

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON.

A Broad Gospel.

"Come thou and all thy house into the ark." —Gen. 7:1.

We do not need the Bible to prove the deluge. The geologist's hammer announces it. Sea-shells and marine formations on the top of some of the highest mountains of the earth Drove that at some time the waters washed over the top of the Alps and the Andes. In what way the catastrophe came, we know not; whether by the stroke of a comet, or by flashes of lightning, changing the air into water, or by a stroke of the hand of God, like the stroke of the axe between the horns of the ox, the earth staggered. To meet the catastrophe, God ordered a great ship built. It was to be without prows, for it was to sail to no shore. It was to be without helm, for no human hand should guide it. It was a vast structure, probably as large as two or three Cunard steamers. It was

SWINGS BOTH WAYS.

I do not know whether the door of the ancient ark was lifted, or rolled on hinges; but this door of Christ opens both ways. It swings out toward all our woes, it swings in toward the raptures of heaven. It swings in to let us in; it swings out to let our ministering ones come out. All are one in Christ—Christians on earth and saints in heaven.

"One army of the living God,
At His command we bow;
Part of the host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now."

Swing in, Oh blessed door, until all the earth shall go in and live! Swing out until all the heavens come forth to celebrate the victory.

But, further, it is

A DOOR WITH FASTENINGS.

The Bible says of Noah: "The Lord shut him in." A vessel without bulk or doors would not be a safe vessel to go in. When Noah and his family heard the fastening of the door of the ark, they were very glad.

Without those doors were fastened, the first heavy surge of the sea would have perished outside the ark as inside the ark. "The Lord shut him in,"

Oh, the perfect safety of the ark! The surf of the sea and the lightnings of the sky may be twisted into a garland of snow and fire—deep to deep, storm to storm, darkness to darkness; but since in the ark, all is well. "God shut him in." There comes upon the good man

A DELUSION OF FINANCIAL TROUBLE. He had his thousands to lend; now he cannot borrow a dollar. He once owned a store in New York, and had branch houses in Boston, Philadelphia, and New Orleans. He owned four horses, and employed a man to keep the dust off his coach, phaeton, carriage and curriole; now he has hard work to get shoes in which to walk. The great storm sweeps along the hills, and bends the cedars until all the branches snap in the gale. There is a moan in the wind like unto the moan of a dying world. The blackness of the heavens is shattered by the glare of the lightnings, that look down into the waters, and throw a ghastliness on the face of the mountains. How strange it looks! How suffocating the air seems! The big drops of rain plash upon the unturned faces of those who are

WATCHING THE TEMPEST.

Crahs! go the rocks in convulsion. Boom! go the bursting heavens. The inhabitants of the earth, instead of fleeing to house-top and mountain-top, as men have fancied, sit down in dumb, white horror to die. For when God grinds mountains to pieces, and lets the ocean slip its cable, there is no place for men to fly to. See the ark pitch and tumble in the surf; while from its windows the passengers look upon the shipwreck of a race, and the carcasses of a dead world. Woe to the mountains! Woe to the sea!

I am no alarmist. When, on the twentieth of September, after the wind has for three days been blowing from the northeast, you prophecy that the equinoctial storm is coming, you simply state a fact not to be disputed. Neither am I an alarmist when I say that

A STORM IS COMING.

compared with which Noah's deluge was but an April shower; and that it is wiser and safest for you and for me to get safely housed for eternity. The invitation that went forth to Noah sounds in our ears: "Come thou and all thy house into the ark."

Well, how did Noah and his family come into the ark? Did they climb in at the window, or come down the roof? No; they went through the door. And just so, if we get into the ark of God's mercy, it will be through

CHRIST THE DOOR.

The entrance to the ark of old must have been a very large entrance. We know that it was, from the fact that there were monster animals in the earlier ages; and, in order to get them into the ark two and two, according to the Bible statement, the door must have been very wide and very high. So the door into the mercy of God is a large door. We go in, not two by two, but by hundreds, and by thousands, and by millions. Yea, all the nations of the earth may go in ten millions abreast.

The door of the ancient ark was in the side. So now it is through the side of Christ—the pierced side, the wide-open side.

THE HEART SIDE.

—that we enter. Aba! the Roman soldier, thrusting his spear into the Saviour's side, expected only to let the blood out, but he opened the way to let all the world in. On what a broad Gospel to preach! If a man is about to give an entertainment, he issues one or two hundred invitations, carefully put up and directed to the particular persons whom he wishes to entertain. But God our Father makes a banquet, and goes out to the front door of heaven, and stretches out his hands over land and sea, and with a voice that penetrates the Hindoo jungle, and the Greenland ice-castle, and Brazilian grove, and English factory, and American home, cries: "Come, for all things are now ready." It is

A WIDE DOOR:

The old cross has been taken apart, and its two pieces are stood up for doorposts, so far apart that all the world can come in. Kings scatter treasures on days of great rejoicing. So Christ, our King, comes and scatters the jewels of heaven. Rowland Hill said that he hoped to get into heaven through the crevices of the door. But he was not obliged thus to go in. After having preached the Gospel in Surrey Chapel, going up toward heaven, the gate-keeper cried: "Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates, and let this man come in." The dying thief went in. Richard Baxter and Robert Newton went in. Europe, Asia, Africa, North and South America, may yet go through this wide door without crowding. Ho, every one—all conditions, all ranks, all people!

Luther said that this truth was worth carrying on one's knees from Rome to Jerusalem; but I think it worth carrying all around the globe, and all around the heavens, that God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Whosoever will, let him come through the large door. Archimedes wanted a fulcrum on which to place his lever, and then he said that he could move the world. Calvary is the fulcrum, and the cross of Christ is the lever; and by that power all nations shall yet be lifted.

Further: It is a door that

so wide, so easily swings both ways, and with such sure fastenings. No burglar's key can pick that lock. No swarthy arm of hell can shove back the bolt. I rejoice that I do not ask you to come aboard a crazy craft with leaking bulk and broken helm and unfastened door; but an ark fifty cubits wide, and three hundred cubits long, and a door so large that the round earth, without grazing the posts, might be bowled in.

Now, if the ark of Christ is so grand a place in which to live and die and triumph, come into the ark. Know well that the door that shut Noah in shut the world out; and though, when the pitiless storm came pelting on their heads, they beat upon the door, saying: "Let me in! let me in!" the door did not open. For one hundred and twenty years they were invited. They expected to come in; but the antediluvians said: "We must cultivate these fields; we must be worth more flocks of sheep and herds of cattle; we will wait until we get a little older; we will enjoy our old farm a little longer." But meanwhile the storm was brewing. The fountains of heaven were filling up. The dry was being placed beneath the foundations of the great deep. The last year had come, the last month, the last week, the last day, the last hour, the last moment. In an awful dash, an ocean dropped from the sky, and another rolled up from beneath; and God rolled the earth and sky into one wave of universal destruction. So

MEN PUT OFF GOING

into the ark. They say they will wait twenty years first. They will have a little longer time with their worldly associates. They will wait until they get older. They say: "You cannot expect a man of my attainments and of my position to surrender myself just now. But before the storm comes, I will go in. Yes, I will. I know what I am about. Trust me." After awhile, one night about twelve o'clock, going home, he passes a scaffolding as a gust of wind strikes it, and a plank falls. Dead, and outside the ark! Or, riding

in the Park, a reckless vehicle crashes into him, and his horse becomes unmanageable, and he shouts, "Whoa! Whoa!" and takes another twist in the reins, and plants his feet against the dashboard, and pulls back. But no use. It is not so much down the avenue he flies as on the way to eternity. Out of the wreck of the crash his body is drawn, but his soul is not picked up. It fled behind a swifter courier into the great future. Dead! and outside the ark! Or,

some night, he wakes up with a distress that momentarily increases, until he shrieks out with pain. The doctors come in, and they give him twenty drops, but no relief; forty drops, fifty drops, sixty drops, but no relief. No time of prayer. No time to get a single sin pardoned. The whole house is aroused in alarm. The children scream. The wife faints. The pulses fail. The heart stops. The soul flies. Oh, my God, dead, and outside the ark! I have no doubt that

DERISION KEPT MANY OUT of the ark. The world laughed to see a man go in and said: "Here is a man starting for the ark. Why, there will be no deluge. If there is one, that miserable ship will not weather it. Ah! going into the ark! Well, that is too good to keep. Here, fellows, have you heard the news? This man is going into the ark." Under this artillery of scorn the man's good resolution perished.

And so there are hundreds kept out by the fear of derision. The young man asks himself: "What would they say at the store to-morrow morning if I should become a Christian? When I go down to the club-house they would shout: 'Here comes that new Christian. Suppose you will not have anything to do with us now. Suppose you are praying now. Get down on your knees and let us hear you pray. Come, now, give us a touch. Will not do it, eh? Pretty Christian you are.'" Is it not the fear of being laughed at that keeps you out of the kingdom of God? Which of these scoffers will help you at the last? When you lie down on a dying pillow, which of them will be there? In the day of eternity, will they bail you out?

My friends and neighbors, come in right away. COME IN

through Christ, the wide door—the door that swings toward you. Come in, and be saved. Come and be happy. "The spirit and the Bride say come," Room in the ark! Room in the ark!

But do not come alone. The text invites you to bring your family. "Come thou and all thy house." That means your wife and your children. You cannot drive them in. If Noah had tried to drive the pigeons and the doves into the ark, he would only have scattered them. Some parents are not wise about these things. They make iron rules about Sabbath, and they force the catechism down the throat, as they would hold the child's nose and force down a dose of rhubarb and calomel. You cannot drive your children into the ark. You can draw your children to Christ, but you cannot coerce them. The cross was lifted, not to drive, but to draw. "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me."

As the sun draws up the drops of dew, so the Sun of Righteousness exhaled the tears of repentance.

"Come thou and all thy house into the ark." Be sure that you

BRING YOUR HUSBAND

or wife with you. How would Noah have felt if, when he heard the rain patterning on the roof of the ark, he knew that his wife was outside in the storm? No; she went with him. And yet some of you are on the ship "outward bound" for heaven, but your companion is unsheltered. You remember the day when the marriage-ring was set. Nothing has yet been able to break it. Sickness came, and the finger shrank, but the ring stayed on. The twain stood alone above a child's grave, and the dark mouth of the tomb swallowed up a thousand hopes; but the ring dropped not into the open grave. Days of poverty came, and the hand did many a hard day's work; but the rubbing of the work against the ring only made it shine brighter. Shall that ring ever be lost? Will the iron clang of the sepulchre-gate crush it forever? I pray God that you who have been married on earth may be together in heaven. Oh, by the bliss of your earthly home; by the babe's cradle; by all the vows of that day when you started life together, I beg you to see to it that both get into the ark!

Come in, and bring your wife or your husband with you—not by fretting about religion, or ding-donging them about religion, but by a consistent life, and by a compelling prayer that shall bring the throne of God down into your bed-room. Better live in the smallest house in Brooklyn and get into heaven, than live fifty years in the finest house on Madison Square, and wake up at last and find that one of you, for all eternity, is outside the ark. "Go home to-night; lock the door of your room; take up the Bible and read it together, and then kneel down and commend your souls to Him who has watched you all these years; and, before you rise, there will be a fluttering of wings over your head, angel crying to angel: "Behold, they pray!" But this does not include all your family.

BRING THE CHILDREN,

too. God bless the dear children! What would our homes be without them? We may have done much for them. They have done more for us. What a salve for a wounded heart there is in the soft palm of a child's hand! Did harp or flute ever have such music as there is in a child's good-night?" From our coarse, rough life, the angels of God are often driven back; but who comes into the nursery without feeling that angels are hovering around? They who die in infancy go to glory, but you are expecting your children into grow up in this world. Is it not a question, then, that rings through all the corridors and windings and heights and depths of your soul, what is to become of your sons and daughters for time and for eternity. "Oh!" you say, "I mean to see that they have good manners." Very well. "I mean to dress them well, if I have myself to go shabby." Very good. "I shall give them an education, and I shall leave them a fortune." Very well. But is that all? Don't you mean to take them into the ark? Don't you know that the storm is com-

ing, and that out of Christ there is no safety! no pardon! no hope! no heaven!

HOW TO GET THEM IN?

Go in yourself. If Noah had stayed out, do you not suppose that his sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, would have stayed out? Your sons and daughters will be apt to do just as you do. Reject Christ yourself, and the probability is that your children will reject Him.

An account was taken of the religious condition of families in a certain district. In the family of pious parents, two-thirds of the children were Christians. In the families where the parents were ungodly, only one-twelfth of the children were Christians. Responsible as you are for their temporal existence, we are also responsible for their eternity. Which way will you take them? out into the deluge, or into the ark? Have you ever made one earnest prayer for their immortal souls? What will you say in the judgment, when God asks: "Where is George, or Henry, or Frank, or Mary, or Anna? Where are those precious souls whose interests I committed into your hands?"

Ad dying son said to his father: "Father, you gave me an education and good manners and everything that the world could do for me; but, father, you never told me how to die, and now my soul is going out in the darkness."

Go home and erect your family altar.

You may break down in your prayer. But never mind, God will take what you mean, whether you express it haltingly or not. Bring all your house into the ark. Is there one son whom you have given up? Is he so dissipated that you have stopped counselling and praying? Give him up? How dare you give him up? Did God ever give you up? While you have single articulation of speech left, cease not to pray for the return of that prodigal. He may even now be standing on the beach at Hong Kong or Madras, meditating a return to his father's house. Give him up? Never give him up. Has God promised to hear thy prayer only to mock thee? It is not too late.

In St. Paul's, London, there is

A WHISPERING-GALLERY.

A voice uttered most feebly at one side of the gallery is heard distinctly at the opposite side, a great distance off. So, every word of earnest prayer goes all around the earth, and makes heaven a whispering gallery. Go into the ark—not to sit down, but to stand in the door, and call until all the family come in. Aged Noah, where is Japheth? David, where is Absalom? Hannah, where is Samuel? Bring them in through Christ the door. Would it not be pleasant to spend eternity with our families? Gladder than Christmas or Thanksgiving festival will be the reunion, if we get all our family into the ark. Which of them can we spare of heaven? On one of the late steamers there were

A FATHER AND TWO DAUGHTERS

journeying. They seemed extremely poor. A benevolent gentleman stepped up to the poor man to offer some form of relief, and said: "You seem to be very poor, sir." "Poor, sir, replied the man, "if there's a poorer man than me—a-troubling the world, God pity both of us. "I will take one of your children, and adopt it, if you say so. I think it would be a great relief to you." "A what?" said the poor man. "A relief?" "Would it be a relief to have the hands chopped off from the body, or the heart torn from the breast? A relief, indeed! God be good to us! What do you mean, sir?"

However many children we may have, we have none to give up. Which of our families, can we afford to spare out of heaven? Come, father! Come, mother! Come, son! Come, daughter! Come, brother! Come, sister! Only one step and we are in. Christ, the door, swings out to admit us; and it is not the hoarseness of a stormy blast that you hear, but the voice of a loving and patient God that addresses you, saying, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark."

And there may the Lord shut us in.

THE Virginia Creeper.

The value of this truly grand creeper should never be overlooked as a decorative plant to cluster about our windows and dwellings; it has of late years become so universally popular that it seems scarcely possible any one could overlook it when seeking plants for the adornment of the house outside. It should be placed due west, where it will receive the last lingering kisses of the sinking sun. In such a position, blushing rose-red, it forms a glorious screen of rich scarlet until the frost of October or November come and nip unkindly its ample, vine-like leaves, which, falling, form patches of resplendent color where they lie.

The glory of these priney woods where the trees are clothed with its splendid foliage, and lit up by the magnificent autumnal tints of many other subtle subjects, it is not easy to imagine; but we get an inkling of their splendor when the first sharp frosts change the green leaves of this grand creeper into crimson.

In many places in Germany it is the fashion to train ivy around the windows inside the rooms; the unnatural conditions of growth make the plant sometimes attenuated and weakly in appearance, compared with the robust habit of "the rare, old plant that creeps 'o'er ruins old" out of doors, and it also darkens a room considerably as soon as the plants attain any size; but for those who do not object to this the Virginia creeper would be found even prettier and more suitable for indoor culture than ivy.

Planted in a tub on the top of a porch, or in a balcony, it grows rapidly, and forms graceful festoons; or planted in areas, back yards, or similar places it soon rises up over the face of the brick-work of the house, and covers it with a mass of graceful, elegant scenery; thus grown it does well for the many colored blossoms arranged on the window-sill; what the fresh, verdant turf is to the beds of masses of color, so, as a suitable framework of fresh green, is the Virginia creeper during summer—relief to scarlet, blue, and yellow flowers on the window-sill and balcony.

COMMON SENSE DOES NOT ASK AN IMPOSSIBLE CHESS-BOARD, BUT TAKES THE ONE BEFORE IT PLAYS THE GAME.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

SUNDAY, APRIL 17, 1887.

Joseph Makes Himself Known.

LESSON TEXT.

(Gen. 45: 1-15.)

LESSON PLAN.

TOPIC OF THE QUARTER: Bondage and Deliverance.

GOLDEN TEXT FOR THE QUARTER:

There is no other God that can deliver after this sort. —Dan. 3: 29.

LESSON TOPIC: The delivered a Deliverer.

LESSON OUTLINE: (1) A Deliverer from Alarm, vs. 1-5. (2) A Deliverer from Peril, vs. 6-8. (3) A Deliverer from Care, vs. 9-15