

# TALMAGE'S SERMON.

Dr. Talmage's text was: "The crystal cannot equal it." Job xxviii, 7.

Many of the precious stones of the Bible have come to prompt recognition. But for the present I take up the less valuable crystal. Job, in my text, compares saving wisdom with a specimen of topaz. An invidious chemist or mineralogist would pronounce the latter worth more than the former, but Job makes an intelligent comparison, looks at religion and then looks at the crystal and pronounces the former as of far superior to the latter, exclaiming in the words of my text: "The crystal cannot equal it."

Now, it is not a part of my sermonic design to depreciate the crystal, whether it be found in Cornish mine or Hartz mountain or Mammoth Cave or tunkling among the pendants of the chandeliers of a palace. The crystal is the star of the mountain; it is the queen of the cave; it is the eardrop of the hills; it finds its heaven in the diamond. Among all the pages of natural history there is no page more interesting to me than the page crystallographic. But I want to show that Job was right when taking religion in one hand and the crystal in the other, he declares that the former is of far more value and beauty than the latter, recommending it to all the people and to all ages, declaring: "The crystal cannot equal it."

In the first place I remark that religion is superior to the crystal in exactness. That shapeless mass of crystal against which you accidentally dashed your foot is laid out with more exactness than any earthly city. There are six styles of crystallization and all of them divinely ordained. Every crystal has mathematical precision. God's geometry reaches it, and it is a square or it is a rectangle or it is a rhomboid or in some way it hath a mathematical figure. Now religion beats that in the simple fact that spiritual accuracy is more beautiful than material accuracy. God's attributes are exact, God's management of the world exact. Never counting wrong, though He counts the grass blades and the stars and the sands and the cycles. His providences never dealing with us perpendicularly when those providences ought to be oblique, nor lateral when they ought to be vertical. Everything in our life arranged without any possibility of mistake. Each like a six-sided prism. Born at the right time, dying at the right time. There are no happen-so's in our theology. If I thought this was a slipshod universe I would go crazy. God is not an anarchist. Law, order, symmetry, precision, a perfect square, a perfect rectangle, a perfect rhomboid, a perfect circle. The edge of God's robe of government never frays out. There are no loose screws in the world's machinery. I believe in a particular providence. I believe God's geometry may be seen in all our life more beautifully than in crystallography. Job was right. "The crystal cannot equal it."

Again I remark that religion is superior to the crystal in transparency. We know not when or by whom glass was first discovered. Beads of it have been found in the tomb of Alexander Severus. Vases of it are brought up from the ruins of Herculaneum. There were female adornments made out of it 3,000 years ago—those adornments found now attached to the mummies of Egypt. A great many commentators believe that my text means glass. What would we do without the crystal? The crystal is the window to keep out the storm and let in the day—the crystal over the watch defending its delicate machinery, yet allowing us to see the hour—the crystal of the telescope by which the astronomer brings distant worlds so near he can inspect them. Oh, the triumphs of the crystals in the celebrated windows of Rouen and Salisbury! But there is nothing so transparent in a crystal as in our holy religion. It is a transparent religion. You put it to your eye and you see man—his sin, his soul, his destiny. You look at God and you see something of the grandeur of His character. It is a transparent religion. Infidels tell us it is opaque. Do you know why they tell us it is opaque? It is because they are blind. The natural man receiveth not the things of God because they are spiritually discerned. There is no trouble with the crystal; the trouble is with the eyes which try to look through it. We pray for vision, Lord, that our eyes might be opened. When the eyes cure our blindness then we find that religion is transparent.

It is a transparent Bible. All the mountains of the Bible come out: Sinai the mountain of the law; Pisgah, the mountain of prospect; Olivet, the mountain of sacrifice. All the rivers of the Bible come out: Aikekel, or the river of paradisaical beauty; Jordan, or the river of holy chiasm; Cherith, or the river of prophetic supply; Nile, or the river of palaces, and the pure river of life from under the throne, clear as crystal. While reading this Bible after our eyes have been touched by grace, we find it all transparent, and the earth rocks, now with crucifixion agony and now with judgement terror and Christ appears in some of His 236 titles, as far as I can count them—the bread, the rock, the captain, the commander, the conqueror, the star, and on and on beyond any capacity of mine to rehearse transparent religion.

praises the crystal in its beauty. That lump of crystal is put under the magnifying glass of the crystallographer and he sees in it indescribable beauty—snowdrift and splinters of hoar frost and corals and wreaths and stars and crowns and castellations of conspicuous beauty. The fact is that crystal is so beautiful that I can think of but one thing in all the universe that is so beautiful, and that is the religion of the Bible. No wonder this Bible represents that religion is the daybreak, as the apple blossoms, as the glitter of a king's banquet. It is the joy of the whole world.

Beautiful in its symmetry. When it presents God's character it does not present Him as having love like a great protuberance on one side of His nature but makes that love in harmony with His justice—a love that will accept all those who come to Him, and a justice that will by no means clear the guilty. Beautiful religion in the sentiment it implants! Beautiful religion in the hope it kindles! Beautiful religion in the fact that it proposes to garland and enthrone and emparadise an immortal spirit! Solomon says it is a lily. Paul says it is a fountain kissed of the sun. Ezekiel says it is a foliaged cedar. Christ says it is a bridegroom come to fetch home his bride. While Job in the text takes up a whole vase of precious stones—the topaz and the sapphire and the chrysolite—and he takes out of this beautiful vase just one crystal and holds it up until it gleams in the warm light of the eastern sky, and he exclaims, "The crystal cannot equal it."

Oh, it is not a stale religion, it is not a stupid religion, it is not a toothless hag as some seem to have represented it; it is not a Meg Merrilies' wif shrivelled arm come to scare the world. It is the fairest daughter of God, heiress of all His wealth. Her cheek the morning sky; her voice the music of the south wind; her step the dance of the sea. Come and woo her. The spirit and the bride say come, and whosoever will, let him come. Do you agree with Solomon and say it is a lily? Then pluck it and wear it over your heart. Do you agree with Paul and say it is a crown? Then let this hour be your coronation. Do you agree with the Apocalypse and say it is a springing fountain? Then come and slake the thirst of your soul. Do you believe with Ezekiel and say it is a foliaged cedar? Then come under its shadow. Do you believe with Christ and say it is a bridegroom come to fetch home a bride? Then strike hands with the Lord the King while I pronounce you everlastingly one. Or if you think with Job that it is a jewel, then put it on your finger like a ring, on your neck like a head, on your forehead like a star, while looking into the mirror of God's word you acknowledge "the crystal cannot equal it."

"What," say you, "will God wear jewelry?" If he wanted it, He could make the stars of heaven His belt and have the evening cloud for the sandals of His feet; but he does not want that adornment. He will not have that jewelry. When God wants jewelry He comes down and digs it out of the depths and darkness of sin. These souls are all crystallizations of mercy. He puts them on and he wears them in the presence of the whole universe. He wears them on the hand that was nailed, over the heart that was pierced, on the temples that were stung. "They shall be mine," saith the Lord, "in the day when I make up my jewels." Wonderful transformation! "The crystal cannot equal it." There she is, a wife of the street; but she shall be a sister of charity. There he is, a sot in the ditch; but he shall preach the gospel. There, behind the bars of a prison, but he shall reign with Christ forever. Where sin abounded grace shall much more abound. The carbon becomes the solitaire. "The crystal cannot equal it."

Now, I have no liking for those people who are always enlarging in Christian meetings about their early dissipation. Do not go into the particulars my brothers. Simply say you were sinner, but make no display of your ulcers. The chief of oak in trade of some ministers and Christian workers seems to be their early crimes and dissipation. The number of pockets you have stole make your poor prayer meeting rhetoric. Remember that, it discourages other Christian people who never got drunk or stole anything. But it is pleasant to know that those who were farthest down and have been brought highest up. Out of the infernal scum into eternal liberty. Out of darkness into light. From coal to the solitaire. "The crystal cannot equal it."

But, my friends, the chief transcendental power of the gospel will not be

seen in this world, and not until the heavens break upon the soul. When that light falls upon the soul then you will see the crystals. Oh, what a magnificent setting for these jewels of eternity! I sometimes hear people representing heaven in a way that is far from attractive to me. It seems almost a vulgar heaven as they represent it, with great blotches of color and bands of music making a deafening racket. John represents heaven as exquisitely beautiful. Three crystals. In another place he says: "Before the throne there was a sea of glass clear as crystal." Three crystals! John says crystals atmosphere. That means health. Balm of eternal June. What weather after the world's east wind! No rack of storm clouds. One breath of that air will cure the worst tubercles. Crystal light on all the leaves. Crystal light shimmering on the topaz of the temples. Crystal light tossing in the plumage of the equestrians of heaven on white horses. But "the crystal cannot equal it." John says crystal river, that means joy. Deep and ever rolling. Not one drop of the Thames or the Hudson or the Rhine to soil it. Not one tear of human sorrow to embitter it. Crystal, the rain out of which it was made. Crystal, the bed over which it shall roll and ripple. Crystal, its infinite surface. But "the crystal cannot equal it." John says crystal sea. That means multitudinously vast. Vast in rapture. Rapture vast as the sea, deep as the sea, ever changing as the sea. Billows of light, blue with skys that were never clouded and green with depths that were never fathomed. Arctic and Antarctic, Mediterranean and Atlantic and Pacific in crystalline magnificence. Three crystals. Crystal light falling on a crystal river. Crystal river rolling into a crystal sea. But "the crystal cannot equal it."

"Oh," says some one, "it is just the doctrine I want; God is to do everything and I am to do nothing." My brother, it is not the doctrine you want. The coal makes no resistance. It hears the resurrection voice in the mountain and it comes to crystallization, but your heart resists. The trouble with you my brother, is the coal wants to stay coal. I do not ask you to throw open the door and let Christ in. I only ask that you stop bolting it and barring it. O, my friends, we will have to get rid of our sins. I will have to get rid of my sins, and you will have to get rid of your sins. What will we do with our sins among the three crystals? The crystal atmosphere would display our pollution. The crystal river would be befouled with our touch. The crystal sea would whelm us with its glistering surge. Transformation at all. Give sin full chance in your heart, and the transformation will be downward instead of upward. Instead of a crystal it will be a cinder. Sins want to put you in a fiery boat, and shove you off in an opposite direction—off from peace, off from God, off from heaven, everlastingly off; and the port toward which you would sail would be a port of darkness, and the guns that would greet you would be the guns of despair, and the flags of death. O, my brother, you must either kill sin or sin will kill you. It is no wild exaggeration when I say that any man or woman that wants to be saved may be saved. Tremendous choice! A thousand people are choosing this moment between salvation and destruction, between light and darkness, between heaven and hell, between charred ruin and glorious crystallization.

One Lesson Enough.

This reminds me, says a writer in the New York Press, of an episode in the life of the great merchant prince of New York, the late A. T. Stewart. It was during the war when gold was at a premium and jumping about with every war report like a jumping-jack on the end of a string. It had gone up to such a point that some people were beginning to wonder if it would not eventually be quoted in four figures. If a big General was killed it would jump up ten points. If there was a rebel victory or rumors of one it would jump up twenty, thirty or forty points. If there was a Union victory or a prospect of peace it would fall like a plummet. A. T. Stewart was then in the height of his great career, and he had never engaged in speculation of any kind but the solid kind, known as "business."

But he got a notion that with his long bank account and big credit he could take a few flyers in gold and make millions in them in a hurry, instead of pursuing the old humdrum course of buying goods at low prices and selling them at profit per yard. So he went down to Levi P. Morton, now Vice President of the United States, who was a leading banker in Wall Street, and through the firm of which Mr. Morton was a member he began to operate in gold. He kept it up for nearly a year. In that time he dropped into the laps of his more fortunate rivals in the race for gain a cool million dollars. A million dollars was a vast amount of money even for A. T. Stewart to lose, and it cooled his brain when he found by examination of his accounts how much he had lost in the whirlpool of speculation. He withdrew from speculation as abruptly as he had entered into it, charged his losses to his profit and loss account, and made this comment on the subject to his most intimate friend: "Hilton, it's a good rule to follow never to depart from any line of business in which one is engaged and has followed successfully for another line of which one knows nothing. What did I know about gold?"

Occasionally some sheep raiser will come out in an advisory article and will tell of his wonderful success in crossing a Cotswold ram onto merino ewes, and urge everybody to follow his example. Sheep raisers should be consistent and have a purpose in their work; if they have not it matters little what they cross with or what they do, their flocks will not profit them much. If you purpose to raise a sheep for wool, remember there is nothing equal to the merino; it is the king of the wool breeds. If you want a mutton sheep go direct into the mutton breeds, those breeds that have established themselves as superior in quantity and quality of mutton in the estimation of the general public.

If you want to raise early lambs for the meat market you have another question presented for your consideration. You want to use for this purpose a producing stock that will not cost you so much money as the thoroughbred of any breed. You want, also, to get a kind of sheep for your ewe stock that will bear crowding together more than the big Cotswold or Shropshire. You want a good milk-producing breed; in fact, you want ewes that are excellent in this particular. In the former requirement you find nothing equal to the Merino and its crosses; in the latter you find that the mutton breeds and their crosses superior. From this consistent view of the requirements for producing a profitable mutton lamb you will decide to go between and get what is the cheapest class of ewes on the market. A big, rangy, grade ewe, with enough Merino blood in her make-up to carry a good compact fleece and bear crowding into large flocks and close quarters; and enough of the coarse blood to make her a liberal milker and a sure mother.

Now for the ram. What shall be your choice? You have a flock that is a certainty for your purpose, if you use judgment in selecting a ram. If your ewes show a predominance of Merino blood then use the best ram you can get of a mutton breed. If the ewes are strongly on the coarse order then you may with a certainty select a Merino ram. The objections in a general way of crossing a ram of any large mutton breed onto Merino ewes are, the danger in losing the ewe at lambing, owing to the too large fetus, the lack in the natural supply of milk to satisfy the increased demand of a big coarse lamb, thereby causing an extra strain on the system of the ewe; this, as well as not producing the best results in growing up the lamb, may be called the main objection. On the other hand, the big coarse ewe often brings twins and is able, by a little extra attention to bring them up, owing to her superior milking qualities.

Surface Preparation.

Plowing deep in the fall and then thoroughly working the soil before planting the seed, and then with cultivated crops only giving shallow cultivation, is a plan of managing the soil that is steadily gaining favor. If rightly managed, there is a considerable saving of work at the busy season. By plowing in the fall or winter the ground intended for spring planting can, in many cases, be planted in better season than if the work of plowing is delayed until spring. The same theory applies to fall seeding, either for grass or winter wheat. Another advantage with this plan is that the plowing can be done deeper and to better advantage than is otherwise possible. With old soil it is not a good plan to turn up on the surface any considerable amount of new subsoil at one time, but it can be gradually deepened with benefit. By having the plowing done in advance, and by using a surface cultivator, the soil can be prepared at less cost and in shorter time than in any other way.

The disc harrow, the spring tooth harrow and cultivator the pulverizing and cutter harrow are all implements designed to lessen the work of preparing the soil after plowing. It is reasonably safe to say that no one implement is the best for all kinds of soil. The lay and character of the soil must be considered. The disc harrow is one of the best for preparing the ground. Pulverizers work best in loamy soil. The cutter or cutting harrows are perhaps the best if the implement is intended for all kinds of soils. They do best on fallow land, corn stubble or land that has been plowed and let lay for some time. Any of these are rather better than the common diamond shaped shovel cultivators, although these have been greatly improved for this class of work by making the shovels smaller and putting on more of them. It is not necessary to stir deep, especially for clover, grass, oats, flax, or any of the small grains usually sown in the spring, and most of these implements cut from three to six feet, the work of getting the soil in condition can also be used to good advantage in preparing land for corn beans. In some soils, however, it will be necessary to use the spike-tooth harrow in order to properly pulverize the soil before planting. With all spring crops, and especially those that are to be cultivated, it pays to work the surface in

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The disc harrow, the spring tooth harrow and cultivator the pulverizing and cutter harrow are all implements designed to lessen the work of preparing the soil after plowing. It is reasonably safe to say that no one implement is the best for all kinds of soil. The lay and character of the soil must be considered. The disc harrow is one of the best for preparing the ground. Pulverizers work best in loamy soil. The cutter or cutting harrows are perhaps the best if the implement is intended for all kinds of soils. They do best on fallow land, corn stubble or land that has been plowed and let lay for some time. Any of these are rather better than the common diamond shaped shovel cultivators, although these have been greatly improved for this class of work by making the shovels smaller and putting on more of them. It is not necessary to stir deep, especially for clover, grass, oats, flax, or any of the small grains usually sown in the spring, and most of these implements cut from three to six feet, the work of getting the soil in condition can also be used to good advantage in preparing land for corn beans. In some soils, however, it will be necessary to use the spike-tooth harrow in order to properly pulverize the soil before planting. With all spring crops, and especially those that are to be cultivated, it pays to work the surface in

to as good dirt as possible before planting the seed, but at the same time it is also well to do work as economically as possible, and the implement used will make a considerable difference in this respect.—Prairie Farmer.

Occasionally some sheep raiser will come out in an advisory article and will tell of his wonderful success in crossing a Cotswold ram onto merino ewes, and urge everybody to follow his example. Sheep raisers should be consistent and have a purpose in their work; if they have not it matters little what they cross with or what they do, their flocks will not profit them much. If you purpose to raise a sheep for wool, remember there is nothing equal to the merino; it is the king of the wool breeds. If you want a mutton sheep go direct into the mutton breeds, those breeds that have established themselves as superior in quantity and quality of mutton in the estimation of the general public.

If you want to raise early lambs for the meat market you have another question presented for your consideration. You want to use for this purpose a producing stock that will not cost you so much money as the thoroughbred of any breed. You want, also, to get a kind of sheep for your ewe stock that will bear crowding together more than the big Cotswold or Shropshire. You want a good milk-producing breed; in fact, you want ewes that are excellent in this particular. In the former requirement you find nothing equal to the Merino and its crosses; in the latter you find that the mutton breeds and their crosses superior. From this consistent view of the requirements for producing a profitable mutton lamb you will decide to go between and get what is the cheapest class of ewes on the market. A big, rangy, grade ewe, with enough Merino blood in her make-up to carry a good compact fleece and bear crowding into large flocks and close quarters; and enough of the coarse blood to make her a liberal milker and a sure mother.

Now for the ram. What shall be your choice? You have a flock that is a certainty for your purpose, if you use judgment in selecting a ram. If your ewes show a predominance of Merino blood then use the best ram you can get of a mutton breed. If the ewes are strongly on the coarse order then you may with a certainty select a Merino ram. The objections in a general way of crossing a ram of any large mutton breed onto Merino ewes are, the danger in losing the ewe at lambing, owing to the too large fetus, the lack in the natural supply of milk to satisfy the increased demand of a big coarse lamb, thereby causing an extra strain on the system of the ewe; this, as well as not producing the best results in growing up the lamb, may be called the main objection. On the other hand, the big coarse ewe often brings twins and is able, by a little extra attention to bring them up, owing to her superior milking qualities.

Surface Preparation.

Plowing deep in the fall and then thoroughly working the soil before planting the seed, and then with cultivated crops only giving shallow cultivation, is a plan of managing the soil that is steadily gaining favor. If rightly managed, there is a considerable saving of work at the busy season. By plowing in the fall or winter the ground intended for spring planting can, in many cases, be planted in better season than if the work of plowing is delayed until spring. The same theory applies to fall seeding, either for grass or winter wheat. Another advantage with this plan is that the plowing can be done deeper and to better advantage than is otherwise possible. With old soil it is not a good plan to turn up on the surface any considerable amount of new subsoil at one time, but it can be gradually deepened with benefit. By having the plowing done in advance, and by using a surface cultivator, the soil can be prepared at less cost and in shorter time than in any other way.

# WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT.

The triple filets of velvet, pink, gold cord are the most popular dresses of the moment. Sometimes bands of the same form serve for foundation of bonnets.

A novelty this season is the shaded cretonne, which when hung in the light, shows the pattern with unusual distinctness. It is shown in designs and seventy different colors. Stationers' novelties come in Easter brightness. A basket for stamps or small desk contents counterfeits a robin's nest in the form of a branch and surrounded by blossoms. For the lace pins two charming signs are a shepherdess' crook of gold, in the center a diamond and set slantwise. The other is a bamboo cane, and the gold is full, partly polished.

All sorts of artistic objects in iron are in vogue in England, queen recently devoted a paper to illustrations of this work and in a accompanying article dwelt upon its steadily growing popularity. Small Roman lamps in silver, like those found in the catacombs, seen. The irreverent would like to gray boats, with the flame in from the nose. These lamps are on fashionable dinner tables. Princess dresses are frequently to fasten at the side, and are down the opening and round the sleeve is one full puff to the and then tight to the wrist.

The new cut-jet beads used in the latest French garniture trimming toilets of net and guipure the title of "black diamonds" bestowed upon them, for they glimmer brilliantly as any 'twelve and are quietly cut. There is a wide choice among blues, silver-blues, swallows, darms, ciel, ocean, drake's and nebula, so that all types are provided for, discretion in choosing all that is needed to insure the

Beautiful curtain poles made in different shades of white, subdued antique shades which are rich and well adapted to match some of the illuminated materials that now and again goes into room decoration. Roses are always to be found many beautiful rosebuds occur new brocade. The deep red which is rather brighter than the forms such a good background for padour sprays, satin being the able ground in preference to

Women who like neither the sheath skirt, with fan belt, nor the moderately gored skirt, either a long apron overdress or the side to the belt, or with a foundation, graced with draped la Greque. The shower bouquet is an entirely handsome and original ornament, the top part of which is entirely of red and brown orchids, long grasses, ferns, etc., interspersed with a mass of silk ribbons of delicate pink color. When carried the dress has the effect of a bouquet of flowers. Brass poles and ends have been persevered to some extent by the Paris Herald. The Greek just now very much in vogue, particularly handsome effigy kind is formed with barrettes of gold, with Greek pattern and little fantasy pins. The coiffure is ornamented with pearls. At a recent wedding there were really charming bride-maids, made of the most delicate tulle, trope mousseline chiffon, drawn, for there is a great deal of this soft material on the were trimmed with two tons of in dark and light shaded velvet, espays to match, and each bent to suit the face of the band of gold galon encircled. They were to be worn with woolen crepe gowns, having sleeves of the heliotrope, had a stylish gray velvet hat with brim, turning up at the encircling the crown and feathers in the rear. A profusion on the suspicion of bordered with gray velvet, crown of white cloth.

Rings for the little finger, less a fad of the hour, says York Herald. They are set with turquoise, or set with moonstones. There is also using the stone corresponding to the month of the wearer. The rings, which should be small and dainty and as designs as possible.

Wholesome Lesson.

Proprietor of drug store (looking over the accounts).—James, who is it you have charged with this \$1.50 for a bottle of patent medicine? I can't make out the name."

Salesman.—"Mr. Dingus."

Proprietor.—"That man's reputation, James, should have been sufficient to warn you not to trust him. I care nothing for the amount involved, but to teach you a lesson, James I shall have to look to you for the money we have lost on that sale. Mr. Addams, you will charge James' account with—thirteen cents."—Chicago Tribune.

Victoria's Descendants.

Queen Victoria's family circle now numbers fifty living descendants, including sons and daughters, grandsons and granddaughters, great grandsons and great granddaughters. Beside those she has four sons-in-law and four daughters-in-law, five grand sons-in-law and one granddaughter-in-law. The queen has lost one son, one daughter, five grandsons, one granddaughter, one great grandson and one son-in-law. If these were living her family would number seventy-four.

Wholesome Lesson.