REV. DR. TALMAGE.

The Eminent Washington Divine's Sunday Sermon.

Subject: "Gathering Around Christ."

TEXT: "Unto Him shall the gathering of the people be."—Genesis xlix., 10.

Through a supernatural lens, or what I might call a prophescope, dying Jacob looks down through the corridors of the centuries until he sees Christ the center of all popular attraction and the greatest being in all the world, so everywhere acknowledged. It was not always so. The world tried hard to put Him down and to put Him out. In the year 1200, while excavating for antiquities fifty-three miles northeast of Rome, a copper plate tablet was found containing the death warrant of the Lord Jesus Christ, reading in this wise:

"In the year 17 of the empire of Tiberius Cæsar, and on the 25th of March, I, Pontius Pilate, governor of the Prætore, condemn Jesus of Nazareth to die between two thieves, Quintius Cornelius to lead him forth to the place of execution."

The death warrant was signed by several names. First, by Daniel, rabbi Pharisee; secondly, by Johannes, rabbi; thirdly, by Raphael; fourthly, by Capet, a private citizen. This capital punishment was executed according to law. The name of the thief crucified on the right hand side of Christ was Dismas. The name of the thief crucified on the left hand side of Christ was Gestus. Pontius Pilate describing the tragedy says the whole world lighted candles from noon until night. Thirty-three years of maltreatment. A wall of the city, built about those times and recently exposed by archæologists, shows a caricature of Jesus Christ, evidencing the contempt in which He was held by many in His day, that caricature on the wall representing a cross and a donkey nailed to it, and under it the inscription, "This is the Christ whom the people worship." But I rejoice that that day is gone by. Our Christ is coming out from under the world's abuse. The most popular name on earth to-day is the name of Christ. Where He had one friend Christ has a thousand friends. The scoffers have become the worshipers. Of the twenty most celebrated infidels in Great Britain in our day sixteen have come back to Christ, trying to undo the blatant mischief of their lives—sixteen out of the twenty. Every man who writes a letter or signs a document, wittingly or unwittingly, honors Jesus Christ. We date everything as B. C. or A. D.—B. C., before Christ; A. D., Anno Domini, in the year of our Lord. All the ages of history on the pivot of the upright beam of the cross of the Son of God. B. C., A. D. I do not care what you call Him—whether Conqueror or King or Morning Star or Sun of Righteousness or Balm of Gilead or Lebanon Cedar or Brother or Friend or take the name used in the verse from which I take my text and call Him Shilo, which means His Son, or the Tranquillator, or the Peacemaker, Shiloh. I only want to tell you that "unto Him shall the gathering of the people be."

In the first place, the people are gathered around Christ for pardon. No sensible man or healthfully ambitious man is satisfied with his past life. A fool may think he is all right. A sensible man knows he is not. I do not care who the thoughtful man is the review of his lifetime behavior before God and man gives to him no especial satisfaction. "Oh," he says, "there have been so many things I have done I ought not to have done; there have been so many things I have said I ought never to have said; there have been so many things I have written I ought never to have written; there have been so many things I have thought I ought never to have thought! I must somehow get things readjusted. I must somehow have the past reconstructed. There are days and months and years which cry out against me in horrible vociferation." Ah, my brother, Christ adjusts the past by obliterating it. He does not erase the record of our misdoing with a dash of ink from a register's pen, but lifting His right hand crushed, red at the palm, He puts it against His bleeding brow and then against His pierced side, and with the crimson accumulation of all those wounds He rubs out the accusatory chapter. He blots out our iniquities. Oh, never be anxious about the future; better be anxious about the past! I put it not at the end of my sermon; I must put it at the front—mercy and pardon through Shiloh, the sin pardoning Christ. "Unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." "Oh," says some man, "I have for forty years been as bad as I could be, and is there any mercy for me?" Mercy for you. "Oh," says some one here, "I had a grand ancestry, the holiest of fathers and the tenderest of mothers, and for my perfidy there is no excuse! Do you think there is any mercy for me?" Mercy for you. "But," says another man, "I fear I have committed what they call the unpardonable sin, and the Bible says if a man commit that sin he is neither to be forgiven in this world nor the world to come. Do you think there is any mercy for me?" The fact that you have any solicitude about the matter at all proves positively that you have not committed the unpardonable sin. Mercy for you? Oh, the grace of God which bringeth salvation!

The grace of God! Let us take the surveyor's chain and try to measure God's mercy through Jesus Christ. Let one surveyor take that chain and go to the north, and another surveyor take that chain and go to the south, and another surveyor take that chain and go to the east, and another surveyor take that chain and go to the west, and then make a report of the square miles of that vast kingdom of God's mercy. Aye, you will have to wait to all eternity for the report of that measurement. It cannot be measured. Paul tried to climb the height of it, and he went height over height, altitude above altitude, mountain above mountain, then sank down in discouragement and gave it up, for he saw Sierra Nevadas beyond and Matterhorns beyond, and waving his hands back to us in the plains he says, "Past finding out; unsearchable, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." You notice that nearly all the sinners mentioned as pardoned in the Bible were great sinners—David a great sinner, Paul a great sinner, Rahab a great sinner, Magdalene a great sinner, the prodigal son a great sinner. The world easily understood how Christ could pardon a half and half sinner, but what the world wants to be persuaded of is that Christ will forgive the worst sinner, the hardest sinner, the oldest sinner, the most inexcusable sinner. To the sin pardoning Shiloh let all the gathering of the people be.

But, I remark again, the people will gather around Christ as a sympathizer. Oh, we all want sympathy! I hear people talk as though they were independent of it. None of us could live without sympathy. When parts of our family are away, how lonely the house seems until they all get home! But, alas, for those who never come home. Sometimes it seems as if it must be impossible. What, will their feet never again come over the threshold? Will they never again sit with us at the table? Will they never again kneel with us at family prayer? Shall we never again look into their sunny faces? Shall we never again on earth take counsel with them for our work? Alas me, who can stand under these griefs? Oh, Christ, Thou canst do more for a bereft soul than any one else! It is He who stands beside us to tell of the resurrection. It is He that came to bid peace. It is He that comes to us and breathes into us the spirit of submission until we can look up from the wreck and ruin of our brightest expectations and say: "Father not my will, but Thine, be done." Oh, ye who are bereft, ye anguish bitten come into this refuge! The roll of those who came for relief to Christ is larger and larger. Unto this Shiloh of omnipotent sympathy the gathering of the people shall be. Oh, that Christ would stand by all these empty cradles and all these desolated homesteads and all these broken hearts and persuade us it is well!

The world cannot offer you any help at such a time. Suppose the world comes and offers you money. You would rather live on a crust in a cellar and have your departed loved ones with you than live in palatial surroundings and they away. Suppose the world offers you its honors to console you. What is the Presidency to Abraham Lincoln when little Willie lies dead in the White House? Perhaps the world comes and says, "Time will cure it all." Ah, there are griefs that have raged on for thirty years and are raging yet. And yet hundreds have been comforted, thousands have been comforted, millions have been comforted, and Christ had done the work. Oh, what you want is sympathy! The world's heart of sympathy beats very irregularly. Plenty of sympathy when we do not want it, and often when we are in appalling need of it, no sympathy. There are multitudes of people dying for sympathy—sympathy in their work, sympathy in their fatigues, sympathy in their bereavements, sympathy in their financial losses, sympathy in their physical ailments, sympathy in their spiritual anxieties, sympathy in the time of declining years—wide, deep, high, everlasting, almighty sympathy. We must have it, and Christ gives it. That is the cord with which He is going to draw all Nations to Him.

At the story of punishment a man's eye flashes, and his teeth set, and his fist clinches, and he prepares to do battle even though it be against the heavens. Yet what heart so hard but it will succumb to the story of compassion! Even a man's sympathy is pleasant and helpful. When we have been in some hour of weakness, to have a brawny man stand beside us and promise to see us through, what courage it gives to our heart, and what strength it gives to our arm. Still mightier is a woman's sympathy. Let him tell the story who, when all his fortunes were gone and all the world was against him, came home and found in that home a wife who could write on the top of the empty flour barrel, "The Lord will provide," or write on the door of the empty wardrobe: "Consider the lilies of the field. If God so clothed the grass of the field, will He not clothe us and ours?"

Or let that young man tell the story who has gone the whole round of dissipation. The shadow of the penitentiary is upon him, and even his father says: "Be off! Never come home again!" The young man finds still his mother's arm outstretched for him, and how she will stand at the wicket of the prison to whisper consolation or get down on her knees before the governor begging for pardon, hoping on her wayward boy after all others are hopeless. Or let her tell the story who, under villainous allurement and impatient of parental restraint, has wandered off from a home of which she was the idol into the murky and thunderous midnight of abandonment, away from God, and further away until some time she is tossed on the beach of that early home a mere splinter of a wreck. Who will pity her now? Who will gather those dishonored locks into her lap? Who will wash off the blood from the gashed forehead? Who will tell her of that Christ who came to save the lost? Who will put that weary head upon the clean white pillow and watch by day and watch by night until the hoarse voice of the sufferer becomes the whisper, and the whisper becomes only a faint motion of the lips, and the faint motion of the lips is exchanged for a silent look, and the cur feet are still, and the weary eyes are still, and the frenzied heart is still, and all is still? Who will have compassion on her when no others have compassion? Mother! Mother!

Oh, there is something beautiful in sympathy—in manly sympathy, wifely sympathy, motherly sympathy, yea, and neighborly sympathy! Why was it that a city was aroused with excitement when a little child was kidnapped from one of the streets? Why were whole columns of the newspapers filled with the story of a little child? It was because we are all one in sympathy, and every parent said: "How if it had been my Lizzie? How if it had been my Mary? How if it had been my Maud? How if it had been my child? How if there had been one unoccupied pillow in our trundle bed to-night? How if my little one—bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh—were to-night carried captive into some den of vagabonds, never to come back to me? How if it had been my sorrow looking out of the window watching and waiting—that sorrow worse than death?" Then when they found her, why did we declare the news all through the households, and everybody that knew how to pray said, "Thank God?" Because we are all one, bound by one great golden chain of sympathy. Oh, yes, but I have to tell you that if you will aggregate all neighborly, manly, wifely, motherly sympathy, it will be found only a poor starving thing compared with the sympathy of our great Shiloh, who has held in His lap the sorrows of the ages and who is ready to nurse on His holy heart the woes of all who will come to Him. Oh, what a God! What a Saviour we have!

But in larger vision see the Nations in some kind of trouble ever since the world was derailed and hurled down the embankments. The demon of sin came to the world, but other demons have gone through other worlds. The demon of conflagration, the demon of volcanic disturbance, the demon of destruction.

La Place says he saw one world in the Northern Hemisphere sixteen months burning. Tycho Brahe said he saw another world burning. A French astronomer says that in 300 years 1500 worlds have disappeared. I do not see why infidels find it so hard to believe that two worlds stopped in Joshua's time, when the astronomers tell us that 1500 worlds have stopped. Even the moon is a world in ruins. Stellar, lunar, solar catastrophes innumerable. But it seems as if the most sorrows have been reserved for our world. By one toss of the world at Ticuboro, of 12,000 inhabitants only twenty-six people escaped. By one shake of the world at Lisbon in five minutes 60,000 perished, and 200,000 before the earth stopped rocking. A mountain falls in Switzerland, burying the village of Goldau. A mountain falls in Italy in the night, when 2000 people are asleep, and they never arouse. By a convulsion of the earth Japan broken off from China. By a convulsion of the earth the Caribbean Islands broken off from America. Three islands near the mouth of the Ganges, with 340,000 inhabitants—a great surge of the sea breaks over them, and 214,000 perish that day. Alas, alas, for our poor world! It has been recently discovered that a whole continent has sunk, a continent that connected Europe and America—part of the inhabitants of that continent going to Europe, part coming to America over the tablelands of Mexico, up through the valleys of the Mississippi, and we are finding now the remains of their mounds and their cities in Mexico, in Colorado and the tablelands of the West. It is a matter of demonstration that a whole continent has gone down, the Azores off the coast of Spain only the highest mountain of that sunken continent. Plato described that continent, its grandeur, the multitude of its inhabitants, its splendor and its awful destruction, and the world thought it was a romance, but archæologists have found out it was history, and the English and the German and the American fleets have gone forth with archæologists, and the Challenger, and the Dolphin, and the Gazelle have dropped anchor, and in deep sea soundings they have found the contour of that sunken continent.

Oh, there is trouble marked on the rocks, on the sky, on the sea, on the flora and the fauna! Astronomical trouble, geological trouble, oceanic trouble, political trouble, domestic trouble, and standing in the presence of all those stupendous devastations I ask if I am not right in saying that the great want of this age and all ages is divine sympathy and omnipotent comfort, and they are found not in the Brahma of the Hindoo or the Allah of the Mohammedad, but in the Christ unto whom shall the gathering of the people be. Other worlds may fall, but this morning star will never be blotted from the heavens. The earth may quake, but this rock of ages will never be shaken from its foundations. The same Christ who fed the 5000 will feed all the world's hunger. The same Christ who cured Bartimeus will illumine all blindness. The same Christ who made the dumb speak will put on every tongue a hosoanna. The same Christ who awoke Lazarus from the sarcophagus will yet rally all the pious dead in glorious resurrection. "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and "to Him shall the gathering of the people be." Ah, my friends, when Christ begins thoroughly and quickly to lift this miserable wreck of a sunken world it will not take Him long to lift it.

I have thought that this particular age in which we live may be given up to discoveries and inventions by which through quick and instantaneous communication all cities and all communities and all lands will be brought together, and then in another period perhaps these inventions which have been used for worldly purposes will be brought out for gospel invitation, and some great prophet of the Lord will come and snatch the mysterious, sublime and miraculous telephone from the hand of commerce, and, all lands and kingdoms connected by a wondrous wire, this prophet of the Lord may, through telephonic communication, in an instant announce to all Nations pardon and sympathy and life through Jesus Christ, and then, putting the wondrous tube to the ear of the Lord's prophet, the response shall come back, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son."

You and I may not live to see the day. I think those of us who are over forty years of age can scarcely expect to see the day. I expect before that time our bodies will be sound asleep in the hammocks of the old gospel ship as it goes sailing on. But Christ will wake us up in time to see the achievement. We who have sweated in the hot harvest fields will be at the door of the garner when the sheaves come in. That work for which in this world we toiled and wept and struggled and wore ourselves out shall not come to consummation and we be oblivious of the achievement. We will be allowed to come out and shake hands with the victors. We who fought in the earlier battles will have just as much right to rejoice as those who reddened their feet in the last Armageddon. Ah, yea, those who could only give a cupful of cold water in the name of a disciple; those who could only scrape a handful of lint for a wounded soldier; those who could only administer to old age in his decrepitude; those who could only coax a poor waif of the street to go back home to her God; those who could only lift a little child in the arms of Christ, will have as much right to take part in the ovation to the Lord Jesus Christ as a Chrysostom. It will be your victory and mine as well as Christ's, He the conqueror, we shouting in His train. Christ the victor will pick out the humblest of His disciples in the crowd, and turning half around on the white horse of victory He shall point her out for approval by the multitude as He says, "She did what she could." Then putting His hand on the head of some man, who by his industry made one talent do the work of ten, He will say: "Thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over ten cities." Two different theories about the fulfillment of this promise.

There are people who think Christ will come in person and sit on a throne. Perhaps He may. I should like to see the scarred feet going up the stairs of a palace in which all the glories of the Alhambra, and the Taj Mahal, and St. Mark's, and the Windsor palace are gathered. I should like to see the world pay Christ in love for what it did to Him in maltreatment. I should like to be one of the grooms of the chargers holding the stirrup as the King mounts. Oh, what a glorious time it would be on earth if Christ would break through the heavens, and right here where He has suffered and died have this prophecy fulfilled, "Unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." But failing in that I bargain to meet you at the ponderous gate of heaven on the day when our Lord comes back. Garlands of all Nations on His brow—of the bronzed Nations of the South and the pallid Nations of the North—Europe, Asia, Africa, North and South America and the other continents that may arise meantime from the sea to take the places of their sunken predecessors; the arch of Trajan, arch of Titus, arch of Triumph in the Champs Elysees, all too poor to welcome this King of kings, and Lord of lords, and Conqueror of conquerors in His august arrival. Turn out all heaven to meet Him. Hang all along the route the flags of earthly dominion, whether decorated with crescent or star or eagle or lion or coronet. Hang out heaven's brightest banner, with its one star of Bethlehem and blood striped of the cross. I hear the procession now. Hark, the tramp of the feet, the rumbling of the wheels, the clattering of the hoofs and the shout of the riders! Ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands. Put up in heaven's library, right beside the completed volume of the world's ruin, the completed volume of Shiloh's triumph. The old promise struggling through the ages fulfilled at last, "Unto Him shall the gathering of the people be."

While everlasting ages roll
Eternal love shall feast their soul
And scenes of bliss forever new
Rise in succession to their view.

WILL SUPERSEDE THE BICYCLE.

Fifteen Miles an Hour Can Be Attained on Pneumatic Skates.

A new form of locomotion has been introduced through the medium of the pneumatic road skate. This skate is in the form of a miniature bicycle for each foot. Attached to it is a support for the ankle, and below the sole are two pneumatic wheels of about three and a half inches diameter. It is claimed that it gives any person a speed of from ten to fifteen miles an hour after but little practice, and much higher speed can be obtained by experts.

The skate can be used on a rough road, up and down hill, and on all ordinary and smooth surfaces. It is proposed to apply it to nearly every purpose for which bicycles have hitherto been used, as it offers a cheap and easy means of locomotion for postmen, carriers and numerous other persons, including country doctors and clergymen. It is well adapted to the purposes of pleasure seekers and tourists, and, in crowded thoroughfares, it entails the minimum risk of accident or hindrance by traffic.

A champion figure skater states that it is much less cumbersome than the bicycle, and its motion gives even more pleasure to the wearer. Uphill work is effected with less exertion than with the bicycle, and in going down hill there is not the slightest danger of losing control of the feet. All the skater has to do to preserve complete command of himself being to slightly cross the rear foot.

It is believed that this skate will meet the needs of many persons who are deterred by nervousness from riding on the bicycle.

SPONGE SUPPLY IN DANGER.

Carelessness of Cuban Fishermen Threatens the Beds With Extinction.

The sponge supply of the United States is seriously threatened by the wanton carelessness of the Cuban sponge fishermen. For several years they have been gathering the small or infant sponges with those of larger growth. The inevitable result is that the Cuban sponge beds, from which the greater portion of sponges used in the United States come, are threatened with total extinction.

Already prices have advanced, and a still further increase is probable in a very short time. The shipments of sponges to dealers vary greatly in size and time of receipt. To gather them it is necessary that the water should be absolutely clear, and if for any reason the ocean is disturbed in more than ordinary degree over the sponge beds, the fishermen must wait for clear water—perhaps a week, or even a month.

The sponges which come from Cuba are known as medium grade, the variety in general use. Florida and Nassau furnish a proportion of the supply of this grade, but nothing like the amount that comes from Cuba. The best sponges are known as the Mediterranean variety, as they come from beds in the sea of that name. They are the heavy, white sponges, and are always high-priced. Even the supply of these, however, is much smaller than usual. So people can make up their minds that this is not a year of cheap sponges.

The Only Gold Toilet Set.

The only complete gold toilet service in the world belongs to the Khedive of Egypt. It was made in London and consists of twenty-eight pieces. Each piece bears the monogram of the Khedive in diamonds, the same being surrounded by a fillet in imitation of that of the Grand Turk. Upwards of 3,000 diamonds and over 1,200 rubies were used in decorating these golden toilet articles. The body of each piece is of 18-carat gold, and all are inclosed in a diamond-incrusted ebony case.

Care of Lamps.

Burners need a monthly boiling if they are to give the clear, steady light which well-regulated households desire. Vinegar, with a little salt sprinkled in it, is the fluid in which they should be boiled. Wicks should never be cut, but the charred portion should be rubbed off every day with a card or cloth, and the loose threads clipped with small scissors. Wicks should not be used until they are very short, but should be changed frequently. An old wick becomes tightened and the webbing is no longer loose enough to draw the oil easily. Chimneys should not be washed, but should be cleaned every day with a cloth wet in alcohol. This will keep them shining and brilliant. Shades should be deep enough to keep the light from striking through the clear glass to the eye, no matter how low one is sitting. The tank should be filled every day almost to the brim, but not quite.

For Testing Diamonds.

Electricity is now used to detect paste diamonds from the genuine. A small disk of aluminum is attached to the spindle of a small motor. A clamp with a small flat spring, provided with an adjustable screw, holds the article to be tested. It is then moistened and placed in contact with the rapidly revolving aluminum disk. If the stone is a genuine one, it will be left intact; if it is bogus it will show brilliant metallic sparks.—New York Telegram.

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Each generation lives in a different world.—Anon.

Nothing in bath or laundry so good as Borax. Dobbins' Floating Borax Soap needs but one trial to prove its value. Costs same as poorer floating soap. No one has ever tried it without buying more. Your grocer has it.

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The Ins and Outs of It.

If you get best wear out of a coat, best work must have gone into it. You can't get good bread out of poor flour.

Moral: You can't get the best out of anything, unless the best is in it; and the best has to be **put** in before it can be taken out. Now, we have a rule to test those sarsaparillas with a big "best" on the bottle. "Tell us what's put in you and we'll decide for ourselves about the best." That's fair. But these modest sarsaparillas say: "Oh! we can't tell. It's a secret. Have faith in the label." . . . Stop! There's one exception; one sarsaparilla that has no secret to hide. It's Ayer's. If you want to know what goes into Ayer's Sarsaparilla, ask your doctor to write for the formula. Then you can satisfy yourself that you get the best of the sarsaparilla argument when you **get Ayer's.**

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The mighty hopes that make us men.—Tennyson.

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