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TALMAGE'S SERMON.

HE PREACHES ON THE SACRIFICE OF ABRAHAM.

"The Lamb of God Who Takes Away the Sin of the World"—A Remarkably Powerful and Clear Bible Story—Abraham and Isaac.

Lesson of a Sunday.

In his sermon last Sunday Rev. Dr. Talmage chose for his subject Abraham's supreme trial of faith and the angelic rescue of Isaac from being offered by his father as a sacrifice. The text was Genesis xlii, 7, "Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb?"

Here are Abraham and Isaac, the one a kind, old, gracious, affectionate father, the other a brave, obedient, religious son. From his bronzed appearance you can tell that this son has been much in the fields, and from his shaggy dress you know that he has been watching the herds. The mountain air has painted his cheek rufous. He is 20 or 25, or, as some suppose, 33 years of age, nevertheless a boy, considering the length of life to which people lived in those times and the fact that a son never is anything but a boy to a father. I remember that my father used to come into the house when the children were home on some festive occasion and say, "Where are the boys?" although "the boys" were 25 and 30 and 35 years of age. So this Isaac is only a boy to Abraham, and this father's heart is in him. It is Isaac here and Isaac there. If there is any festivity around the father's tent, Isaac must enjoy it. It is Isaac's walk and Isaac's apparel and Isaac's manners and Isaac's prospects and Isaac's prosperity. The father's heartstrings are all wrapped around that boy, and wrapped again, until nine-tenths of the old man's life is in Isaac. I can just imagine how lovingly and proudly he looked at his only son.

A Burnt Offering.

Well, the dear old man had borne a great deal of trouble, and it had left its mark upon him. In hieroglyphics of wrinkle the story was written from forehead to chin. But now his trouble seems all gone, and we are glad that he is very soon to rest forever. If the old man shall see that Isaac is strong enough to get decent, Isaac is strong enough to wait on him. If the father gets dim of eyesight, Isaac will lead him by the hand. If the father become destitute, Isaac will earn him bread. How glad we are that the ship that has been in such a stormy sea is coming at last into the harbor. Are you not rejoiced that glorious old Abraham is brought with his troubles? No, not a thunderbolt! From that clear eastern sky there drops into that father's tent a voice with an announcement enough to turn black hair white and to stun the patriarch into instant annihilation. God said, "Abraham!" The old man answered, "Here I am." God said to him, "Take thy son, thy only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering." In other words, slay him, cut his body into fragments, put the fragments on the wood, set fire to the wood and let Isaac's body be consumed to ashes. "Cannibalism! Murder!" said some one. "Not so," said Abraham. I hear him soliloquize: "Here is the boy on whom I have depended. Oh, how I loved him! He was given in answer to prayer, and now must I surrender him? O Isaac, my son! Isaac, how shall I part with you? But, then, it is always safer to do as God asks me to. I have been in dark places before, and God got me out. I will implicitly do as God has told me, although it is very dark. I can't see my way, but I know God makes no mistakes, and to him I commit myself and my darling son."

Early in the morning there is a stir around Abraham's tent. A beast of burden is fed and saddled. Abraham makes no disclosure of the awful secret. At the break of day he says: "Come, come, Isaac, get up! We are going off on a two or three days' journey." I hear the ax hewing and splitting amid the wood until the sticks are made the right length and the right thickness, and then they are fastened on the beast of burden. They pass on—there are four of them—Abraham, the father; Isaac, the son, and two servants. Going along the road, I see Isaac looking up into his father's face and saying: "Father, what is the matter? Are you not tired? Has anything happened? Are you tired? Lean on my arm." Then, turning around to the servants, the son says, "Ah, father is getting old, and he has had trouble enough in other days to kill him!"

The Day of the Tragedy.

The third morning has come, and it is the day of the tragedy. The two servants are left the best of burden, while Abraham and his son Isaac, as was the custom of good people in those times, went up on the hill to sacrifice to the Lord. The wood is taken off the beast's back and put on Isaac's back. Abraham has in one hand a pan of coals or a lamp, and in the other a sharp, keen knife. Here are all the appliances for sacrifice, you say. No, there is one thing wanting—there is no victim—no pigeon, or heifer or lamb. Isaac, not knowing that he is to be the victim, looks up into his father's face and asks a question which must have cut the old man to the bone—"My father?" The father said, "My son, Isaac, here I am." The son said, "Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb?" The father's lip quivered, and his heart faint, and his whole body, mind and soul shiver in sickening anguish as he struggles to gain equipoise, for he does not want to break down. And then he looks into his son's face, with a thousand rushing tenderances, and says, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb."

The twin are now at the foot of the hill, the place which is to be famous for a most transcendent occurrence. They gather some stones out of the field and build an altar three or four feet high. Then they take this wood off Isaac's back and sprinkle it over the stones, so as to help and liven the flame. The altar is done—it is all done. Isaac has helped to build it. With his father he has dis-

cussed whether the top of the table is even and whether the wood is properly prepared. Then there is a pause. The son looks around to see if there is not some living animal that can be caught and butchered for the offering. Abraham tries to choke down his fatherly feelings and suppress his grief, in order that he may break to his son the terrific news that he is to be the victim.

Ah! Isaac never looked more beautiful than on that day to his father. As the old man ran his emaciated fingers through his son's hair he said to himself: "How shall I give him up? What will his mother say when I come back without my boy? I thought he would have been the comfort of my declining days. I thought he would have been the hope of ages to come. Beautiful and loving and yet to die under my own hand. O God, is there not some other sacrifice that will do? Take my life and spare him! Pour out my blood and save Isaac for his mother and the world!" But this was an inward struggle. The father controls his feelings and looks into his son's face and says, "Isaac, must I tell you all?" His son said: "Yes, father. I thought you had something on your mind. Tell it." The father said, "My son Isaac, thou art the lamb?" "Oh," you say, "why didn't that young man, if he was 20 or 30 years of age, smite into the dust his infirm father? He could have done it." Ah! Isaac knew by this time that the scene was typical of a Messiah who was to come, and so he made no struggle. They fell on each other's necks and wept out the parting. Awful and matchless scene of the wilderness. The rocks echo back the breaking of their hearts. The cry: "My son! My son!" The answer: "My father! My father!"

The Arm of God.

Do not compare this, as some people have, to Agamemnon, willing to offer up his daughter, Iphigenia, to please the gods. There is nothing comparable to this wonderful obedience to the true God. You know that victims for sacrifice were always bound, so that they might not struggle away. Rawlings, the martyr, when he was dying for Christ's sake, said to the blacksmith who held the manacles, "Fastens those chains tight now, for my flesh may struggle mightily." So Isaac's arms are fastened, his feet are tied. The old man, rallying all his strength, lifts him on a pile of wood. Fastening a thong on one side of the altar, he makes it span the body of Isaac, and fastens the thong at the other side of the altar, and another thong, and another thong. There is the lamp flickering in the wind, ready to be put under the brushwood of the altar. There is the knife, sharp and keen. Abraham—struggling with his mortal feelings on the one side and the commands of God on the other—takes that knife, rubs the flat of it on the palm of his hand, cries to God for help, comes up to the side of the altar, puts a parting kiss on the brow of his boy, takes a message from him for mother and home, and then, lifting the glittering weapon for the plunge of the death stroke—his muscles knitting for the work—the hand begins to descend. It falls! Not on the heart of Isaac, but on the arm of God, who arrests the stroke, making the wilderness quake with the cry: "Abraham! Abraham! Lay not thy hand upon the lad nor do him any harm!"

What is this sound back in the woods! It is a crackling of ash and branches, a bleating and a struggle. Go, Abraham, and see what it is. Oh, it was a ram that, going through the woods, has its crooked horns fastened and entangled in the brushwood and could not get loose, and Abraham seizes it gladly and quickly unlooses Isaac from the altar, puts the ram on in his place, sets the lamp under the brushwood of the altar, and as the dense smoke of the sacrifice begins to rise the blood rains down the sides of the altar and drops hissing into the fire, and I hear the words, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world."

Well, what are you going to get out of this? There is an aged minister of the gospel. He says: "I should get out of it that when God tells you to do a thing, whether it seems reasonable to you or not, go ahead and do it. Here Abraham couldn't have been mistaken. God didn't speak so indistinctly that it was not certain whether he called Sarah or Abimelech or somebody else, but with divine articulation, divine intonation, divine emphasis, he said, 'Abraham!' Abraham rushed blindly ahead to do his duty, knowing that things would come out right. Likewise do so yourselves. There is a mystery of your life. There is some burden you have to carry. You don't know why God has put it on you. There is some persecution, some trial, and you don't know why God allows it. There is a work for you to do, and you have not enough grace, you think, to do it. Do as Abraham did. Advance, and do your whole duty. Be willing to give up Isaac, and perhaps you will not have to give up anything. 'Jehovah-jireh'—the Lord will provide." A capital lesson this old minister gives us.

God Will Provide.

Out yonder in his house is an aged woman. The light of heaven in her face, she is half way through the door; she has her hand on the pearl of the gate. Mother, what would you get out of this subject? "Oh," she says, "I would learn that it is in the last pinch that God comes to the relief. You see, the altar was ready, and Isaac was fastened on it, and the knife was lifted, and just at the last moment God broke in and stopped proceedings. So it has been in my life of seventy years. Why, sir, there was a time when the four walls were all out of the house, and I set the table at noon and had nothing to put on it, but five minutes of 1 o'clock a loaf of bread came. The Lord will provide. My son was very sick, and I said: 'Dear Lord, you don't mean to take him away from me, do you? Please, Lord, don't take him away. Why, there are neighbors who have three and four sons. This is my only son, this is my Isaac. Lord, you won't take him away from me, will you? But I saw he was getting worse and worse all the time, and I turned round and prayed, until after awhile I felt submissive, and I could say, 'Thy will, O Lord, be done.' The doctors gave him up, and we all gave him up. And, as was the custom in those times, we had made the grave clothes, and we were

whispering about the last exercises when I looked, and I saw some perspiration on his brow, showing that the fever had broken, and he spoke to us so naturally that I knew he was going to get well. He did get well, and my son Isaac, whom I thought was going to be slain and consumed of disease, was loosened from that altar. And, bless your souls, that's been so for seventy years, and if my voice were not so weak, and if I could see better, I could preach to you younger people a sermon, for though I can't see much I can see this: Whenever you get into a tough place, and your heart is breaking, if you will look a little farther into the woods you will see, caught in the branches, a substitute and a deliverance. 'My son, God will provide himself a lamb.'

Typical of Jesus.

Now, that aged minister has made a suggestion and this aged woman has made a suggestion. I will make a suggestion—Isaac going up the hill makes me think of the great sacrifice. Isaac, the only son of Abraham. Jesus, the only son of God. On those two "only" I build a fearful emphasis. O Isaac! O Jesus! But this last sacrifice was a more tremendous one. When the knife was lifted over Galvary, there was no voice that cried "Stop!" and no hand arrested it. Sharp, keen and tremendous, it cut down through nerve and artery until the blood sprayed the faces of the executioners and the midday sun dropped a veil of cloud over its face because it could not endure the spectacle. O Isaac of Mount Moriah! O Jesus of Mount Calvary! Better could God have thrown away into annihilation a thousand worlds than to have sacrificed his only Son. It was not one of ten sons—it was his only Son. If he had not given up him, you and I would have perished. "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son"—I stop there, not because I have forgotten the quotation, but because I want to think, "God so loved the world that he gave his only beloved Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Great God, break my heart at the thought of that sacrifice. Isaac the only, typical of Jesus the only.

You see Isaac going up the hill and carrying the wood. O Abraham, why not take the load off the boy? If he is going to die so soon, why not make his last hours easy? Abraham knew that in carrying that wood up Mount Moriah Isaac was to be a symbol of Christ carrying his own cross up Calvary. I do not know how heavy that cross was—whether it was made of oak or acacia or Lebanon cedar. I suppose it may have weighed 100 or 200 or 300 pounds. That was the heaviest part of the burden. All the sins and sorrows of the world were wound about that cross. The heft of one, the heft of two, worlds—earth and hell were on his shoulders. O Isaac, carrying the wood of sacrifice up Mount Moriah. O Jesus, carrying the wood of sacrifice up Mount Calvary, the agonies of earth and hell wrapped around that cross. I shall never see the heavy load on Isaac's back that I shall not think of the crushing load on Christ's back. For whom that load? For you. For me. For me.

You say: "If this young man was 20 or 30 years of age, why did not he resist? Why was it not Isaac binding Abraham instead of Abraham binding Isaac?" The muscle in Isaac's arm was stronger than the muscle in Abraham's withered arm. No young man 25 years of age would submit to have his father fatten him to a pile of wood with intention of burning. Isaac was a willing sacrifice, and so a type of Christ who willingly came to save the world. If all the armies of heaven had resolved to force Christ out from the gate, they could not have done it. Christ was equal with God. If all the battalions of glory had armed themselves and resolved to put Christ forth and make him come out and save this world, they could not have succeeded in it. With one stroke he would have toppled over angelic and archangelic dominion.

But there was one thing that the omnipotent Christ could not stand. Our sorrows mastered him. He could not bear to see the world die without an offer of pardon and help, and if all heaven had armed itself to keep him back, if the gates of hell were bolted and double barred, Christ would have flung the everlasting doors from their hinges and would have sprung forth, scattering the hindering hosts of heaven like chaff before the whirlwind, as he cried: "Lo, I come to suffer! Lo, I come to die!" Christ—a willing sacrifice. Willing to take Bethlehem humiliation and sanhedrin outrage and whipping post maltreatment and Golgotha butchery. Willing to suffer. Willing to die. Willing to save.

How does this affect you? Do not your very best impulses bound out toward this painstaking Christ? Get down at his feet. O ye people. Put your lips against the wound on his right foot and help kiss away the pang. Wipe the foam from his dying lip. Get under the cross until you feel the baptism of his rushing tears. Take him into your heart, with warmest love and undying enthusiasm. By your resistances you have abused him long enough. Christ is willing to save you. Are you willing to be saved? It seems to me as if this moment were throbbing with the invitations of an all-compassionate God.

I have been told that the cathedral of St. Mark stands in a quarter in the center of the city of Venice, and that when the clock strikes 12 at noon all the birds from the city and the regions round about the city fly to the square and settle down. It came in this wise: A large-hearted woman passing one noonday across the square saw some birds shivering in the cold, and she scattered some crumbs of bread among them. The next day at the same hour she scattered more crumbs of bread among them, and so on from year to year until the day of her death. In her will she bequeathed a certain amount of money to keep up the same practice, and now, at the first stroke of the bell at noon, the birds begin to come there, and when the clock has struck 12 the square is covered with them. How beautifully suggestive. Christ comes out to feed thy soul to-day. The more hungry you feel yourself to be the better it is. It is noon, and the gospel clock strikes 12. Come in flocks! Come in droves to the window! All the air is filled with the liquid chains! Come! Come! Come!

GOWNS AND GOWNING

WOMEN GIVE MUCH ATTENTION TO WHAT THEY WEAR.

Brief Glances at Fashionable, Frivolous, Mayhap, and Yet Offered in the Hope that the Reading Prove Restful to Worried Womankind.

Gossip from Gay Gotham.

New York correspondence.

EMEMBERING clearly what the distinctive features of last year's jackets were, the examiner of the present supply will find the current stock is in all essential particulars the same, and be pleased or disappointed, according as her purse is scant or full. But possessors of the latter style of pocket-book were never

yet denied the opportunity to wear garments that from their appearance prove their newness, and so closer examination shows that last year's garment will not be much better able to masquerade as this year's than is usually the case. Still there is comfort for those who must rely on last season's jackets, for they will not be so devoid of stylishness as to be hopelessly unfashionable. The new one will differ from them chiefly



IN FASHIONABLE DARK GREEN.

in length and size of sleeves, the former being shorter and the latter larger. When the garments depart from the simple sorts, the differences become more apparent, for the present schemes of ornamentation are quite new. Furs and braid are the chief trimmings, and jet garnitures are also employed. As to colors of the jackets, oyster shades are still worn, putty color, a little darker than oyster, is newer, and there are all sorts of effects in green and brown and dull reds. Black will have a distinct air of its own, because of the number of velvet jackets that will be worn of that shade, and because these garments run to originality in their designs. The artist puts one of these beside the initial letter, and adds a muff because dealers are already trying to dispose of muffs and jackets to go together. As the former are of no use at present, this may be only a device of the seller to dispose of two items of his stock instead of one, but it is a successful trick. The loose fronts of this garment widen toward the bottom, and its seamless back is sewed to a square yoke, with very little fullness, and shows a wattleu pleat about an inch wide at the top. It is lined with quilted satin. The yoke is finished with jet gallowan and a black fallie ruffle, and the front is ornamented with four pleats of the same silk, weighted at the



EMBROIDERED WITH BRAID AND SPANGLES.

bottom with jet ornaments. The sleeves have fitted cuffs and jet garniture. The question of color may not go far toward proclaiming that a garment is new, but dark green will, perhaps, do as much as any shade, and some very desirable models are offered in it. One that fully answers all the latest requirements comes next in the illustra-

HIS WITS SAVED HIM.

An Incident in a Lawyer's Career that Won a Case.

"A man who has his wits about him," remarked a learned judge, "is greater than he who conquers a city, or words to that effect, for he is always sure of getting there."

"In respect of what?" was the inquiry, made with the ulterior purpose of drawing the judge out, for he knew a good many things worth the telling. "In many," he went on, "but in this particular case I refer to an experience I had when I was practicing for two or three years, and had an idea that Coke, Blackstone et al. were scarcely in it with me in the ordinary business of the courts. There were a lot of young fellows at our bar, and I am free to confess that we did not always maintain the dignity of the law which is one of its strongest points. Sometimes we even exceeded the limits, and now and then somebody had a fine to pay for contempt. We had fun at times with visiting lawyers, and the best practical joker in the lot was always held in great respect by the rest of us."

"One day an old lawyer from the neighboring county seat was defending a prisoner for stealing a cow, I believe, and I had the other side and was quite sure of making my case. The old fellow had been in our court many times, and he was the slowest and longest talker I think I ever listened to. He didn't seem to know when to let up. Well, on this occasion he had been talking until the young fellows were worn out, and they thought they would teach him a lesson and at the same time help me in downing him. So they quietly went out to the telegraph office, got a blank and an envelope and fixed up a telegram which read: 'Great Caesar, Governor, won't you ever stop talking?'

"Then they got a boy to bring the message into the court room, and they sat around the bar to see the old man fall dead when he read the dispatch. The boy came in all right and the sheriff promptly delivered the message. Of course, everything became quiet when the point was reached and the lawyer asked permission of the court to read his message; he tore it open amid breathless silence, everybody watching him, and those who were in the joke expecting an explosion as soon as the end had been reached. But there was nothing of the kind. He read it over slowly once, then more slowly again, and then he looked up at the judge and over to the jury.

"'May it please the court,' he said in tremulous tones, 'I have just received a message announcing the death of a very near and dear relative, one who,' and his lip quivered, 'was more to me than I can tell, and I must ask to be excused from speaking further.'

"This was an entirely unexpected turn to the affair, and of course the jokers were powerless to change the current. They simply sat dumfounded, while the old fellow was asked to finish his speech. He finished very briefly, but it was to the point, and when my turn came to end the business I was not in it with the grief-stricken man by my side, and the jury gave the case to my opponent without leaving the room.

"After it was all over the old lawyer called one of the crowd aside and said something to him with a mild sort of a smile that resulted in his taking up a collection among us sufficient to pay for a fine dinner for the entire bar."—Washington Star.

A Veteran of 1812.

A conspicuous figure at the celebration of the Society of the War of 1812 in Baltimore recently was Capt. James Hooper. Captain Hooper was born on July 5, 1804, and when 10 years old was a powder boy on the United States schooner Comet in the Chesapeake bay, on which his father was an officer. He remembers the events of his early years, and no one applauded more enthusiastically than he the allusions to them made by the speakers at the park celebration. The appearance of Captain Hooper does not indicate his extreme age. He is of tall and commanding stature, agile in movement, and looks many years younger than he is. The captain occupied a seat in the park pavilion, together with members of the society, invited guests and those who took part in the exercises.

Delta of the Danube.

An Anglo-Dutch syndicate is trying to reclaim the land in the delta of the Danube, between the St. George's and Sullia branches, by means of dikes. The dredging of the bar now permits vessels drawing twenty-one and one-half feet to reach Sullia, and before long it is hoped the channel will be deep enough for ships drawing twenty-four feet.

An Epileptic Record.

An epileptic young woman, whose case is reported in the Lancet, seems to have broken the record for fits. She had 3,203 distinct fits in twenty-one days, an average of 152 a day, and in one day had 330 of them. She was cured with chloral hydrate and bromide of potassium.

Tell a woman that she doesn't look well, and you have furnished a topic of conversation to last an hour.



SHOWING BUTTONS THAT DO NOT FASTEN

for plaided linings. To those who follow it, it means that the lining to a cloak, no matter how cheap it may be in price, at once becomes an elegance if only it be in checked or plaid material. This extends to other garments than wraps, as the band about this skirt shows; indeed, plaids and checks are in a furor of popularity with the scholars of the advanced class. The mere fact that a silk is plaid or check or double cross-barred gives it distinction. A wide belt of silken ribbon, a common enough thing for some seasons, becomes a special novelty if it's of plaid ribbon. Women are even invited to buy plaid silk stockings, and she who would rather die in her boots than appear in low shoes and a contrasting stocking of any other kind will expose to the world a bit of plaided ankle and feel its conspicuousness more than excused by its correct style.

When it comes to putting braid on a jacket, it is safe to use a lot of it. The earlier examples of this type seem at first to be overdone in this respect, but that is doubtless due to their being viewed by eyes that are unaccustomed to such garniture, and the fact that careful dressers don models like that in the third picture is all the proof that is needed of their correctness. It means, too, that the impression that the first examples create will promptly wear



OF ODD CUT AND ORNAMENTATION.

away. Soutache and spangles are used here, and three ornamental buttons are placed upon the center fold, the fastening being beneath it. Such jackets are made with the skirt very short, just barely below the hips, and a little longer at the back. Sometimes the back ripples, but there is no trace of ripple at the side and, of course, absolutely nothing but severity in front. These jackets are sometimes made of smooth cloth with skirt to match, and in some cases the strapping is done in material of another color, while in others braid is used, the simpler the jacket the more complete the effect made by faultless cut and style.

Buttons weren't mentioned in the foregoing list of mediums for ornamentation, but they deserve a place, for when the jacketed girl repiles to the query "Button, button, who's got the button?" she would answer in many cases, if she answered truthfully, "I have, and a lot of 'em!" In the case of the fourth pictured jacket she might add, too, that they were of no service as fasteners, but were purely ornamental. Dark cloth was the material here, the long revers were garnished with bias folds of the stuff, and the standing collar was encircled with a collarette of feather trimming, from which depended a lace jabot.

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Chicago's rich people returned to the assessors of last year \$2,000 worth of diamonds and \$74 worth of silver table ware.