

BIBLE LESSON XX.

John 19:1

SOURGE OF TONGUES

“Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him.” But Jesus said never a word. We do not speak when the scourge of tongues is upon our character, our work, our motives.

We do not think anything when the scourge of adversity is upon our undertakings. We do not think or speak when sharp pains scourge our bodies. We answer never a word when one who has wronged us sorely tries by adroit accusings to make us speak some retaliatory words to engage us in quarrel. We give the “soft answer that turneth away wrath” when one has come to feel that he has just cause for anger against us. Thus is the summary of this lesson. According to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, all evil is a lie from the beginning – pure delusion. But the loving kindness of the Gospel is such that we may know exactly what to do under every circumstance and condition of human experience to rise out of suffering which seems real.

According to the Gospel, suffering of any kind was not made for the children of God; and we are the children of God.

Jesus told us that if the cup of sorrow should be pressed to our lips we must refuse it, saying: “I will not drink it. I refuse it.” He tasted it once for the purpose of telling us we

need not drink it. He showed us we need not drink it. He showed how the refusing to feel sorrowful at a sorrowful state of affairs would set the affairs straight.

This is the Gospel. Under the law and the prophets we have cause and effect, physical and metaphysical.

Under the law we have the cold to chill our bodies into consumption and the failing mental state to show a wrong thought once held.

Under the Gospel, "None of these things move me."

At each point of human experience touch your lot with the Gospel and be free from cause and effect.

The oldest teaching known to the race is that all things we see and feel and hear and taste were wrought and built by some thoughts we used to hold.

We have now riches or poverty, health or sickness, sorrow or gladness, friends or foes, according as our thoughts have formulated. Edwin Arnold gives us this as the teaching of Buddhism:

Thought in the mind has made us.

What we are by thought was wrought and built.

If a man's mind hath evil thoughts,

Pain comes to him as comes the wheel the ox behind.

Once they taught in ancient books that we are surrounded by a cosmic ether or matter principle which receives every thought we

think and every word we say and brings it forth as the soil brings up the seeds.

Some thoughts are slow to come to fruit, just as some seeds are slow. The apple seed is longer than corn; the corn longer than the pea.

Every affirmation is a prayer. An affirmation is a positive statement that something is. Every affirmation carries the tacit asking for something and also carries the tacit expectation that it will be so proved. A certain quick-tempered feeling, for instance, is the tacit asking for something bad to happen. We speak impulsively the affirmation, "You are a hateful thing." We, of course, expect something to result from our speaking: either the pain or the despair of somebody.

Then we forget our word, but afterwards we are lame or some member of our family is disabled. "For the lightest word thou shalt give account in the day of judgment." Judgment is when the words have come forth in solid pictures.

There is a physical mode in trying to set things that are consequences right. The oculist, the artist, and the surgeon are as busy as can be rectifying consequences. Our popular magazines often have page after page of descriptions of successful management of consequences by surgeons, artists, oculists.

But the metaphysician or moralist says so long as the causes remain, the consequences will follow as "comes the wheel the ox behind." If a strong prejudice caused cataract the cataract will stay till the prejudice is gone; it

will form and reform, says the moralist. If Napoleon III shoots causelessly at Maximilian in Mexico, Napoleon's son must be shot causelessly in the jungles of Africa.

For every shriek of the drowning slave thrown overboard to lighten the slave ships in the storms, a Harvard boy, a Yale youth or a farmer's son must fall on the battlefield of the Republic in the civil war that sets them free.

From Genesis to Revelation "Eye for eye and tooth for tooth" for everybody and everything out of Christ. The cheating of the car-conductor out of your fare, though you argue that the corporation is rich and you are poor, will put you behind sixty and an hundred fold more than the fare.

Confidence in the God of right will add to you sixty and an hundred fold. "He that leadeth into captivity shall be led into captivity, and he that killeth with the sword, shall be killed with the sword," whether it be sword and bondage of tongue or steel.

To annul this we follow Christ Jesus. We cannot make believe follow His ways, either. Making believe brings failure and loss. "The hypocrite's hope shall perish." Here is a beautiful lesson in Christ of how to act under the stings of the tongue of the law, when we are in some bodily torture or mental pain, or hurting circumstance. Keep still. There is a breathing finer than the nostrils and the lungs and the airs experience. There is a pulse beat more irresistible, and a heartbeat for ever steady, which it is impossible to watch with the muscles relaxed and the mind intent.

When the little widows of India were asked how they endured the scourings of their lot one of them explained that they had learned that they had a finer life within them which would live and bear it, if they would be still enough. Shall we not see the Christ in the innocent victims? Is not the Christ able? Is not Christ in us? This is the finer life that can make scourings nothing if we relapse into it.

Within the alchemy of mind is the peaceful Spirit. Within the chemist's fire is the crystal ice. Within the sun, a center of peace. Within the cyclone, stillness. Within mind, God. "My peace I give unto you." That finer life within us all knows no suffering; knows no death never heard of any of them. We all have the same faculty given us of watching the subtle, sweet life when the pains and torments of our past thoughts come to their fruitage, and thereby not feeling the pains.

We may call it the faculty of wrapping the mantle of our own thoughts around us, as we are taught in science to do on the Sabbath.

Indeed, the teachings of Jesus are the twelve simple lessons of Christian science put into practical living. The silent life of us is the triumphant power of us. It will speak and live so perfectly for us, we get into the way of letting it, that we see and hear and know only that life, and to us it is no longer silent.

In these days of noise and hurry we must not lose sight of that fine victorious life ever coursing through us, willing to do all things for us.

In a newspaper we were all told lately that everything nowadays has to be loudly heralded. "To depend upon merit is obsolete and chimerical. The only winning card is assurance." But Jesus Christ's teachings were for all time and for every situation. He taught a sure rule for success. Success means good health, good judgment and prosperity. All other ways except His way have failed. Let us try His way.

The letter fails and systems fall,

And every symbol wanes;

The Spirit overbrooding all,

Eternal love remains.

Try for your health the silent way, the supremely still way. A few years ago a number of invalids, scourged, beaten things they were, had an idea come to them all over the world simultaneously, as an idea of a patent car-coupler would strike ten thousand minds just ready for it simultaneously. They determined to lie still - still - still, and see what would become of them. They all got well. How many have stopped their vain searchings and hard studying to suddenly find themselves thoroughly enlightened on the subject that had baffled them. "Be still and know that I Am God." You can get best financial and professional success by relying upon the still principle.

Serene, I fold my hands and wait,

Nor care for wind or tide or sea.

I rave no more 'gainst time or fate,

For lo! My own shall come to me.

Some people will not turn to the silence of the fine life within them till they are driven by the winds of sore failure of every other plan. There is a wind flower in South America which will not show its sweet bloom unless the rough winds blow, but we need not wait for calamity to blow wore winds, or the scourging of pain. We may sing the Benedictus from a silence not enforced like Zachariah's. We need not wait for the law to imprison us before we write a great book like Bunyan. Here we are taught to cease from fretting at sore trials for they simply mean that old ways of thinking and old material conditions are being struck off.

We have got into set ways of thinking, supposing feeling. When we have believed in the necessity for summer and winter, seed time and harvest, we have come to believe in toil – hard toil. If we believe in hard toil we believe in unavailing toil this always brings death or famine to the individual and to the planet. Death of peace, hope, substance, happiness, friends - death of something.

“As comes the wheel the ox behind.”

Pilate, whose name shows that he stands for a hand of the law and the prophets, finds no real fault in us. He is simply an instrument of the people with some hint of a soul. He lays all the blame of the scourging onto somebody else. His wife warns him.

Whoever acts the Pilate will be warned in advance.

Before you speak harshly to your boy for some supposed offense, stop. You had a warning not to do it by a feeling the other day

that something bad was going to happen to him. You are the thing that is going to happen to him. The child must not be scourged by your tongue or our ships, for Pilate acted out always has a fearful end.

"Take ye Him," said Pilate. Now be no coward. If it was right for Pilate to scourge Jesus it was right for him to finish the punishment. The Adam type never likes to be responsible. The Christ always is. Bold, intrepid people have more admiration from us than shrinking, shirking ones.

Cortez wins our admiration, though his boldness was engaged to ignoble uses. We see how he was a hand of the law, not afraid to destroy those Aztecs in a religious frenzy as those Aztecs had boldly destroyed twenty thousand noble youths every year in cruel religious frenzy. Cleopatra was intrepid, fearless to the last breath.

"We have a law," shouted the populace, "whereby He ought to die." This law was Lev. 24:16, which put their neighbors to death for blasphemy. But who should judge what is blasphemous?

Luther haughtily refused to shake the hand of the gentle Zwingli because he thought the kindly heart had blasphemed God. But is haughtiness honor of god? Is not mercy and tolerance more Godlike? How can the Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Catholics, etc. know whether they or the Briggs, Newtons, Brooks, McGynns, etc., are more nearly Godlike, save by the mercy, gentleness, love, forgetfulness of opinions they show? Who is

more likely to be honoring the Maker of all things, he who calls himself a worm of the dust, a helpless child, or He who rises and says, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth, for I and my Father are One?"

The Pilate nature is in great doubt when he gets between the two factions, one calling himself a helpless infant and the other God in His Greatness. "Whence?" But Jesus answers nothing, for Pilate is determined not to hear the Jesus idea. He is mortally afraid of the people. Do no explain yourself to one who is afraid the people are not ready to be told of their omnipotence and omniscience. Your silent presence is all they can bear.

Whatever you know of your power and wisdom will treat hem. They will catch the idea from your atmosphere. If you said yesterday to anything, "I hate it," or "I hate you," somebody coming near to you today will feel a little hate of you come suddenly into his mind. You cannot think a thought but somebody will catch it, and if your mind is absolutely absorbed with any theme everybody will catch it.

So you see how the disease germs will spread by thinking of disease germs. You see how a doctor may actually drop down into your house the idea of that last case he attended and you will be another just like it on his list pretty soon.

To study nosology, classification of disease, astrology, causes of disease, symptomatology, symptoms of disease is not nearly as healthy a state of mind to carry around as the

absorption with the idea, "The Spirit maketh you every whit whole." Now Pilate gets angry. What at? Why, because he has done Jesus a great wrong, and His patience under it makes Pilate hate Him.

Rosina Vokes in one of her plays says, "I have done him a great wrong and I hate him for it? The audience laughs knowingly when she repeats the little truism of the Pilate type.

Here is where Jesus speaks. Pilate begins to feel it was cruel of Jesus to get him into such a predicament. "Pilate," He says tenderly, "you would not have done it if you had acted out your own best judgment." There is no real power in being wrong even with members on your side. Power is in being in the right. He shows him how his foolishness came from Judas, the luster. Weakness had its rise in lust of some kind. So, whoever is cowardly or weak or faltering of courage of mind or body needs the whole six treatments of science.

Pilate refused the divinity side and gave over to the material side of the question. All those who parleyed with Judas ended violently. They had to, because they kept under the law of cause and effect, as "he that killeth shall be killed."

Judas, Pilate, Herod, Caiaphas, Annas, where are they? How ended the? Jesus and His doctrine - were they crucified, killed? To the Christ that never was crucified, to the Christ that never was entombed, to the Christ that never had to rise, being already risen, to the triumphant Christ, high over principalities

and powers and nations, be joined. Ye are of like Substance. The fine, still life within you, watch it: it is Christ within you, victorious over all, never knowing defeat of health, or wisdom, or wealth.

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