

TESTIMONY

FOR

THE CHURCH.

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THE JUDGMENT.

ON the morning of Oct. 23, 1879, about two o'clock, the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, and I beheld scenes in the coming Judgment. Language fails me in which to give an adequate description of the things which passed before me, and of the effect they had upon my mind.

The great day of the execution of God's judgment seemed to have come. Ten thousand times ten thousand were assembled before a large throne, upon which was seated a person of majestic appearance. Several books were before him, and upon the covers of each was written in letters of gold, which seemed like a burning flame of fire, "Ledger of Heaven." One of these books containing the names of those who claimed to believe the truth was then opened. Immediately I lost sight of the countless millions about the throne, and only those who were professedly children of the light and of the truth engaged my attention. As these persons were named, one by one, and their good deeds mentioned, their countenances would light up with a holy joy that was reflected in every direction. But this did not seem to rest upon my mind with the greatest force.

Another book was opened, wherein were recorded the *sins* of those who professed the

truth. Under the general heading of selfishness came every other sin. There were also headings over every column, and underneath these, opposite each name, were recorded in their respective columns the lesser sins. Under covetousness came falsehood, theft, robbery, fraud, and avariciousness; under ambition came pride and extravagance; jealousy stood at the head of malice, envy, hatred; and intemperance headed a long list of fearful crimes, such as lasciviousness, adultery, indulgence of animal passions, etc. As I beheld, I was filled with inexpressible anguish, and exclaimed, Who can be saved? who will stand justified before God? whose robes are spotless? who are faultless in the sight of a pure and holy God?

As the Holy One upon the throne slowly turned the leaves of the Ledger, and his eyes rested for a moment upon individuals, his glance seemed to burn into their very souls, and at the same moment every word and action of their lives passed before their minds as clearly as if traced before their vision in letters of fire. Trembling seized them, and their faces turned pale. Their first appearance when around the throne was that of careless indifference. But how changed their appearance now! The feeling of security is gone, and in its place is a nameless terror. A dread is upon every soul lest he shall be found among those who are wanting. Every eye is riveted upon the face of the One upon the throne; and as his solemn, searching eye sweeps over that company, there is a quaking of heart, for they are

self-condemned without one word being uttered. In anguish of soul each declares his own guilt, and with terrible vividness sees that by sinning he has thrown away the precious boon of eternal life.

One class were registered as cumberers of the ground. As the piercing eye of the Judge rested upon these, their sins of neglect were distinctly revealed. With pale and quivering lips they acknowledged that they had been traitors to their holy trust. They had had warnings and privileges, but they had not heeded nor improved them. They now see that they presumed too much upon the mercy of God. True, they had not such confessions to make as had the vile and basely corrupt; but like the fig-tree they were cursed because they bore no fruit, because they had not put to use the talents intrusted to them.

This class had made *themselves* supreme, laboring only for selfish interests. They were not rich toward God, not having responded to his claims upon them. Although professing to be servants of Jesus Christ, they brought no souls to him. Had the cause of God been dependent on their efforts, it would have languished; for they not only withheld the means lent them of God, but they withheld themselves. But these now see and feel that in occupying an irresponsible position in reference to the work and cause of God, they have placed themselves on the left hand. They had opportunity, but would not do the work that they could and should have done.

The names of all who professed the truth

were mentioned. Some were reprov'd for their unbelief, others for having been slothful servants. They allowed others to do the work in the Master's vineyard, and to bear the heaviest responsibilities, while they were selfishly serving their own temporal interests. By cultivating the abilities God had given them, they could have been reliable burden-bearers, working for the interest of the Master. Said the Judge, All will be justified by their faith, and judged by their works. How vividly then appeared their neglect, and how wise the arrangement of God in giving to every man a work to do to promote the cause and save his fellow-men. Each was to demonstrate a living faith in his family and in his neighborhood, by showing kindness to the poor, sympathizing with the afflicted, engaging in missionary labor, and by aiding the cause of God with his means. But like Meroz, the curse of God rested upon them for what they did not do. They loved that work which would bring the greatest profit in this life; and opposite their names in the Ledger devoted to good works there was a mournful blank.

The words spoken to these were most solemn: You are weigh'd in the balances, and found wanting. You have neglected spiritual responsibilities because of busy activity in temporal matters, while your very position of trust made it necessary that you should have more than human wisdom and greater than finite judgment. This you needed in order to perform even the mechanical part of your labor; and when you disconnected God and his glory from

your business, you turned from his blessing.

The question was then asked, Why have you not washed your robes of character, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb? God sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that through him it might be saved. My love for you has been more self-denying than a mother's love. It was that I might blot out your dark record of iniquity, and put the cup of salvation to your lips, that I suffered the death of the cross, bearing the weight and curse of your guilt. The pangs of death, and the horrors of the darkness of the tomb, I endured that I might conquer him who had the power of death, unbar the prison-house, and open for you the gates of life. I submitted to shame and agony because I loved you with an infinite love, and would bring back my wayward, wandering sheep to the paradise of God, to the tree of life. That life of bliss which I purchased for you at such a cost, you have disregarded. Shame, reproach, and ignominy, such as your Master bore for you, you have shunned. The privileges he died to bring within your reach have not been appreciated. You would not be partaker of his sufferings, and you cannot now be partaker with him of his glory. Then were uttered these solemn words: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." The book then closed, and the mantle fell from the person on the throne, revealing the terrible glory of the Son of God.

The scene then passed away, and I found

myself still upon the earth, inexpressibly grateful that the day of God had not yet come, and that precious probationary time was still granted us in which to prepare for eternity.

OUR PUBLICATIONS.

SOME things of grave importance have not been receiving due attention at our Offices of publication. Men in responsible positions should have worked up plans whereby our books could be circulated, and not lie on the shelves, falling dead from the press. Our people are behind the times, and are not following the opening providence of God.

Many of our publications have been thrown into the market at so low a figure that the profits are not sufficient to sustain the Office and keep good a fund for continual use. And those of our people who have no special burden of the various branches of the work⁷ at Battle Creek, and at Oakland, do not become informed in regard to the wants of the cause, and the capital required to keep the business moving. They do not understand the liability to losses, and the expense every day occurring to such institutions. They seem to think that everything moves off without much care or outlay of means, and therefore they will urge the necessity of the lowest figures on our publications, thus leaving scarcely any margin. And after the prices have been reduced to almost ruinous figures, they manifest but a feeble interest in increasing the sales of the very books

on which they have asked such low prices. The object gained, their burden ceases, when they ought to have an earnest interest and a real care to press the sale of the publications, thereby sowing the seeds of truth, and bringing means into the Offices to invest in other publications.

There has been, on the part of ministers, a very great neglect of duty in not interesting the churches in the localities where they labor, in regard to this matter. When once the prices of books are reduced, it is a very difficult matter to get them again upon a paying basis, as men of narrow minds will cry speculation, not discerning that no one man is benefited, and that God's instrumentalities must not be crippled for want of capital. Books that ought to be widely circulated are lying useless in our Offices of publication, because there is not interest enough manifested to get them circulated.

The press is a power; but if its products fall dead for want of men who will execute plans to widely circulate them, its power is lost. While there has been a quick foresight to discern the necessity of laying out means in facilities to multiply books and tracts, plans to bring back the means invested, so as to reproduce other publications, have been neglected. The power of the press with all its advantages is in their hands, and they can use it to the very best account, or they can be half asleep, and through inaction, lose the advantages which they might gain. They can extend the light, by judicious calculation, in the sale of books and pamphlets. They can send them into thousands of families who now sit in the darkness of error.

With other publishers, there are regular systems of introducing into the market books of no vital interest. "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." Golden opportunities occur almost daily where the silent messengers of truth might be introduced into families and to individuals; but no advantage is taken of these opportunities by the indolent, thoughtless ones. Living preachers are few. There is only one where there should be a hundred. Many are making a great mistake in not putting their talents to use in seeking to save the souls of their fellow-men. Hundreds of men should be engaged in carrying the light all through our cities, villages, and towns. The public mind must be agitated. God says, Let light be sent out into all parts of the field. He designs that men shall be channels of light, bearing it to those who are in darkness.

Missionaries are wanted everywhere. In all parts of the field canvassers should be selected, not from the floating element in society, not from men and women who are good for nothing else, and have made a success of nothing; but they should be persons of good address, of tact, keen foresight and ability. Such are needed to make a success as colporteurs, canvassers, and agents. Men suited to this work undertake it; but some injudicious minister will flatter them that their gift should be employed in the desk instead of simply working as colporteurs. Thus the work of the colporteur is belittled. They are influenced to get a license to preach, and the very ones who might

have been trained to make good missionaries to visit families at their homes, and talk and pray with them, are caught up to make poor ministers, and the field where so much labor is needed and where so much good might be accomplished for the cause, is neglected. The efficient colporteur, if his work is faithfully done, should have a sufficient remuneration for his services as well as the minister.

If there is one work more important than another, it is that of getting before the public our publications which will lead men to search the Scriptures. Missionary work—introducing our publications into families, conversing, and praying with and for them—is a good work, and one which will educate men and women to do pastoral labor.

Every one is not fitted for this work. Those of the best talent and ability, who will take hold of the work understandingly and systematically, and carry it forward with persevering energy, are the ones who should be selected. There should be a most thoroughly organized plan; and this should be faithfully carried out. Churches in every place should feel the deepest interest in the tract and missionary work.

The volumes of Spirit of Prophecy, and also the Testimonies, should be introduced into every Sabbath-keeping family, and the brethren should know their value, and be urged to read them. It was not the wisest plan to place these books at a low figure and have only one set in a church. They should be in the library of every family, and read again and again. Let them be kept where.

they can be read by many, and let them be worn out in being read by all the neighbors.

There should be evening readings, in which one should read aloud to those assembled at the winter fireside. There is but little interest manifested to make the most of the light given of God. Much of it is concerning family duties, and instruction is given to meet almost every case and circumstance. Money will be expended for tea, coffee, ribbons, ruffles, and trimmings, and much time and labor spent in preparing the apparel, while the inward work of the heart is neglected. God has caused precious light to be brought out in publications, and these should be owned and read by every family. Parents, your children are in danger of going contrary to the light given of Heaven, and you should both purchase and read the books, for they will be a blessing to you and yours.

You should lend Spirit of Prophecy to your neighbors, and prevail upon them to buy copies for themselves. Missionaries for God, you should be earnest, active, vigorous workers.

Many are going directly contrary to the light which God has given to his people, because they do not read the books which contain the light and knowledge in cautions, reproofs, and warnings. The cares of the world, the love of fashion, and the lack of religion, have turned the attention from the light God has so graciously given, while books and periodicals containing error are traveling all over the country. Skepticism and infidelity are increasing everywhere. Light, so precious, com-

ing from the throne of God, is hid under a bushel. God will make his people responsible for this neglect. An account must be rendered to him for every ray of light he has let shine upon our pathway, whether it has been improved to our advancement in divine things, or rejected because it was more agreeable to follow inclination.

We now have great facilities for spreading the truth, but our people are not coming up to the privileges given them. They do not see and sense the necessity in every church of using their abilities in saving souls. They do not realize their duty to obtain subscribers for our periodicals, including our health journal, and to introduce our books and pamphlets. Men should be at work who are willing to be taught as to the best way of approaching individuals and families. Their dress should be neat, but not foppish, and their manners such as not to disgust the people. There is a great want of true politeness among us as a people. This should be cultivated by all those who take hold of the missionary work.

Our publishing houses should show marked prosperity. Our people can sustain them if they will show a decided interest to work our publications into the market. But, should as little interest be manifested in the year to come as has been shown in the year past, there will be but small margin to work upon.

The wider the circulation of our publications, the greater will be the demand for books that make plain the Scriptures of truth. Many are becoming disgusted with the incon-

sistencies, errors, and the apostasy of the churches, and with the festivals, fairs, lotteries, and numerous inventions to extort money for church purposes. There are many who are seeking for light in the darkness. If our papers, tracts, and books, expressing the truth in plain Bible language, could be widely circulated, many would find that they are just what they want. But many of our brethren act as if the people were to come to them or send to our Offices to obtain publications, when thousands do not know that they exist.

God calls upon his people to act like living men, and not to be indolent, sluggish, and indifferent. We must carry the publications to the people, and urge them to accept, showing them that they will receive much more than their money's worth. Exalt the value of the books you offer. You cannot regard them too highly.

My soul was agonized as I saw the indifference of our people who make so high a profession. I was shown that the blood of souls will be on the garments of very many who now feel at ease and irresponsible for souls that are perishing around them for want of light and knowledge. They have come in contact with them, but have never warned them, never prayed with or for them, and never made earnest efforts to present the truth to them. I was shown that there has been a wonderful negligence on this point. Ministers are not doing one-half what they might do to educate the people for whom they labor upon all points of truth and duty; and, as a consequence, the people are

spiritless and inactive. The stake and scaffold are not appointed for this time to test the people of God, and for this very reason the love of many has waxed cold. When trials arise, grace is proportioned for the emergency. We must individually consecrate ourselves on the very spot where God has said he would meet us.

CHRIST'S AMBASSADORS.

AMBASSADORS for Christ have a solemn and important work, which rests upon some altogether too lightly. While Christ is the minister in the sanctuary above, he is also, through his delegates, the minister of his church on earth. He speaks to the people through chosen men, and carries forward his work through them, as when, in the days of his humiliation, he moved visibly upon the earth. Although centuries have passed, the lapse of time has not changed his parting promise to his disciples, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." From Christ's ascension to the present day, men ordained of God, deriving their authority from him, have become teachers of the faith. Christ, the True Shepherd, superintends his work through the instrumentality of these under-shepherds. Thus the position of those who labor in word and doctrine becomes very important. In Christ's stead they beseech the people to be reconciled to God.

The people should not regard their ministers as mere public speakers and orators, but as Christ's ambassadors, receiving their wisdom

and power from the great Head of the church. To slight and disregard the word spoken by Christ's representative, is not only showing disrespect to the man, but also to the Master who has sent him. He is in Christ's stead. The voice of the Saviour should be heard in his representative.

Many of our ministers have made a great mistake in giving discourses which were wholly argumentative. There are souls who listen to the theory of truth and are impressed with the evidences brought out, and then if a portion of the discourse presents Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world, the seed sown might spring up and bear fruit to the glory of God. But in many discourses the cross of Christ is not presented before the people. Some may be listening to the last sermon they will ever hear. And some will never again be situated where they can have the chain of truth brought before them and a practical application made of it to their hearts. That golden opportunity lost, is lost forever. Had Christ and his redeeming love been exalted in connection with the theory of truth, it might have balanced them on the side of Jesus Christ.

There are more souls longing to understand how they may come to Christ than we imagine. Many listen to popular sermons from the pulpit and know no better how to find Jesus and the peace and rest which their souls desire, than before they listened. Ministers who preach the last message of mercy to the world should bear in mind that Christ is to be exalted as the sinner's refuge. Many ministers

think that it is not necessary to preach repentance and faith, with a heart all subdued by the love of God; they take it for granted that their hearers are perfectly acquainted with the gospel, and that matters of a different nature must be presented in order to hold their attention. If their hearers are interested, they take it as evidence of success. The people are more ignorant in regard to the plan of salvation, and need more instruction upon this all-important subject, than upon any other.

Those who assemble to listen to the truth should expect to be profited, as did Cornelius and his friends: "Now, therefore, are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God."

Theoretical discourses are essential, that all may know the form of doctrine, and see the chain of truth, link after link, uniting in a perfect whole. But no discourse should ever be delivered without presenting Christ and him crucified as the foundation of the gospel, making a practical application of the truths set forth, and impressing upon the people the fact that the doctrine of Christ is not yea and nay, but yea and amen in Christ Jesus.

After the theory of truth has been presented, then comes the laborious part of the work. The people should not be left without instruction in the practical truths which relate to their every-day life. They must see and feel that they are sinners, and need to be converted to God. What Christ said, what he did, and what he taught, should be brought before them in the most impressive manner.

The work of the minister is but commenced when the truth is opened to the understanding of the people. Christ is our mediator and officiating high priest in the presence of the Father. He was shown to John as a Lamb that had been slain,—as in the very act of pouring out his blood in the sinner's behalf. When the law of God is set before the sinner, showing him the depth of his sins, he should then be pointed to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. He should be taught repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus will the labor of Christ's representative be in harmony with his work in the heavenly sanctuary.

Ministers would reach many more hearts if they would dwell more upon practical godliness. Frequently, when efforts are made to introduce the truth into new fields, the labor is almost entirely theoretical. The people are unsettled. They see the force of truth, and are anxious to obtain a sure foundation. As their feelings are softened, then is the time, above all others, to urge the religion of Christ home upon the conscience; but too often the course of lectures has been allowed to close without that work being done for the people which they needed. That effort was too much like the offering of Cain; it had not the sacrificial blood to make it acceptable to God. Cain was right in making an offering, but he left out all that made it of any value,—the blood of the atonement.

It is a sad fact that the reason why many dwell so much on theory, and so little on prac-