

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

"SILENCE IN HEAVEN FOR THE SPACE OF HALF AN HOUR."

Only That Short Space in all the Eternities of Time Given to Silence—Importance of These Fragments of Our Lives—A Glimpse of the Kingdom.

(Copyright, 1902, Louis Klopsch, N. Y.) Washington, April 6.—In the following discourse, prepared by Dr. Talmage before his illness, a vivid glimpse of the splendors and glories of heavenly life is presented; text, Revelation viii, 1, "There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour."

The busiest place in the universe is heaven. It is the center from which all good influences start; it is the goal at which all good results arrive. The Bible represents it as active with wheels and wings and orchestras and processions mounted or charioted. But my text describes a space when the wheels ceased to roll and the trumpets to sound and the voices to chant. The riders on the white horses reined in their chargers. The doxologies were hushed and processions halted. The hand of arrest was upon all the splendors. "Stop, heaven!" cried an omnipotent voice, and it stopped. For thirty minutes everything celestial stood still. "There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour."

From all we can learn it is the only time heaven ever stopped. It does not stop as other cities for the night, for there is no night there. It does not stop for a plague, for the inhabitant never says, "I am sick." It does not stop for bankruptcies, for its inhabitants never fail. It does not stop for impassable streets, for there are no fallen snows or sweeping freshets. What, then, stopped it for thirty minutes? Grotius and Professor Stuart think it was at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. Mr. Lord thinks it was in the year 311, between the close of the Diocletian persecution and the beginning of the wars by which Constantine gained the throne. I do not know when it was, and I do not care when it was, but of the fact that such an interregnum of sound took place I am certain. "There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour."

If geologists are right—and I believe they are—there has not been a moment of silence since this world began its travels, and the crashing and the splitting and the uproar and the hubbub are ever in progress. But when among the supernals a voice cried, "Hush!" and for half an hour heaven was still, silence was honored. The full power of silence many of us have yet to learn. We are told that when Christ was arraigned "he answered not a word." That silence was louder than any thunder that ever shook the world. Oftentimes when we are assailed and misrepresented the mightiest thing to say is to say nothing and the mightiest thing to do is to do nothing. Silence! Do right and leave the results with God. Among the grandest lessons the world has ever learned are the lessons of patience taught by those who endured uncomplainingly personal or domestic or political injustice. Stronger than any bitter or sarcastic or revengeful answer is the patient silence.

Learn also from my text that heaven must be an eventful and active place from the fact that it could afford only thirty minutes of recess. There have been events on earth and in heaven that seemed to demand a whole day or whole week or whole year for celestial consideration. If Grotius was right and this silence occurred at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, that scene was so awful and so prolonged that the inhabitants of heaven could not have done justice to it in many weeks. Six hundred priests were destroyed on Mount Zion because, the temple being gone, there was nothing for them to do. Six thousand people in one cloister were consumed. There were 1,100,000 dead according to Josephus. Grotius thinks that this was the cause of silence in heaven for half an hour. If Mr. Lord was right, and this silence was during the Diocletian persecutions, by which 844,000 Christians suffered death from sword and fire and banishment and exposure, why did not heaven listen throughout at least one of these awful years? Not thirty minutes! The fact is that the celestial program is so crowded with spectacle that it can afford only one recess in all eternity, and that for a short space.

In my text heaven spared thirty minutes, but it will never again spare one minute. In worship in earthly churches where there are many to take part we have to counsel brevity, but how will heaven get on rapidly enough to let one hundred and forty-four thousand get through each with his own story and then one hundred and forty-four million and then one hundred and forty-four billion and then one hundred and forty-four trillion? Not only are all the triumphs of the past to be commemorated, but all the triumphs to come. Not only what we now know of God, but what we will know of him after everlasting study of the defile. If my text had said there was silence in heaven for thirty days, I would not have been startled at the announcement, but it indicates thirty minutes. Why, there will be so many friends to hunt up, so many of the greatly good and useful that we will want to see, so many of the inscrutable things of earth we will need explained, so many exciting earthly experiences we will want to talk over, and all the other spirits and all the ages will want the same, that there

will be no more opportunity for cessation. The multitudes of men and women who got no crown on earth we will want to see them when they get their crown in heaven. I tell you heaven will have no more half hours to spare.

Besides that, heaven is full of children. They are in the vast majority. No child on earth who amounts to anything can be kept quiet half an hour, and how are you going to keep five hundred million of them quiet half an hour? You know heaven is much more of a place than it was when that recess of thirty minutes occurred. Its population has quadrupled, sextupled, centupled. Heaven has more on hand, more of rapture, more of knowledge, more of intercommunication, more of worship. The most thrilling place we have ever been in is stupid compared with that, and, if we now have no time to spare, we will then have no eternity to spare. Silence in heaven only half an hour!

My subject also impresses me with the immortality of a half hour. That half hour mentioned in my text is more widely known than any other period in the calendar of heaven. The only part of eternity that was ever measured by earthly timepiece was measured by the minute hand of my text. Oh, the half hours! They decide everything. I am not asking what you will do with the years or months or days of your life, but what of the half hours? Tell me the history of your half hours and I will tell you the story of your whole life on earth and the story of your whole life in eternity. The right or wrong things you can think in thirty minutes, the right or wrong things you can say in thirty minutes, the right or wrong things you can do in thirty minutes are glorious or baleful, inspiring or despicable.

Look out for the fragments of time. They are pieces of eternity. The half hour a day for good books or bad books, the half hour a day for prayer or indolence, the half hour a day for helping others or blasting others, the half hour before you go to business and the half hour after you return from business—that makes the difference between the scholar and the ignoramus, between the Christian and the infidel, between the saint and the demon, between triumph and catastrophe, between heaven and hell. The most tremendous things of your life and mine were certain half hours. The half hour when in the parsonage of a country minister I resolved to become a Christian then and there, the half hour when I decided to become a preacher of the gospel, the half hour when I first realized that my son was dead, the half hour when I stood on the top of my house in Oxford street and saw our church burn, the half hour in which I entered Jerusalem, the half hour in which I stopped on Mount Calvary, the half hour in which I stood on Mars hill and about ten or fifteen other half hours are the chief times of my life. You may forget the name of the exact years or most of the important events of your existence, but those half hours, like the half hour of my text will be immortal. I do not query what you will do with the twentieth century. I do not query what you will do with this year, but what will you do with the next half hour? Upon that hinges your destiny, and during that some of you will receive the gospel and make complete surrender, and during that others of you will make final and fatal rejection of the full and free and urgent and impassioned offer of life eternal. Oh, that the next half hour might be the most glorious thirty minutes of your earthly existence!

Far back in history a great geographer stood with a sailor looking at a globe that represented our planet, and he pointed to a place on the globe where he thought there was an undiscovered continent. The undiscovered continent was America. The geographer who pointed where he thought there was a new world was Martin Behaim and the sailor to whom he showed it was Columbus. This last was not satisfied until he had picked that gem out of the sea and set it in the crown of the world's geography. O ye who have been sailing up and down the rough seas of sorrow and sin, let me point out to you another continent—yea, another world—that you may yourself find, a rapturous world, and that is the world a half hour of which we now study! Oh, set sail for it! Here is the ship and here are the compasses. In other words, make this half hour the grandest half hour of your life and become a Christian. Pray for a regenerated spirit. I say to you, my hearers, only God by his convicting and converting grace can make a Christian, but he is ready this very half hour to accomplish it.

Again, my text suggests a way of studying heaven so that we can better understand it. The word "eternity" that we can handle so much is an immeasurable world. Knowing that we could not understand that word, the Bible uses it only once. We say "forever and ever." But how long is "forever and ever?" I am glad that my text puts under our eye heaven for thirty minutes. As when you see a great picture, you put a sheet of paper into a scroll and look through it or join your forefinger to your thumb and look through the circle between, and the picture becomes more intense, so this masterpiece of heaven by St. John is more impressive when we take only thirty minutes of it at a time. Now, we have something that we can come nearer to grasping, and it is a quiet heaven. When we discourse about the multitude of heaven, it must be also a nervous shock to those who have all their lives been

crowded by many people and who want a quiet heaven. For the last thirty-five years I have been much of the time in crowds and under public scrutiny and amid excitements, and I have sometimes thought for a few weeks after I reach heaven I would like to go down in some quiet part of the realm, with a few friends, and for a little while try comparative solitude.

You will find the inhabitants all at home. Enter the King's palace and take only a glimpse, for we have only thirty minutes for all heaven. "Is that Jesus?" "Yes." Just under the hair along his forehead is the mark of a wound made by a bunch of twisted brambles, and his foot on the throne has on the round of his instep another mark of a wound made by a spike, and a scar on the palm of the right hand and a scar on the palm of the left hand. But what a countenance! What a smile! What a grandeur! What a loveliness! What an overwhelming look of kindness and grace! Why, he looks as if he had redeemed a world! But come on, for our time is short. Do you see that row of palaces? That is the Apostolic row. Do you see that long reach of architectural glories? That is Martyr row. Do you see that immense structure? That is the biggest house in heaven; that is "the house of many mansions." Do you see that wall? Shade your eyes against its burning splendor, for that is the wall of heaven, Jasper at the bottom and amethyst at the top. See this river rolling through the heart of the great metropolis? That is the river concerning which those who once lived on the banks of the Hudson or the Alabama or the Rhine or the Shannon say, "We never saw the like of this for clarity and sheen." That is the chief river of heaven—so bright, so wide, so deep. But you ask, "Where are the asylums for the old?" I answer, "The inhabitants are all young." "Where are the hospitals for the lame?" "They are all agile." "Where are the infirmaries for the blind and deaf?" "They all see and hear." "Where are the almshouses for the poor?" "They are all multimillionaires." "Where are the inebriate asylums?" "Why, there are no saloons." "Where are the graveyards?" "Why, they never die." Pass down those boulevards of gold and amber and sapphire and see those interminable streets built by the Architect of the universe into homes, over the threshold of which sorrow never steps and out of whose windows faces, once pale with earthly sickness, now look rubicund with immortal health.

"Oh, let me go in and see them!" you say. No, you cannot go in. There are those who would never consent to let you come out again. You say, "Let me stay here in this place where they never sin, where they never suffer, where they never part." No, no! Our time is short, our thirty minutes are almost gone. Come on! We must get back to earth before this half hour of heavenly silence breaks up, for in your mortal state you cannot endure the pomp and splendor and resonance when this half hour of silence is ended. The day will come when you can see heaven in full blast, but not now. Come on! There is something in the celestial appearance which makes me think that the half hour of silence will soon be over. Remember we are mortal yet and cannot endure the full roll of heavenly harmonies and cannot endure even the silent heaven for more than half an hour. Hark! The clock in the tower of heaven begins to strike, and the half hour is ended. Descend! Come back! Come down till your work is done. Should a little longer your burdens. Fight a little longer your battles. Weep a little longer your griefs. And then take heaven not in its dullest half hour, but in its mightiest pomp, and, instead of taking it for thirty minutes, take it world without end.

But how will you spend the first half hour of your heavenly citizenship after you have gone in to stay? After your prostration before the throne in worship of him who made it possible for you to get there at all I think the rest of your first half hour in heaven will be passed in receiving your reward if you have been faithful. I have a strangely beautiful book containing the pictures of the medals struck by the English government in honor of great battles. These medals are pinned over the heart of the returned heroes of the army on great occasions, the royal family present and the royal bands playing—the Crimean medal, the medal of the mutiny, the Victoria cross, the Waterloo medal. In your first half hour in heaven in some way you will be honored for the earthly struggles in which you won the day. Stand up before all the royal house of heaven and receive the insignia while you are announced as victor over the drafts and freshets of the farm field, victor over the temptations of the Stock Exchange, victor over professional allurements, victor over domestic infelicities, victor over mechanic's shop, victor over the storehouse, victor over home worriments, victor over physical distresses, victor over hereditary depressions, victor over sin and death and hell. Take the badge that celebrates those victories through our Lord Jesus Christ. Take it in the presence of all the galleries, saintly, angelic and divine, while all heaven chants. "These are they who came out of great tribulation and had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb."

"Thy saints in all this glorious war Shall conquer though they die; They see the triumph from afar And seize it with their eye."

Current News and Views

FRENCH STATESMAN IN TROUBLE.

Editor Mistakes the Minister of Justice for a Burglar. M. Caillaux, the French minister of finance, had a curious adventure in Paris one evening recently. He was invited to dine with his colleague, the minister of marine, whose residence is opposite the ministry of finance on the other side of the Louvre. As he was late he took a short cut through the garden, but found the gate locked and that he had forgotten the key. M. Caillaux is an excellent gymnast, and proceeded to scale the railing. He had just got on the top when he was spotted by the vigilant sentry, who menaced him with his bayonet. His assertion that he was the minister of justice was received with scorn, and his transfer to the guard house as a burglar was only prevented by the arrival of the minister of marine, who rescued him from the soldier.

IS GREATGRANDMOTHER AT 45.

Mrs. Minnie Davis of Omaha Holder of the World's Record. A most extraordinary record is that of Mrs. Minnie Davis of Omaha. Married at 13, she was a mother at 14, a grandmother at 23 and at 45 a great-grandmother. Mrs. Davis is a native of Boston and has lived in Nebraska since 1863. Her first child, now Mrs. Ellis of Council Bluffs, born when her mother was 14, was married when 13 and had a daughter a year later. This daughter at 15 became Mrs. Rigby of



Mrs. Minnie Davis. Seattle, Wash., and two years later was a mother. This latter event happened three years ago. Mrs. Davis now has children younger than her great-granddaughter.

ANOTHER DEAD SEA.

The new dead sea discovered by Dr. Sven Heald, in Tibet, seems entitled to rank among the geographical wonders of the world. It is described as enormous in extent, but so shallow that to navigate it one must wade half a mile to reach the boat, and must drag the boat half a mile before it can be floated with a load. But the most remarkable characteristic is the almost incredible amount of salt, and the boat and oars are as white as chalk; even the dress of the rowers soon become whitened, while drops of the water sprinkled upon a dry surface leaves globules like candle drippings.

CARICATURE OF GEN. BOBRIKOFF.

Finish People Show Their Hatred of Their Russian Governor. That Gen. Bobrikoff, who has been commissioned by the czar to "Russianize" Finland, is the most unpopular man in the country goes without saying. Though the Finns are a God-fearing and peace-loving people, reports of attempts on the general's life have been telegraphed several times. To vent their hate the Finns have recently spread broadcast best photographs of Gen. Bobrikoff, which they have surmounted with two horns,



The Caricature. showing that they consider his character on a par with the satanic majesty in charge of hades. The police have looked in vain for the photographer responsible for the caricature. Several arrests have been made, but no convictions have resulted. An order has been issued threatening all who are found in possession of copies of the picture with imprisonment.

HEIR TO JAPAN'S THRONE.

His royal highness, Prince Michi, grandson of the present mikado of Japan, is the youngest heir presumptive to a great throne among all the royal personages in the world. He is eight months old, has a dozen nurses and English and French governesses will be secured as soon as he is able to talk.

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Statement December 10, 1901, To Auditor of State.

Loans and Discounts	\$68,074.57	Capital Paid in	\$100,000.00
Real Estate	8,500.00	Earnings	3,071.58
Furniture and Fixtures	1,000.00	Call Deposits	\$36,817.56
Cash and Exchange	87,193.35	Time Deposits	60,079.97
Total	\$165,767.92	Total	\$100,769.79

Deposits December 14, 1900, \$40,382.05 Deposits December 14, 1901, \$100,079.08

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Very respectfully yours,
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