

CUNNINGLY
DEvised FABLES
OF
RUSSELLISM.

By PINE WOODS BIBLE CLASS.

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THE "CUNNINGLY DEvised FABLES," OF RUSSELLISM.

Albert. I was reading in the New Testament, about a time that is coming, when people would prefer fables to the truth. It does seem to me, that those times have surely come. I wish the Class would examine that topic to-night.

Teacher. Where is it taught that men would be turned unto fables?

A. In 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto FABLES."

Q. To what period of time does this text refer to?

A. The context reads: "This know

also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.”

Q. Have those times come?

A. They have.

Q. What do you find to be in peril?

A. The faith of many is severely tried by teachers of all kinds of fables.

Q. Well, from among them all, which would you select as being peculiarly dangerous?

A. I would select the fables taught by Russellites.

Q. I thought they taught a great deal of truth, says one; is that not the case?

A. They do; and that is what makes it so dangerous. People are attracted by it, and are thus unsuspectingly led into its meshes.

Q. What overthrew the faith of some in apostolic days?

A. See 2 Tim. ii. 18. Speaking of Hymenæus and Philetus, he says: “Who concerning the truth have erred, saying

the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."

Q. Well, if to deny a future resurrection of the dead, is subversive of the faith; surely what would it be to deny the resurrection of the blessed Lord Jesus, who suffered on the cross as the Savior of sinners?

A. There could be no question about that being subversive of the faith.

Q. Why so?

A. Because Paul says in 1 Cor. xv. 14-18: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching VAIN, and your FAITH is also VAIN. . . . Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are PERISHED."

Bessie. I would like to see some genuine evidence that Mr. Russell really does deny the resurrection of the Crucified One?

A. You can find all you want, by reading Chapter V. of "Millennial Dawn," Vol. II.

Q. Can't you give us a quotation right now?

A. I can. I will quote as follows: "Many Christians have the idea that our Lord's glorious spiritual body is the VERY SAME BODY that was CRUCIFIED and LAID in Joseph's tomb; they expect when they see the Lord in glory, to identify him by the SCARS he received on Calvary."

"We KNOW nothing about what BECAME of it, except that it did not decay or corrupt. Whether it was DISSOLVED into GASES, or whether it is still preserved somewhere as a grand memorial of God's love, of Christ's obedience, and our redemption, no one knows, nor is such knowledge necessary."

Ella. I would like to have the Class put this quotation from Mr. Russell, in contrast with Matt. xxviii. 5-7: "And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek JESUS, who was CRUCIFIED. He is not HERE; but is RISEN, as he said. Come see the place where he lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he was RISEN from the DEAD."

Q. Who did the angel say "was risen from the dead?"

A. Why the very same "Jesus who was crucified." I wonder if Mr. Russell has conceit enough to presume that he knew more about this matter than the angel, when he said: "Many Christians have the idea that our Lord's glorious, spiritual body is the very SAME body that was crucified and LAID in Joseph's tomb." It seems to me that all true Christians are bound to believe the angel when he said, "Ye seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen." They were also invited to "come see the place where he lay" in Joseph's tomb. There was no body there. The angel accounted for its absence, by saying, "He is not here; for he is risen, as he said."

Arloa. I would like to know how Mr. Russell accounts for the vacant tomb?

Teacher. I will answer that by giving another quotation from "Millennial Dawn." It is as follows: "Our Lord's

human body was SUPERNATURALLY REMOVED from the TOMB; because had it remained there it would have been an insurmountable obstacle to the faith of the disciples, who were not yet instructed in spiritual things." "We know not what became of it," etc.

Lucy. Why don't he know "what became of it?" Does he not accept the testimony of the angel, when he said, "Ye seek Jesus which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen?" It seems to me, that his idle speculation, that it may have been "dissolved into gases," is worse than the story told by the soldiers, who guarded his tomb.

Q. How many ways are suggested to account for the empty tomb?

A. Three.

Q. Please name them?

A. 1st. The Soldiers.---"His disciples came by night, and stole him."

2nd. Mr. Russell.---"Supernaturally removed." May be "dissolved into gases;" or may be "preserved somewhere

as a grand memorial," a relic of imagination and guess work.

3d. The Angel.---"He is risen from the dead."

Lud. Why does Mr. Russell claim that it was necessary that the body must be gotten rid of, either by being "dissolved into gases," or some other way?

A. I will answer that by giving one more quotation from "Millennial Dawn." It reads as follows: "After they had become partakers of the Holy Spirit and understood spiritual things, they could have believed the angels at the sepulchre, that he had risen from the dead condition, even if they had seen the fleshly BODY of the man Christ Jesus STILL LYING in the TOMB; but not so before. The BODY MUST be AWAY to make faith in the resurrection possible to them."

Q. What does this language indicate?

A. If it indicates anything, it indicates that a deceptive trick must be played on the disciples, the body must be gotten away from the tomb, either by be-

ing "dissolved into gases," or in some other way, and when they fail to find the crucified body of the Lord in the tomb, then they will believe it has been raised from the dead. We want them to believe and preach that he has been raised from the dead, while in point of fact, it has only been "supernaturally removed from the tomb." "The body must be removed, to make faith in his resurrection possible to them." In point of fact, the absence of the body from the grave under such conditions, would be no proof of his resurrection at all. To preach a resurrection based on deceptive tricks, would most certainly be preaching a cunningly devised fable.

Ella. I noticed Mr. Russell said that after the disciples had become partakers of the Holy Spirit, they could have believed that the Lord had risen from the dead, even if they could actually see the body of the Lord "still lying in the tomb." What do you think of that?

Teacher. It seems to me that if Mr.

Russell's conception of the Holy Spirit is such that it could lead the disciples to believe a lie, and also to contradict their own God-given senses, it must be on a par with the rest of his fables.

Q. What good evidence have we, that the crucified Lord himself, has actually and literally been raised from the dead, and not "dissolved into gases?"

A. We have his own testimony.

Q. Please give it?

A. See Rev. i. 18: "I am he that liveth, and WAS dead; and, behold, I am alive for ever more."

Q. How strangely this sounds, when compared with the fables of Russellism, which has him "supernaturally removed," "dissolved into gases," or any other way to nullify the actual and literal resurrection of the blessed Redeemer who suffered on the cross. Notice very particularly his language: "I AM HE" the real identical one---"the very same body that was crucified and lay in Joseph's tomb," as "many Christians have the idea."

“Identify him by the scars he received on Calvary.” Test him, “Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.” Believe that “I am He that Liveth, and WAS DEAD; and, behold, I am ALIVE forever more.” Why is it that Mr. Russell has so little use for the resurrection of the Crucified One?

A. I presume that it does not harmonize with some of his notions.

I will quote again from pp. 130, 132, Vol. II., “Millennial Dawn.” It reads as follows: “If his BODY after his resurrection were flesh and bones, and the SAME body that was crucified, with all the features and SCARS, why did he perform miracles, etc.?”

“If the SCARS and marred human features are a part and parcel of our exalted Lord, he would be far from beautiful.”

Carrie. Is it really possible that Mr. Russell has no regard for the clear tes-

timony of our dear risen Lord, when he said, "I am He that was dead?" The tone of the last quotations from Millennial Dawn, seems to doubt that "his body after his resurrection were flesh and bones, and the SAME body that was crucified, with all the features, and SCARS?"

Lud. Well, if he does doubt, he will still have to set aside some more straight testimony of the risen Lord.

Arloa. What testimony do you have reference to?

Lud. I refer to his testimony as given in Luke xxiv. 38-40: "And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed him his hands and his feet."

Mr. Russell is sceptical about our Lord having "flesh and bones," in his resurrection body, but the Lord said that he had, all the same. "Handle me and

see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." He invited them to exercise their sense of sight and touch, and be convinced. Furthermore, he twice invited them to examine "his hands and his feet," where they could actually see the nail prints, and by this be convinced, that his resurrection body, was in point of fact, the very same body which hung upon the cross.

Q. Have we further evidence concerning the nail prints?

A. Yes, we have?

Q. Where?

A. In John xx. 19, 20: "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side."

Q. Was it not his design in showing

them "his hands and his side," to convey to their minds the impression that he was truly the very Christ which their own eyes had so recently seen hanging on the cross, and that they may "Identify him by the SCARS he received on Calvary," just as Mr. Russell, says, "Many Christians" "expect when they see the Lord in glory?"

A. There can be no doubt but what that was his purpose.

Q. Were the disciples all present when Jesus appeared?

A. No, sir; "Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came."

Q. Did they tell Thomas about having seen the Lord?

A. They did. They "said unto him, we have SEEN the LORD."

Q. Were the disciples sure that they had really seen the Lord, and had not been deceived by some imposition?

A. "He shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples

GLAD when they SAW the LORD." They did not seem to have the least idea that those SCARS were counterfeits.

Q. Well, what did Thomas say about the report that they had seen the Lord?

A. "He said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."

Q. Well, supposing that Thomas could do all that, what good would that do him, providing those nail prints, and the spear wound were all BOGUS, put there for the purpose of DECEPTION?"

A. None, whatever.

Q. Well, did Thomas ever have an opportunity to make a personal examination of those scars?

A. He did. "After eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and he stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

Then saith he to Thomas, Reach

hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless but believing.”

Q. What was the effect of his examination?

A. Thomas exclaims, “My Lord and my God.”

Q. What did Jesus say?

A. “Thomas, because thou hast SEEN ME, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”

Q. Well, now, suppose that no nail had ever pierced the hands where those nail prints appeared, into which Thomas pressed his finger, and no spear had ever entered the side, where Thomas put his hand, what then?

A. Why, such an insinuation would practically charge the Lord with being a fraud, a deceiver, and a counterfeitor.

George. Now, suppose we ask Mr. Russell a few questions, and we will try and ascertain if we can, whether or not

the wounds examined by Thomas, were the genuine wounds which our Lord received while on the cross.

Now, Mr. Russell, tell us, do Christians in general, believe, that the body which hung on the cross, and was laid in Joseph's tomb became our Lord's glorious resurrection body?

Mr. Russell. "Many Christians have the idea that our Lord's glorious, spiritual body is the very same body that was crucified and laid in Joseph's tomb?"

George. Well, if the crucified body was not raised, what became of it? You know the angel said to the women who visited the tomb, "Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen." Now, do you agree with the angel who said the crucified Jesus was risen? If not, tell us what became of the crucified body?

Mr. Russell. "We know nothing about what became of it, except that it did not decay or corrupt."

George. As you don't seem to agree

with the angel that the crucified Lord was raised from the dead, can't you suggest some idea as to what became of it?

Mr. Russell. "Whether it is dissolved into gases, or whether it is still preserved as a grand memorial of God's love, of Christ's obedience, and of our redemption, no one knows, nor is such knowledge necessary."

George. This not knowing what became of the crucified body, is somewhat unsatisfactory. Can't you give something more definite? If you dispute the idea that "the very SAME BODY that was crucified and laid in Joseph's tomb," was "risen from the dead," as the angel declared it was, you should have some strong evidence to show that the angel bore false testimony?

Mr. Russell. "Our Lord's human body was, however, supernaturally removed from the tomb."

George. Why was it so removed?

Mr. Russell. "Because had it remained there it would have been an insur-

mountable obstacle to the faith of his disciples, who were not yet instructed in spiritual things."

George. Faith in what?

Mr. Russell. "The body must be AWAY to make faith in his resurrection possible to them."

George. Now, if the crucified body, showing the nail prints, was never raised but "supernaturally removed." How do you account for our Lord exhibiting the wounds to his disciples, and also inviting Thomas to inspect them, and satisfy himself that they were genuine wounds, and no counterfeits?

Mr. Russell. "For the purpose of instructing them,---he---appeared as a man in various bodies of flesh and bones which he CREATED and DISSOLVED as OCCASION REQUIRED."

George. Then when Jesus appeared in the midst of his disciples and showed them his hands and his side, and convinced them that he was indeed, the real crucified Lord raised from the dead, and

also invited Thomas to personally examine his wounds, and satisfy himself that such was in fact the case. Now, according to the fables of Russellism, such was not the case. The disciples never saw that body before; it never hung on the cross. The wounds examined by Thomas were forgeries, placed in one of those bodies, "which he created and dissolved as occasion required." The "occasion" at this time, was one of deception. As to the real body, Mr. Russell says: "We know nothing about what became of it."

Teacher. Answers attributed to Mr. Russell, are quotations from "Millennial Dawn."

Q. If Russellism was true, would it not be a further act of deception on the part of the angels to invite the women to "Come, see the place where the Lord lay," as an evidence that he was raised from the dead, if the angels knew as a matter of fact, that he never was raised, but simply "supernaturally removed?"

A. It could not have been otherwise.

Q. Again, the angels said to the women, "Go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead." Would not that be equivalent to instructing the women to "go quickly and tell his disciples" a down right untruth, if they knew that his body had been spirited away in place of being raised from the dead?

A. It certainly would.

Q. What confidence could you have in any system of religious teaching, if you should find it based on forgery, fraud and deceit?

A. None, whatever.

Q. Will the scars still be with the Lord when he comes again?

A. They will; the scars will be the sign that will convince Israel, that they really did crucify their own Messiah?

Q. Where do you find the evidence?

A. In Zech. xii. 10-14; xiii. 6: "They shall look upon me whom they HAVE pierced," and not on one whom they HAD NOT pierced.

Q. If Russellism is correct, may

not this be a repetition of the trick that it is said was played on Thomas, and the other disciples, by appearing in one of those "various bodies of flesh and bones which he created and dissolved as occasion required?"

A. The Christ whom Mr. Russell preaches, may possibly do such tricks, but the Christ of the Bible, never!

Q. Have we anything further which will help to convict Israel?

A. We have. See Zech. xiii. 6: "And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."

Now, if those were not the wounds which he received as he said, but counterfeits, in one of those "various bodies of flesh and bones which he created and dissolved as occasion required," it would make him a counterfeitor and a deceiver. If Russellites admire a Christ of that character, they are welcome to him, but we will stand by the Christ of the Bible.

Teacher. After our Lord ascended to heaven, did he send any message as to the manner of his coming, and also as to how many would witness that event?

Arloa. He did. See Rev. i. 7: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

Q. Then, if his coming is visible to "every eye," that shuts off the teaching that his coming will be secret, and unobserved, does it not?

A. Most assuredly.

Ella. I know that the general teaching of Holy Scripture is that his coming will be an open, manifest, and glorious event, but I would like to know how Luke xvii. 20, can be harmonized with such teaching?

Teacher. Please read it?

Ella. "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the Kingdom of God shall come, he answered them, and

said, The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, lo, here! or lo there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within---margin among ---you."

Lud. There are two senses in which this word "observation," may be used. When the time draws near for the appearance of a comet, astronomers will go into their observatories, and through their powerful telescopes, take observations, and when some one observes it, he makes reports, saying, "see here," or "see there," giving the points of the compass. But with regard to the coming of the Kingdom of God, such a procedure, would be entirely unnecessary.

Q. Why so?

A. Because it will be such an open, magnificent and glorious event, seen by "every eye," we wont have any use for telescopes with which to take observations. Therefore it is true, "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation," as taken through a telescope.

Q. Then the idea is, that there will be no need for taking close observations of that which cannot be hidden?

A. Exactly so.

Q. Do the Scriptures teach that the Lord's coming will be so luminous and brilliant that it cannot be hidden?

A. They do. "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the COMING of the SON of MAN BE."

Q. Do Russellite fables teach a secret coming?

A. They teach that he has already come. He came so secretly that no eye ever saw him.

Q. But did not Jesus himself say: "EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM?"

A. Yes, I know he did, but you must remember that Jesus and the Russellite fables, are very much at variance.

Q. Did the Lord prophecy that when his coming in "Great Glory," should draw near, that "secret coming," and "secret presence" teachers would make close ob-

servations, and report saying, "see---he is ---here," "see---he is---there," "he is in the desert," or rural districts, in "secret presence," indicated by the phrase "secret chambers," hid from view, like a person hid away in a chamber?

A. He did.

Q. What did he advise about believing such teaching?

A. See Matt. xxiv. 26, 27: "Then if any man---that includes Russellites---shall say unto you, LO, HERE IS CHRIST, OR THERE; BELIEVE IT NOT."

Q. Why not?

A. For two reasons:

1. "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets"---teachers.

2. Because the Lord has promised: "Every eye SHALL see him."

Q. Did the Lord give a sign by which believers may positively know when the King shall come?

A. He did. See Luke xvii. 24: "For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven; so shall

ALSO the COMING of the SON of MAN be."

• Matt. xxv. 31: "When the Son of Man shall come in his GLORY, and ALL the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory."

See Acts i. 11: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner ---visible---as ye have seen him go into heaven."

As he was seen to ascend into heaven, he must be seen coming again, otherwise it will not be "in like manner."

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