

# REV. DR. TALMAGE.

The Brooklyn Divine's Sunday Sermon.

Subject, "In the Lion's Den."

TEXT: "Then the King commanded, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions."—Daniel vi, 16.

Darius was King of Babylon, and the young man Daniel was so much a favorite with him that he made him Prime Minister or Secretary of State. But no man could gain such a high position without exciting the envy and jealousy of the people. There were demagogues in Babylon who were his appreciative of their own abilities that they were affronted at the elevation of this young man. Old Babylon was afraid of young Daniel. They called the den the more apt it is to be riven of the lightning.

These demagogues asked the King to make a decree that anybody that made a petition to anyone except the King within thirty days should be put to death. King Darius, not suspecting foul play, makes that decree. The demagogues accomplished all they want, because they knew that no one can keep Daniel from sending petitions before God for thirty days.

So far from being afraid, Daniel goes on with his supplications three times a day, and is found on his housetop making prayer. He is caught in the act. He is condemned to be devoured by the lions. Rough executioners of the law seize him and dash him into the cavern. I hear the growl of the wild beasts, and I see them pawing the dust, and as they put their mouths to the ground the solid earth cracks and they begin to howl. I see their eyes roll, and I almost hear the fiery balls smother in the darkness. These monsters approach Daniel. They have an appetite nearly as large as their own. With one stroke of their paw or one scratch of their claw they leave him dead at the bottom of the cavern. But what a strange welcome Daniel receives from these hungry monsters! They fawn around him; they lick his hands; they bury his feet in their long manes. That night he has calm sleep, with his head pillowed on the warm necks of the tame lions.

But not so well did Daniel sleep. He loves Daniel, and hates this strategy by which he has been condemned. All night long the King walks the floor. He cannot sleep. At the dawn of the morning, at the first streak of the daylight Darius hastens forth to see the fate of his favorite. The heavy palace doors open and clank shut long before the people of the city wake. Darius goes to the den of lions; he looks in. All is silent. He hears steps. He catches the very words he has heard; but gathered all his strength he shouts through the rifts of the rock: "O Daniel! is the God whom thou servest continually able to deliver thee?" There comes rolling up from the deep darkness a voice which says: "O King! live forever. My God has sent His angel to shut the lions' mouths that they have not hurt me."

Then Daniel is brought out from the den. The demagogues are hurled into it, and no sooner have they struck the bottom of the den than their flesh was rent, and their bones cracked, and their blood spurted through the rifts of the rock, and as the lions make the rocks tremble with their roar they announce to all ages that while God will defend His people the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Learn first from this subject that the greatest crime that you can commit in the eyes of man is the crime of success. What had Daniel done that he should be flung into the lions? He got to be prime minister. They could not forgive him for that, and behold in that a touch of unsanctified human nature as seen in all ages, your success is long as you are pinched in poverty, so long as you are running the gauntlet between landlord and the tax gatherer, so long as you find it hard work to educate your children, there are people who will say: "Poor man, I am sorry for him; he ought to succeed, poor man!"

But after a while the tide turns in your favor. That was a profitable investment you made. You bought at just the right time. Fortune becomes good humored and smiles upon you. Now you are being in some department successful your success chokes some one. Those men who used to sympathize with you stand along the street, and they scowl at you from under the rim of their hats. You no longer have more or more influence than they have, and you ought to be scowled at from under the rim of their hats. You catch a word or two as you pass. "Stick up your chin, you one." "Got it dishonestly," says another. "Will burst soon," says a third. Every stone in your new house is laid on their hearts. Your horse's hoofs wear over their backs.

Every item of your success has been to them an item of discomfiture and despair. Just as soon as you see respect, you are above your fellows, if you are more virtuous, if you are more wise, if you are more influential, you cast a shadow on the prospect of others. The road to honor and success is a narrow one, and it is a narrow one. Jealousy says, "Stay down or I'll knock you down." "I do not like you," said the snowflake to the snowflake. "Oh," said the snowflake, "you are going up and I am coming down." Young merchants, young lawyers, young doctors, young mechanics, young artists, young farmers, at certain times there were those to sympathize with you, but now that you are becoming master of your particular occupation or profession, how is it now, your lawyers, your doctors, your artists, your farmers—how is it now? The greatest crime that you can commit is the crime of success.

Again, my countrymen, do not set the value of decision of character in your department. Daniel knew that if he continued his adherence to the religion of the Lord he would be hurled into the lions, but having set his compass well he sailed right on.

For the lack of that element of decision of character so eminent in Daniel many men are ruined for crime and ruin for the world to come. A great many at forty years of age are not settled in any respect, because they have not been able to make up their mind. Perhaps they will go West. Perhaps they will go East. Perhaps they will go South. Perhaps they will not. Perhaps they may be in real estate, or in railroads. Perhaps they will not. They are like a steamer that should go out of New York harbor, starting for Glasgow, and the next day should change for Havre de Grace, and the next for Charleston, and the next for Boston, and the next for Liverpool—these men on the sea of life, everlastingly tacking ship and making no headway, and they are like a man who starts to build a house in the Corinthian style and changes it to Doric, and then completes it in the Ionic, and is cursed by all styles of architecture.

Young man, start right and keep on. Have decision of character. Character is like the goldfish of Tongatoo; it is a constant while standing firm, but loses all its beauty in flight. How much decision of character in order that these young men may be Christians! The old sages make sarcastic flings at them. They go on excursions and they do not invite them. They prophesy that he will give out. They wonder if he is not getting wings. As he passes they grin and wink and chuckle, and say: "There goes a saint."

Oh, young man, have decision of character! You can afford to be in this matter of religion to be laughed at. What do you care for the scoffs of these men, who are affronted because you will not go to ruin with them? When the grave cracks open under their feet, and grim messengers push them into it, and eternity comes down hard upon their spirits, and conscience stings, and hopeless rain lifts them up to hurl them down, will they laugh then?

I learn also from my subject that men may take religion into their worldly business. Daniel had enough work to do to

# STORIES OF ANIMALS.

HORSE, MULE, BULL AND PANTHER.

"Jen" Could Kick—A Gunning Bull—Washing a Panther.

Last winter a Scranton, Pa., man owned a lank bay horse that stood nearly nineteen hands high. The long-legged animal devoured great quantities of food, and after the Scranton man had made several unsuccessful efforts to sell him or trade him off he got a Waverly farmer to winter the horse at a stated price. In the course of six weeks the voracious horse had devoured a whole stack of hay, and the Waverly man became frantic. He straightway came to Scranton and told the owner of the horse that the greedy beast would ruin him financially before spring, and he begged the man to take the horse away at once, agreeing to take \$5 a ton for all the hay the horse had eaten and say no more about it. There was a good deal of the milk of human kindness in the owner of the horse, and he made the discouraged farmer feel happy by removing the horse the next day.

The bay nag was an elephant on the Scranton man's hands for a while, but eventually he traded it off for a pair of mule mules that he didn't know anything about. One of the mules proved to be a very gentle and docile creature, while the other soon convinced her owner that she had been fooled and raised right in the centre of the village of Kickerville, as he expressed it. The man quickly concluded that it wouldn't do to keep the mules together, and so he sold the gentle mule for \$175. The bad mule, whose name was Jen, was as big an elephant on his hands as the tall horse had been, and how to dispose of her honorably racked his brain for months, he said.

Along in the summer an unusually active young chap offered to bet Jen's owner that he could ride the mule five blocks on one of the business avenues. "I'll bet you \$5 you can't," the man told the spry fellow, and the money was put up at once. All that the young man wanted on Jen when he rode her was a blind bridle and a surcingle, and pretty soon Jen was led out into the street in sight of a crowd that didn't get very near her heels. The athletic chap seized the bridle reins in his left hand, grasped the surcingle on Jen's back with his right, and spoke kindly to the mule.

Jen was standing still then, but the expression in her moving ears, her owner said, told him as plainly as words that the old Harry would soon be to pay. With a spring the young man leaped to Jen's back, and at the same instant Jen's hind legs began to play like drum sticks, while her head went down, and the athlete was astride of her neck. Between kicks Jen whirled around a dozen times within a circle of twenty feet, and then made a dash for the open door of a grocery, in front of which a low awning extended over the sidewalk. Her would-be rider saw his danger, and grabbed the eaves of the awning with both hands, and Jen kited into the grocery and began to eat apples out of a barrel. He was the last person who tried to ride her.

Last summer a wealthy coal mine operator in the Lackawanna valley owned a six-year-old Holstein bull that was cross and vicious. Generally the bull was tied with a rope in a yard by himself, but occasionally he was allowed to run loose in a yard with a lot of idle mine mules. The two yards joined, and one day four or five of the mules got in the yard where the bull was tied up and began to act mischievously around him. The barn keeper saw one of them nip the bull on the flank and cut up other playful capers. The bull didn't like to be played with, but one mule in particular seemed to take delight in teasing him. After a while the old bull got bellowing mad, and the barn keeper drove the mules out and put up the bars.

A few days after that the bull was let loose in the mule yard. He began to nose around a manure heap, apparently as contented as could be, while several of the mules nibbled straw on either side of him. At his right stood the mule that had teased him a few days before. The barn man was watching them. All at once, without a bit of warning, the bull made a vicious lunge at the mule on his right, and thrust one of his horns deep into its left side. The mule died in no time, and when they cut it open they found that the bull's horn had pierced the centre of its heart. After that the bull tried to kill two men, and he got to be so dangerous that the owner had him shot.

While driving through the Stony Creek ravine recently, Mr. H. M. Hanor, who lives in the Elk Creek valley, four miles from Skinner's Creek, Pa., had a remarkable experience. Mr. Hanor had a single horse attached to a buggy with a canopy top, and he was alone. The horse was on a slow walk, when suddenly it shied to the right, and Mr. Hanor saw a quick movement among the bushes to his left. What the flash-like motion was he didn't know, he said, because his whole attention was directed to the skittish horse at the instant, and when he reined the horse back into the road he saw a long-bodied animal creeping through the copse toward the carriage. Before he had time to make up his mind what kind of a beast it was, the animal crouched, and then sprang at the buggy.

It landed in the roadway opposite a point between the wheels, having seemingly checked its leap on account of the canopy, the fringe of which fluttered. The horse snorted and plunged ahead, and the strange animal

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# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1890.

Parable of the Pounds.

LESSON TEXT.

(Luke 19: 11-27. Memory verses: 12-13.)

LESSON PLAN.

TOPIC OF THE QUARTER: Jesus the Saviour of Men.

GOLDEN TEXT FOR THE QUARTER: He is able to save to the uttermost.—Heb. 7: 25.

LESSON TOPIC: Rewarding the Faithful Servant.

LESSON OUTLINE:

1. Testing all Servants, vs. 12-15.

2. Rewarding Faithful Servants, vs. 16-19, 24-27.

3. Punishing Unfaithful Servants, vs. 20-24, 27.

GOLDEN TEXT: Unto every one which hath shall be given.—Luke 19: 26.

DAILY HOME READINGS:

M.—Luke 19: 11-27. Rewarding faithful service.

T.—Matt. 25: 14-30. Rewarding faithful service.

W.—Rev. 2: 1-10. Faithful service enjoined.

T.—2 Tim. 4: 1-18. Faithful service reviewed.

F.—Deut. 34: 1-12. Faithful service ended.

S.—Matt. 14: 1-12. Faithful service.

S.—1 Cor. 3: 1-23. Service tested.

LESSON ANALYSIS.

I. TESTING ALL SERVANTS.

I. The Absent Lord:

A certain nobleman went into a far country (12).

I go to prepare a place for you (John 14: 2).

Now I go unto him that sent me (John 16: 5).

He was taken up; and a cloud received him (Acts 1: 9).

Christ returned... unto heaven itself (Heb. 9: 24).

II. The Trusted Servants:

He called ten servants... and gave them ten pounds (13).

Called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods (Matt. 25: 14).

To each one is given... to profit withal (1 Cor. 12: 7).

He ascended on high... and gave gifts unto men (Eph. 4: 8).

As each hath received a gift, ministering it (1 Pet. 4: 10).

III. The Final Reckoning:

Called to him, that he might know what they had gained (15).

Unto every man according to his deeds (Matt. 16: 27).

Cometh, and maketh a reckoning with them (Matt. 25: 19).

Render the account of thy stewardship (Luke 16: 2).

Each one may receive the things done in the body (2 Cor. 5: 10).

1. "They supposed that the kingdom of God was immediately to appear." (1) The assured coming; (2) The misjudged time; (3) The corrective teachings.

2. "Trade ye herewith till I come." (1) The master; (2) The servants; (3) The trust; (4) The trading; (5) The absence; (6) The return.

3. "That he might know what they had gained by trading." (1) The trust committed; (2) The trading ordered; (3) The report required; (4) The results involved.

II. REWARDING FAITHFUL SERVANTS.

Diligence:

Lord, thy pound hath made ten pounds more (16).

The hand of the diligent maketh rich (Prov. 10: 4).

Seest thou a man diligent?... he shall stand before kings (Prov. 22: 29).

Lo, I have gained other five talents (17).

Adding... all diligence, in your faith supply virtue (2 Pet. 1: 5).

II. Commendation:

Well done, thou good servant (17).

Well done, good and faithful servant (Matt. 25: 21).

Faithful in a very little... faithful also in much (Luke 16: 10).

They shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy (Rev. 3: 4).

They washed their robes, and made them white (Rev. 7: 14).

III. Advancement:

Unto every one that hath shall be given (26).

I will set thee over many things (Matt. 25: 23).

Give it unto him that hath the ten talents (Matt. 25: 28).

He shall have abundance (Matt. 25: 29).

He counted me faithful, appointing me to his service (1 Tim. 1: 12).

1. "Well done, thou good servant." (1) The conduct commended; (2) The commendation bestowed; (3) The rewards added.

2. "Give it unto him that hath ten pounds." (1) Ability demonstrated; (2) Opportunity enlarged.

3. "Unto every one that hath shall be given." God's law for human advancement: (1) Opportunity bestowed; (2) Improvement noted; (3) Opportunity extended; (4) Possibilities limited.

III. PUNISHING UNFAITHFUL SERVANTS.

I. Inactivity:

Thy pound, which I kept laid up in a napkin (20).

He said, I go, sir; and went not (Matt. 25: 20).

1. "...hid thy talent in the earth; lo, thou hast thine own (Matt. 25: 25).

Thou wicked and slothful servant (Matt. 25: 26).

Be ye doers... not hearers only, delecting your own selves (Jas. 1: 22).

II. Distrust:

I feared thee, because thou art an austere man (21).

What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? (Job 21: 15).

They say, How doth God know? (Psa. 78: 11).

What profit is it that we have kept his charge? (Mal. 3: 14).

I knew thee that thou art a hard man (Matt. 25: 24).

III. Deprivation:

Take away from him the pound (24).

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