

CHARLES FILLMORE, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1927.

Developing Honor and Just Dealing

Micah 2:1-3; 6:1-13

I call your attention briefly to some of the points for our consideration in the lesson on Justice---Righteousness. We, in this day and age, find it difficult to compare conditions with the age in which Micah wrote, seven hundred years before Christ. Even

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the chosen of God, the children of Israel, made sacrifices of their children to appease the wrath of Jehovah. This is not emphasized by Christians today, but it is the truth. At the very time that Micah wrote, it was the custom of the Israelites to sacrifice their first-born, just as he states here: "Shall I sacrifice my first-born for my transgression?" They thought that that was an evidence of repentance. And that was not the only sacrifices that they made.

You can see that here was an awakening on the part of one of them, at least, to the fact that that kind of sacrifice was not what Jehovah wanted. That was superstition; that was ignorance. They had borrowed that from the heathen, and yet they practised it. Even Abraham wanted to sacrifice Isaac to appease what he thought was the wrath of Jehovah. And these old prophets, even Micah, although he had some new concepts about what real sacrifice was---to do right---he thought that Jehovah

devised evil against man; that He was devising evil against the children of Israel. That is brought out in the lesson.

Now, there, you can see, was a misconception of God. God does not devise evil against His people, any more than a good father would devise evil against his children. God wants to save His people from evil. We devise all the evil conditions that come into our lives through our freedom of action. God has given us all opportunity to

do whatever we want to do; and these children of Israel seeking to know and do the will of God, in their ignorance, sacrificed the dearest thing they had---their first-born. Put them down there in that Valley of Hinnom, near Jerusalem, and burned them up; a sacrifice, as they thought, to Jehovah, for their transgression.

We are not doing that today. We don't consider that we are transgressors, even. You know, we have lost all sight, nearly, of

the penalty of sin, or the failure to measure up to the divine law. We are just beginning to see that this matter of sin or transgression or falling short of the divine law originates in ourselves and must be compensated in ourselves. Jesus taught: "Judge not, that ye be not judged, for with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged." That is getting right home. We are beginning to find out that it is within ourselves that we form, we might say, almost altogether the conditions that

bring about transgression and pain and suffering, retribution for broken law. That is all. The law is exact and we must observe the law, and that law inheres in the principle, which is the realm of ideas. We are the recipients of ideas, and as we use those ideas so we get results.

How are you using the good ideas of the good God? How are you using those ideas in the every-day relation with your fellow? How is

the judge on the seat of judgment using the divine law? I read just the other day that a certain judge told that he had printed as a motto this statement from Micah, which is considered one of the great commands in the Old Testament: "He hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?" The judge told the reporter that when he failed to have that motto before him during the sessions of

court he felt worried. He felt that he had lost his central idea that he should deal justly. He should deal justly in the sight of God.

God is the judge of his people---that must be true---and we are told that there is to be a great day of judgment when the good and the bad are to be separated; and people have looked forward with fear and trembling to that day and yet they have not reformed. Fear as an incentive, as a great bugaboo of the future, has not worked successfully.

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We are not good because we are afraid of punishment. We must be good, we must be just, we must be righteous, because we love those things, not because we are afraid of punishment. I have seen men stand up to a bar, take a drink of whiskey and say: "Here is another nail in my coffin." It didn't make any difference to them. They knew what the result would be, but that didn't deter them from nailing up their coffins. But it is the understanding that God as the Good, working

in them; that there is a divine principle that, carried into expression, will bring them into equilibrium. That is what justice is; it is the great equilibrium of man between himself and his fellow man and between himself and God. We must establish there an equilibrium.

We are told by astronomers that this earth can be estimated in weight in millions of pounds, and yet in its relations to the other planets it does not weigh a feather's weight. Why? Because it is so

carefully, so freely adjusted to those other heavenly bodies that it just floats---floats in the air. It is equalized.

Now, that same adjustment can be made between man and God, and man and his fellow man. Man, so far as these other bodies are concerned, is like this little earth. It can be so perfectly adjusted that there will be no friction, no lack of balance; and when we know that law and begin this adjustment, then equilibrium and harmony and continuous living

will be established.

Now, we know that although people die on this earth year after year, the earth with all of its activities goes right on, showing that there is an eternal activity of life here. Why don't we tune in with it? Why don't we continue to live right on with the natural world? Well, we have transgressed the law, broken the chain of life in our consciousness, and it reacts upon our bodies. How shall we get back into this

continuous living and adjust ourselves to the law of---well, the natural world? People think that it is a divine law. So it is; but the divine and nature are one, and all we need is to tune in, get into harmonious relations with this continuous living, and we will become one with it.

The idea and the worry and the fear of dying and sickness and all those things lead up to that, and we simply drop out. How shall we get this? By finding the law, and Jesus Christ is the greatest revealer of

the law that we know anything about, and Micah and Hosea and all these Old Testament writers got just an inkling. They saw the law, but not all of it. But Jesus seemed to have a larger comprehension. He didn't keep all the law. Jesus Christ broke the law, but he had an object in it. He knew what He was doing when He broke the law. He knew that incurring the displeasure and the opposition of those Pharisees would call down upon him destruction in a measure; but there was an object in

that. We sometimes have an object in our work and we know we understand what we are doing, while others that do it blindly don't understand. They are simply like a lot of people walking toward a precipice, and all at once down they go.

Now, we can avoid all that, and this avoidance, this escape, comes through righteousness, through taking right up in our everyday life these problems of judgment that bring it right home to every individual



---every individual. We are told that Micah said: "This is an evil time." Well, you will hear that cry always. We are living in an evil time. I don't think there was ever a time in the history of the world when somebody didn't say that it was evil. Well, that is true because men are living in error. They are not living in the Truth; but some ages are more dominant in their evil tendencies than others. I think that at this time there is really more evil, more injustice, more unrighteousness in

proportion to the number of people on earth than ever before, and the same evil conditions prevail today. It is an evil time; but to what extent should we recognize that evil, and how shall it be overcome? How shall righteousness prevail in the world? By getting people to see the benefits of righteousness. Who is going to demonstrate? Is it going to be brought about through preaching and writing? Those are helps, but somebody must live the life. Somebody must demonstrate the

justice, the righteousness and the mercy, the kindness and tenderness of the Christ life. That one is you, me, all of us, and we must begin with the individual.

This righteousness toward the great Source of our existence is not a matter of making sacrifice. It really is a matter of adding to our character another quality, and that quality is the consciousness of--- well, in this matter of judgment, we have to take up the different

attributes of mind: love and truth and power and wisdom and all these qualities.

Today our lesson is of judgment. What kind of judgment have you? How are you judging others? And how are you judging yourself? Some people become self-righteous. They judge themselves by other people's standard. If you accuse them of some delinquency, they say: "Well, So-and-So does the same thing." In other words, their patterns are from

men, from their associates. Now, we must get out of this idea of self-righteousness, squaring our acts by what somebody else does; what somebody else has done. We must get into the consciousness that we are holding, that we are justified by the one supreme Law, and if we are in fault, we should be willing to admit it. And here is a quality that we everyone need, and that is humbleness; to walk humbly with God, to be willing to take rebuffs, to be unjustly dealt with.

Now, there is no doubt that the greatest example that the world has ever seen of real injustice was the crucifixion of Jesus; but he didn't rebel against that, he didn't condemn those who crucified him. He said: "Forgive them, Father, they know not what they do," and when they fought back and Peter cut off the ear of the high priest's servant, he healed it and said: "You don't understand what kind of world you are living in; you don't know what you are doing, and you must practise non-resistance."

Now, in our time we have some outstanding examples of this non-resistance right in the face of tremendous injustice. Take Abraham Lincoln, who is counted the greatest American. During the war, you know, he suffered injustice almost beyond comprehension; unspeakable injustice among his immediate associates. But he didn't condemn. He didn't wield the axe that would have decapitated his Cabinet, everyone of them. He sent a message one day, so history tells us, to Edward M.

Stanton, and the messenger returned full of anger. He said: "Mr. Lincoln, Stanton tore up your message, and he did worse than that. He called you a fool." And Lincoln said: "Did Stanton call me a fool?" He said: "Yes, he called you a fool twice," and Lincoln said, with a twinkle in his eye, "Do you know, I think Stanton is most always right?" There was no resentment in him. That showed that he had the real Christ spirit.

On another occasion, when McClellan was Chief of Arms, he insulted Abraham Lincoln openly. He refused to have a conference with him; and

yet Lincoln didn't condemn him he said: "Well, we must deal charitably because we are looking for victories." He said: "Maybe McClellan is our man, and we want to give him a fair chance." Then, when Chase, in his Cabinet, opposed him he listened to him and he didn't resent it. He dealt charitably with him and afterwards appointed Chase Chief Justice of the United States. Most of us would have exercised our authority. Lincoln could have, just with a word, cleared up the whole situation

by dismissing a lot of those people, but he didn't. He had the spirit of Christ. He bore with them all, and the result was that he came out victorious.

Now, we can get wonderful examples from everyday life of great men who have borne injustice and unrighteousness with humility. Humble in the sight of God.

Lincoln was a praying man; not necessarily a member of any church.

He didn't make public exhibitions of his piety, but he undoubtedly, according to all history, was a man who believed that he had back of him a Divine guidance. God was guiding him and his life afterwards proved that he had. He was sacrificed. He was sacrificed by the opposition.

Now, here in Lincoln's life and his victory, we have in modern days a wonderful example of what patience and love and good judgment will achieve. We, in our experience, are all unjustly treated at times. We

don't establish ourselves in our new concept of what Jesus taught, we are not appreciated by the world, and sometimes we feel like rebelling. We feel like those disciples of Jesus when the people of a certain town didn't receive them. They said: "Let's call down the fire of heaven on them; let's burn them up." Don't you sometimes feel like you would like to burn up these people that don't know the truth and yet are opposing it? Let's be careful. Don't burn up anybody,

because there is a law of retribution there. You will have to make good for all destructive thoughts that you have. God is not a God of destruction and Christ didn't come into the world to destroy it, but to restore it. Jesus Christ is the great example of one who comes to restore.

Now, the modern preaching, all preaching of the results of sin used to be, up to within a very few years, hell fire. Sinners should be eternally cooked---hell fire. But you know that is entirely changed.

Revivalists are now preaching the love of God. People have lost faith, lost that universal belief that used to prevail in a literal hell.

Modern translations of the Bible show that no such belief as that was taught, and that as a penalty of sin has been dissolved. What is the result? Why, a larger and better concept of God is prevailing, and the people at large must eventually understand the character of God. God does not devise evil; God is not a God of vengeance, but God is

love, and all God wants is that we shall think and act according to that divine law of justice and righteousness and goodness, and then everything will work out harmoniously, not only for us but for the other fellow. We are all the human family.

Micah was right in calling attention to these delinquencies of the children of Israel, how their over-reaching to get the things---the houses, the lands and the money of their neighbors---would eventually

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result in disaster to the whole race; but he didn't do just as we would, in our present understanding, to attain the right result. In other words, he didn't show them that God was a God of love and that they were bringing judgment upon themselves. The ancients used to say that "the mills of the gods grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small." They pulverize every unjust thing. It is the law; and if you are being unjustly treated, don't apply to the courts for justice. Get into the



inner consciousness that there is a divine law of justice and righteousness, and if you are now allied with that and all your thought force is going to be thrown into that, then you will know how to act, you will know when to act, and you will bring to bear forces that will bring you absolute justice. You don't get justice in the courts. The courts today, I suppose, are different from the time of Micah, but there is no closer justice dealt out; not a bit, because we know that the

man that has the longest purse usually gets the decision in his favor. That is the rule, although the judges try, I think, to the best of their ability, to be just and to deal out justice; but the lawyers and the juries and the precedents and a thousand and one things are brought to bear to defeat that central idea of justice. But there is a justice and there is a righteousness that we every one of us have access to, and that is the justice and the righteousness that we all are seeking

and we can gain it in the quietness of our own soul, in the quietness of our own homes. We can have justice and righteousness, we can adjust all the conditions of our lives if we go to this one Source.

God is the judge of His people, we are told. That is repeated over and over in the Old Testament. Jesus Christ reiterated it, not in those words, but he showed how we must not expect some great day of judgment. He said, "in a day of judgment," and when are those days of judgment?

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Every day. You are being judged by the thoughts that you thought yesterday, or last week or last year. You are living certain phases of life in your soul and your body today that you set into action in a former incarnation; many ages back you set into action the forces of that character that you are developing right now. This is broadening our vision. We are getting back of the yesterday and the last minute's thought and expecting results; but away back, if you wish, you will find

that there is a law that gives an effect, or, as the Hindu say, the Karma, that is producing results. Don't blame the parents, don't blame conditions---the poverty or the lack---or anything outside of yourselves. Say: When did I think the thought that has brought this physical condition? When did I have the thought that has brought this idea of insufficiency, of life or poverty? When did I have the thought that has brought me into so much inharmony? or when did I have the thought that

has brought me so much love, so much peace, so much prosperity? Somewhere, some time, you set those forces into action and you are now reaping the result. This is your day of judgment, and look on every day as a day of judgment and sift out your thought. Find out what kind of thoughts you are thinking today, because tomorrow you will get a judgment on those thoughts. So, don't even wait for tomorrow. I have known people get angry and get results right straight away. Just here

in the last few days, it has come into my observation, a certain person who is given to anger, and she got real angry one day and the next morning she awoke with both eyes blackened like somebody had hit her right between the eyes. Now, she thought that that was a result of a lack of adjustment of the vertebrae in the back of her head, but the real cause was in her mind, the force of thought that had decomposed the very cells in her blood and had affected her eyes. These things can all be worked

out logically. There is no doubt about it.

I know a man that broke his arm in a fit of semi-anger. The doctors who examined him said they couldn't understand how he could have broken his arm. He had no accident, but he had a sort of a spell,--you might call it a fit---and in that fit he broke his arm. What did that? The force of his subconscious mind acting on the muscle. You can throw the forces of thought on to your arm and break it. The baseball pitchers

do that quite often. Did you ever crank an old Ford, throw all the force you had into your arm? It will break your arm sometimes. That shows the power of mind.

How about this matter of justice? this matter of anger? this matter of seeing injustice and calling down the forces of hell? It works. It works. And how about the God of peace and love, and trusting the divine law to iron out all these things? That works. That works. And that is

the one thing that we all must adjust ourselves to. We must have this divine Unity. We must trust God for righteousness and justice, and then we shall come under the dominion of the law of God and all of our troubles will be at an end; and we shall find that this prophet was telling the truth when he said: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?"