**“Doubt and Murder” The Signs of the Times, 21, 7.**

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When Jesus read the prophecy of Isaiah, in the synagogue at Nazareth, and began to say to the people, whose eyes were fastened upon him, “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.” Luke 4:21, 22. The Spirit of the Lord was indeed upon him, and as the result his words produced conviction. Involuntarily they responded to the power of the Spirit. {SITI February 14, 1895, p. 103.1}

Then came in another feeling. They said, “Is not this Joseph’s son?” They gave place to doubt. True, the words which Jesus had read and spoken had come with the force of the Holy Spirit, and they had acknowledged their gracious power; but they could not make the gracious words harmonize with their reason and experience, and so they lost the blessing. {SITI February 14, 1895, p. 103.2}

The same thing is repeated again and again in these days. People hear burning words of truth, which cause their own hearts to burn in response, and then doubt comes in under the guise of “prudence” and “caution.” “We must not be too quick to accept new things;” “Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?” “We will not commit ourselves until we see how this thing is going to turn.” “We cannot be too cautious”—these and many other things hold many people back from following the convictions produced by the Holy Spirit. Looking at the matter from a worldly critical point of view, they conclude that the influence of the Spirit was only a sudden impulse, which it would be most unwise to yield to. They are confirmed in this view by the fact that, as the result of their unbelieving calculation, the Spirit’s voice has been silenced, and they no longer feel that response in their hearts to the words of truth. And thus carnal wisdom proves their ruin. {SITI February 14, 1895, p. 103.3}

But this is not the end. The Gospel narrative tells us that the very people who at first bore witness to the gracious words of Jesus, seized him a few minutes later, and attempted to throw him down headlong from a precipice. Murder was in their hearts. That they did not kill Jesus was only because they had not the power. {SITI February 14, 1895, p. 103.4}

What caused this change?—nothing but cherishing of a single doubt. Here is a warning for those who think that doubt is a trivial matter. Every doubt has murder connected in it. Those doubts which seem so perfectly “natural” that you scarcely call them doubt, but only the manifestation of proper caution are the things which if cherished, will cry, “Crucify him.” It is not a light thing to doubt the witness of the Spirit of God. One of the things which made David a man after God’s own heart, was the fact that he “made haste, and delayed not” to keep the commandments of God, when they were made known to him. Psalm 119:60. Take heed not to quench the Spirit by doubt. {SITI February 14, 1895, p. 103.5}