

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON

Seven in the Bible.

"God blessed the seventh day."—Genesis 2:3.

THE mathematics of the Bible is noticeable; the geometry and the arithmetic; the square in Ezekiel; the circle spoken of in Isaiah: the curve alluded to in Job; the rule of fractions mentioned in Daniel; the rule of loss and gain in Mark, where Christ asks the people to cipher out by that rule what it would "profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul." But there is one mathematical figure that is CROWNED ABOVE ALL OTHERS

in the Bible: it is the numeral seven, which the Arabians got from India, and all following ages have taken from the Arabians. It stands between the figure six and the figure eight. In the Bible all the other numerals bow to it. Over three hundred times it is mentioned in the Scriptures, either alone or compounded with other words. In Genesis the week is rounded into seven days, and I use my text, because there this numeral is for the first time introduced in a journey which halts notably in the close of the Book of Revelations its monument, the built into the wall of heaven in chrysolite, which, in the strata of precious stones, is the seventh.

A CURIOUS RECURRENCE.

In the Bible we find that Jacob had to serve seven years to get Rachel, but she was well worth it; and, foretelling the years of prosperity and famine in Pharaoh's time, the seven fat oxen were eaten up of the seven lean oxen; and wisdom is said to be built on seven pillars; and the ark was left with the Philistines seven years; and Naaman, for the cure of his leprosy, plunged in the Jordan seven times; the dead child, when Elisha breathed into its mouth, signified its arrival back into consciousness by sneezing seven times; to the house that Ezekiel saw in vision, there were seven steps; the walls of Jericho, before they fell down, were compassed seven days; Zachariah describes a stone with seven eyes; to cleanse a leprous house, the door must be sprinkled with pigeons' blood seven times; in Canaan were overturned seven nations; on one occasion Christ cast out seven devils; on a mountain He fed a multitude of people with seven loaves, the fragments left filling seven baskets; and the closing passages of the Bible are magnificent and overwhelming with the imagery made up of seven churches, seven stars, seven candlesticks, seven seals, seven angels, and seven heads, and seven crowns and seven horns, and seven spirits, and seven vials, and seven plagues, and seven thunders.

Yes, the numeral seven seems A FAVORITE WITH THE DIVINE MIND outside as well as inside. The Bible, for example, has seven prismatic colors. And when God with the rainbow wrote the comforting thought that the world would never have another deluge, He wrote it on the scroll of the sky in ink of seven colors. He grouped into the Pleiades seven stars. Rome, the capital of the world, sat on seven hills. When God would make the most intelligent thing on earth, the human countenance, He fashioned it with seven features—the two ears, the two eyes, the two nostrils, and the mouth. Yea, our body lasts only seven years, and we gradually slied it for another body after another seven years, and so on, for we are, as to our bodies, septennial animals. So the numeral seven ranges through nature and through revelation. It is the number of perfection, and so I use it while I speak of the seven candlesticks, the seven stars, the seven seals, and the seven thunders.

THE SEVEN CANDLESTICKS were and are the churches. Mark you, the churches never were, and never can be, candles. They are only candlesticks. They are not the light, but they are to hold the light. A room in the night might have in it five hundred candlesticks, and yet you could not see your hand before your face. The only use of a candlestick, and the only use of a church, is to hold up the light. You see it is a dark world, the night of sin, the night of persecution, the night of poverty, the night of sickness, the night of death; ay, about fifty nights have interlocked their shadows. The whole race goes stumbling over prostrated hopes and fallen fortunes and empty flour-barrels and desolated cradles and death-beds. Oh, how much we have

USE FOR ALL THE SEVEN candlesticks, with lights blazing from the top of each one of them! Light of pardon for all sin! Light of comfort for all trouble! Light of encouragement for all despondency! Light of eternal riches for all poverty! Light of rescue for all persecution! Light of reunion for all the bereft! Light of heaven for all the dying! And that light is Christ, who is the Light that shall yet irradiate the hemispheres. But, mark you, when I say churches are not candles, but candlesticks, I cast no slur on candlesticks. I believe in beautiful candlesticks. The candlesticks that God ordered for the ancient tabernacle were something exquisite. They were a dream of beauty carved out of loveliness. They were made of hammered gold, stood in a foot of gold, and had six branches of gold blooming all along in six lilies of gold each, and tips of gold, from which the candles lifted their holy fire. And the best houses in any city ought to be the churches—the best built, the best ventilated, the best swept, the best windowed, and the best chandeliered. Log-cabins may do in neighborhoods where most of the people live in log-cabins; but let there be partial churches for regions where there are no log-cabins. Do not have a better place for yourself than for your Lord and King. Do not live in a parlor and put your

CHRIST IN A KITCHEN. These seven candlesticks of which I speak were not made out of pewter or iron; they were golden candlesticks, and gold is not only a valuable but a bright metal. Have everything about your church bright—your ushers with smiling faces, your music jubilant, your hand-shaking cordial, your entire service attractive. Many people feel that

in church they must look dull, in order to be reverential, and many whose faces in other kinds of assemblages show all the different phases of emotion, have in church no more expression than the back wheel of a hearse. Brighten up and be responsive. If you feel like weeping, weep. If you feel like smiling, smile. If you feel indignant at some wrong assailed from the pulpit, frown. Do not leave your naturalness and resiliency home because it is Sunday morning. If as officers of a church you meet people at the church door with a black look, and have the music black, and the minister in black dress, and the black sermon, and from invocation to benediction have the impression black, few will come; and those who do come will wish they had not come at all.

Golden candlesticks! Scour up the six lilies on each branch, and know that the more lovely and bright they are, the more fit they are to hold the light. But a Christless light is a damage to the world rather than a good. Cromwell established his cavalry horses in St. Paul's Cathedral, and many now use the church as a place in which to stable worldlyness. A worldly church!

A CANDLESTICK WITHOUT THE CANDLE.

and it had its prototype in St. Sophia, in Constantinople, built to the glory of God by Constantine, and transformed to a mosque by Mohammed the Second. Built out of colored marble; a copula with twenty-four windows soaring to the height of 180 feet; the ceiling one great bewildering mosaic; galleries supported by eight columns of porphyry and sixty-seven columns of green jasper; nine bronze doors with alto-relievo work, fascinating to the eye of any artist; vases and vestments encrusted with all manner of precious stones. Four walls on fire with indescribable splendor. Though labor was cheap, the building cost one million five hundred thousand dollars. Ecclesiastical structure, almost super-natural in pomp and majesty. But Mohammedanism tore down from the walls of that building all the saintly and Christly images, and high up in the dome the figure of the cross was rubbed out; that the crescent of the barbarous Turk might be substituted.

A great church, but no Christ! A gorgeous candlestick, but no candle! Ten thousand such churches would not give the world as much light as one home-made tallow candle by which last night some grandmother in the eighties put on her spectacles and read the Psalms of David in large type. Up with the churches, by all means! Hundreds of them, thousands of them, and the more the better. But let each one be a blaze of heavenly light, making the world brighter and brighter, till the last shadow has disappeared, and the last of the suffering children of God shall have reached the land where they have no need of candlestick or "of candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign forever and ever."

TURN now in your Bible to THE SEVEN STARS. We are distinctly told that they are the ministers of religion. Some are large stars, some of them small stars, some of them sweep a wide circuit and some of them a small circuit, but so far as they are genuine they get their light from the great central sun around whom they make revolution. Let each one keep in his own sphere. Ministers of religion should never clash. But in all the centuries of the Christian church some of these stars have been hunting an Edward Irving or a Horace Bushnell or an Albert Barnes; and the stars that were in pursuit of the other stars lost their own orbit, and some of them could never again find it. Alas for the heresy hunters! The best way to destroy error is to preach the truth. The best way to scatter darkness is to strike a light. There is in immensity room enough for all the stars, and in the church room enough for all the ministers. The ministers who give up righteousness and the truth will get punishment enough anyhow, for they are "the wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

I should like, as a minister, when I am dying, to be able truthfully to say what a captain of the English army, fallen at the head of his column and dying on the Egyptian battle-field said to General Wolsey, who came to condole with him: "I led them straight; didn't I lead them straight, General?" God has put us ministers as captains in this battle-field of truth against error. Great as it will be our chagrin if we fall leading the people the wrong way; but great will be our gladness if, when the battle is over, we can hand our sword back to our great Commander, saying: "Lord Jesus! We led the people straight; didn't we lead them straight?"

THE SEVEN SEALS.

St. John in vision saw a scroll with seven seals, and he heard an angel cry: "Who is worthy to loose the seals thereof?" Take eight or ten sheets of foolscap paper, paste them together and roll them into a scroll, and have the scroll at seven different places sealed with sealing wax. You unroll the scroll till you come to one of these seals, and then that seal; then unroll again until you come to another seal, and you can go on no further until you break that seal; then you go on until all the seven seals are broken, and the contents of the entire scroll are revealed. Now, that scroll with seven seals held by the angel was the prophecy of what was to come on the earth; it meant that the knowledge of the future was with God, and no man and no angel was worthy to open it; but the Bible says Christ opened it and broke all the seven seals.

He broke the first seal and unrolled the scroll, and there was a painting of a white horse, and that meant prosperity and triumph for the Roman Empire, and so it really came to pass that for ninety years virtuous emperors succeeded each other—Nerva, Trajan, and Antoninus. Christ in the vision broke the second seal and unrolled again, and there was a painting of a red horse, and that meant bloodshed, and so it really came to pass, and the next ninety years were red with assassinations and wars. Then Christ broke the third seal and unrolled it, and there was a painting of a black horse, which in all literature

work in the history of nations on earth, has been given such a high place in that Niagara of colors, the wall of heaven, "the first foundation of which is jasper, the second, sapphires, the third, a chalcidony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite.

"When shall these eyes thy heaven-built walls And pearls gates behold? Thy bulwarks with salvation strong, And streets of shinning gold!"

THE SEVEN THUNDERS.

What those thunders meant we are not told, and there has been much guessing about them; but they are to come, we are told, before the end of all things, and the world cannot get along without them. Thunder is the speech of lightning. There are evils in our world which must be thundered down, and which will require at least seven volleys to prostrate them. We are all doing nice, delicate, soft-handed work, in churches and reformatory institutions, against the evils of the world, and much of it amounts to a teaspoon dipping out the Atlantic Ocean, or a clam-shell digging away at a mountain, or a tack hammer smiting the Gibraltar. What is needed is thunder-bolts, and at least seven of them. There is the long line of fraudulent commercial establishments; every brick stone in the foundation, and every brick in the wall, and every nail in the rafter made out of dishonesty; skeletons of poorly paid sewing girls' arms in every beam of that establishment; human nerves worked into every figure of that embroidery; blood in the deep dye of that proffered upholstery; billions of dollars of

ACCUMULATED FRAUD entrenched in massive storehouses, and stock companies manipulated by unscrupulous men, until the monopoly is defiant of all earth and heaven. How shall the evil be overcome? By treaties on the maxim: Honesty is the best policy? Or by soft repetition of the golden rule that we must do to others as we would have them do to us? No, it will not be done that way. What is needed, and will come, is the seven thunders.

There are drunkennes backed up by a capital mightier than in any other business. Intoxicating liquors enough in this country to float a navy. Good grain to the amount of 67,950,000 bushels annually destroyed to make the deadly liquid. Breweries, distilleries, gin shops, rum palaces, liquor associations, our nation spending annually seven hundred and forty millions of dollars for rum, resulting in bankruptcy, disease, pauperism, filth, assassinations, death, illegitimate work. What will stop them? High License? No. Prohibition laws? No. Churches? No. Moral suasion? No. Thunderbolts will do it; nothing else will. Seven thunders! Yonder are entrenched

INFIDELITY AND ATHEISM with their magazines of literature scoffing at our Christianity; their He printing presses busy day and night. There are their blaspheming apostles, their drunken Tom Paines and libertine Voltaires of the present as well as the past, reinforced by all the powers of darkness from highest demon to lowest imp. What will extirpate those monsters of infidelity and atheism? Thunderbolts! The seven thunders!

For the impurities of the world em-palaced as well as cellared, epauleted as well as ragged, enthroned as well as ditched: for corrupt legislation which at times makes our State and National capitals a hemispheric stretch: for superstitions that keep whole nations in squalor century after century, their Juggernauts crushing, their knives piercing burning, their waters drowning their lagging, and women, disheartened at the bad way things often go, hear you not a rumbling down the sky of heavy artillery, coming in on our side, the seven thunders of the Almighty? Don't let us try to wield them ourselves; they are too heavy and to fiery for us to handle; but God can and God will; and when all mercy has failed and all milder means are exhausted, then judgment will begin. Thunderbolts! Depend upon it, that what is not done under the flash of the seven candlesticks will be done by the tramping of the seven thunders.

But I leave this imperial and multi-potent numeral seven, where the Bible leaves it, imbedded in the finest wall that was ever built, or will be constructed, the wall of heaven. IT IS

THE SEVEN STRATA of precious stones that make up that wall. After naming six of the precious stones in that wall, the Bible cries out—"the seventh chrysolite!" The chrysolite is an exquisite gem, and in that seventh layer of the heavenly wall shall be preserved forever the dominant color of the earth we once inhabited. I have sometimes been saddened at the thought that this world, according to Science and Revelation, is to be blotted out of existence, for it is such a beautiful world. But here in this layer of the heavenly wall, where the numeral seven is to be embodied, this strata of green is to be photographed, and embalmed and perpetuated, the color of the grass that covers the earth, the color of the foliage that fills the forest, the color of the deep sea. One glance at that green chrysolite, a million years after this planet has been extinguished, will bring to mind just how it looked in summer and spring, and we will say to those who were born blind on earth, and never saw at all in this world, after they have obtained full eyesight in heaven: "If you would know how the earth appeared in June and August, look at the seventh layer of the heavenly wall, the green of the chrysolite."

And while we stand there and talk, spirit with spirit, that old color of the earth which had more sway than all the other colors put together, will bring back to us our earthly experiences, and noticing that this green chrysolite is the seventh layer of

CHRISTALIZED MAGNIFICENCE

we may think ourselves of the domination of that numeral seven over all other numerals, and thank God that in the dark earth we left behind us we so long enjoyed the light of the seven golden candlesticks, and were all of us permitted to shine among the seven stars of more or less magnitude, and that all the seven seals of the mysterious future have been broken wide open for us by a loving Christ, and that the seven thunders having done their work have ceased reverberating, and that the numeral seven, which did such tremendous

work in the history of nations on earth, has been given such a high place in that Niagara of colors, the wall of heaven, "the first foundation of which is jasper, the second, sapphires, the third, a chalcidony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite.

ANIMALS AND MUSIC.

The Tunefulness of Tiny Letterers of a Summer's Day.

Some animals abhor music, at least some music; but most animals love music. A cow likes nothing better than slinging and whistling, and her milk flows gladly for a chap that will sing to her, as she turns her head and kisses him with her tongue. A dog, so far as I know, hates music, except singing and whistling. A piano sets him on edge, and a drum or life makes him wince. Horses, I believe, love martial music best. Every horse is naturally a war horse, and likes parade and the dash of military life. Next to this he is in his element running with a fire engine. I know of no decent music that he dislikes. Cats, unlike dogs, like pianos and organs. Of course, we understand that nearly all birds have some musical taste, although few have real skill. I know of but two real masters of song in our northern states, the bobolink and catbird; although there are many more really sweet singers. The liquid, silvery notes of the bobolink are like the dew of the early, pure morning. One always associates them with waterfalls and the music of silvery instruments. But the catbird is the marvel of all musicians. He is able to do about what he will.

But what led me to sit down to write was the music of the insects—"tiny letterers of a summer's day." It is a mistake to suppose the chief occupation of these diptera and hymenoptera is eating and working—it is making music. You should go out in hay in the middle of the day; and then again in the evening, and you will, if you give yourself to listening, have revealed to you a new world. No, you must not be thinking of other things. Close your eyes and lay your head back on the sweet hay. There! Are you not now conscious of several strata of music, reaching far up into the sky? The upper air is full of bees—horns in part, it may be—and there are millions of them. Then lower down are all sorts of flies and working bees, while in the trees and grass there is fully as vast a number of crickets, katydids and other music makers. Now you must open your ears as carefully as you close your eyes, and listen attentively; for I assure you there are myriads of sounds close by you that you never heard. Is it not so? You are surprised. Indeed, I will bet you know it.

Indeed, I will bet you know it. The fact is these music notes blend together about us in a vast harmony, that hails our sense of hearing instead of quickening it. I am sure our hearing needs a great deal more education than it generally gets. If you try you can separate the sounds that now you discover, and pick out the different instruments in the orchestra. Plainly enough I was right, that working and eating do not predominate as employments of the insect world. Here is a cluster of humble or bumble bees, bent on sport, as you can see. Flies dance about in circles under that apple limb, and are playing at some game, quite like tag. There is a very soft and gentle murmur of their wings, hardly audible. They have no other musical instruments, but are quite sure they enjoy not only the motion, but the sound. Crickets, however, are real musicians, using their wing covers as instruments. When he wishes to pipe the cricket raises these covers and moves them together lengthwise, so that they work as a boy's cornstalk fiddle works. I confess the music is not sweet, but it is better than a Scotch bagpipe or a hurdy-gurdy. Be the fun of a cricket's music is in its element of ventriloquism. I should like to see you select one of these fellows just now and go directly to him following up his music. You will go half a dozen ways before you find him. Nearly all the insects have this power, and it is no doubt used in self-protection.

The handsome green katydid plays sound more like the sheepskin drums of the Africans, or a primitive taboret. In each wing cover there is a triangular space, over which is situated a thin membrane. The opening and shutting of the wing covers, more or less rapidly, produces the notes that we hear. Perhaps both are true. Crickets and katydids of both sexes are musicians, and all night long are to be heard calling and responding like the shepherd boys of eastern lands. The cicadas are musical only in the male sex, and that is quite enough, for if both sexes could beat the kettle drums we should be dummed deaf with the noise. On their sides are membranes plaited over each other and covering hollows. These are beaten with coxae that relax and contract as boys pull rubber bands in contact with a resonating material. These fellows keep it up all day, however, and as they are abundant there is no lack of their music.

I have by no means recounted all the musical instruments one can hear at midday or at evenings in July or August. Many of the tiny bugs have power to emit singing sounds. From the greatest to the least forms of life there is some way of expressing emotion. So I like to sit on these hillocks of hay and listen—just listen. It is love that, after all, fills nature and gives voice to it. Only when love fails some harsh shriek indicates the presence of hate. Have I forgotten the frog and the tree toad? By no means; and you need not recall them with a sneer. A frog is a gentleman every way, and his music is far from being despicable. In early spring it is truly delightful to hear the first cry from the pools. It is this and water and full of inquiry, but it means spring and green grass and flowers.

Fred Douglass has that rare beauty, an absolutely perfect hand.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1888.

Caleb's Inheritance.

LESSON TEXT.
Josh. 14: 6-15. Memory verses, 10-12.

LESSON PLAN.

TOPIC OF THE QUARTER: God's Promises Fulfilled.

GOLDEN TEXT FOR THE QUARTER: There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.—Josh. 21: 45.

LESSON TOPIC: Receiving the Reward.

Lesson Outline: 1. The Reward Promised, vs. 6-8. 2. The Reward Claimed, vs. 9-12. 3. The Reward Received, vs. 13-15.

GOLDEN TEXT: Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shall thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.—Psa. 37: 3.

DAILY HOME READINGS:

M.—Josh. 14: 1-15. Receiving the reward.

T.—Josh. 15: 13-20. Caleb's inheritance.

W.—Num. 13: 17-33. Reward earned.

T.—Num. 14: 1-24. Reward promised.

F.—Num. 32: 1-12. Fidelity remembered.

S.—Deut. 1: 19-39. Fidelity remembered.

S.—Josh. 21: 43-45. God's faithfulness to Israel.

LESSON ANALYSIS.

I. THE REWARD PROMISED.

I. Israel's Weakness:

My brethren... made the heart of the people melt (8).

They brought up an evil report of the land (Num. 13: 32).

The people wept that night (Num. 14: 1).

Our brethren have made our heart to melt (Deut. 1: 28).

The hearts of the people melted, and became as water (Josh. 7: 5).

II. Caleb's Fidelity:

I wholly followed the Lord my God (8).

Caleb... hath followed me fully (Num. 14: 24).

Caleb... and Joshua... have wholly followed the Lord (Num. 32: 12).

He hath wholly followed the Lord (Deut. 1: 36).

He wholly followed the Lord, the God of Israel (Josh. 14: 14).

III. God's Graciousness:

Thou knowest the thing that the Lord spake... concerning me (6).

Him will I bring into the land whereto he went (Num. 14: 24).

Joshua... and Caleb... remained alive (Num. 14: 38).

Caleb... shall see it, and to him will I give the land (Deut. 1: 36).

Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb (Josh. 14: 14).

"As the Lord commanded... so the children of Israel did." (1) The supreme Lord; (2) The submissive children.

"Thou knowest the thing that the Lord spake unto Moses." (1) Revelation bestowed; (2) Revelation known; (3) Revelation used.

"Wholly followed the Lord my God." (1) A trustworthy leader; (2) A consecrated follower; (3) A precursive reward.

II. THE REWARD CLAIMED.

I. God's Promise Remembered:

Surely the land... shall be an inheritance to the (9).

His seed shall possess it (Num. 14: 24).

The Lord... bless you, as he hath promised you (Deut. 1: 11).

Assured that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform (Rom. 4: 21).

He hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises (2 Pet. 1: 4).

II. God's Mercies Acknowledged:

Behold, the Lord hath kept me alive (10).

His mercies are great (2 Sam. 24: 14).

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever (Psa. 89: 1).

Who crowneth thee with... tender mercies (Psa. 103: 4).

Great are thy tender mercies, O Lord (Psa. 119: 150).

III. God's Promises Claimed:

Now therefore give me this mountain, wherof the Lord spake (12).

Thou hast promised this good thing unto thy servant (2 Sam. 7: 28).

O Lord... keep with thy servant... that which thou hast promised (1 Kings 8: 25).

O Lord God, let thy promise... be established (2 Chron. 1: 9).

She counted him faithful who had promised (Heb. 11: 11).

"The land... shall be an inheritance to thee... because..." (1) The land of promise; (2) The certainty of inheritance; (3) The ground of bestowal.

"The Lord hath kept me alive." (1) Continued life a gift of God; (2) Continued life a spur to praise.

"It may be that the Lord will be with me, and I shall drive them out." (1) Present foes; (2) Expected help; (3) Anticipated victory.

III. THE REWARD RECEIVED.

I. The Reward Bestowed:

And Joshua... gave Hebron unto Caleb (13).

Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt (Num. 13: 22).

Unto Caleb... he gave a portion... (the same is Hebron) (Josh. 15: 13).

They gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses had spoken (to the least forms of life there is some way of expressing emotion. So I like to sit on these hillocks of hay and listen—just listen. It is love that, after all, fills nature and gives voice to it. Only when love fails some harsh shriek indicates the presence of hate. Have I forgotten the frog and the tree toad? By no means; and you need not recall them with a sneer. A frog is a gentleman every way, and his music is far from being despicable. In early spring it is truly delightful to hear the first cry from the pools. It is this and water and full of inquiry, but it means spring and green grass and flowers.

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