

THE WORLD LOST

A SERMON

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By Mister JAMES WELLS

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“For God sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.” John 3:17

WE have this morning, three main points before us; first, *the appearance of the lost at the day of judgment*; secondly, *the successive steps by which they come to that judgment*: and lastly, *the law by which their punishment shall be proportioned*.

First Point: I notice then, first, for this is our subject this morning, A WORLD LOST: a world that Christ will ultimately judge. And I must again remind you, that we keep to the idea of the Christian world; but then, the vast majority of the Christian world are led by Satan; and therefore, notwithstanding their nominal Christianity, they must nevertheless be lost. If you ask, why? the answer is, “Because they receive not,” says the apostle, “the love of the truth;” and therefore, with all their profession they are minus that one essential; “they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” And for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness, or in hostility to God's eternal truth. But let us then, in the first place, look at the appearance of the lost world at the judgment; how do they appear? In the first place, as we learn in Matthew 25 that they appear at the judgment seat of God, or of Christ, not as sheep, but as goats “He shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left.” Now, with those who know the Lord, there can be no difficulty here in identifying character. How am I to identify the character then denoted by the goats? Why, friends, it is that which stands in direct opposition or contrast to the *sheep*. Learn what he said of the sheep, and then take the opposite to mean the goats. The Savior said, after testifying of his pastoral character, he said to those that despised him, “You believe not, because you are not my sheep; my sheep hear my voice, and I know them; and I give unto them eternal life.” Let us begin with this item, “I give unto them eternal life.” Eternal life is originally the gift of the Father, for the “gift of God is eternal life.” And eternal life is also mediatorially the gift of God; eternal life also ministerially, is the gift of God. Eternal life, with all its certainty, is the gift of God. This is in contrast to death. And so, the sheep are brought to receive this; they are brought to feel that it lies with God as to whether they shall live or die; that it lies with Christ as to whether they shall be saved or lost; that it lies with the Holy Spirit as to whether they shall live or die. They are brought to feel that apart from the Father's gift, apart from the

Savior's perfect work, and apart from the sovereign power of the Holy Ghost, and apart from God's immutable oath, they are lost. This is what the goats never felt; those who are called goats at the last, were never brought in this way to feel their need of this gift of God. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Here is their safety; "neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. And my Father, who gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Here then they stand safe in mediation, and safe in eternity. He is the Good Shepherd that laid down his life for the sheep; and therefore, they remain in his hand; they are safe with him; and they are brought to know that he will present them at the last day, and that without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; and that they are safe in the hands of God, the eternal Father. This never will be the case with those who shall be lost; they are not brought to feel their need of this; and therefore, not being brought to feel their need of this, the pastoral character of the Savior, was never supremely endeared to them. And here I will mention an aspect of the Savior's character which, as you all know, is a very favorite one with me, and I am sure with all who feel what they are as sinners; I mean that of his Suretyship responsibility; this belongs especially to his pastoral character. He became responsible for their sins; and he became not more responsible for their sins, he was not more accountable for their sins, than he is accountable for their presentation without spot at the last great day. This, is what the sheep are brought to, receive. He did, in his humiliation, stand by his position and did atone for their sins; laid down his life for them; and he was not moved; this is what those who are saved are brought to receive; and the man who is not brought to receive it, does not belong to the sheep at all. Therefore, the Savior says, "you believe not, because you are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." My hearer, how is it with you? Are you driven by necessity as a poor sinner to Christ as the surety, to Christ as that good Shepherd, that true Shepherd, that faithful Shepherd? If you are led to receive this truth, in the love of it, then you will appear at the judgment seat as one of the sheep at his right hand; but if you are ignorant of this truth, blindly hating it, careless about it, neglecting or despising it, then he will put you on his left hand. That is one idea of their appearing at the judgment seat They have not the love of the truth. I dwelt a good deal upon that phrase last Sunday morning, and so I shall again this morning, because I more and more see the importance of it all through the Bible. Why did the Israelites, as you find in the Old Testament, so frequently apostatize from the true God? Was it not because they had not the love of the truth? And why in the apostle's days did many likewise apostatize from the Christian faith? Because they never had the love of the truth. That is the test by which we are to be tried.

They appear there as *cursed*. "Depart from me, you cursed." It does not say, "*cursed of my Father*;" it does not say that; but "Depart from me, you cursed." Now wherein lies the curse? Let the words of your Maker answer that question. It stands like this, that "as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse of the law." Now, all men by nature, are under the law, and consequently under the curse; and let me tell you, that there is only one way out from under that law; and if you ask what that way is, my answer is, that which the Savior gives in the former part of this chapter, "You must be born again; born of an incorruptible seed that lives and abides forever." There is the man by nature; he may profess the gospel, he may be in a variety of ways connected with religion; yet, if he has not the love of the truth, he is still under the law; he does not know it, but he is there, and consequently under the curse. So, Saul of Tarsus was under the law; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and his eyes were opened, and he saw what a terrible law that

he was under; and that as the law is eternal, so is the curse. As the law is infallible, so that not one jot nor tittle of it shall fail; so not one pang, nor sorrow, nor grief, nor agony, can fail. The law is eternal; and hell, in all its terrors is kept up by that eternal law breathing eternal indignation. Therefore, they are accursed because they are under the law. Ah, when a sinner is brought to feel this, when this enters by the power of God into his conscience, and has as Habakkuk expresses it, "Rottenness enters into his bones;" yes, he says, "my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice." And so, it has been in all ages; where God begins his work, he shakes the soul to the very center, and convinces sooner or later, more or less, where that soul is; and the solemn words will rebound again and again, "You must be born again." Therefore, we can be taken out from under this law only by that incorruptible seed of which all are born that shall be saved. Now let me look again a little closer, at this. That man that is under the law is sure to manifest wrath towards the truth. It is a remarkable thing, but it is so, You will find that our low Calvinists, who are nothing but Arminians in disguise, you will find that when they are put to the test throughout the length and breadth of the law of liberty, they go but a little way; they begin to think they must bring in their universalism, universal invitation; though there is not one universal invitation in the New Testament; these are under the law; there is in all they say that legal twang which proves that with all their professed Calvinism, they have never yet been killed to the law, and the law is not yet dead to them. And therefore, all the time a man is there he cannot receive the truth in the love of it; he is not at liberty to do so; he is under that law which works wrath. And thus, then when the Savior says, "Depart, you cursed," that is the voice of the law, that is the language of the law which is the ministration of death. My hearer, does the Almighty, does our Maker, does the everlasting God, so regard every iota of his eternal law that not one jot nor tittle shall fail, and yet we trifle with it? No; if we are taught of God, we shall not trifle with it, but look about for a Law Fulfiller; and that Law Fulfiller is Christ Jesus the Lord.

They appear also at the judgment under the law of retaliation. The Savior says, "Depart from me;" this is just what they have said to his truth. And there are ministers now, that will preach the most pathetic sermons upon the sufferings of Christ, and like their forefathers say, "If we had been in his day, we would not have crucified him, we would not so have treated him." So, said the people in the Savior's day, "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have shed the blood of the prophets." "Oh, you hypocrites," said the Savior, "You allow the deeds of your fathers;" for you are seeking to degrade and ruin, if possible, him whom God has sent. "Depart from me." My sheep have been diseased; they have been sick; they have been driven away; they have been broken-hearted; they have been poor lost sinners; and you have despised them, and ridiculed them, and your language has been, "Depart from me, you high doctrine men, you dangerous men, you narrow-minded men." And now comes in the law of retaliation, "Depart from me, you cursed, for what is done unto my brethren is done unto me." Now who are your companions in matters of religion; are they the sleek, the smooth, the long-faced, the formal, the prayer-saying, the wonderfully pious hypocrite, are these your companions? Or are they the men that are poor, needy, weary, hungry, thirsty, and that receive the truth in the love of it; who love the truth with all their hearts? Then if this is the case, you have the love of the truth in you; and if you have the love of the truth in you, you have the love of the brethren, and that is an evidence that you have passed from death unto life. Thus then, they appear as goats, not as sheep, as under the law; not under the gospel; and under the law of retaliation, "Depart;" having themselves said to the people of God, "Depart from me."

But they appear also as destitute of the love of the truth: "I was hungry, and you gave me no meat; thirsty, and you gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and you took me not in; naked, and you clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and you visited me not." Then listen to their Pharisaism: "When saw we you hungry, or thirsty, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto you?" What is the answer? "Inasmuch as you did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, you did it not unto me." Why did they not do it unto the brethren? They could not, and yet perhaps many of them gave many things charitably, from the love of benevolence. I showed last Sunday morning, that a man may go so far as to give all his goods to feed the poor from the love of benevolence; and therefore, it is quite possible, probable indeed, that many of those to whom the Savior said, "You did it not unto me," that many of them had done it, had done what he said they did not do; but then they had done it from the love of benevolence, or from pride, or from some motive or another, but they had not done it from the *love of the truth*; and therefore, not having done it from the love of the truth, it was nothing in the gospel sense of the word. Therefore, take notice of the language, "he that shall give a cup of cold water unto one of these little ones shall in no way lose his reward;" but then it must be, "in the name of a disciple." Ah, if I were ill now, and in want, you free-will people, you bastard Calvinists, or bastard professors, could you come to me and minister something to me on the ground of the truth? No, you could not. You might do it perhaps on the ground of what you call general Christianity. Ah, well, say you, it is love; it does not matter about the ground of it. Let me say then, that it must be the love of the truth; and he who has not ministered to the child of God from the love of the truth, if it is not done from the love of the brethren! for it is the truth that unites the brethren, it is the truth that is the bond of peace, it is the truth that makes them free; and therefore, whatever is done, if it is not done from the love of the truth, it is not acceptable to God. Thus then, they appear at the judgment, first as goats in contrast to sheep; secondly, as under the law in contrast to being regenerated; and thirdly as under the law of retaliation, "Depart from me;" and then fourthly as never having from a right motive ministered to the brethren. But did the Savior condemn them for not ministering? No, no; it was not for that; they came forward and said, well, we have done so. Yes, you have given to your own cause; and if ever you ministered to any of my disciples, it was not because of the truth; your motive was not right, and therefore it amounts to nothing. Oh, I can almost see the Savior looking at that one, and looking at that one, and looking at that one, and saying, you ministered to my brethren from the love of the truth! You know you did not, know you ministered to so and so with the hope that you should bribe them away from the truth, you would get them away from that high doctrine man. Did not you tell them that the reason they did not get on better was because they listened to that man? Did you not tell them that if they joined a more respectable church, they would have more customers to their shops? Your gifts were in the shape of bribes. Righteous before man, said the Savior. God knows your hearts. Oh! my hearers, then, unless I have in me the new covenant love of new covenant truth, centering in and sustained by the dear Mediator, there is no single thing that I can do that will constitute an evidence or proof of interest in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now look on the other hand, how he deals with his own people. "Come, you blessed of my Father;" as though he had said, you have been accustomed to this doctrine, accustomed to this truth; "Come you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, *from the foundation of the world*" I was hungry, and you gave me meat: I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in." Lord, we have done nothing; we don't recollect it; there are but two things which we can recollect. Well, what are they? Our sins, and your mercy; that is all we recollect, Lord. We have been poor, sinning creatures all the way; we felt every day what poor creatures we were; and

every day our testimony was, (and from experience too,) that it was of your mercy, we were not consumed. Oh well, he says, you have given to my brethren; you have said, That man is a lover of the truth: I will give him something, for I love the truth too. Now then you see the difference. The one that had done nothing, boasted he had done something; the other, who had done something, forgot it all in the remembrance of his sins, and of the Lord's mercy. Oh, what a difference there is then, between the two; the one makes everything of God's eternal mercy; the other makes a mere nothing of it.

Second Point: Let us then, look at the successive steps by which our poor fellow creatures, (and in one sense, I shall not be sorry when I conclude this sermon; there is something awfully terrible about it; but still we must at times, however harrowing to our feelings it may be, dwell upon these solemn matters; they are one of the means by which the Lord, not only awakens sinners, but reminds his own people of what he has delivered them from, and by which he does remind them of the greatness of the gulf between the saved and the lost; and the greatness of the grace, by which we are saved;) let us look at the SUCCLSSIVE STEPS BY WHICH THEY COME UNDER THIS JUDGMENT. The first is the fall of man; that is the first step. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." So that everyone was brought into a lost condition by the fall; that is where man is lost; that is the root, that is the pit, and that is the prison, into which they are brought: they are lost. Men are not lost by their own personal works; they are lost before that. I am aware that the fall is not believed in now days; it is partly denied, in order to answer men's purposes: but if "death reigned by one, and judgment came upon all men to condemnation," then every man is under that judgment. The infant, therefore, can be saved only by electing grace, only by the atonement of Jesus Christ, only by the quickening power of the Holy Ghost; that is the only way in which an infant can be saved. Some men tell us, that infants are not exposed to condemnation. Where is the scripture to prove it? Oh, judge not the Lord in these matters by feeble sense. Does the infant die? Yes. What is the origin of its death? Medical skill may inform us of the immediate cause of its death, but we must look to God's word, and we shall there find that sin is the cause of its death. But does the infant die because of any practical sin of its own? Truly no. Well, but do you mean to say, that but for Jesus Christ, and but for God's mercy, that infant must be eternally lost. Well, I think that's very unjust. But you're thinking it unjust does not make it unjust. The great God does many things, not because they are right, but they are right because *he does them*. You can never get over that; they are right because he does them. Well, someone may say, I cannot see the justice of my being a sinner, by the offence of a man, whose sin was committed 6,000 years ago. But God has so ordered it, that the whole human race is involved in that fall; and therefore, I say, apart from the new covenant, the babe as well as the adult must sink to eternal perdition. That is the first step then in the awful path of eternal condemnation. Where is the remedy for this? The remedy for this is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world: but more of this presently. The second step is described by the apostle, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in wickedness;" or, as the margin renders it, thereby making the antithesis more complete, "the whole world lies in the wicked one." There is a threefold sense, there are three characters, by which you may know a man lying in the wicked one; first, blindness to the truth; "the god of this world blinding the minds of them that believe not;" if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. Therefore, that man, that, is blind to the truth, is on the way to hell. The second is a characteristic of Satan himself; the first does not belong to him; he is not blind, he blinds us, but he can see. But there are two characters belonging to him, which he ministers to poor sinners. He is a murderer; Satan was a

murderer from the beginning. And therefore, here is a sinner blind to the Gospel, and at enmity against it. That man is on his way to hell. The third characteristic is falsehood. Satan is a liar, and the father of lies. There, is a man that holds either to profligacy or else false doctrine; that man is one with Satan; he is on his way to hell. First, the fall of man; secondly, blindness; thirdly, enmity; and then the falsehood. And who can deliver from all these? None but the Lord himself. And then Satanic delusion. We live in a day when eternal election is almost everywhere professed, but in a way that beguiles unstable souls. Men take up that truth, in order to put, when they please, an extinguisher, upon it; they receive it into their creed to silence it. Now just watch me a few moments in this part of our, subject. Who are they that shall be deceived by Satan? Who are the deceived? Revelation 8:8: "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship the beast," that is, error in every shape and form; "whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." "Come, you blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you (prepared especially for you,) from the foundation of the world."

Secondly. "And they that dwell on the earth, shall wonder, (that is, *admire*,) whose names are not written in the book of life, from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast." Revelation 17:8. So it does appear, if I understand Scripture rightly, that no man is thoroughly undeceived, until he becomes poor and needy enough to appreciate, not only the mediation of Christ, but electing grace that gave him to Christ, and to appreciate the blessed God's mercy, in giving him to Christ.

Third, I come to the end of Revelation 20, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." So, if your name is not inscribed there, from the foundation of the world, let your works be as wonderful as they may, you are lost to all eternity; and if your name be there, God will manifest it to you, sooner or later, unite you to himself, and show that all your sins are carried eternally away by the triumphant atonement of the dear Savior; and thus you shall escape the delusion of Satan. It is said of Satan, that he deceives the whole world; and that it is one of his deceptions, to make light of that great truth. Again, at the end of Revelation 21, "There shall in no way enter into the city, anything that defiles, neither whatsoever works abomination, or makes a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life:" their names are in the book of life; they are in relationship to Jesus Christ; and by faith in him, they arrive at the end of the law, at the end of sin, at the end of transgression, at the end of death, at the end of Satan's power, and have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Thus then, the way to be lost is, First, the fall of man. Secondly, continuing in our state by nature; Thirdly, Satanic delusion. Fourthly, dying in their sin; It is a solemn truth, that as death leaves us, judgment will find us. The reverse of all this, is the way to be saved. If I am brought to receive Christ as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, that takes away my original sin; if I am brought to receive Christ as the end of the law, that takes away my present practical sin, for where there is no law, there is no transgression. If I am brought to receive Christ in his eternity, to receive the Father in his eternal election of me, that puts the devil down, that puts Satan down, brings me out of all his delusions, because everything that makes up my salvation, from first to last, is of God, and there can be no delusion in that, Then, if I am thus brought to God, I die in Christ, die in the Father, die in the Spirit, die in the truth, and in the love of the truth; but, the love of the truth does not die in me, that will never die.

Third Point: Now, lastly, THE LAW OF PROPORTION, BY WHICH THEIR PUNISHMENT SHALL BE PROPORTIONED. The goats who never received the love of the truth, the goats, that were never born of God; the goats, that always said to the truth, in some shape or other, "Depart from me;" the goats, that never could, from a right motive, minister anything good to the least of the brethren of Christ, "These shall go away into everlasting perdition." Now then, does the Savior work miracles in Chorazin and Capernaum? What do the people do? Do all of them bow to him, believe on him, receive him, and not persecute that which they knew was of God? They knew he was sent of God, though they could not know him as the Son of God; he was sent of God, and even the heathen governor Pilate knew that. And will you, in the face of all these miracles, still persist in defaming him? Will you still persist in blaspheming him? Will you still go on in your demoniacal madness? If so, you will commit sins that Sidon and Tyre never had the opportunity of committing; "For if these things had been done in Sidon and Tyre, they had repented in sackcloth and ashes;" if these things had been done in Sodom, it had remained to this day. And so, the Jews, if they had done as they ought to have done, would have saved their temple, their city, their land, their nation, to the present day. But what has this to do with the eternal salvation of the soul? Nothing at all, nothing at all. Nowadays, you must exalt this moral principle of human accountability up into an evidence of salvation, or else they annihilate it altogether.

But for the Lord to come and damn me for not being regenerated, he will never do that; I could not help that; it is not my fault. And, therefore, it is not the fault of these men that they are lost; if it be, let the duty-faith men that say it is, prove it; it never has been proved yet, and it never will be. Their willful sin is the augmentation of their guilt. So then does the Savior send his apostles; do they enter a house, and do the people of that house, in the face of the miracles the apostles wrought, in the face of the heavenly testimony, persecute them? "I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city," or for that house, or that man. Why so? Because they were not regenerated? No; but because of their own voluntary sin. I hold that the punishment of men will be proportioned to their willful, crimes. Some have said, How can that be, for they are all cast into one lake of fire, and it will last to all eternity; therefore, where are your degrees of punishment? Well, friends, we do read of some receiving a *greater condemnation*; that it shall be *more tolerable* for Sodom in the day of judgment than for others.

But, in conclusion, let us look at that, they are cast into the same lake of fire, I am speaking as though it was a literal fire; if the intensity of the fire upon each soul is to be according to the amount of that soul's guilt; according to the depth and magnitude of that man's sin; if you will allow the expression, his sins are the immortal fuel, ever burning, but never consumed; and, therefore, the greater the sin the more intensely will the fire take hold of that man. But let me not sit down without just saying, that hell to the man who has lived a conscientious life, for it is a fact that a man may be conscientious from first dawn of conscience, to the last hour, and yet he a lost man: Saul of Tarsus was conscientious, and if grace had left him, he would have been a lost man, hell to such a man must be an awful state; it is an awful state for those that shall suffer the least; it is hell even to the one that suffers the least; it is the curse of the Almighty; it is everlasting fire; it is a scene, awful beyond all expression. Therefore, I trust no one, I am sure no one with sober feelings, will go away this morning, with the notion, that I am making out hell to be light, or something not much to be dreaded, so that we do not go into the worst part of it. Ah! no, my hearer, I say no such thing. God forbid, I should ever utter a syllable to weaken the force of that solemn declaration, that "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

I have thus tried, though very feebly, nor have I made the matter so clear as I could wish, to set before you, in what way the lost will appear at judgment, and the successive steps by which they reach that awful scene. For the present I say no more, only that there is a world saved, and a world for ever lost; we must belong either to the one or the other.