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## Sam Jones' Last Sermon

**"He that Being Often Reproved and Hardeneth His Neck Shall Suddenly be Destroyed and that Without Remedy."**

The great Addison used to say: "Men sometimes upon the hour of departure do speak and reason above themselves, for then the soul, beginning to be freed from the ligaments of the body, reasons like herself and discourses in a strain above mortality." A supernatural insight and a presentment of the future has been claimed by many good men as they stood on the brink of the grave, and if we believe that God ever interprets His purposes in dreams and visions we dare not doubt these extraordinary manifestations. Sam Jones made no prediction. That he felt the shadow of the death angel hovering near him seems to be clear from the remarkable sermon he preached in Oklahoma City on the night immediately preceding his sudden call, and from the still more remarkable reference to himself, his wife, his home, his prayer that he might "go home easily." God had perhaps sent His angel to break the secret to this noble warrior before the clarion should summon him finally. At any rate his work was done, and multitudes who owe to him a Saviour can thank God that he performed his part so well. The following sermon is his remarkable effort on the night of October 14, 1906:

We have selected as the text for this occasion these words from the twenty-ninth chapter of Proverbs and the first verse:

"He that being often reproved and hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy."

The bare announcement of this text is enough to bring every one of us to our feet with this question: "Unto whom does God speak in those fearful words? Unto whom does God address himself in that fearful language?" There are in this audience hundreds of people who ought to remain standing and announce another fact, and that is, "Surely God means me, for I have been often warned, I have often been reproved and have often heard His Word. Surely He means me." "He that being often reproved and hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy." I announce strictly a fact when I say there have been more sudden deaths in the last twelve months of this world's history than any year since the evening and morning of the first day of this world's life. More men in the last twelve months have suddenly gone into the presence of God than in any twelve months in all the world's history. You hardly pick up a leading daily newspaper in the United States that there is not from fifty to 5,000 persons that have been swept away suddenly and have come into the presence of God. By earthquake, by fire, by tidal waves, by accidents on railroads, by storms at sea, by apoplexy, by paralysis, by heart failure; day by day the register has gone way up; and, mark my words just as God gives the warning to men so is that proportion of sudden death multiplied in all the earth. More men have hardened their hearts and more men have been swept into the presence of God, and as you hear me tonight I shall recall illustrations of these fearful facts that lie back in my brain and which have been gathered from all parts of the country.

I want to say to you that I have preached to thousands and tens of thousands of people who have been swept suddenly and awfully into the presence of God soon after my voice died out in their ears. I

was preaching at that memorable meeting at Nashville, Tenn., some years ago. On the second Tuesday night Captain Ryan, a man who owned all the steamboats along the river, came forward and asked to be prayed for. Shortly one of the pastors walked up to my side and said, "Mr. Jones, that man, Captain Ryan, is the most wicked man in this city and a very great sinner." That night Captain Ryan was converted, and he walked up to me after the service and said, "I want you to come to my house and I want you to see my wife and children." I answered, "I cannot come before a certain date." He said, "I will come for you on that day." On the morning of the day arranged he was at the service, and after that service we got into a buggy and rode up to his splendid home. When we got out of the buggy he introduced me to the mayor of the city and three of the captains of boats which he, himself, owned; also to lawyers and other influential men of Nashville.

Presently Mr. Ryan's wife walked in and I was introduced to her, and after a few moments of conversation, she said, "now, gentlemen, dinner is ready." As we crossed the hall into the large dining room the captain took my arm. "Mr. Jones," he said, "not one of these four men are religious and I want the last one of them brought to Christ." He put me at the head of the table. The mayor of the city sat directly on my right and at his side was one of the captains. Immediately on the left side were the other two captains—four great, big, stalwart men. I addressed my conversation right to those four men, pressing Christianity and the question of religion on them with all the force I could, incidentally mentioning the fact that within twelve months there would be sudden deaths among those sitting at the table.

After the meal was over we parted and not one of the four men were Christians or came to the meetings. I had not been away from Nashville three months until the steamboat captain who sat next to the mayor on my right hand side walked up to his home one day and when his feet struck the front porch of his home he fell with a heavy thud and was dead when his wife and children reached him. Not three months more had passed when the man who sat on my left, just as he stepped on to his boat and as the boat started to move off, fell on his face and never spoke another word. Not two months more had passed when Captain Ryan sent me a paper from Nashville in which I noticed that the steamboat captain who sat second to my left went suddenly into the presence of God. A few days later I saw where the mayor of the city had been out hunting and when loading his gun the gun went off, putting the whole load of shot into his head. He fell forward and never breathed another breath; and before I had been away from that town twelve months those four stalwart men had all been suddenly called into the presence of God.

"He that being often reproved and hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy."

I was preaching at a Tennessee camp meeting a few years ago and we were having great crowds there. On a certain day a young man who had been in the back of the tent standing up while I was preaching (and I was "saying things" that night) turned on his foot with

an oath on his lips and said, "I have had enough of that." He went out and went toward the railroad station. There was a freight train passing at the time which was going about eight or ten miles an hour. That young man grabbed at the side irons on the side of the train, lost his grip and rolled under the wheels and was in the presence of God almost before I was done speaking.

"He that being often reproved and hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy."

I was preaching at Gainesville, Miss., some three or four years ago. There were only a few days left in the meeting and I said to the men who were helping: "Let us all get down to work." Next morning Pastor Brown came up to me and said that he had passed two saloonkeepers on the street that morning as he was coming down and had asked them to close up their saloons and come down and hear Sam Jones. They said, "does Jones think that we can close up our business and go down to hear a man like him talk?" I mentioned this incident in the meeting and said that two saloonkeepers of that town had cursed on the street and said they could not close up their places of business to hear the Word of God. I said, "I have seen doors closed with black crepe tied on the door knob; they had better look out."

The morning I left Gainesville one of the saloonkeepers who had said this came down-town in the early morning to open his saloon, and just as he unlocked the door and pushed it open he fell in the doorway and lay there dead when the first policeman came around on his beat that morning. Dead before his wife and children could say "good-bye!" Mr. Brown sent me a marked copy of the paper a few days later which said that the other saloonkeeper went up to his home and fell on the floor as he was going in and was dead when his wife got to him. There was black crepe on the doors of those two saloons, and, mark my words, there are men in this town that are cursing this meeting and cursing, on the street, who will suddenly be struck down. I am not a prophet nor the son of a prophet, but you will have deaths in this town that will startle it before the last day of this very month. Mark that! God hath said it. There are people in this town that are turning against God and despising His mercy, some of them in the last sixty days of their lives, and every time you turn your back on God and walk on from His mercy you are refusing the greatest offer that a man can ever have.

"He that being often reproved and hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy."

Years ago a corps of civil engineers came to a little town in a valley in Pennsylvania and went up into the mountains and examined the dam which controlled the waters of the stream which flowed down into the valley. They came back to the valley and said to the people of the town, "that dam is unsafe. The people in the valley are in constant danger." The people said to them, "You can't scare us." That fall the men came back to the valley and examined the dam again and said to the people in the valley, "we warn you people again, you are in danger every hour." They laughed at them again and said, "scare us if you can." The men went up again in the spring and warned the people again, but the people said, "that is a farce. We have been hearing that so many times. Scare us if you can."

It was not fifteen days later, that a boy with his horse on the dead

run came down into the valley shouting, "run for your lives! The dam has gone and the water is coming!" The people only laughed at him; but he did not wait to hear their laughter; he went on down the valley still shouting the warning. In a very few minutes the dirty piling water came and in less than thirty minutes after the water struck the town Johnstown was in ruins with more than 3,701 of those who had been in the town in the presence of God. You have been reproved many a time yourself, and frightened many a time yourself and you sit out there and say, "scare me if you can." "Get me by frightening me if you can," but on God's judgment day you will run and call for the rocks, and mountains to hide from God's just fire, your little soul. God gets closest to the man who is closest to his own soul and is in need of Christ. God help you to pray about this, "I am not to be frightened into Christianity."

"He that being often reproved and hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy."

It is an awful thing to die, any way, but to die without a moment to pray, without a moment to counsel the wife without a moment to talk with the children; but to be struck down suddenly.

I don't know when I shall die or where I may go down, whether in a railroad wreck, in storm at sea, and I might even go down on a wagon or I might drop dead with heart failure; I don't know how I shall die, but I know I prefer to die easily. I know I deserve to die suddenly but I don't know when or where I shall die. I may be taken with a stroke of paralysis and would have to be carried to the train and from the depot up to the old home where I can live for years, into the room where I have sat and talked hours at nights with my wife and children. I would suffer and linger there for days talking to them about the responsibilities that would rest upon them when I was gone, about right living, and, when the last day would come and the last night would come, and the doctor had packed up his stuff and gone; wife and children would stand around my couch and I would bid them live good lives; at the last moment I would turn to my wife and speak the last words of my heart to her and bid her be faithful to the end; I would kiss them all good night and go home as happy as any school boy ever went home from school; but to die suddenly and without preparation, without a word of counsel to the wife, without a word of comfort to the children, without a moment to utter anything to this world. "Cut him down, why cumbereth he the ground?" God help me to go home easily.

"Suddenly destroyed and that without remedy." How we look to remedies here. Millions of dollars are spent in patent medicines, doctoring and all that sort of a thing and it shows how men dread death, and how they lean upon remedies, and how they look to remedies to heal and remedies to effect the cure; but "without remedy." The saddest hour that I ever saw was after more than ten weeks of suffering and hard work, when my wife was very sick. That night the doctor came to me and said, "I now break to you the saddest news that ever fell on human ears. Your wife cannot live." I looked at the doctor and said: "Doctor, do you mean it?" He said, "the symptoms now say that remedies are useless." I went in to the upper chamber of my home and turned my face toward God and said, "O Lord Jesus Christ, who raised Lazarus from the dead when he had been buried four

## DEATH OF MR. GUS MARTIN.

**One Of the County's Best Citizens— Was Eighty-One Years Old.**

Mr. Gus Martin, one of the county's best and oldest citizens, who resided at Brown Mountain, died last Thursday after an illness of several weeks. He had been in feeble health for a good while and his recovery was considered doubtful from the time he first took his bed. Had Mr. Martin lived one more day he would have been 81 years old.

Besides an aged wife the deceased leaves four sons and two daughters, as follows: Messrs. W. M., R. L., A. H. and Joseph Martin, and Mesdames Myra Simmons and Christina Webster.

The remains were interred at the family burying ground last Friday, Rev. R. W. George, of Francisco, conducting the funeral services.

## Doctors To Meet April 1st.

The Stokes Medical Society was to have held a meeting here Saturday but owing to the fact that only four of the members were present it was decided to postpone the meeting until the first Monday in April, when it is hoped to have a full attendance. So much sickness over the county was doubtless responsible for the small attendance Saturday.

## Petition In Bankruptcy For T. W. Hylton.

As attorney for creditors, Mr. W. W. King on last Monday, secured from Judge Boyd, at Greensboro, an order of bankruptcy for T. W. Hylton. The matter was referred to Referee in Bankruptcy, J. E. Alexander, of Winston.

An excursion will be operated from Winston to Roanoke, Va., on Easter Monday.

days, and said, "come forth Lazarus," and he stepped forth and drew the napkin from his jaws and the grave clothes off of him and walked home with his sisters; keep the words that you spoke that day and spare my wife." She lives today, cured by that only remedy of God.

The day will come to you, father, mother, man and woman, when your doctor will pack up his medicines and go, and when every instrumentality shall leave; mark my words, and you will turn your eyes toward humans and human instruments and they will say, "there is no remedy," and then is the time when that man or woman shall turn his eyes from human remedy to God and God shall sit upon his throne and say, "no remedy." There is no remedy in either human or instrumental power and there is no remedy in Heaven for that poor fellow. "He that being often reproved and hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy."

I want every man of you here to settle this question tonight, either surrender your life right here tonight, or deliberately make up your mind to run on to ruin.

You are daring God to His face to execute His Word on you. If you feel that there is more important business than we have here you may go, but I tell you what I want to do. I want to take the hands of you mothers, I want to take the hands of you fathers, I want you to stay and let the other people do what they will. I want all the sinners here tonight to say, "God help me, I will be a Christian from this time on." I want you to come up here and say, "here is my hand and I endorse every word you have said tonight," and I like the man with courage to do what his convictions tell him to do. Come on now and give me your hand and let us pray for you.

## Briefs Adrift.

Drs. J. H. Ellington and L. H. Hill were Danbury visitors Saturday.

Mr. J. H. Robertson, of Campbell Route 2, was here Friday night.

Mr. W. W. McBride and wife, of Campbell Route 2, were in Danbury Friday.

Attorney J. D. Humphreys visited Winston and Greensboro Friday and Saturday.

Mr. J. H. Carter, of Walnut Cove Route 5, was a visitor at the Reporter office Thursday.

Mr. D. S. Duncan, of Madison Route 4, was a welcome visitor at the Reporter office Thursday.

Mr. Dave Hodgkin, traveling salesman for the Odell Hardware Co., spent Thursday night at the Taylor Hotel.

Miss Floss Crews returned to her home at Kernersville Friday after visiting her sister, Mrs. A. W. Davis, for several days.

Mrs. W. B. Rucker, of Stuart, Va., accompanied by little Reaver McCannless and Mary Noell, spent the past week visiting relatives here.

Messrs. C. W. Tilley, Jos. Martin and J. T. Dawson, of Dellar, were here Wednesday returning from Winston where they sold a lot of tobacco at very satisfactory prices.

Mr. L. A. Duncan, of Dillard, was here a short while Thursday. Mr. Duncan has been teaching the Beaver Dam school in the northern part of the county the past winter.

Mr. J. A. Mabe, of Campbell Route 2, was here on his way home from the Winston tobacco market Thursday. Mr. Mabe reports the weed bringing a fairly good price but the breaks are very light.

As will be noticed elsewhere in this paper Prof. J. T. Smith expects to open school here on April 2nd. A special course for those expecting to teach will be given. There has recently been a great scarcity of teachers in Stokes and Prof. Smith's chief object in opening this school is to supply the needed teachers for our schools.

## Former Stokes Man Killed.

News reaches here that Houston Harrison, a former Stokes man, who resided in the Rock House section, was last week shot to death over in Patrick county, Va., by a man named Scales. The shooting occurred near a distillery. Other particulars were not learned.

## Old Board Of Education Re-Appointed.

The old Board of Education for Stokes was re-appointed by the Legislature. The board is composed of Dr. E. Fulp and Messrs. N. A. Martin and R. E. Smith.

The first meeting of the board will be held on the first Monday in July, at which time they will be sworn in and re-organized. A county Superintendent of Public Instruction will also be appointed at this meeting. It is more than likely that the present incumbent, Prof. J. T. Smith, will be re-appointed.

## Two Deaths From Scarlet Fever.

Two of the small children of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Booth, near Danbury, aged respectively one and three years, have died from scarlet fever. The little three-year-old girl died on the 13th and the other last Wednesday. One of their other children has the disease but is reported improving. Mr. and Mrs. Booth have the sympathy of the entire community in their bereavement.

It is learned that two of the children of Mr. Billy Lawson, at Hardbank, are also ill with scarlet fever.