

## SOME BIBLE MYSTERIES.

## QUESTIONS SETTLED BY TALMAGE.

Knotty Points and Incidents of Bible History Characteristically Explained—Another Version of the Miracle of Jonah and the Great Fish.

The glorious weather last Sunday morning brought out a host of church-goers, and the Brooklyn tabernacle was jammed to the outer corridors long before the services began. Hundred of people who came late were unable to get further than the doors. The Rev. Dr. Talmage preached a sermon in defense of the bible:

"In which many things hard to be understood."—II Peter iii, 16. As there are many thing in the bible, according to the suggestion of my text, hard to be understood, I purpose this morning to solve some of these things, hoping to leave upon the mind of every honest man and honest woman in this assemblage the impression that if five or six or seven of these hard things may be explained, then all the other mysteries may be explained. Hard thing the first: The bible says the world was made in six days. Geology says the process of making the world may have gone on hundreds of thousands of years, perhaps millions of years. We say that God wrote the bible, God certainly made the rocks. Now, is there a contradiction? "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." In the beginning. There you can roll in 10,000,000 years if you want to. There is no date given. No war between science and revelation. You can roll in 10,000,000 years before the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis, or you can roll in 10,000,000 years right after that verse. The world may have been in process of construction for millions of years, and yet in one week fitted up for man's residence; just as you might be building a great mansion for many years, and then in one week upholster it, chandelier it, picture it for a bride and groom. So there is no war between those two statements—God writing in the bible, the same God writing on the rocks. Perfect harmony and perfect accord unless you want to make a discord. And beside that, we are not compelled to believe that the day mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis is a day of twenty-four hours. The Bible distinctly says that a thousand years are with the Lord as one day, and it may have been God's day. Another hard thing to understand: The Bible says that light was created on Monday and the sun did not shine until Thursday, and hundreds and thousands of scientific infidels have scoffed at the Bible. They say: "What an absurd book!" Why, my dear friends, heat and electricity emit light independent of the sun. The world in the process of condensation emitted light. Rocks in crystallization emit light. David Brewster and Herschel, the astronomer, and all men of that type—they go on to say that the sun is not light, it is an opaque mass, it is only the candlestick that holds the light surrounded by a phosphorescent atmosphere. The aurora borealis emits light independent of the sun. All geology asserts that there were thousands of miles of liquid granite all afame for ages emitting light independent of the sun. Another hard thing to be understood: The deluge and Noah's ark. Why, the skeptics, the infidel scientists of our day say: "That story is absurd. The ark would not have contained two of every kind. Beside that there was only a small window in the ark and these creatures would have been asphyxiated for lack of ventilation. Beside that, the ark landed on Ararat, according to the bible—that is 17,000 feet high—and all these creatures would have been immediately frozen to death." I must confess there used to be some mystery about that story of the deluge and of Noah's ark, but there is no possible mystery to me now because I have the key to that whole affair. I have got the account of the depth of the flood. He himself measured the depth of the flood. He talked about the great storm just as you and I would talk about any great storm, and then Moses took Noah's account and incorporated it into the bible. Noah says everything under the whole heaven was covered as far as he could see. What was the use of the ancient deluge? It was to destroy the outrageous people of the then thinly inhabited earth. We need not necessarily believe that that storm covered the Sierra Nevadas and Mount Washington, Europe and Africa. There was not a soul living in all these lands. This deluge was sent for a special purpose and it swept to ruin the people of the earth, then around about the place where the ark was launched. As so much water coming down every day in order to make the great depth, have you noticed that most of the flood came up and did not come down at all? I know the bible says "the windows of heaven were open," and then it says that "all the fountains of the great deep were broken up," and the rivers, and the lakes, and the oceans, unmoored by this great convulsion of nature, came up. Most of the flood rose. It did not fall at all. Geologists tell us that again and again there has been a flood of ice, or a flood of fire, or a deluge of destructive elements. You cannot take up a work on geology but you will read about twenty floods; but, when I heard twenty floods, we ask that they believe the flood of the bible, they almost charge us with being non-compos mentis. They believe in twenty. We believe in one. Besides that, as to the size of that great ark. It was as large as the Great Eastern of our time; it was as large as three or four of our men of war. Before the world had any shipping at all, God constructed the vessel so that it was the model vessel and of about the same proportions as the stanchest vessels now. In other words, after we have improved in naval architecture for thousands of years, we have only got up to Noah's ark. That one model sailing ahead to-day on all the oceans, then to the small window. Why, if the infidel scientists knew that the Ark was built on the tip of the little finger, they would know that the word translated window means window course, a whole flight of windows. So if there were any lawful criticism of the Ark on the subject of windows, there were two many windows considering the great storm. But, say they, "the whole group of people and the large number of animals would have been suffocated in the Ark; because of the tempest these windows must be kept closed." I answer, saying there are people in this house this morning who came all the way from Liverpool to Barnegat lighthouse with the hatches battened down. But say some: "How would it have been possible to get all those creatures in the Ark?" Why, you would have had to coax them in and push them in and then you couldn't get them out again. I do not think you have been born in the country or you have heard an August thunder storm coming up, and you have seen the cattle at the bars meaning to get in, and you have seen the fowl go to perch at noon, and you have heard dog and cat at the door,

begging for entrance. And when that great storm came on, that darkening and tremendous tempest, the most terrific storm the world ever saw, was it not natural for the animal creation to go to the only shelter—for there were few shelters for dumb beasts—to start right away? I have owned horses and dogs and cattle and sheep and I never had a dog or a goat or a sheep that did not know enough to come in when it rained. And as the Ark landed on Mount Ararat, 17,000 feet high, that is geographical license. Another is that name of whole range of hills, some of them five feet high, some 100 feet high, some 1,000 feet high, and the Ark, that famous vessel, came down upon one of those hilltops. Another hard thing to be understood: The story that the sun and the moon stood still in order to allow Joshua to finish his battles. Did you see the Coriolis engine at the Philadelphia centennial? Could the mechanist start it? Could he not stop it? What a poor mechanist that would be, who could make an engine start and could not stop it, and could not take it all apart and start it again. Is a machine mightier than God? Who made the machine or who? Is the machine mightier than the God who made it? Could he not make all worlds, could he not have stopped two of them? If I can lift fifty pounds, can I not lift an ounce? "Oh" they say, "it is such an absurd story—the sun and the moon standing still in the daytime!" What is the moon doing out in the daytime? Why, my friends, you have not been a very close observer of the heavens, if you have not seen the moon a hundred times in the daytime. Beside that, the earth has two motions—a motion on its own axis and it has a motion around the sun. It is not necessary that the earth stop its motion around the sun. It has had to stop on its own axis to make the story. I speak of. The Bible is regular and God's vernacular in that case is only human vernacular. We say sunset. The earth only has to stop the motion on its own axis. Beside that, the world need not have stopped a second when by miraculous power there could have been a prolonged continuance of the refraction of the sun's rays. God in the Bible always speaking in the language of men. Why in our time words have been made. A few years ago an astronomer telegraphed from Washington through the Associated Press saying he had found a new world. No one doubted it. And within two centuries there have been thirteen worlds destroyed that we are positive about. Astronomers say. They looked just like other worlds. Then, after a while, astronomer looked at them and they were red—in other words, aside. After a while they looked, and they were ashen—in other words, they had gone to ashes. After a while those bodies had disappeared—the ashes had been scattered. Now, I say, if God can make a world, and destroy thirteen of them without accident or collision on the astronomical heavens and the universe, I think He could stop two. But this is the last of the bodies that had disappeared—the ashes had been scattered. Now, I say, if God can make a world, and destroy thirteen of them without accident or collision on the astronomical heavens and the universe, I think He could stop two. But this is the last of the bodies that had disappeared—the ashes had been scattered. Now, I say, if God can make a world, and destroy thirteen of them without accident or collision on the astronomical heavens and the universe, I think He could stop two. But this is the last of the bodies that had disappeared—the ashes had been scattered. Now, I say, if God can make a world, and destroy thirteen of them without accident or collision on the astronomical heavens and the universe, I think He could stop two. 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