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TALMAGE'S SERMON.

A MOST ELOQUENT DISCOURSE AT THE TABERNACLE.

He Dreams a Marvelous Dream of Heaven and Describes What He Saw There—The Saints Who are Great in Heaven—Names Not in the Dictionary.

A Vision of Heaven.

Rev. Dr. Talmage took for his subject "A Vision of Heaven," the text being Ezekiel 1, 1, "Now it came to pass as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God." Expatriated and in far exile on the banks of the River Chebar an affluent of the Euphrates, sat Ezekiel. It was there he had an immortal dream, and it is given to us in the Holy Scriptures. He dreamed of Tyre and Egypt. He dreamed of Christ and the coming Heaven. This exile seated by that River Chebar had a more wonderful dream than you or I ever had or ever will have seated on the banks of the Hudson or Alabama or Oregon or Thames or Tiber or Tanais.

But we all have had memorable dreams, some of them when we were half asleep and half awake, so that we did not know whether they were born of shadow or sunlight, whether they were thoughts left loose and disarranged as in slumber, or the imagination of faculties awake.

Such a dream I had this morning. It was about half-past 5, and the day was breaking. It was a dream of God, a dream of Heaven. Ezekiel had his dream on the banks of the Chebar; I had my dream not far from the banks of the Hudson. The most of the stories of Heaven were written many centuries ago, and they tell us how the place looked then, or how it will look centuries ahead. Would you not like to know how it looks now? That is what I am going to tell you. I was there this morning. I have just got back. How I got into that city of the sun I know not. Which of the 12 gates I entered is to me uncertain. But my first remembrance of the scene is that I stood on one of the main avenues, looking this way and that, lost in raptures, and the air so full of music and redolence and laughter and light that I knew not which street to take, when an angel of God accosted me and offered to show me the objects of greatest interest, and to conduct me from street to street, and from mansion to mansion, and from temple to temple, and from wall to wall. I said to the angel, "How long has there been in Heaven?" and the answer came, "Thirty-two years according to the earthly calendar."

There was a secret about this angel's name that was not given me, but from the tenderness and sweetness and affection and interest taken in my walk through Heaven, and more than all in the fact of thirty-two years' residence, the number of years since she ascended. I think it was my mother. Old age and decrepitude and the tired look were gone, but I think it was she. You see, I was only on a visit to the city and had not yet taken up residence, and I could know only in part.

The Church in Heaven.

I looked in for a few moments at the great temple. Our brilliant and lovely Scotch essayist, Mr. Drummond, says there is no church in Heaven, but he did not look for it on the right street. St. John was right when in his Patmos vision, recorded in the third chapter of Revelation, he speaks of "the temple of my God." I saw it this morning, the largest church I ever saw, as big as all the churches and cathedrals of the earth put together, and it was thronged. Oh, what a multitude! I had never seen so many people together. All the audiences of all the churches of all the earth put together would make a poor attendance compared with that assemblage. There was a fashion in attire and headress that immediately took my attention. The fashion was white. All in white, save one. And the headress was a garland of rose and lily and magnolia, mingled with green leaves culled from the royal gardens and bound together with bands of gold.

And I saw some young men with a ring on the finger of the right hand and said to my accompanying angel, "Why those rings on the fingers of the right hands?" and I was told that those who wore them were prodigal sons and once fed swine in the wilderness and lived on husks, but they came home, and the rejoicing father said, "Put a ring on his hand."

But I said there was one exception to this fashion of white pervading all the auditorium and clear up through all the galleries. It was the attire of one who presided in that immense temple—the chiefest, the mightiest, the loveliest person in all the place. His cheeks seemed to be flushed with infinite beauty, and his forehead was a morningsky, and his lips were eloquence omnipotent. But his attire was of deep colors. They suggested the carnage through which he had passed, and I said to my attending angel, "What is that crimson robe that he wears?" and I was told, "They are dyed garments from Bozrah," and "He trod the wine press alone."

Soon after I entered this temple they began to chant the celestial litany. It was unlike anything I had ever heard for sweetness or power, and I have heard the most of the great orators and the most of the great oratories. I said to my accompanying angel, "Who is that standing yonder with the harp?" and the answer was, "David." And I said, "Who is that sounding that trumpet?" and the answer was, "Gabriel." And I said, "Who is that at the organ?" and the answer was, "Haniel." And the music rolled on till it came to a doxology extolling Christ himself, when all the worshippers, lower down and higher up, a thousand galleries of them, suddenly dropped on their knees and chanted, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." Under the overpowering harmony I

fell back. I said, "Let us go. This is too much for mortal ears. I cannot bear the overwhelming symphony."

But I noticed as I was about to turn away that on the steps of the altar was something like the lachrymal, or tear bottle, as I had seen it in the earthly museums, the lachrymals, or tear bottles, into which the orientals used to weep their griefs and set them away as sacred. But this lachrymal, or tear bottle, instead of earthenware, as those the orientals used, was lustrous and fiery with many splendors, and it was towering and of great capacity. And I said to my attending angel, "What is that great lachrymal, or tear bottle, standing on the step of the altar?" and the angel said, "Why, don't you know? That is the bottle to which David, the psalmist, referred in this fifty-sixth psalm when he said, 'Put thou my tears into thy bottle.' It is full of tears from earth—tears of repentance, tears of bereavement, tears of joy, tears of many centuries." And then I saw how sacred to the sympathetic God are earthly sorrows.

As I was coming out of the temple I saw all along the pictured walls there were shelves, and golden vials were being set up on all those shelves. And I said, "Why the setting up of those vials at this time?" They seem just now to have been filled, and the attending angel said, "The week of prayer all around the earth has just closed, and more supplications have been made than have been made for a long while, and these new vials, newly set up, are what the Bible speaks of as 'golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints.' And I saw all the accompanying angel, 'Can it be possible that the prayers of the earth are worthy of being kept in such heavenly shape?' "Why," said the angel, "there is nothing that so moves Heaven as the prayers of earth, and they are set up in sight of these infinite multitudes, and, more than all, in the sight of Christ, and He cannot forget them, and they are before Him world without end."

The great Christian Sees.

Then we came out, and as the temple is always open and some worship at one hour and others at other hours we passed down the street amid the throngs coming to and going from the great temple. And we passed along through a street called Martyr place, and we met there or saw sitting at the windows, the souls of those who on earth went through fire and blood and under sword and rack. We saw John Wycliffe, whose ashes were by decree of the Council of Constance thrown into the river, and Rogers, who bathed his hands in the fire as though it had been water, and Bishop Hooper and McKail and Latimer and Ridley and Polsepore, whom the flames refused to destroy as they bent outward till a spear did the work, and some of the Albigenses and Huguenots and consecrated Quakers who were slain for their religion. They had on them many scars, but their scars were illumined, and they had on their faces a look of especial triumph.

Then we passed along Song row, and we met some of the old gospel singers. "That is Isaac Watts," said my attendant. As we came up to him, he asked me if the churches on earth were still singing the hymns he composed at the house of Lord and Lady Abney, to whom he paid a visit of thirty-six years, and I told him that many of the churches opened their Sabbath morning services with his old hymn, "Welcome, Sweet Day of Rest," and celebrated their gospel triumphs with his hymn, "Salvation, Oh, the Joyful Song," and often roused their devotions by his hymn, "Come, We That Love the Lord."

While we were talking he introduced me to another of the song writers and said, "This is Charles Wesley, who belonged on earth to a different church from mine, but we are all now members of the same church, the temple of God and the Lamb." And I told Charles Wesley that almost every Sabbath we sang one of his old hymns, "Arm of the Lord, Awake!" or, "Come, Let Us Join Our Friends Above!" or, "Love Divine, All Love Excelling." And while we were talking on that street called Song row, Kirk White, the consumptive college student, now everlastingly well, came up, and we talked over his old Christmas hymn, "When Marched on the Nightly Plain." And William Cowper came up, now entirely recovered from his religious melancholy and not looking as if he had ever in dementia attempted suicide, and we talked over the wide earthly celebrity and Heavenly power of his old hymns, "When I Can Read My Title Clear," and "There is a Fountain Filled With Blood."

And there we met George W. Bethune of wondrous Brooklyn pastorate, and I told him of how his comforting hymn had been sung at obsequies all around the world—"It Is Not Death to Die." And Toplady came up and asked about whether the church was still making use of his old hymn, "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me." And we met also on Song row Newton and Hastings and Montgomery and Horatio Bonar, and we heard floating from windows window snatches of the old hymns which they started on earth and started never to die.

"But," say some of my hearers, "did you see anything of our friends in Heaven?" Oh, yes, I did. "Did you see my children there?" says some one, "and are there any marks of their last sickness still upon them?" I did see them, but there was no pallor, no cough, no fever, no languor, about them. They are all well and ruddy and songful and bounding with eternal mirth. They told me to give their love to you; that they thought of you hour by hour, and that when they could be excused from the heavenly playgrounds they came down, and hovered over you, and kissed your cheek, and filled your dream with their glad faces, and that they would be at the gate to greet you when you ascended to be with them forever.

"But," say other voices, "did you see our glorified friends?" Yes, I saw

them, and they are well in the land across which no pneumonias or palsies or dropsies or typhoids ever sweep. The aroma blows over from orchards with trees bearing twelve manner of fruits, and gardens compared with which Chateaux is a desert. The climate is a mingling of an earthly June and October—the balm of the one and the tonic of the other. The social life in that realm where they are is superb and perfect. No controversies or jealousies or hates, but love, universal love, everlasting love. And they told me to tell you not to weep for them, for their happiness knows no bound, and it is only a question of time when you shall reign with them in the same palace and join with them in the same exploration of planets and the same tour of worlds.

But yonder in this assembly is an upturned face that seems to ask how about the ages of those in Heaven. "Do my departed children remain children, or have they lost their childish vivacity? Do my departed parents remain aged, or have they lost the venerable out of their nature?" Well, from what I saw I think childhood has advanced to full maturity of faculty, retaining all the resilience of childhood, and that the aged had retreated to middle life, freed from all decadence, but still retaining the charm of the venerable. In other words, it was fully developed and complete life of all souls, whether young or old.

Changed Conditions.

Some one says, "Will you tell us what most impressed you in Heaven?" I will. I was most impressed with the reversal of earthly conditions. I knew, of course, that there would be differences of attire and residence in Heaven, for Paul had declared long ago that souls would then differ "as one star differed from another," as Mars from Mercury, as Saturn from Jupiter. But at every step in my dream in Heaven I was amazed to see that some who were expected to be high in Heaven were low down, and some who expected to be low down were high up. You thought, for instance, that those born of pious parentage, and of naturally good disposition, and of brilliant faculties, and of all styles of attractiveness, would move in the highest range of celestial splendor and pomp. No, no, I found the highest thrones, the brightest coronets, the richest mansions, were occupied by those who had repudiated father or bad mother, and who inherited the twisted natures of ten generations of miscreants, and who had compressed in their body all depraved appetites and all evil propensities, but they had laid hold of God's arm, they cried for especial mercy, they conquered seven devils within and seventy devils without, and they washed in the blood of the Lamb, and by so much as their contest was terrific and awful and prolix their victory was consummate and resplendent, and they have taken places immeasurably higher than those of good parentage, who could hardly help being good, because they had ten generations of preceding piety to aid them. The steps by which many have mounted to the highest places in Heaven were made out of the cradles of a corrupt parentage. When I saw this I said to my attending angel, "That is fair; that is right. The harder the struggle the more glorious the reward."

Then I pointed to one of the most colonnaded and grandly domed residences in all the city and said, "Who lives there?" and the answer was, "The widow who gave two mites." "And who lives there?" and the answer was, "The penitent thief to whom Christ said, 'This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.' "And who lives there?" I said, and the answer was, "The blind beggar who prayed, 'Lord, that my eyes may be opened.' "

Names Not in the Directory.

Some of those professors of religion who were famous on earth I asked about, but no one could tell me anything concerning them. Their names were not even in the city directory of the New Jerusalem. The fact is that I suspected some of them had not got there at all. Many who had ten talents were living on the back streets of Heaven, while many with one talent had residences fronting on the King's park, and a back lawn sloping to the river clear as crystal, and the highest nobility of Heaven were guests at their table, and often the white horse of him who "hath the moon under his feet" champed its bit at their doorway. Infinite capsize of earthly conditions! All social life in Heaven graded according to earthly struggle and usefulness as proportioned to talents given.

As I walked through those streets I appreciated for the first time what Paul said to Timothy, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." It surprised me beyond description that all the great of Heaven were great sufferers. "Not all?" Yes, all. Moses, him of the Red Sea, a great sufferer. David, him of Absalom's unfilial behavior, and Abithophel's betrayal, and a nation's dethronement, a great sufferer. Ezekiel, him of the captivity, who had the dream on the banks of the Chebar, a great sufferer. Paul, him of the diseased eyes, and the Mediterranean shipwreck, and the Mars Hill decision, and the Mamertine endangerment, and the whipped back, and the headman's ax on the road to Ostia, a great sufferer.

Yes, all the apostles after lives of suffering died by violence, beaten to death with fuller's club, or dragged to death by mobs, or from the thrust of a sword, or by exposure on a barren island, or by decapitation. All the high up in Heaven great sufferers, and women more than men, Felicitas and St. Cecilia and St. Agnes and St. Agatha and Lucia and women never heard of outside their own neighborhood, queens of the needle, and the broom, and the scrubbing brush, and the washtub, and the dairy, rewarded according to how well they did their work, whether to set a tea table or govern a nation, whether empress or milkmaid.

I could not get over it, as in my dream I saw all this, and that some of

the most unknown of earth were the most famous in Heaven and that many who seemed the greatest failures of earth were the greatest successes of Heaven. And as we passed along one of the grandest boulevards of Heaven there approached us a group of persons so radiant in countenance and apparel I had to shade my eyes with both hands because I could not endure the luster, and I said, "Angel, do tell me who they are?" and the answer was, "These are they who came out of great tribulation and had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb!"

Equalized at Last.

My walk through the city explained a thousand things on earth that had been to me inexplicable. When I saw up there the superior delight and the superior fitness of many who had on earth had it hard with cancers and bankruptcies and persecutions and trials of all sorts, I said, "God has equalized it all at last; excess of enchantment in Heaven has more than made up for the deficits on earth."

Why may not the Lord bless this as well as that? Heaven as I dreamed about it, and as I read about it, is so benign a realm you cannot any of you afford to miss it. Oh, will it not be transcendently glorious after the struggle of this life is over to stand in that eternal safety? Samuel Rutherford, though they viciously burned his books and unjustly arrested him for treason, wrote of that celestial spectacle:

The King there in his beauty,
Without a seal, is seen;
It were a waste of journey,
Though seven deaths lay between.

The Lamb with his fair army
Doth on Mount Zion stand,
And glory, glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

He Was Fond of Twins.

When the car stopped a man and a woman came in through the rear door, each carrying something done up in a red shawl. The passengers moved over and made room for them near the stove. Then they began unrolling the shawls and each brought to view a fat-faced, bright-eyed baby. The hoods were just alike. The little jackets were just alike and the two babies were also just alike. At once the entire car became interested. The business man with the nose glasses stopped reading his paper and blinked good-naturedly at the baby nearest him.

"Boys or girls?"
"Boys," answered the father of a blond young man.
"How old?"
"Ten months."
"Twins, of course?"
"Yes."
"Yours?"
"Mine and hers."
The elderly woman across the way leaned over and addressed the mother.
"You keep their feet warm, of course?"
"Oh, yes, ma'am, they're bundled up good."
"That's right; you can't be too careful. They're as cute as they can be."

The mother laughed in a gratified way and the husband blushed. As the conductor came through he also asked if they were boys. Over in the corner was a stout man who had been drinking. He gazed at the twins with an expression of rapt delight. The twins, after taking an inventory of all the passengers, found him the most entertaining, and they gazed back at him. He winked at them and one of them laughed.

"I'd give \$100 to be the father of two boys like that," said he in a loud voice.

The father seemed uncomfortable and shifted his twin to the other knee, but the twin, by twisting his neck, was still able to command a view of the stout gentleman, who said, after a short pause: "You ought to be a proud man, sir, and no mistake. Here's \$1, and I want you to get them two boys a present—two presents, I mean!"

He offered the money, holding vigorously to a strap with the other hand. The father shook his head neckily.

"Take it," said the passenger in chorus.

So he took it and then the stout man got off the car, but everyone forgave him for drinking.—Chicago Record.

Poor Doggie.

Many eccentricities are pardoned in musical geniuses, especially by those who do not suffer from them. Unfortunately, the object of a musician's wrath is quite apt to be unable to appreciate why he has offended.

One can fancy the possessor of the untrained voice who figures in the following story, thinking hard things of the celebrated composer, Rameau.

One day Rameau, while calling on a lady, fixed a stern glance on a little dog who sat in her lap, and was barking good-naturedly. Suddenly Rameau seized the poor little fellow, and threw him out of the window.

"What is the matter?" asked his hostess, much alarmed.

"He barked false!" said Rameau, indignantly.

When it becomes a duty for a man to be good to his wife instead of a joy, he is no longer kind.

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