

**IN MEMORIAM, R.S. CANDLISH,
SERMONS PREACHED IN FREE
ST. GEORGE'S, EDINBURGH, ON
SABBATH, NOVEMBER 2, 1873**

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In memoriam, R.S. Candlish, sermons preached in free St. George's, Edinburgh, on Sabbath, November 2, 1873 by Robert Buchanan & Robert Rainy

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ROBERT BUCHANAN & ROBERT RAINY

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IN MEMORIAM.

R. S. Candlish, D.D.

Died October 19, 1873.

SERMONS

PREACHED IN

FREE ST. GEORGE'S, EDINBURGH,

ON SABBATH, NOVEMBER 2, 1873,

By the

Rev. Dr. Buchanan, Glasgow;

and

Rev. Dr. Rainy, Edinburgh.



EDINBURGH: T. NELSON AND SONS.

1873.

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Sermon

BY THE REV. DR. BUCHANAN.

SERMON

BY THE REV. DR. BUCHANAN.

"The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come."—ISA. lvii. 1.



HERE could hardly be a more fatal sign of the condition and prospects of any community than the existence in it of such a state of things as our text describes. When a people cease to cherish and venerate moral and religious worth; when the death of eminently good and holy men hardly attracts notice and awakens no regret, and when the solemn lessons which so great a public calamity is fitted to teach are totally disregarded, the fact is ominous of coming wrath and ruin. It painfully indicates that the cement which binds human society together is undergoing a process of dissolution.

In the course of its eventful history, our fallen world has often exemplified this truth. In the days that were before the flood the righteous perished, and no man laid it to heart. The sons of God—those who had the spirit of an Abel, a Seth, or an Enoch, disrelished and opposed by the ungodly spirit of the age in which they lived—were at length, in God's divine displeasure, taken, one after another, away. And what was the terrible consequence? The earth became

corrupt, and was filled with violence. Engrossed with their eating and drinking, their planting and building, their marrying and giving in marriage, the men of that sensual, antediluvian world considered not that the righteous, in whose gradual disappearance they rather rejoiced than grieved, had been taken away from the evil to come. But their reckless levity and selfish unconcern did not hinder the evil, from which the righteous were being removed, from overtaking themselves. The heavens grew dark with judgment, when the despised lights that once shone in it, had all sunk back into the depths of the sky. The vengeance of the Almighty was let loose, and the flood came and took them all away!

The same truth was illustrated, in a hardly less terrible form, subsequently to the coming and the crucifixion of our Lord, in the case of Jerusalem and the Jews. Piety had long been upon the decline among God's ancient people. The men who sat in Moses' seat, and who ought to have been the guides and guardians of the nation's moral and spiritual life, had become the chief transgressors. Even that partial awakening to a sense of sin, and that temporary revival of religious thought, which attended the solemn preaching of John the Baptist, and which spread still wider abroad under the ministry of our Lord, served only, in the long run, to rouse into intenser activity the ungodly spirit of the time, and to turn it with a fiercer enmity against the cause and kingdom of God. The righteous and merciful One Himself, after being publicly disowned and rejected, was, by a national act, put to a cruel and ignominious death, and neither princes, nor priests, nor people laid it to heart. Loving and God-fearing men, like Stephen, were stoned and slain; and none considered that, by such savage deeds, they were only taking these righteous and

merciful men away from the evil to come. Piety and purity, goodness and holiness, systematically discouraged in the midst of this abounding wickedness, fled up to Heaven. And the salt being thus withdrawn from the increasingly corrupt mass of Jewish society, its crimes, ere long, rendered it intolerable alike to God and man. The measure of the nation's iniquity had come to the full. He who is slow to wrath, but who is also of great power, and who will not at all acquit the wicked, uplifted His avenging arm, and their city, their temple, and their nation perished.

Nor is it only in the records of Scripture that we can trace the fatal influences of such a state of things as that to which our text refers. The thoughtful student of history will not fail to recognize that state of things as the sure precursor of disaster and overthrow wherever it has appeared. In his great work on the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," its author, sceptic though he was, and little either disposed or qualified to mark the operations of God's mighty hand, is, nevertheless, constrained to acknowledge that not the power of Rome's *external* foes, but the canker of her own *internal* corruptions, brought on her ruin. Such virtues as even Pagan Rome once knew,—severe simplicity of manners—patient industry—indomitable hardihood and courage—a proud sense of honour and truth—stern, self-sacrificing devotion to the interests of the state,—were no longer held in esteem. The few who retained and cherished such virtues, perished; and no man laid it to heart. The very soldiers, enervated by luxury and ease, pusillanimously abandoned both the nation's defence and their own. The material prosperity of the empire died out with the virtues of its citizens. Want and misery grew apace. And yet at the very time when destitution and disease and death were at the height in one class of the population, the wildest