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## A WEDDING INVITATION.

SERMON PREACHED BY DR. TALMAGE ON SUNDAY, MAY 10.

**It Was Preceded by the Baptism by the Doctor of a Number of Infants with Water Brought from the River Jordan.**

BROOKLYN, May 10.—An interesting ceremony was performed this morning in the Brooklyn tabernacle before the sermon was preached. A number of infants who had been brought there by their parents were baptized. The water used was some of that which was brought by Dr. Talmage from the river Jordan. The main auditorium of the Tabernacle and the adjoining rooms were crowded by an audience of seven thousand persons. The subject of Dr. Talmage's sermon was "Invitation to a Wedding," and the text Luke xiv, 17, "Come, for all things are now ready."

Holy festivities today. We gather other sheaves into the spiritual garner. Our joy is like the joy of Heaven. Spread the banquet, fill all the chalices. We are not today at the funeral of a dead Christ; we are celebrating the marriage of the king's son.

AN EXCITING TIME.

It was an exciting time in English history when Queen Elizabeth visited Lord Leicester at Kenilworth castle. The clocks in all the towers and throughout the castle were stopped at the moment of her arrival, so continuing to point to that moment as the one surpassing all others in interest.

The doors of the great banqueting hall were opened. The queen marched in to the sound of the trumpets. Four hundred servants waited upon the guests. It was a scene that astonished all nations when they heard of it. Five thousand dollars a day did the banquet cost as it went on day after day. She was greeted to the palace gates with floating islands and torches and the thunders of cannon and fireworks that set the night ablaze, and a burst of music that lifted the whole scene into enchantment. Beginning in that way, it went on from joy to joy and from excitement to excitement and from rapture to rapture. That was the great banquet that Lord Leicester spread in Kenilworth castle.

Cardinal Wolsey entertained the French ambassadors in Hampton Court. The best cooks of all the land provided for the table. The guests were kept hunting in the parks all the day, so that their appetites might be keen, and then in the evening hour they were shown into the banqueting hall, with table aglitter with imperial plate and ablush with the very costliest wines, and the second course of the feast was made of food in all shapes, of men and birds and beasts, and dancing groups, and jousting parties riding upon each other with uplifted lances. Lords and princes and ambassadors, their cups gleaming to the brim, drank first to the health of the king of England, and then to the health of the emperor of France. That was the banquet that Cardinal Wolsey spread in Hampton Court.

A GRANDER ENTERTAINMENT.

But today, my brothers and sisters, I invite you to a grander entertainment. My Lord, the king, is the banqueter. Angels of God are the cupbearers, all the redeemed are the guests; the halls of eternal love frescoed with light and paved with joy and curtained with unfading beauty are the banqueting place, the harmonies of eternity are the music, the chalices of God are the plate, and I am one of the servants come out with invitations to all the people, and oh that you might break the seal of the invitation and read in ink of blood, and with the tremulous hand of a dying Christ, "Come, come, for all things are now ready."

Sometimes there have been great disappointments at a banquet. The wine has given out, or the servants have been rebellious, or the lights have failed; but I walk all around the banqueting table of my Lord today, and I find everything complete, and I swing open the door of this banqueting house and I say, "All things are now ready."

Illustrating my text I go on, and in the first place say that the Lord Jesus Christ is ready. Cardinal Wolsey did not come into the banqueting hall until the second course of the feast, and when he entered, booted and spurred, all the guests arose and cheered him; but I have to tell you that our banqueter, the Lord Jesus Christ, comes in at the beginning of the feast. Ay, he has been waiting for his guests, waiting for some of them 1891 years, waiting with mangled feet, waiting with hand on the punctured side, waiting with hand on the lacerated temples, waiting, waiting!

Wonder it is that the banqueter did not get weary and say, "Shut the door, and let the laggards stay out." No, he has been waiting. How much he is in earnest! Shall I show you? I gather up all the tears that flooded his cheek in sympathy, all the blood that channeled his brow and back and hand and foot to purchase our redemption. I gather up all the groans coming from midnight chill, and mountain hunger, and desert loneliness, and I put them into one bitter cry. I gather up all the pangs that shot from cross and spike and spear into one groan. I take one drop of sweat on his brow, and I put it under the glass of the gospel, and it enlarges to lakes of sorrow, to oceans of agony. That Christ today, emaciated and worn and weary, comes here, and with a pathos in which every word is a heartbreak and every sentence a martyrdom, he says to you, and he says to me, "Come, come, for all things are now ready."

AN EVERLASTING FEAST.

Ahasuerus made a feast that lasted 180 days. This lasts forever. Lords and princes were invited to that. You and I are invited to this. Yes, he has been waiting—he is waiting now. Other kings wrap themselves in robes of beauty and power before they come into a banquet. So does Christ. Oh, he is the fairest of the fair. In his hand is the omnipotent surgery that opened blind eyes and straightened crooked limbs and hoisted the pillars of heaven, and swung the twelve gates which are twelve pearls. Oh, what a Christ—a Christ of beauty, a Christ of power.

There are not enough cups on earth to dip up this ocean of beauty. There are not ladders to scale these heights of love. Oh, thou flower of eternity, thy breath is the perfume of heaven. Oh, thou daybreak of the soul, let all nations clap their hands in thy radiance. Chorus! Come men and angels and cherubim and seraphim and archangel, all heights, all depths, all immensities. Chorus! Roll on through the heavens in chariot of universal acclaim, over bridges of hosanna, under arches of coronation, by the towers chiming with eternal jubilee. Chorus! Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God, to him be glory.

Ah! there is one word of five letters that I would like to write, but I have no sheet fair enough to write it on, and no pencil good enough to inscribe it. Give me a sheet from the heavenly records, and some pencil used by angel in describing a rapture, and then with hand struck with supernatural energy, and with pencil dipped in everlasting morning, I will write it out in capitals of love, J-E-S-U-S Jesus! It is this One that is waiting for you and for me, for we are on the same platform before God. How long he waited for me! How long he has waited for you! Waiting as a banqueter waits for his delayed guests, the meats smoking, and the beakers brimming, and the minstrel with his finger on stiff string ready to strike at the first clash of the hoofs at the gateway. Waiting as a mother waits for a boy that ten years ago went off dragging her bleeding heart after him. Waiting. Oh, can you not give me some comparison intense enough, importunate enough, high as heaven, deep as hell and vast as eternity? Not expecting that you can help me with such a comparison, I simply say he is waiting as only an all sympathetic Christ knows how to wait for a wandering soul.

Bow the knee and kiss the Son,
Come and welcome, sinner, come.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS WAITING.

But I remark again, not only Christ is waiting, but the Holy Spirit is waiting. Why are some sermons a dead failure? Why are there songs that do not get their wing under the people? Why are there players that go no higher up than a hunter's halloo? Because there is a missing link that only the Holy Spirit can make. If that Spirit should come through this assemblage this morning there would be a power felt like that when Saul was unhorsed on the road to Damascus, like as when Lydia's heart was broken in her fine store, like as when three thousand souls were lifted out of midnight into midnoon at the Pentecost. Do you notice that sometimes that Spirit takes an insignificant agency to save a soul? I think it is very often that at just one passage of Scripture, just one word of Scripture, a soul is saved because the Holy Spirit gives it supernatural power.

Do you know what it was that saved Martin Luther? It was that one verse, "The just shall live by faith." Do you know what it was that brought Augustine from his horrible dissipations? It was that one verse, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." Do you know what it was that saved Hedley Vicars, the celebrated soldier? It was the one passage, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Do you know what it was that brought Jonathan Edwards to Christ? It was the one passage, "Now unto him be glory forever and ever."

One Thanksgiving morning in church I read my text, "Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good," and a young man stood in the gallery and said to himself: "I have never rendered one acceptable offering of gratitude to God in all my life. Here, Lord, I am thine forever." By that one passage of Scripture he was brought into the kingdom, and if I might tell my own experience, I might tell how one Sabbath afternoon I was brought to the peace of the gospel by reading of the Syro-Phœnician's cry to Christ where she said: "Even the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the master's table." Philosophic sermons never saved anybody. Metaphysical sermons never saved anybody. An earnest plea going right out of the heart blessed of the Holy Ghost, that is what saves, that is what brings people into the kingdom of Christ.

I suppose the world thought that Thomas Chalmers preached great sermons in his early ministry, but Thomas Chalmers says he never preached at all until years after he had occupied a pulpit he came out of his sick room, and, weak and emaciated, he stood and told the story of Christ to the people. And in the great day of eternity it will be found that not so much the eloquent sermons brought men to Christ as the story told perhaps by those who were unknown on earth, the simple story of the Saviour's love and mercy, sent by the power of the Holy Ghost straight to the heart. Come, Holy Ghost. Ay, he is here this morning. He fills all the place. I tell you the Holy Ghost is ready.

THE CHURCH IS WAITING.

Then I go on and tell you the church is ready. There are those here who say, "No one cares for my soul." We do care for it. You see a man bowing his head in prayer, and you say, "That man is indifferent." That man bows his head in prayer that the truth may go to every heart. The air is full of prayers. They are going up this morning from this assembly. Hundreds of prayers straight to the throne of a listening God. The air is full of prayers—prayers ascending noon by noon from Fulton street prayer meeting, Friday night by Friday night all over this land, going up from praying circles. Yea, there is not a minute of an hour of any day that there are not supplications ascending to the throne of mercy. The church is ready. And if you should this morning start for your Father's house there would be hundreds and thousands in this assemblage who would say if they knew it, "Make room for that man, make room for him at the holy sacrament; bring the silver bowl for his baptism; give him full right to all the privileges of the church of Jesus Christ."

Oh, I know there are those who say the church is a mass of hypocrites, but they do not really think so. It is a glorious church. Christ purchased it. Christ built it. Christ swung all its gates. Christ curtained it with upholstery, crimson with crucifixion carnage. Come into it. Come into it. I do not pick out this man or that man and say, "You may come." I say all may come—whosoever will. "Come with us and we will do you good. The Lord hath promised good concerning Israel."

We are a garden walled around,
Chosen and made peculiar ground,
A little plot inclosed by grace
Out of the world's wild wilderness.

COME! COME!

Do not say you have never been invited. I invite you now to the King's feast. One and all. All! All! But I go further and tell you that the angels are ready. Some people think when we speak about angels we are getting into the region of fancy. They say it is very well for a man when he has just entered the ministry to preach about the angels in heaven, but after he has gone on further it is hardly worth while. My friends, there is not any more evidence in the Bible that there is a God than that there are angels. Did they not swarm around Jacob's ladder? When Lazarus' soul went up did they not escort it? Did not David say, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels?" Are they not represented as the chief harvesters of the judgment day? Did not one angel in one night slay 180,000 of Sennacherib's troops?

Oh, yes, our world is in communication with two other worlds. All that communication is by angels. When a bad man is to die, a man who has despised God and rejected the Gospel, the bad spirits come on sulphurous wing and they shackle him and try to push him off the precipices into the ruin, and they lift a guffaw of diabolical exultation. But there is a line of angels, bright and beautiful and loving angels, mighty angels, reaching all the way from earth to heaven, and when others gather like them I suppose the air is full of them. They hover. They flit about. They push down sympathy from your heart. They are ready to rejoice.

Look! There is an angel from the throne of God. One moment ago it stood before Christ and heard the doxology of the redeemed. It is here now. Bright immortal, what news from the golden city? Speak, spirit blest. The answer comes melting on the air, "Come, come, for all things are now ready." Angels ready to bear the tidings. Angels ready to drop the benediction. Angels ready to kindle the joy. All ready. Ready, cherubim and seraphim. Ready, thrones and principalities and powers. Ready, Michael the archangel.

NO SYMPATHY WITH MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

Yes, I go further and say that your glorified kindred are ready. I have not any sympathy with modern spiritualism. I believe it is born in perdition. When I see the ravages it makes with human intellects, when I see the homes it has devastated, when I see the bad morals that very often follow in its wake, I have no faith in modern spiritualism. I think if John Milton and George Whitefield have not anything better to do than to crawl under Rochester tables and rattle the leaves, they had better stay home in glory. But the Bible distinctly teaches that the glorified in heaven are in sympathy with our redemption.

"There is joy in heaven among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth;" and if the angels hear it do not our departed kindred there hear it? There are those there who toiled for your salvation, and when they bade you goodby in the last hour, and they said, "Meet me in heaven," there was hovering over the pillow the awful possibility that you might not meet. But, oh, the pathos when that hand was thrust out from the cover and they said goodby. For how long goodby was it?

Now, suppose you should pass into the kingdom of God this morning, suppose you should say: "I'm done with the sins of this world. Fie upon all these follies. O Christ! I take thee now, I take thy service, I respond to thy love, thine am I forever." Why, before the tear of repentance had dried on your cheek, before your first prayer had closed, the angel standing with the message for thy soul would cry upward, "He is coming!" and angels poising midair would cry upward, "He is coming!" all along the line of light from doorway to doorway, from wing tip to wing tip, the news would go upward till it reached the gate, and then it would flash to the house of many mansions and find your kindred out, and those before the throne would say: "Rejoice with me, my prayers are answered. Give me another harp with which to strike the joy. Saved, saved, saved!"

ARE YOU READY?

Now, my friends, if Christ is ready, and the Holy Ghost is ready, and the church is ready, and the angels of God are ready, and your glorified kindred are ready, are you ready? I give with the emphasis of my soul the question, "Are you ready?" If you do not get into the king's feast it will be because you do not accept the earnest invitation. Arm stretched out soaked with blood from elbow to finger tip, lips quivering in mortal anguish, two eyes beaming everlasting love while he says, "Come, come, come, for all things are now ready."

At Kenilworth Castle, I told you, they stopped the clocks when Queen Elizabeth arrived, that the hand of time might point to that moment as the one most significant and tremendous, but if this morning the King should enter the castle of your soul, well might you stop all the clocks and have the finger of time pointing to this moment as the one most stupendous in all your life. Would that I could come all through these aisles and all through these galleries, not addressing you perfunctorily, but taking you by the hand as a brother takes a brother by the hand, and saying to one and all to each, "Come, come; the door is open; enter now and sit down at the feast."

Old man, God has been waiting for thee long years. Would that some tear of repentance might trickle down thy wrinkled cheek. Has not Christ done enough in feeding thee and clothing thee all these years to win from thee one word of gratitude? Come, all the young. Christ is the fairest of the fair. Wait not till thy heart gets hard. Come, the farthest away from Christ. Drunkard, Christ can put out the fire of that thirst. He can restore thy broken home. He can break that shackle. Come now, today, and get his pardon and its strength. Libertine, Christ knew where you were last night. He knows all the story of thy sin. Come to him this day. He will wash away thy sin, and he will throw around thee the robe of his pardon. Harlot, thy feet foul with hell, thy laughter the horror of the street—O Mary Magdalen! Christ waits for thee.

And the one farther off, farther than I have mentioned, a case not so hopeful as any I have mentioned, self righteous man, feeling thyself all right, having no need of Christ, no need of pardon, no need of help—O self righteous man! dost thou think in those rags thou canst enter the feast? Thou canst not. God's servant at the gate would tear off thy robe and leave thee naked at the gate. O self righteous man! the last to come. Come to the feast. Come, repent of thy sin. Come, take Christ for thy portion.

Day of grace going away. Shadows on the cliff reaching farther and farther over the plain. The banquet has already begun. Christ has entered into that banquet to which you are invited. The guests are taking their places. The servant of the king has his hand on the door of the banqueting room, and he begins to swing it shut. Now is your time to go in. Now is my time to enter. I must go in. You must go in. He is swinging the door shut. Now, it is half shut. Now, it is three-fourths shut. Now, it is just ajar. After awhile it will be forever shut!

Why will ye waste on trifling cares
That life which God's compassion spares?
While in the endless round of thought
The one thing needful is forgot.

### What Bessie Gave Her.

"The governess was awful cross today," the children said in the evening. "Well, mamma, maybe we were bad; but we soon pacified her. I gave her a big, rosy apple; Fanny gave her a hearty kiss, and Fred gave her a promise to behave better hereafter."

"And, Bessie, what did you give her?" mamma asked of the youngest.

"I?" stammered Bessie. "I—I—gave her the—the—slip!"—Kate Field's Washington.

### A New Belt of Camels' Hair.

A new belt, which is claimed to be more durable and less liable to slip than leather, while at the same time no more costly, is woven with cotton warp and camels' hair filling. The fabric is then subjected to chemical treatment, and when dry the belt is given severe tests.—New York Journal.

Mr. Dance, husband of the sculptress, left face in his wardrobe when he died valued at upward of £15,000. He was not a collector, either. Many of his epoch were.

A HORSE WHO CAN TALK.

Everybody has heard of a "horse laugh," but who has ever seen an equine gifted with the power of speech? Such an animal would be pronounced a miracle; but so would the telegraph and the telephone a hundred years ago. Why, even very recently a cure for consumption, which is universally acknowledged to be scrofula affecting the lungs, would have been looked upon as miraculous, but now people are beginning to realize that the disease is not incurable. Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery will cure it, if taken in time and given a fair trial. This world-renowned remedy will not make new lungs, but it will restore diseased ones to a healthy state when other means have failed. Thousands gratefully testify to this. It is the most potent tonic, or strength-restorer, alterative, or blood-cleanser and nutritive, or flesh-builder, known to medical science. For Weak Lungs, Spitting of Blood, Bronchitis, Asthma, Catarrh in the Head, and all Lingering Coughs, it is an unequaled remedy. In derangements of the stomach, liver and bowels, as Indigestion, or Dyspepsia, Biliousness, or "Liver Complaint," Chronic Diarrhea, and kindred ailments, it is a sovereign remedy.

"Golden Medical Discovery" is the only medicine of its class, sold by druggists, under **a printed guarantee**, from the manufacturers, that it will benefit or cure in every case of disease for which it is recommended, or money paid for it will be promptly refunded.

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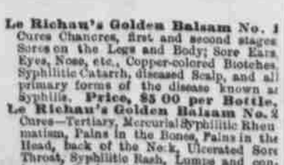


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