

BIBLE LESSON XXVII.

Isaiah 28:1

WHO ARE DRUNKARDS

The lesson for today is all about woe, according to Isaiah and the religious world that has let its thought currents be stirred by Isaiah. It is, "Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim;" and the Golden text selected is, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

According to absolute truth, who are drunkards? Those who have swallowed the idea that there is another power besides spirit, another substance besides spirit, another law besides spirit.

What other power besides spirit is there? None. "Is there any besides Me? Nay, I know not any."

What other substance is there besides spirit? None. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?"

What other law is there besides the law of the spirit? None. "The law of the spirit maketh free from sin and death." "There shall be one Lord (law) and His name one."

Then who is there to swallow the idea that there is more than one power, presence, law? Nobody.

There is but one being. "There is one God who is above you all and through you all and in you all."

Then who is there to be a drunkard? Nobody.

Then what is Isaiah talking about in this twenty-eighth chapter? Nothing.

How, then is it profitable to read and study the chapter? Simply as the observation of contrasts – opposites. To look his words over from the standpoint of one who knows what is real and what is supposition is worthwhile.

If there were anybody to believe in two powers and the results of the belief were to confront us this would be the way the results would look.

But starting out with the belief in evil and good would not make both evil and good true, any more than it would make it true if you should suspect a good man of having stolen your watch when he was utterly incapable of such a thing.

God is the only Presence, Power, Law. You may agree with Isaiah and the kings and queens and college presidents of the world that drunkenness and poverty and sorrow are realities and are permitted within the omnipresent good, but it is a lie from the beginning just the same and you will only demonstrate freedom in yourself and for your world by rising out of the clutches of Isaiah and the kings and queens and college presidents by speaking the truth.

"You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free."

If there were any being to get drunk then he must have first swallowed the belief in two powers, two substances, two laws. Then he would get afraid of the other power and get to hating the other presence. Then his hate must rest somewhere and on something as the magnetic belts that are supposed to circle the earth find some stones, some plants, some animals that will catch and hold their quality of magnetism more than others.

If a person keeps saying, even casually and carelessly, "I hate it," or "I hate him," his words must go over the air like dandelion seeds and drop somewhere, and whoever comes into the spots where the words are lying will pick up the harmless little nightshade or tobacco plant and find poison in it. He will find the word hate dropped into the plant and will say it is poison.

But it would never be true for a moment. For "God saw everything that He had made and, behold, it was very good." "And without Him was nothing made that was made." Ephraim in this woe of Isaiah is Samaria which was named after Ephraim. Ephraim means double fruitfulness - that is, both evil and good thoughts should have their fruits in this city. They should have their crown here. They should be very apparent.

Isaiah falls directly into the sight of both good and evil, and one moment triumphantly prophesies the double good to be demonstrated when people shall not judge after the sight of the eyes, and in the next moment judges entirely after the sight of his eyes by

seeing where the hate thoughts of Esau had stopped in the vineyards and among the people of Samaria. Ephraim or Samaria took the hate thoughts of Esau and the fear thoughts of Jacob, and Isaiah saw the feeling effects of such notions so vividly that he caused the hate and fear to come quickly to a head, like a great boil, and break over in to a terrible rage of misery. For Isaiah believed greatly in the active operation of evil now and the future active operation of good.

His mind had great power. At Samaria he might have pronounced the omnipotence of the good with such intense spiritual and mental efficiency that the reeling priests and drunken princes would have shouted praises and hallelujahs to Jehovah Nissi.

The banner over them was love. The belief around them was hate. Where did all the hate come from? It had slipped over the head of Ephraim himself from Esau's hatred of Jacob, had rested temporarily on poor Joseph, sold by his brethren in to Egypt, and had come down to reach its ultimate or crown of pride in Samaria.

Isaiah ought to have realized how powerful – how doubly powerful the word of good would be in Samaria, just as Elisha had so long before him.

Just at the moment when the hate thoughts of Esau and the fear thought of Jacob were festered into what was called the siege of Samaria, Elisha had risen in the power of his mind and spoken such words as had turned the Syrian army aside, and fed the

starving inhabitants of the city where forever the signs of evil and of good together should distract the mind to see double, as the Iceland spar doubly refracts light, and forever makes two images of one substance – till we withdraw our hate thoughts from the earth.

Whoever sees both good and evil plays the part of a double refractor, and is typified by the Iceland spar. He is well represented by Isaiah if he feels dreadfully about the evil and works himself sick in the slums, supposing that to mourn and wail and pronounce woes on governments, preachers, teachers, for not stopping the same is wise. Such ragings are deceptions, and “whoever is deceived thereby is not wise.”

Back of all that the senses tell, and back of all that the mind believes, is the truth. Whoever started there, and believed in something not true, he caused a Jacob to be both mean and noble. There are two Jacobs now. Jacob stole his birthright and earned Rachel. These two trains of character fought within him near the brook of Jabbok. He was trying to believe in the triumph of love while his mind was half believing in the power of hate.

The confidence in the power and presence and efficiency or law of love is never absent from anybody’s mind; but not everybody rallies that idea (which is his angel), and causes it to face the fear of hate, or fear of evil, as Jacob did just before he met Esau.

His confidence in the power of love prevailed, and love spoke boldly as his noble

friend, "As a prince hast thou power with God and man."

Take your two states of mind and settle the question today whether you believe in the presence and power and working of the love of God to stop all the fruits of hate and fear now. See how Jacob prevailed. Esau met him kindly. Your mission is greater than Jacob's. He settled it for himself, but not for his children nor for his world. You and I will take the question for all the universe.

I do believe in the good only as now working with me and through me and by me and for me to make me a living demonstration of the power of goodness for all the world. I do not believe in the signs of evil. God is all. God folds and keeps all this world in love. I pronounce all evil sights and sounds absent, and declare love and joy their rightful inheritance of every creature, from this moment.

If the absurdity of such a prayer comes up it is your Jacob experience. Rise and wrestle to believe in the good. Miracles are wrought by prayer, child of God.

When fear of evil or hate of evil sights or belief in a law of evil comes up within you, wrestle; wrestle all night till the morning. You will see great corporations wither and drunken officials cease from power and proud magnates get meek as Jacob's thigh - which was the part of him that stood for his fear of evil - as these are the part of the world that stand out as your fear of evil or grief at evil.

Jacob was most interested in his own fortunes. You are interested in a common

humanity. What you have you wish all the world to have. They may receive it at your hands. If you believe otherwise than this, wrestle with my message for it is sent to tell you that our God reigns and you will see His loving kindness when you believe He is the only presence, the only power, and the only efficiency.

At Samaria, Elisha decided for the loving kindness of Jehovah. At Samaria, Jesus announced the presence of the Messiah. At Samaria, Isaiah pronounced for the power of evil as ending in death.

The noble vineyards, the beautiful olive groves, and the bountiful fields of waving grain in Samaria were the fruit of the word of the loving kindness of God believed in. The intoxicating wines, the reeling priests, and profligate princes were the fruits of the words of hate and the belief in hate.

As there is only one presence and that is omnipresent, only one power and that is omnipotence, only one science or knowledge and that is omniscience, any other idea of anything must be no idea at all - just delusion.

Whenever one has tried the ways of the world and learned the law of the spirit there comes a time when he must choose positively which he will believe in. It will mark itself on his face from that moment, for he has met his Samaria, and the watchpost thereof is in him from that time on. Samaria means "watchpost."

The woman at the well still under the dominion of the Isaiah type of a future Messiah heard Jesus Christ tell her that the Messiah was already here. We who have been believing that the good is coming to us now rise to shake off the belief in time and the belief in the presence of evil and declare that there is nothing to hate. We declare from the coiling cobra to the flowing bowl of the reeling statesmen we withdraw our accusations.

There is nothing to hate. God made all things and pronounced them very good. We will not fill them with our fear of them. We know that this is the only law of safety there is. It is the law of non-condemnation practiced by Jesus Christ. "Neither do I condemn thee." So shall it be fulfilled of which He promised, "They shall drink any deadly thing and it shall not hurt them."

We will remember how God made everything good, even all mankind, and will not accuse anybody of anything. There we will see our high thoughts come around us instead of our low thoughts. The high thoughts of Abraham came and sat in the door of his tent like men. The high thoughts of Elijah took him up in a chariot of majesty. The high thoughts of Elisha encamped as Majestic horsemen and descended the walls of Samaria to tell him how to feed the besieged city. The high thoughts of Jesus fed Him, as an angel came and ministered. All the people round about us are majestic, noble, beautiful, happy.

If we have covered them with mantles of meanness, with veils of dishonesty, with skins

of ugliness, with talks of misery, we hereby withdraw all the thoughts which have caused them to look and act quite different from their true selves, and we know that so shall the supernal beings God keeps in this world – the angels of whom we are unaware – come into our sight.

All is good. All is beauty. All is love. Here, on the hilltop of Samaria, we lift our eyes to God and pronounce no woe on mankind, no denunciation on the creeping things, nor on the growing plants or fruit.

There is no process by which any man can hurt his neighbor according to spirit. And spirit is all. There is no way whereby man can defraud his neighbor according to spirit. And spirit is all. There is no law whereby anything that lives or grows can cause our young men to reel or stagger as drunken. There is only God. There are no words given under Heaven for anybody to eat save the words of Jesus Christ. "They shall have no power to hurt."

Do you not see that if you must rise today and announce to your own self whether you accuse anything or anybody, or withdraw your accusation, that there is but one thing to do?

If you have noticed how no other plan works you may be more willing to withdraw your accusations for a new plan. Whosoever is deceived by thinking that it is wine that causes men to reel had better withdraw his accusation from the wine and see it "have no power to hurt." Whosoever thinks that strong drink is raging as a wild enemy to peace and prosperity had better withdraw his fear of evil

and his belief in hate and his sting of accusation from the air where they have wondered and dropped into the fermented grains, and strong drink shall have no power to hurt even when mixed with the deadly drugs that represent our hatred of people.

"They shall drink any deadly thing and it shall not hurt them."

The stings of our false notions we now withdraw. We love truth and good substance. "If this be not true then is my preaching vain," and I must enter the gates of despair with the rest of the philanthropists of the world who believe in fighting the evils their own beliefs have projected on the canvas of humanity.

But I do not believe in the power or the presence or the action of evil. At the highest point of its crown of pride I name it delusion and put there the triumphant healing name - Jesus Christ.

"There is, therefore, now no condemnation."

There is nothing to hate. All is spirit.

This is the teaching prophesied to come; "Hear and your soul shall live."

We feel the air blow o'er us,

And the glory shines before us

Of what mankind may be,

Pure, generous, brave and free.

"Am I my brother's keeper?" Yea, verily.

But the beasts of the field were made to love me, the storms were made to praise me, and I was made to love them all. There is nothing to hate.

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