT TREASURY.

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ORIGINAL SIN.*

BY REV. G. F. PENTECOST, D.D., TOMPKINS AVENUE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.—PSALM li., 5.

WE make our address this afternoon to those who, at least nominally, accept the Bible as God's Word, and as containing the true doctrine of God and man. Doubtless there are some in the audience who do not accept the Bible as the inspired and infallible word of truth. The plan of this brief course of sermons compels me to leave all such to work out the problem of their own moral inharmony (if I may so speak of man's sinful estate) as best they can. By moral inharmony I mean this: that every man, whether he is a believer in the truths of Christianity or not, recognizes that there is a conflict within himself as between conscience and conduct. It is not only a truth of revelation that man by nature is always in a state of schism with himself, his judgment approving one course and his affections and will leading him in the opposite direction; for this is a recognized fact in human experience. If there were no Bible in the world, this would still be the truth. If God had never revealed His plan of salvation or pointed out the truth with regard to sin, this would still be the universal experience of man. Now with this problem on

* Preached in the Academy of Music, Brooklyn, N. Y., being the first one in a series of fourteen sermons on Fundamental Evangelical Truth. A large portion of the audience were men and four-fifths of all non-church members. The sermon is stenographically reported.

Northampton, Mass. August 19th, "The Ethical Proof of Immortality," by Rev. J. Whiton, Ph.D., N. Y. August 20th, "Agnosticism," by F. L. Patton, D.D., LL.D., Princeton, N. J. August 21st, "Labor and Capital," a discussion by the Faculty and invited Speakers. August 22d, 11 A.M., Sermon by Rev. Dr. Deems, President of the Institute; 4 P.M., "The Mistakes of Moses," address by Rev. H. L. Hastings, Boston. August 23d, "Logic and Life," by Prof. B. P. Bowne, Boston University. August 24th, "The Function of Christian Doctrine," by J. E. Rankin, D.D., Orange Valley, N. J. August 25th, "Accord between Philosophy and Faith," and the Anniversary Address, by R. B. Welch, D.D., LL.D., Auburn, N. Y. August 26th, "The Conservation of Spiritual Force," by Rev. J. W. Lee, Atlanta, Ga.

The Lectures begin each day at 11:30 A.M. and Discussions at 3:00 P.M. Address Mr. Charles M. Davis, Secretary, 4 Winthrop Place, New York City.

The SEASIDE ASSEMBLY will meet at Key-East, N. J., August 1st-15th, 1886. The Objects of the Assembly are: "To unite evangelical Christians in promoting the general interests of Christian education, by providing an annual course of free instruction in Sunday-school work; Biblical and Scientific knowledge; Art; Music; Languages; and General Literature."

The outline of the Program is as follows: *The Children's Hour*, daily, in charge of Mrs. S. W. Clark. *Kindergarten Normal*, daily, in charge of Miss

Elridge. *Normal Work*: Bible section, J. Morrow, D.D.; Sunday-school section, Rev. S. W. Clark; Practical section, Dr. C. R. Blackall, Rev. S. W. Clark. *English Literature*, Prof. R. W. Welch, D.D., LL.D. *German Literature*, Rev. J. Richelson. *Elocution*, Miss C. E. Maguire. *Botany*, Prof. C. M. Davis, A.M., Miss S. F. Davis. *Music*, Prof. H. R. Palmer, Mus. Doc., Mr. H. H. McGranahan. Two musical concerts will be given. *Special Lectures*: Prof. R. B. Welch, D.D., LL.D., 1. "The Scriptures: their Genuineness and Authenticity," 2. "Their Inspiration and Divine Authority." Mr. Chas. W. Seymour, 1. "Mexico the Silver Land;" 2. "Spain and the Moors." Rev. P. S. Henson, D.D., Topic to be announced. Prof. W. R. Brooks, Two Lectures, "The Wonders of the Heavens." Mr. Acland Boyle, 1. "The Humorometer;" 2. "Dialectical Monologue." Prof. T. J. Morgan, D.D., "Salt Lake and Chinatown." Mr. P. M. Von Finkelstein, 1. "The Bedouins of Arabia;" 2. "The Fallaheen, or Farmer of Palestine." Rev. J. S. Ostrander, 1. "Bread or Beer;" 2. Three Lectures with large model of Palestine. Prof. D. S. Holman, 1. "Wiggles: How Animals Move and Live;" 2. "Wabbles and Waves: Motion in not Living Matter." Mr. Robert J. Burdette, 1. "Pilgrimage of the Funny Man;" 2. "The Diligent Man." Rev. H. L. Wayland, D.D., "An Evening in the House of Commons." Rev. J. O. Wilson, "From Hell Gate to Gold Gate." Rev. A. J. Rowland, D.D., "Plod and Pluck." Miss Carrie E. Maguire, an evening of Readings and Recitations.

THE PULPIT TREASURY IN THE FAMILY.

Wedding Congratulations.*

T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D.D. (PRESBYTERIAN).

We are closing a week of marriages. The air has been full of the tintinnabulation of wedding bells. Orange blossoms in a hundred homes and a hundred churches, north, south, east and west. I never in my life knew so many wed-

dings in one week. Our hotels, our rail-trains, our places of amusement thronged with the newly married. They may try by style of apparel or an affectation of indifference to hide the fact that their marriage was recent, but the attempt is a failure. The world picks them out as easily as we can tell the morning from the full noon. And our congratulations

*A Prayer-meeting Address, June 4th, 1886.

go after them from the White House to the humblest cabin in the far West. I hope that the representatives of foreign governments at Washington will cease to make fools of themselves because they were not invited last Wednesday to the Presidential wedding. If there is any time when a man ought to be allowed to do as he pleases it is when he gets married, choosing what wife he will, though others may have been recommended, and having the altar where he will, surrounded by whom he will, the banns proclaimed by what officiating priest he will. Better that these offended foreign ministers copy the example of our enterprising American reporters; not one of them invited, yet all rapturously happy and giving more vivid account of the happy scene than any could have given had they been present; glowing imagination more entertaining than plain reality. Let no one twist a sprig of nightshade into any of the wedding garlands of any who in any part of the land this week were joined in fortune. If forty-nine would marry twenty-two, or summer is fascinated with spring, whose business but their own? Both May and August are old enough to take care of themselves.

Long life to all those who this week have united destinies, and may their cup of earthly experience have no more bitter or sour drops than are just necessary to keep it from being insipid. God-honored institution of marriage! How it marches on from age to age, and the better society becomes, the more the institution is admired. Not a mere civil contract, as infidel and atheistic people would have us believe, for it had a divine starting in Paradise.

What a morning that was of the world's first wedding! Sky without a cloud. Atmosphere without a chill. Foliage without a crumpled leaf. Meadows without a thorn. It shall be in church—the great temple of a world, sky-domed, mountain-pillared, sapphire-roofed. The sparkling waters of the Gihon and the Hiddekel will make the fount of the temple. Larks, robins and goldfinches will chant the wedding march. Violet, lily and rose burning incense in the morning

sun. Luxuriant vines sweeping their long trails through the forest aisle—upholstery of a spring morning. Wild beasts standing outside the circle looking on, like family servants from the back door gazing upon the nuptials; the eagle, king of birds; the locust, king of insects; the lion, king of beasts, mating. Carpet of grass like emerald for the human pair to walk on. Hum of excitement, as there always is before a ceremony. Grass-blades and leaves whispering, and the birds a-chatter each one to his mate. Hush, all the clouds! Hush, all the birds! Hush, the waters, for the king of the human race advances, and his bride. Perfect man leading to the altar a perfect woman. God, her father, gives away the bride and angels are the witnesses, and tears of morning dew stand in the blue eyes of the violets. And Adam takes the round hand that had never been worn with work or stung with pain into his own stout grasp as he says: "This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." Tumults of joy break forth and all the trees of the wood clap their hands, and all the galleries of the forest sound with carol and chirp and chant, and the circle of Edenic happiness is complete; for while every quail hath answering quail, and every fish answering fish, and every fowl answering fowl, and every beast of the forest appropriated companion, at last man the immortal has for mate woman the immortal.

Married—Wednesday, the 2d day of June, in the year 1, Adam, the first man, to Eve, the first woman, High Heaven officiating.

Away, then, with the coarse notion that marriage is a mere civil contract. It is a Paradisiacal, six-thousand-year-old, divine institution, and all the laws since Blackstone or before Blackstone cannot appropriately marry two hearts unless the Lord Almighty hath first married them. All this makes sensible people look upon marriage as an important step. Instead of being lassoed by a curl or trading hearts in a philopena, they realize that between cradle and grave the most tremendous place is the marriage altar, and that while before that altar the twain stand with joined hands, between

them stands, all unseen, either the white-winged angel of blessing or the horned and hooved and fire-nostrilled gorgon of despair.

Applaud therefore all honest marriages and frown upon everything that would put them to ridicule. Have nothing to do with those slushy pamphlets and books which tell how impossible men met impossible women, got into impossible difficulties, and with impossible results, and villainy went unwhipped, and virtue fell dead. The fact is, that many of the young married people of this day get their heads so filled with the false and sentimental notions in regard to the plain, serious, old-fashioned institution of marriage they are unfit for the common duties of life. There she goes, lounging around the house with a twenty-five cent novel over her arm, her slippers run down at the heel, the furniture undusted and the socks undarned, and everything from cellar to garret in domestic chaos. Go home and gather up all that French stuff and pitch it into the kitchen grate. The best way for us to honor the marriage institution, of which we have heard so much this week, is for us who are now in that relation to faithfully perform all our duties, not taking easy offense from each other, remembering that hasty words and hasty action sometimes are not a matter of the heart, but merely a matter of the nerves. Husbands at the store worn out with anxieties, wives at home worn out with household cares, sometimes have their equipoise of spirit unbalanced. There are but few American men or women who have got any nerves worth speaking of. These delicate telegraph wires of the human body get damaged in the storm and the lightnings of temper run over them very irregularly. Omit all the slights and be economical of all censure, for there will before long be a hearse standing at your front door that will take away out of your presence the best friend you have on earth and the richest boon which God in His omnipotence and infinity has capacity to bestow—a good wife. If a child go, that desolates the nursery. If the wife go, that desolates all the

house and all the heart and all the world. The silences are so appalling when her voice is still, the vacancies are so ghastly, the gloom is as though the midnights of fifty years had dropped. The little child running around the room with a hurt finger calling for mother who will not come, and at night asking for a drink and saying: "No, no; I want mamma to bring it." Reminiscences that rush on the heart like a mountain torrent over which a cloud has burst. Her jewels, her books, her pictures, her dresses, some of them suggestive of banquet and some of burial, put into the trunk whose lid goes down with a heavy thud as much as to say, "Dead." The morning dead. The night dead. The air dead. The world dead. O, man, if in that hour you think of any unkind words uttered, you would be willing to pay in red coin of blood every drop from your heart if you could buy back the unkind words. But they will not come back. Words gone from the lips do not fly in circles like doves coming back to their cote, but in a straight line, a million miles a minute across the eternities. They never come back. Flattering epitaphology though a Dryden composed it, polished Aberdeen granite though an Angelo chiselled it, cannot atone for unkindness to the living.

While I speak my mind is full of the memory of a couple who were united in holy marriage December 19th, 1803. Their Christian names were old-fashioned like themselves, David the one, Catharine the other. Legal contract of course, but chiefly the Lord married them. They lived to see their crystal wedding, their silver wedding, their golden wedding and nine years besides. They lived to weep over the graves of three of their children. They lived to pass through many hardships and trials, but they kept the Christian faith; they lived for God, for each other, for their children, for everybody but themselves. Their hair grew white with age and their steps became shorter and shorter and their voices tremulous in the church psalm, though once they had led in the village choir. The one leaned heavily on a staff which I have in my house to-day but heavier on

the arm of God who had always helped them. They were well mated. What was the joy of the one was the joy of the other, what was the sorrow of the one was the sorrow of the other. At last they parted. God gave to her three years precedence of departure, but the three years soon passed and they were remarried. Their children are gradually joining them and will soon all be there. But the vision of that married life will linger in my memory forever. Together in the village church where they stood up to take the vows of the Christian just be-

fore their marriage day. Together through all the vicissitudes of a long life. Together in the quiet of the Somerville churchyard. Together in heaven. "And in the cave that is in the field Machpelah which is before Mamre, there they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife. There also they buried Isaac and Rebecca, his wife, and there I buried Leah." Oh, there are many in this house who can say with William Cowper:

"My boast is not that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise
The son of parents passed into the skies."

→* SUNDAY SCHOOL CAUSE *

LIGHT ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

BY ALFRED H. MOMENT, D.D. (PRESBYTERIAN), BROOKLYN, N. Y.

July 4,

Jesus and the Blind Man.—JOHN ix., 1-17.

1886.

All men are blind. Sin takes away soul-light. (Isaiah xxix., 10; Jeremiah v., 21; Ps. lxxxii., 5; Matt. xxiii., 16, 19, 26; John i., 5; iii., 19; Romans xi., 25; II. Cor. iii., 14; iv., 3, 4; Rev. iii., 17.) Jesus came to cure such spiritual blindness: "To open the blind eyes." (Is. xlii., 7; John i., 4, 9; iii., 19; viii., 12; ix., 5; xii., 35, 46.) With these two facts in mind, we will study this lesson. The great Gospel contained in it is—MAN'S RUIN AND GOD'S REMEDY.

I. The blind man. The affliction was born with him. So the curse of sin is from birth. Man comes into the world depraved, without understanding, ignorant of God. The cause of the blindness was neither the person himself nor yet his parents. So the reason why I was born a sinner cannot be charged to any act of my own, nor that of my parents—the condition of human nature was the cause. In the unfortunate man's case, the works of God were to be shown. So in the removal of soul-blindness, we have revealed God's greatest work—redemption by grace. The origin of sin is the ultimate mystery. God could not have prevented it, having made man with *free will*. But He showed Himself more than equal to the occasion. Blindness having come, it was "that the works of God should be made manifest." "When sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rev. v., 20).

II. The blind man cured. Vs. 6, 7. (1) The remedy was an external one. It was nothing in the man that secured him light, but an external agency. So grace is external to the sinner and opposed to all human methods, as culture, self-renunciation, morality. (2) The remedy was accommodated to the unfortunate man's condition. Jesus came to the beggar. He comes to us. He is where we are—a present Saviour. (3) The remedy itself: The eye-salve made of clay and spittle and the water of Siloam. This was Christ's own remedy. It suggests His atonement in securing spiritual light. "He hath washed us from our sins in His own blood." Jesus Christ is the world wide Siloam—the One "sent" to die for our poor blind race. (4) The divine remedy involves in it obedience on man's part. "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam," was commanded to the blind man. "Repent and believe the Gospel" is said to the sinner. *He must obey*. The securing of light to the soul is the work of co-operation—God and man, each doing his own part. Neither alone can effect anything. But God in Jesus has done His part. It remains for every blind man to do his—to accept Christ crucified.

III. The blind man's assurance. Vs. 8-17. Having obtained sight, the person before us had no doubt both as to his own identity and as to Jesus being the author