

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON.

Forgiveness Before Sundown.

"Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."—Eph. 4: 26.

WHAT a pillow, embroidered of all colors, hath the dying day! The cradle of clouds from which the sun rises is beautiful enough, but it is surpassed by the many-colored mausoleum in which, at evening, it is buried.

SUNSET AMONG THE MOUNTAINS!

It almost takes one's breath away to recall the scene. The long shadows stretching over the plain make the glory of the departing light, on the tiptop crags, and struck aslant through the foliage, the more translucent. Saffron and gold, purple and crimson commingled. All the castles of cloud in conflagration. Burning Moscow on the sky. Hanging gardens of roses at their deepest blush. Banners of vapor, red as if from carnage, in the battle of the elements. The hunter among the Adirondacks, and the Swiss villager among the Alps, know what is a sunset among the mountains. After a storm into which the sun goes down to bathe at nightfall is something to make weird and splendid dreams out of for a lifetime. Alexander Smith, in his poem, compares the sunset to "the barren beach of hell," but this wonderful spectacle of nature makes me think of the burnished wall of heaven. Paul, in prison, writing my text, remembers some of the gorgeous sunsets among the mountains of Asia Minor, and how he had often seen the towers of Damascus blaze in the close of the Oriental days, and he flashes out that memory in the text when he says, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

SUBLINE AND ALL-SUGGESTIVE DUTY.

For people then and people now! Forgiveness before sundown! He who never feels the throb of indignation is imbecile. He who can walk among the injustices of the world inflicted upon himself and others, without flush of cheek, or flash of eye, or agitation of nature, is either in sympathy with wrong or semi-idiotic. When Ananias, the high priest, ordered the constables of the court room to smite Paul on the mouth, Paul fired up and said: "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall."

In the sentence immediately before my text Paul commands the Ephesians: "Be ye angry and sin not." It all depends on what you are mad at and how long the feeling lasts, whether anger is right or wrong. Life is full of exasperations. Saul after David, Succoth after Gideon, Korah after Moses, the Pasquins after Augustus, the Pharisees after Christ, and every one has had his pursuers, and we are swindled, or belied, or misrepresented, or persecuted, or in some way wronged, and the danger is that healthful indignation shall become baleful spite, and that our feelings settle down into a prolonged outpouring of temper displeasing to God and ruinous to ourselves, and hence the important injunction of the text: "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

WHY THAT LIMITATION? Why that period of flaming vapor set to punctuate a flaming disposition? What has the sunset got to do with one's resentful emotions? Was it a haphazard sentiment written by Paul without special significance? No, no: I think of five reasons why we should not let the sun set before our anger sets. First: Because

TWELVE HOURS IS LONG ENOUGH

to be cross about any wrong inflicted on us. Nothing is so exhausting to physical health or mental faculty as a protracted indulgence of ill-humor. It racks the nervous system. It hurts the digestion. It heats the blood in brain and heart until the whole body is first overheated and then depressed. Beside that, it sours the disposition, turns one aside from his legitimate work, expends energies that ought to be better employed, and does us more harm than it does our antagonist. Paul gives us a good, wide allowance of time for legitimate denunciation, from six o'clock, to six o'clock, but says: "Stop there!" Watch the ascending orb of day, and when it reaches the horizon, take a reef in your disposition. Undoose your collar and cool off. Change the subject to something delightfully pleasant. Unroll your tight fist and shake hands with some one. Drive up the fires at the curfew bell. Bunk the growling dog of enmity back to its kennel. The hours of this morning will pass by, and the afternoon will arrive, and the sun will begin to set, and, I beg you, on its blazing hearth throw all your feuds, invectives and satires.

A VINOUS DIGRESSION.

Other things being equal, the man who preserves good temper will come out ahead. An old essayist says that the celebrated John Henderson, of Bristol, England, was at a dining party where political excitement ran high and the debate got angry, and while Henderson was speaking, his opponent, unable to answer his argument, dashed a glass of wine in his face, when the speaker deliberately wiped the liquid from his face and said: "This, sir, is a digression; now, if you please, for the main argument." While worldly philosophy could help but very few to such equipoise of spirit, the grace of God could help any man to such a triumph. "Impossible," you say, "I would have either left the table in anger or have knocked the man down." But I have come to believe that nothing is impossible if God help, since

WHAT I SAW AT BETHSHAN

faith cures in London, England, two centuries ago. While the religious service was going on, Rev. Dr. Boardman, glorious man since gone to his heavenly rest, was telling the scores of sick people present that Christ was there as of old to heal all diseases, and that, if they would only believe, their sickness would depart. I saw a woman near me, with hand and arm twisted of rheumatism, and her wrist was fiery with inflammation, and it looked like those cases of chronic rheumatism which we have all seen and sympathized with, cases beyond all human healing. At the preacher's reiteration of the words: "Will you believe? Do you believe? Do you believe now?" I heard this poor sick woman say, with an emphasis

which sounded through the building: "I do believe." And then she laid her twisted arm and hand out as straight as your arm and hand, or mine. If I had seen her rise from the dead, I would not have been much more thrilled. Since then I believe that God will do anything in answer to our prayer and in answer to our faith, and He can heal our bodies, and if our soul is all twisted and misshapen of revenge and hate and inflamed with sinful proclivity, He can straighten that also and make it well and clean.

Aye, you will not postpone till sundown forgiveness of enemies if you can realize that their behavior towards you may be

PUT INTO THE CATALOGUE

of the "all things" that "work together for good to those that love God." I have had multitudes of friends, but I have found in my own experience that God so arranged it that the greatest opportunities of usefulness that have been opened before me were opened by enemies. And when, years ago, they conspired against me, that opened all Christendom to me as a field in which to preach the Gospel. So you may harness your antagonists to your best interests and compel them to draw you on to better work and higher character. Suppose, instead of waiting until six minutes past five o'clock this evening, when the sun will set, you transact this glorious work of forgiveness before meridian.

Again: We ought not to let the sun go down on our wrath.

BECAUSE WE WILL SLEEP BETTER

if we are at peace with everybody. Insomnia is getting to be one of the most prevalent of disorders. How few people retire at ten o'clock at night and sleep clear through to six o'clock in the morning! To relieve this disorder all narcotics, and sedatives, and chloral, and bromide of potassium, and cocaine and intoxicants are used, but nothing is more important than a quiet spirit if we would win somnolence. How is a man going to sleep when he is in mind pursuing an enemy? with what nervous twitch he will start out of a dream! That new plan for cornering his foe will keep him wide awake while the clock strikes eleven, twelve, one, two, I give you

AN UNFAILING PRESCRIPTION

for wakefulness: spend the evening hours rehearsing your wrongs and the best way of avenging them. Hold a convention of friends on this subject in your parlor or office at eight and nine o'clock. Close the evening by writing a bitter letter expressing your sentiments. Take from the desk or pigeon hole the papers in the case to refresh your mind with your evening's meanness. Then lie down and wait for the coming of the day, and it will come before sleep comes, or your sleep will be a worried quiescence, and if you take the precaution to lie flat on your back, a frightful nightmare.

Why not put a bound to your animosity? Why let your foes come into the sanctities of your dormitory? Why let those slanderers who have already torn your reputation to pieces or injured your business, bend over your midnight pillow and drive from you one of the greatest blessings that God can offer—sweet, refreshing, all invigorating sleep. Why not fence out your enemies by the golden bars of the sunset? Why not stand behind the barricade of evening o'clock, and say to them: "Thus far and no farther." Many a man and many a woman is having the health of body as well as the health of soul eaten away by a malevolent spirit. I have in time of religious awakening had persons night after night, come into the inquiry room and get no peace of soul. After a while I have bluntly asked them: "Is there not some one against whom you have a hatred that you are not willing to give up?" After a little conversation they have slightly whispered, "Yes." Then I have said: "You will never find peace with God as long as you retain that virulence."

A boy in Sparta having stolen a fox, kept him under his coat and, though the fox was gnawing his vitals, he submitted to it rather than expose his misdeed. Many a man with a smiling face has under his jacket an animosity that is gnawing away the strength of his body and the integrity of his soul. Better get rid of

THAT HIDDEN FOX

as soon as possible. There are hundreds of domestic circles where that which is most needed is the spirit of forgiveness. Brothers apart, and sisters apart, and parents and children apart. Solomon says a brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city. Are there not enough sacred memories of your childhood to bring you together? The rabbins recount how that Nebuchadnezzar's son had such a spite against his father that after he was dead, he had his father burned to ashes and then put the ashes into four sacks and tied them to four eagles' necks which flew away in opposite directions. And there are now domestic antipathies that seem forever to have scattered all parental memories to the four winds of heaven. How far the eagles fly with that sacred ashes! The hour of sundown makes to that family no practical suggestion. Thomas Carlyle, in his biography of Frederick the Great, says the old King was told by the confessor he must be at peace with his enemies if he wanted to enter heaven. Then he said to his wife the Queen: "Write to your brother after I am dead that I forgive him." Before the confessor said: "Her Majesty had better write him immediately." "No," said the King, "after I am dead; that will be safer." So he let the sun of his earthly existence go down upon his wrath.

AGAIN: We ought not to allow the sun to set before forgiveness takes place.

BECAUSE WE MIGHT NOT LIVE

to see another day. And what if we should be ushered into the presence of our Maker with a grudge upon our soul? The majority of people depart this life in the night. Between eleven o'clock P. M. and three o'clock A. M. there is something in the atmosphere which relaxes the grip which the body has on the soul, and most of people enter the next world through the shadows of this world. Perhaps God may have arranged it in that way so as to make the contrast the more glorious. I have seen sunny days in this world that

must have been almost like the radiance of heaven. But as most people leave the earth between sundown and sunrise they quit this world at its darkest, and heaven always bright, will be the brighter for that contrast. Out of darkness into irradiation.

Shall we then leap over the roseate bank of sunset into the favorite hunting ground of disease and death, carrying our animosities with us? We would want to confront his God, against whom we have all done meaner things than anybody has ever done against us, carrying our old grudges? How can we expect His forgiveness for the greater when we are not willing to forgive others for less? Napoleon was encouraged to undertake the crossing of the Alps because Charlemagne had previously crossed them. And all this rugged path of forgiveness bears the bleeding footsteps of Him who conquered through suffering, and we ought to be willing to follow. On the night of our departure from this life be for mercy, and it will have to be offered in the presence of Him who has said: "If you forgive not men their trespasses neither will your heavenly father forgive your trespasses." What a sorry plight if we stand there hating this one, and hating that one, and wishing that one a damage, and wishing someone else a calamity, and we ourselves needing forgiveness for ten thousand times ten thousand obliquities of heart and life. When our last hour comes, we want it to find us all right. Hardly anything effects me so much in

THE UNCOVERING OF POMPEII

as the account of the soldier who, after the city had for many centuries been covered with ashes, and scorias of Vesuvius, was found standing in his place with sword hand on spear and helmet on head. Others fled at the awful submergence, but the explorer, seventeen hundred years after, found the body of that brave fellow in right position. And it will be a grand thing if, when our last moment comes, we are found in right position toward the world, as well as in right position toward God, on guard and unafraid by the ashes from the mountain of death. I do not suppose that I am any more of a coward than most people, but I declare to you that I would not dare to sleep to-night if there were any being in all the earth with whom I would not gladly shake hands, lest during the night hours my spirit dismissed to other realms, I should, because of my unforgiving spirit, be denied divine forgiveness.

"BUT," says some woman, "there is a horrid creature that has so injured me that rather than make up with her I would die first. Well, sister

YOU MAY TAKE YOUR CHOICE,

—for one or the other it will be—your complete pardon of her or God's eternal banishment of you. "But," says some man, "that fellow who cheated me out of those goods, or damaged my business credit, or started that lie about me in the newspapers, or by his perfidy broke up my domestic happiness, forgive him I cannot, forgive him I will not." Well, brother, take your choice. You will never be at peace with God till you are at peace with man. Feeling as you now do, you would not get so near the harbor of heaven as to see the lightship. Better leave that man with the God who said: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." You may say: "I will make him sweat for that yet; I will make him squirm; I mean to pursue him to the death;" but you are damaging yourself more than you damage him, and you are making heaven for your own soul an impossibility. If he will not be reconciled to you, be reconciled to him. In five or six hours it will be sundown. The dahlias will bloom against the western sky. Somewhere between this and that take a shovel and bury the old quarrel at least six feet deep.

"BUT," you say, "I have more than I can bear; too much is put upon me, and I am not to blame if I am somewhat revengeful and unrelenting." Then I think of the little child at the moving of some goods from a store. The father was putting some rolls of goods on the child's arm, package after package and some one said: "It at child is being overloaded and so much ought not to be put upon her," when the child responded:

"FATHER KNOWS HOW MUCH

I can carry;" and God our Father, will not allow too much imposition on his children. In the day of eternity it will be found you had not one annoyance too many; not one exasperation too many; not one outrage too many. Your Heavenly Father knows how much you can carry.

AGAIN: We ought not to allow the passage of the sunset hour before the dismissal of all our affronts, because we may associate

THE SUBLIMEST ACTION OF THE SOUL,

with the sublimest spectacle in nature. It is a most delightful thing to have our personal experiences allied with certain subjects. There is a tree or river bank where God first answered your prayer. You will never pass that place or think of that place without thinking of the glorious communion. There was some gate or some room or some garden wall where you were affianced with the companion who has been your chief joy in life. You never speak of that place but with a smile. Some of you have pleasant memories connected with the evening star, or the moon in its first quarter, or with the sunrise. Because you saw it just as you were arriving at harbor after tempestuous voyage. Forever and forever, Oh hearer, associate the sunset with your magnanimous, out and out, unlimited renunciation of all hatreds and forgiveness of all foes.

I admit it is the most difficult of all

graces to practice, and at the start you may make a complete failure, but keep on in the attempt to practice it. Shakespeare wrote ten plays before he reached "Hamlet," and seventeen plays before he reached "Merchant of Venice," and twenty-eight plays before he reached "Macbeth." And gradually you will come from the easier graces to the most difficult. Beside that, it is not a matter of personal determination so much as the laying hold of the almighty arm of God, who will help us to do anything we ought to do. Remember that in all personal controversies

THE ONE LEAST TO BLAME

will have to take the first step at pacifi-

cation, if it is ever effective. The contest between Aeschines and Aristippus resounds through history, but Aristippus, who was least to blame, went to Aeschines and said: "Shall we not agree to be friends before we make ourselves the laughing stock of the whole country?" And Aeschines said: "Thou art a far better man than I, for I began the quarrel, but thou hast been the first in healing the breach," and they were always friends afterwards. So let the one of you that is least to blame take the first step toward reconciliation. The one most in the wrong will never take it.

Oh, it makes one feel splendidly to be able by God's help to practice unlimited forgiveness. It improves one's body and soul. It will make you measure three or four more inches around the chest and improve your respiration, so that you can take a deeper and longer breath. It improves the countenance by scattering the gloom and makes you somewhat

LIKE GOD HIMSELF.

He is omnipotence, and we cannot copy that. He is independent of all the universe, and we cannot copy that. He is creative, and we cannot copy that. He is omniscient, and we cannot copy that. But He forgives with a broad sweep all faults, and all neglects, and all insults, and all wrong-doings, and in that way we may copy Him with mighty success. Go harness that sublime action of your soul to an autumnal sunset—the hour when the gate of heaven opens to let the day pass into the eternities, and some of the glories escape this way through the brief opening. We talk about the Italian sunsets, and sunset amid the Cordillias, but I will tell you how you may see a grander sunset than any mere lover of Nature ever beheld; that is, by flinging into it all your hatreds and animosities, and let the horses of fire trample them, and the chariots of fire roll over them, and the sparsmen of fire stab them, and the beach of fire consume them, and the billows of fire overwhelm them.

Again: We should not let the sun go down on our wrath, because it is of little importance what the world says of you or does to you when you have the alluent God of the sunset as

YOUR PROVIDER AND DEFENDER.

People talk as though it were a fixed spectacle of Nature and always the same. But no one ever saw two sunsets alike, and if the world has existed six thousand years, there have been about two million one hundred and ninety thousand sunsets, each of them then as distinct from all the other pictures in the gallery of the sky as Titan's "Last Supper," Raphael's "Descent from the Cross," Raphael's "Transfiguration," and Michael Angelo's "Last Judgment" are distinct from each other. If that God of such infinite resources that can put on the wall of the sky each night more than the Louvre and the Luxembourg galleries all in one, is my God and your God, our Provider and Protector, what is the use of our worrying about any human antagonism? If we are misinterpreted, the God of the many-colored sunset can put the right color on our action. If all the garniture of the western heavens at eventide is but the upholstery of one of the win-dows of our future home, what small business for us to be chasing enemies? Let not this Sabbath sun go down upon your wrath.

Mahomet said: "The sword is the key of heaven and hell." But my hearers, in the Last Day we will find just the opposite of that to be true, and that the sword never unlocks heaven, and that he who heals wounds is greater than he who makes them, and that on the same ring are two keys—God's forgiveness of us and our forgiveness of enemies—and these two keys unlock Paradise.

AND NOW, I wish for all of you a beautiful

SUNSET IN YOUR EARTHLY EXISTENCE.

With some of you it has been a long day of trouble, and with others of you it will be far from calm. When the sun rose at six o'clock it was the morning of youth, and a fair day was prophesied, but by the time the noonday of middle life had come, and the clock of your earthly existence had struck twelve, cloud-racks gathered and tempest bellowed in the track of tempest. But as the evening of old age approaches, I pray God the skies may brighten and the clouds be piled up into pillars as of celestial temples to which you go, or move as with mounted cohorts come to take you home. And as you sink out of sight below the horizon, may there be a radiance of Christian example lingering long after you are gone, and on the heavens be written in letters of sap-phire, and on the hills in letters of emerald: "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself, for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." So shall the sunset of earth become the sunrise of heaven.

North American Cannibals.

Dr. Frank Boas, in a report on the Indian tribes of British Columbia, says that the principal figure in the mythology of several of them is a raven, who created all things, not for the benefit of mankind, but to "revenge himself." Cannibalism is practised by some tribes in connection with the winter dances, and there is a Kwakiut tradition that one of their ancestors descended from heaven, wearing a ring of red cedar bark, and taught the people the cannibal ceremonies. The ceremonies have been adopted only in part by the Qomaks, who content themselves with eating "artificial" bodies, which they prepare "by sewing dried halibut to a human skeleton."

Versatility can do little for a young man in the race for permanent prosperity. It is no advantage to him if he can turn his hand to anything. He should be able to do some one thing thoroughly and well.

The finer the nature, the more flaws will it show through the clearness of it. The best things are seldom seen in their best form. The wild grass grows well and strongly one year with another; but the wheat is, by reason of its greater nobleness, liable to a bitter blight.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

SUNDAY, NOV. 13, 1887.

Christ's Witness to John.

LESSON TEXT.

(Matt. 11: 2-15. Memory verses, 2-6.)

LESSON PLAN.

TOPIC OF THE QUARTER: Jesus the King in Zion.

GOLDEN TEXT FOR THE QUARTER: Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all.—1 Chron. 29: 11.

LESSON TOPIC: The King and his Herald.

1. The King's Message to his Herald, vs. 2-4.

2. The King's Questions Concerning his Herald, vs. 5-10.

3. The King's Commendation of his Herald, vs. 11-15.

GOLDEN TEXT: He was a burning and a shining light.—John 5: 35.

DAILY HOME READINGS:

M.—Matt. 11: 2-15. The King and his herald.

T.—Luke 7: 18-30. Luke's parallel narrative.

W.—Matt. 3: 13-17. The King's baptism.

T.—John 1: 19-36. The herald's testimony.

F.—Luke 3: 1-22. The herald's proclamations.

S.—Matt. 14: 1-12. The herald's death.

S.—Mark 6: 14-29. The herald's death.

LESSON ANALYSIS.

I. THE KING'S MESSAGE TO HIS HERALD.

1. The Suffering Herald: John... in the prison (2).

Herod had laid hold on John... and put him in prison (Matt. 14: 3).

When he had taken him, he put him in prison (Acts 12: 4).

Who... cast them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast (Acts. 16: 20).

I... shut up many of the saints in prisons (Acts. 28: 10).

II. The Great Inquiry:

Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another? (3).

Until Shiloh come (Gen. 49: 10).

There shall come forth a star out of Jacob (Num. 24: 17).

The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet (Deut. 18: 15).

Some... said, This is of a truth the prophet (John 7: 40).

III. The Convincing Reply:

Tell John the things which ye do hear and see (4).

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened (Isa. 35: 5).

Many believed... beholding his signs which he did (2: 23).

No man can do these signs... except God be with him (John 3: 2).

Believe me for the very works' sake (John 14: 11).

1. "John heard in the prison the works of Christ." (1) Pining in the prison; (2) Toiling in the world; (3) Hearing of the work.

2. "Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?" (1) Grounds of assurance; (2) Grounds of doubt; (3) Means of satisfaction.

3. "Tell John the things which ye do hear and see." Christ's authority demonstrated (1) By his words (2) By his works.

II. THE KING'S QUESTIONS CONCERNING HIS HERALD.

I. As to the Multitude's Motive:

What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? (7).

Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judea (Matt. 3: 5).

There went out unto him all the country of Judea (Mark 1: 5).

He said... to the multitudes... Who warned you (Luke 3: 7).

All men reasoned in their hearts concerning John (Luke 3: 15).

II. As to the Herald's Character:

A reed shaken... A man clothed in soft raiment? (7, 8).

John was clothed with camel's hair (Mark 1: 6).

Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous man (Mark 6: 20).

He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost (Luke 1: 15).

The child grew and waxed strong in spirit (Luke 1: 80).

III. As to the Herald's Office:

Wherefore went ye out? to see a prophet (9).

All hold John as a prophet (Matt. 21: 26).

All verily held John to be a prophet (Mark 11: 32).

They be persuaded that John was a prophet (Luke 20: 6).

A man, sent from God, whose name was John (John 1: 6).

1. "What went ye out into the wilderness to behold?" (1) A great outgoing recalled; (2) The dominating motive sought.

2. "Yes, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet." (1) A prophet of God; (2) The herald of Messiah; (3) The awakener of Israel.

3. "My messenger." (1) Foretold by prophecy; (2) Accredited of God; (3) Honored by men; (4) Commended by Christ.

III. THE KING'S COMMENDATION OF HIS HERALD.

I. As Personally Great:

There hath not arisen a greater than John (11).

Whosoever would be first... shall be servant of all (Mark 10: 44).

He shall be great in the sight of the Lord (Luke 1: 15).

There is none greater than John (Luke 7: 28).

He that is least among you all, the same is great (Luke 9: 48).

II. As Historically Pivotal:

From the days of John... until now... Prophesied until John (12: 13).

The kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt. 3: 2).

From that time began Jesus to preach (Matt. 4: 17).

The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand (Mark 1: 15).

The law and the prophets were until John (Luke 16: 16).

III. As Like Elijah:

This is Elijah, which is to come (14).

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet (Mal. 4: 5).

I say unto you, that Elijah is come already (Matt. 17: 12).

Elijah indeed cometh first, and restoreth all things (Mark 9: 12).

He shall go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1: 17).

1. "He that is but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater." (1) The great herald; (2) The greater believer; (3) The greatest Lord.—(1) Little in the kingdom; (2) Great with the King.

2. "Men of violence take it by force." (1) The captors of the kingdom; (2) The means of the capture.—(1) The kingdom; (2) The captors; (3) The force.

3. "This is Elijah, which is to come." (1) Elijah of Old Testament history; (2) The Elijah of Old Testament prophecy; (3) The Elijah of New Testament.—John like Elijah (1) In appearance; (2) In spirit; (3) In work; (4) In achievements.

LESSON BIBLE READING.

THE LORD'S HERALD.

Foretold (Isa. 40: 3; Mal. 3: 1; Matt. 11: 10).

Likened to Elijah (Mal. 4: 5; 6; Matt. 11: 14; Luke 1: 17).

Of priestly descent (Luke 1: 5, 8, 9).

Of miraculous birth (Luke 1: 7, 13, 21, 22).