

Rejoicing and Remembering

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon passionately calls believers to a heartfelt resolve to rejoice in Christ and remember His love deeply, especially as they partake in Communion, emphasizing intimate fellowship and the sustaining joy found in Christ's redeeming work.

Scripture: Song of Solomon 1:4, Psalm 42:5, Hebrews 13:8, 1 Corinthians 11:26, John 15:1

Topics: "Communion", "Joy in Christ"

Description

In this devotional sermon, C.H. Spurgeon exhorts believers to a heartfelt and deliberate resolve to rejoice in Christ and remember His love, especially as they partake in the Lord's Supper. He emphasizes the importance of intimate fellowship with Jesus, the joy that comes from focusing on His redeeming work, and the communal blessing of sharing in the feast with fellow believers. Spurgeon encourages all to overcome sorrow and spiritual depression by fixing their hearts on the sustaining and joyous presence of Christ.

Transcript

"We will be glad and rejoice in You, we will remember Your love more than wine." Song of Solomon 1:4.

IT is a very blessed habit of saints who have grown in Grace to enter into actual conversation with the Well-Beloved. Our text is not so much speaking of Him as speaking to Him—"We will be glad and rejoice in You, we will remember Your love more than wine." Of course, in prayer and in praise, we speak to God, but I suggest that we should seek to have much more of intense and familiar conversations with the Lord Jesus Christ than the most of us at present enjoy. I find it good, sometimes in prayer, to say nothing, but to sit or kneel quite still and to look up to my Lord in adoring silence—and then sometimes to talk to Him, not asking anything of Him, but just speaking familiarly with Jesus, realizing Him to be present, and waiting to hear Him speak until some precious Word of His from Scripture comes into my soul as with living accents newly-spoken by those dear lips which are as lilies dropping sweet-smelling myrrh! The French have a word which they use concerning that conversation which is common among those who love one another, or are on terms of intimate friendship. They call it, "tutoyage," for they say, "you" and, "your," to one another, instead of the more formal language used towards strangers. I like that form of expression that is used in our text and delight to meet with souls that are brought into so rapt a state of fellowship with Christ that they can speak to Him in this familiar fashion, "We will be glad and rejoice in You, we will remember Your love more than wine."

If you, dear Friends, have not lately conversed with Jesus, do so now in the quietude of your own spirit. Think that His shadow is over you—do not let it be mere imagination, but let it be what is far better than that—a true realizing faith—for if He is present where two or three are met together in His name, rest assured that He is not absent where this great assembly of His people has come together to commemorate His passion and His death! You are here, blessed Mas-ter—we are sure that You are and we worship You and speak with You as really as if we could see You with that vesture on, woven from the top throughout—as truly as if we saw You, now, lifting that beloved pierced hand and laying it upon us! And we say to You from the bottom of our hearts, "We will rejoice and be glad in You, we will remember Your love more than wine." This text is not so much for me to explain, dear Friends, as for you to enjoy! Forget all about the preacher, but take the text and part it among yourselves—extract as much as you can of its spiritual nourishment and feed upon it!

I. As you do so, you will notice, first, that we have, here, A DOUBLE RESOLVE— "We will be glad and rejoice in You, we will remember Your love more than wine."

I may say of that resolve that it is, first, a necessary resolve, for it is not according to human nature to rejoice in Christ. It is not according to the tendency of our poor fallen state to remember His love. There must be an act of the will with regard to this resolve—let us will it now—"We will be glad and rejoice in You, we will remember Your love more than wine." There are so many things that try to come in between our souls and our Savior, so many sorrows that would prevent our rejoicing in Him, that we must be resolved to be glad in Him whatever our sorrows may be. Down with you, sorrows! Down with you! We have said unto the Lord that we will be glad and rejoice in Him and we mean to prove our words to be true! Then there are so many troublous thoughts that come flying in to mar our full fellowship with our Lord. However tightly windows may be closed and doors may be shut, these thoughts will find an entrance and we get to remembering the sick child at home, or some care that has afflicted us during the week. Oh, but, Lord, we will not remember these things, now! We say to You from our hearts, "We will—we will—we will remember Your love!" Away with you, care, sorrow, grief—away with you! Come to me, O Holy Spirit, and help me, now, to have a happy time, to be glad and rejoice in my Lord—and to have a holy time—to remember His love and to remember nothing else!

You must will it most intensely, dear Friends, or it will not come to pass. It is not sufficient to merely walk into a place of worship and put ourselves into the posture of devotion—and then to imagine that, doing whatever is proper to the place and the hour—we shall have fellowship with Jesus. Oh, no, Beloved! Oh, no! We must worship Him in spirit and in truth, not in fiction and in sham—not mechanically, as though we could have true fellowship with Him without earnest and intense desire. No, there must be these two utterances of our holy resolve, "We will be glad and rejoice in You, we will remember Your love more than wine."

And truly, dear Friends, as this resolve is necessary, it is also a right and proper resolve. Should we not be glad and rejoice in Christ?—

"Why should the children of a King Go mourning all their days?"

Why should the children of the bride-chamber fast while the Bridegroom is with them? With such a Husband as we have in Christ, should not the spouse rejoice in Him? Would it be becoming for a heart that is married to Christ to be in any other condition than that of rejoicing in Him? I know you have many things in which you cannot rejoice. Well, let them go. But you can rejoice in Him—in His Person, in His

work, in His offices, in His relationships, in His power, in His Glory, in His First Advent, in His Second Advent! Surely, these are not things that can be thought of without delightful emotion! It is most proper that we should be glad and rejoice in our Lord. There ought to be a reduplication of our joy—we should joy in Him and then rejoice in Him—we should "be glad and rejoice" in Him.

It is most proper that we should be glad in the Lord and what can be more proper than that we should remember Him? What a shame it is that we ever forget Him! His name should be so deeply engraved on our hearts that we cannot forget Him. Let us remember His love, for, surely if there is anything that we ought to remember, it is that undying love which is our choicest portion on earth and which will be the main constituent of our highest bliss in Heaven! Then, by the help of God's Spirit, let us make this resolve at this moment. Whatever we may do when we get out of this building, at any rate for the next half-hour let us resolve to stand to this double declaration, "We will rejoice, and we will remember."

Do you not think, also, that this resolution, if we carry it out, will be very helpful to ourselves? What a help it is to a Christian to be glad in the Lord! I know what it is to be depressed. I do not suppose there is any person in this place who knows what it is to be cast down so low as I sometimes am. Then I feel that there is no help for me and no hope of my living and working unless I can get out of that sad condition and get to be glad in the Lord. And I cry, "My Heart, my Heart, what are you doing? Why are you cast down, O my Soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God: for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance and my God." There is no way of getting right out of the Stygian bog of the Slough of Despond like rejoicing in the Lord! If you try to rejoice in yourself, you will have a poor reason for joy. But if you rejoice and are glad in the Lord, you have the real, abiding, unchanging source of joy, for he who rejoices in Christ rejoices in Him who is "the same yesterday, today and forever." And he may always rejoice in Him! Come, then, and for your own good hang up the sackbut and take down the psaltery—put away the ashes! What if men call this season, "Lent"? We will keep no Lent, tonight—this is our Eastertide! Our Lord has risen from the dead and He is among us, and we will rejoice in Him! Come, Beloved, surely it is time that we did, for a while, at least, forget our pain, griefs and all the worries of this weary world and, for one, I must, I will, be glad and rejoice in my Lord—and I hope many of you will join with me in the happy occupation which will be helpful to yourselves.

Certainly, it will also be for the good of others. I think that Believers do much harm if they allow their depressions of spirit to be too conspicuous. There is another meaning besides the first one to that text, "You, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face that you appear not unto men to fast." But if you can get right out of your sorrow and can actually rejoice in the Lord. And if you can so remember Him as to be glad and rejoice in Him, you will allure many to the fair ways of Christ which otherwise will be evilly spoken of if you go mourning all your days! Come, you weak ones, come and feast on bread that can make you strong! Come, you, whose eyes are red with weeping, take a handkerchief that shall dry your tears and make your eyes as bright as diamonds! Remember Christ and be glad and rejoice in Him! Angels around the Throne of God can have no higher joy than this! And they cannot enter so fully into it as you can, for He has not loved them as He has loved you!—

"Never did angels taste above, Redeeming Grace and dying love."

This, then, is what I earnestly commend to you, this double resolve, that we should all truly say to our Lord, "We will be glad and rejoice in You, we will remember Your love more than wine." But, dear Friends, we cannot carry out the resolve without the help of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, let us breathe it unto the Lord in prayer and, as we tell Him what we mean to do, let us, each one, add, "Draw me, O Lord. Then I

will run after You. Help me to come to You! Manifest Yourself to me and then I will be glad and rejoice in You."

II. Now I want to go a step further and say that I think the resolve of the text is A SUITABLE RESOLVE FOR THIS OCCASION—"We will be glad and rejoice in You, we will remember Your love more than wine."

We are, most of us, coming to the Communion Table to eat of the bread and to drink of the cup in remembrance of our Master's dying love. Surely now is the hour, if ever in our lives, to be glad and rejoice in Him and to remember Him, for the object of this supper is to commemorate His dying love! It is idle and worse than idle, to come to Christ's Table if you do not remember Him—what good can it do you? The use that it is to the spectator is that you show Christ's death "till He comes." But if there is not in the spectator any thought of that death, of what use is the sight of the Table with its sacred vessels? And if you, yourself, do not think of Christ, of what use to you are the emblems of a forgotten or an unknown Lord? No, we are to commemorate His death—so let us, in our hearts, rejoice in Him and remember Him! Well did we sing just now—

"Jesus, when faith with fixed eyes,

Beholds Your wondrous Sacrifice,

Love rises to an ardent flame,

And we, all other hope disclaim!

Hence, O my Soul, a balsam flows

To heal your wounds, and cure your woes.

Immortal joys come streaming down,

Joys like His griefs, immense, unknown." Remember, next, that in coming to this Communion Table we also commemorate the results of Christ's death. One result of our Lord's death is that He gives food to His people. His broken body has become bread for our souls, yes, it is meat, indeed. His blood, which was shed for many for the remission of sins, has become drink, indeed. By His death, Christ has given us life and by the completion of His great redeeming work, and by His ever-living intercession, He has given us bread and wine by which that life may be sustained. He has finished it all and He has gone into Glory to secure the results of His finished work. Sitting around His Table, we are reminded of all this—the bread is ready, the cup is filled. We have nothing to do to prepare the feast. All we have to do, now, is to come and partake of it and feed to the fullest upon heavenly food. So, dear Friends, if we come to this Table in a right spirit, we must rejoice in our Lord and we must remember His love.

I think, also, that there is this further reason why we should rejoice in our Lord and remember His love, because at this Table the commemoration is made by our Lord to be a feast. They miss the meaning of the Lord's Supper who kneel around what they call an, "altar." The very point of the Supper is that it should be taken while sitting around a table. It is not meant to be an adoration—it is a communion! We come here that we may have fellowship with Him who sat at the table with His disciples and made them to be His companions at His last supper. Joy is becoming at a royal feast! What? Will you come to the King's Table with a sorrowful countenances? Will you come sadly to see what He has brought you? Now that He has

prepared the bread and wine as a feast for your souls, will you come here hanging your heads like bulrushes? No, but let this be your resolution, "We will be glad and rejoice in You, we will remember Your love more than wine."

Do kings make feasts? Do they lift high the flowing bowl? Are there shouts of joy and exultation at their banquets and shall it be that this world's poor vine, whose juice is often to men like the wine of Gomorrah, shall bring even the semblance of joy superior to ours when we drink of the wine that comes from the Vine of God and the clusters that Christ has trod in the winepress? No! Higher, far, is your joy than ever came to them that have made merry at earthly feasts!

More delightful, more intense, more real, more true be your hallowed ecstasies than anything that wine or wealth can ever bring! "We will be glad and rejoice in You, we will remember Your love more than wine." O God, help us to carry out this resolution! It seems to me to be specially right, proper and fit, when we come to this high festival of the Church of God, that we should rejoice in the Lord and remember His love!

Let us also recollect that when we come to the Table of our Lord, we commemorate a very happy union. Our text speaks in the plural—"We will be glad and rejoice in You, we will remember Your love more than wine." I do not know how you feel, Brothers and Sisters, but I should not like to go to Heaven alone. If nobody else will go on pilgrimage, Christian must set out by himself and march along towards the Celestial City until he finds a suitable fellow-pilgrim. But I like best to go with Christiana, Mercy and the children—and as the company together. Though I should enjoy fellowship with my Lord if I were His only loved one, yet it greatly increases my joy as I look at the faces of many of you whom I have known a score of years and with whom I have lived in such happy union year after year! Many of you who were once "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity," have been plucked, like brands out of the burning, through the preaching of the Gospel in this pulpit—and it seems such a happy thing for us to be communing together around the Table of our Lord.

Some of you, my dear venerable Brothers and Sisters, will soon be Home—come, we will be glad and rejoice in our Lord, will we not? Before you go away from us, join us in another holy song! Give us another of your patient, quiet, happy, restful looks! One dear Sister went Home this morning, at twelve o'clock, while we were worshipping here. I am sure that her spirit is now rejoicing before the Throne of God and some of you will be going soon—but until you go, we will rejoice and be glad together, will we not? We will still take the cup of blessing at the Lord's Table, whatever our infirmities and sorrows may be. And we will remember Him until we drink the new wine in our Father's Kingdom above! And you men and women in the very midst of the battle of life, with all your trials and struggles, we will stand shoulder to shoulder, will we not? We are one in Christ and there is between us a bond of union that never can be snapped! It binds us for time and for eternity. We came to this Communion Table to eat and to drink, not each one for himself, only, but each one in fellowship with all the rest—and this ought to make us glad. If I am not glad about myself, I will be glad to think that you are glad! If I have a heavy burden to carry, I will be glad that you have not. And if you have a burden and I have not, try to be glad that I have not one, or, if you have one, and I have another, let us rejoice that we both have the same God to help us to carry them and let us believe that as our days, so shall our strength be!

What a joy it adds to this festival when we see the young folk coming among us, the sons and daughters of God's people being brought into the Church! Do you not notice how dear Mr. William Olney, whenever he prays for a blessing upon our ministry, always breaks out into thanksgiving to God that all his family have been brought to Christ? There are many others of us who can praise the Lord for the same favor and

it is a great joy to us! Yes, Lord, we will remember Your love—husband and wife, sons and daughters, and some of us can say grandchildren, too—we will all come clustering around Your Table and, together, we will remember Your sweet love to our fathers, to ourselves and to our children! We cannot help remembering it and rejoicing and being glad in it.

I must give you just one more thought upon this point. It does not become us to gather at this Communion Table with a heavy heart when we remember that it is not only a commemoration, but an anticipation. We are to do this "till He comes." Did I not try, this morning, [Sermon No. 1894, Volume 32—"The Two Appearings and the Discipline of Grace" to sound the trumpet of His coming? It would not have startled me if He had come while we were assembled and I was speaking of "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." Nor should it startle any of you, if, in the dead of this very night, while you are in your beds, you should hear the cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom comes!" for He may come at any moment and He will come, "in such an hour as you think not." Let us leap up at the remembrance of this gladsome hope!

We are coming to the Table, keeping up the memorial of our Lord's first appearing in the fond hope and sure belief of that second appearing when the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father. Therefore, let us keep the feast with high hope. With joyous notes, sound aloud the silver trumpet of the great jubilee and, as you come to the Table, let your hearts be glad in the Lord, whose love you especially remember at this hallowed festival!

III. I will close in a very few minutes, but I must dwell for a brief space upon what I meant to make my third point concerning this double resolve—LET US CARRY IT OUT. That ought always to be the practical conclusion to every sermon—let us carry it out! We have said to our Lord in the language of the text, "We will be glad and rejoice in You, we will remember Your love more than wine." Very well, now let us carry out this resolve.

"We will remember Your love." Dear Savior, what we have to remember is Your love—Your love in old eternity, before the earth was, Your prescient love, which—

"Saw us ruined in the Fall, Yet loved us notwithstanding all." We remember the love of Your espousals when You did espouse Your people unto Yourself and did resolve that, whatever might be the lot of Your elect, You would share it with them. The Lord Jesus made up His mind that He would be one with His Church—for this purpose He left His Father that He might be one with His bride. I shall get into great depths if I go much further in speaking about Christ's love.

"We will remember Your love"—that love which, having once begun, has never wavered, never diminished, never stopped—

"Love, so vast that nothing can bound! Love, too deep for thought to sound! Love, which made the Lord of All Drink the wormwood and the gall! Love, which led Him to the Cross, Bearing there unuttered loss! Love, which brought Him to the gloom Of the cold and darksome tomb! Love, which will not let Him rest Till His chosen all are blest! Till they all for whom He died Live rejoicing by His side!"

We remember the love which Jesus bore in His heart right up into Glory at the right hand of the Father—that love which is still as great as when He hung on Calvary to redeem us unto Himself. The wonderful part of all this to me is that it should be the love of such an One as Christ is. That ever so Divine a Person should set His love on us is very wonderful. I can understand my mother's love. I can understand

my child's love. I can understand my wife's love, but I cannot understand Christ's love. Oh, Brothers and Sisters, we are nothings, we are nobodies! Yet this glorious Everybody, this All in All, did actually set His love upon us! Suppose that all the holy angels had loved us and that all God's redeemed had loved us? All put together, it would be only so many grains of dust that would not turn the scale! But Christ's love is a mountain, no, more than all the mountains in the universe! I know of nothing to be compared with it.

That is the first way in which we are to carry out this double resolve—we are to remember and to rejoice in Christ's love.

Next, let each one of us say to Christ, "I will remember Your love to me." Brothers and Sisters, I can believe in Christ's loving you, but there are times when it seems a great mystery that He should ever have loved me. I can truly say that, often, I have felt that if I might sit at the feet of the poorest, meanest, least of God's servants and serve them, I would count it a Heaven to do it if I did but feel sure of Christ's love to my own soul. I see so many beauties in my Brothers and my Sisters that I can admire the Grace of God in them, but, often, I see and feel so many imperfections in myself that I can only wonder that Christ should ever have loved me. I suppose that each of you feels the same. I am sure that you do if you are in a right state of heart, for, truth to tell, there is no beauty in any of us that He should desire us—and there is no excellence in any of us that could have made it worth His while to die for us. "God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly"—and died for us as ungodly. Come, then, will you not be glad and rejoice that Christ should ever have loved you? Will you not be glad and rejoice, and yet wonder all the while, that it should ever have been possible for Him to draw you "with cords of a man, with bands of love," and bring you into living, loving, everlasting union with Himself?

Still, even that is not all! The text does not merely speak about Christ's love, and Christ's love to me, but it talks about Christ Himself. "We will be glad and rejoice in You"—not only in His love, but in Himself! Do try, dear Friends,

to let your thoughts dwell upon Christ, His complex Person, God and Man, and all the wonders which lie wrapped up in Emmanuel, God With Us! Your work, Lord, is fair, but the hand that worked the work is still fairer. All Your designs of love are full of splendor, but what shall we say of the mind that first gave creation to those designs? The glance, the look of love which You have given me is blessed, but oh, those eyes of Yours, those eyes which are brighter than the stars of the morning! The Lord Jesus is better than everything that comes from Him! His gifts are infinitely precious—then what must He, Himself, be? Come, then, Beloved, and let us be glad and rejoice in Him, and let us remember His love more than wine!

The text says, "we will remember," but some of you cannot remember because you do not know. A man cannot remember what he has never heard of, or seen, or known. But, Brothers and Sisters, let us remember what we do know of Christ's love. I remember the first day I ever tasted of His love consciously to myself. Ah, but I look back and think of the rivers of love that came steaming down to me when I did not even know that I was receiving them! And I remember that many days have passed since first I could give back the glance of love in return for His love to me. But oh, what His love to me since then has been! His love in sickness, in sorrow, in labor, in backsliding, in prayer, in tears, in unbelief, in faith, in varying and changing as many as the changes of the moon! Yet, His love has always been the same. What a book some of you could write concerning Christ's love to you if you had but a nimble pen! What a story some of you could tell of Christ's love if some guest could be detained while you told the wondrous story!

I sometimes think within myself that if all the interesting things that are written in all the works of fiction could be put together, I could surpass them all in the literal simple facts of a common life like mine—and I believe that many of God's people here could say the same! A Christian's life is full of interest. Last Thursday night I called the life of a Christian a cluster of Kohinoors threaded on a string of Divine faithfulness and I am sure that it is so!—

"Wonders of Grace to God belong, Repeat His mercies in your song." Repeat His mercies as you remember them and be glad and rejoice in Him even more than in the mercies that come from

Him!

In conclusion, I would say that I think the people of God, in gathering to the Communion Table, should try to be glad and rejoice in their Lord, and in nobody else—and to remember Him—and nothing else. Let all be a blank except what Christ has written on your memory! Let all be a blank except where that dear face appears—

"The head that once was crowned with thorns,"

but—

"Is crowned with Glory now."

Think only of Him! Put the glass to your eye and shut out all the rest of the landscape—let that glass take nothing within its circle but just the face of the Well-Beloved which we soon hope to see without a cloud between!

God bless you, dear Friends! I wish that all of you understood this Truth of God of which I have been speaking. Some of you do not—may the Lord lead you to do so, for there is no life like that which is spent at Jesus' feet, and no joy like that which comes from our dear Lord! I wish you knew it. Believe on Him and you shall know it, and shall know it at once. Amen.

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—797, 804, 819.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: PSALM 22.

This Psalm is a sort of window through which we can look into the heart of our crucified Savior. We see all the external part of the Crucifixion through the four windows of the Gospels, but this 22nd Psalm brings us into the King's innermost chamber and here we perceive the secret sufferings of His soul. You can very well conceive of the Lord Jesus Christ, when He was on the Cross, beginning to speak in the language of the first verse of this Psalm and closing with the last words of the Psalm—"He has done this," which might properly be interpreted, "It is finished." I have often read this Psalm with you, especially on the evenings of our great Communion services. If we are spared, we will read it together many more times. It is a very wonderful Psalm—the Lord give us to understand it as we read it!!

Verse 1. My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, and from the words of My roaring? That was the very climax of our Lord's grief upon the Cross, that it was necessary that the Father, Himself, should forsake Him. The penalty of sin is that God must leave the man who has sin upon him even by imputation—and God left this wondrous Man, this perfect Man, in whom was no sin, but upon whom the sin of His people had been laid. He, "His own Self, bore our sins in His

own body on the tree" and, therefore, the Father must forsake Him. But it was a bitter experience for our Savior that even His prayers should not be heard when they had become so hoarse as to resemble, rather, the roaring of a wounded beast than the articulate utterance of a man—"Why are You so far from helping Me, and from the words of My roaring?"

2, 3. O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You hear not; and in the night season, and am not silent. But You are holy, O You that inhabit the praises of Israel. Notice that the Lord Jesus, in His greatest agony, does not impugn the justice of His Father's treatment. In His bitterest sufferings He still adores the holiness of God—"You are holy." It was because God was holy that His Son must suffer so—in order to save the unholy.

4-6. Our fathers trusted in You: they trusted, and You did deliver them. They cried unto You, and were delivered: they trusted in You, and were not confounded. But I am a worm, and no man—There is a little red worm which seems to be nothing but a mass of blood—and the Savior compares Himself in His agony to that tiny creature—"I am a worm, and no man"—

6-8. A reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see Me, laugh Me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the lord that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him. What vinegar and gall that mockery poured into the Savior's wounded heart! How these cruel words must have stung His sensitive spirit! It was necessary that God should leave Him while He was bearing His people's sin, but how shameful it was that evil men should turn that stern necessity into a ground of accusation against Him! Yet they did—they taunted Him with it—"He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him."

9,10. But You are He that took Me out of the womb: You did make Me hope when I was upon My mother's breast. I was cast upon You from the womb: You are My God from My mother's belly. Our Savior remembers His own marvelous birth which differed from ours in some respects—and He thinks of how the Father took care of Him, then. Did He not preserve Him when Joseph and Mary fled into Egypt from the wrath of Herod? Was there not a singular power that controlled the movements of the Wise Men and warned them to return to their own country another way, so that the Infant Christ should not be discovered and destroyed? Jesus on the Cross remembers that remarkable preservation! And I suggest to you who are getting old that you may draw comfort from the fact that when you were infants and could not help yourselves, the Lord took care of you. And if you come to a second childhood—if you should live to be as helpless as when you were infants—the God who watched over you in the beginning will watch over you to the end! Remember how He has said, "Even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you."

11. Be not far from Me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help. Peter, James, John and all the disciples had fled. "There is none to help." The women could weep with pitying eyes and sympathetic hearts, but they could not help. "There is none to help."

12. Many bulls have compassed Me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset Me round. There stood the chief priests and the rulers, and the Roman soldiers with their massive bulk and brute strength.

13. They gaped upon Me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion. There was nothing but cruelty and spite and fury all round the tender heart of that lonely Sufferer. Ah, me, was there ever sorrow like unto His sorrow?

14. I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint. This was caused by the rough dashing of the Cross into the ground when they lifted it up and plunged it into its place.

14. My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of My bowels. It was a living death, a deadly life. Christ's very heart, which is the center of life, had become dissolved by pain and weakness and sorrow.

15. My strength is dried up like a potsherd and My tongue cleaves to My jaws; and You have brought Me into the dust of death. The terrible death-thirst was upon Him through the fever generated by His wounds.

16. For dogs have compassed Me: this assembly of the wicked have enclosed Me: they pierced My hands and My feet. The common multitude, with ribald jest and hateful mockery, stood there taunting Him. He was encircled by them—like a poor hunted stag surrounded by the hounds.

17. I may count all My bones: they look and stare upon Me. They stood mocking at His nakedness, jesting at His emaciated form.

18- 19. They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture. But be You not far from Me, O LORD. That is still the very center of our Savior's suffering, so He turns His pleading in that direction. He does not ask that the dogs may be called off, nor that the bulls may be driven away—His cry is, "Be not You far from Me, O Lord."

19- 21. O My Strength, hasten You to help Me. Deliver My soul from the sword; My darling from the power of the dog. Save Me from the lion's mouth: for You have heard Me from the horns of the unicorns. He remembers former days wherein God had helped Him, and He prays that the Lord will help Him still, and bring Him safely through this terrible trial, as, indeed, He did! Now the tone of the Psalm changes. A gleam of sunlight plays across the scene. The agony is over, the life is poured out, and now the Savior begins to contemplate the result of His suffering. Think, dear Brothers and Sisters, how the Lord thought of You! He says—

22. I will declare Your name unto My brethren. In the midst of the congregation will I praise You. The risen Christ is in the midst of us! He has come here to tell us of His Father's love. He has told it to us by His death and now He bids us praise the Lord and He, Himself, leads our song! This is the reward of His passion, that He and His brethren should bless and praise the Lord forever and ever!

23, 24. He that fears the LORD, praise Him; all You, the seed of Jacob, glorify Him; and fear Him, all You the seed of Israel. For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the Afflicted, neither has He hid His face from Him; but when He cried unto Him, He heard. Is not this delightful? Your Lord has gone through the black darkness and has come out into the Light of God—and when your turn comes to go through the darkness, you, too, shall come out into the Light even as He did! Therefore, rejoice in His name! If the Head has conquered, the members shall conquer, too. You shall all share in your Savior's joy as you are partakers of His sufferings.

25, 26. My praise shall be of You in the great congregation: I will pay My vows before them that fear Him. The meek shall eat and be satisfied. He thought of you, poor, timid, trembling ones! You who are humbled before God under a sense of your sin. Because He died, because He accomplished your redemption, you "shall eat and be satisfied."

26, 27. They shall praise the LORD that seek Him: Your heart shall live forever. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before You. See

what solace Christ derives from the spread of the faith, the conquest of the world by His death!

28-30. For the Kingdom is the LORD'S: and He is the governor among the nations. All they that are fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before Him: and none can keep alive his own soul. A seed shall serve Him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. This is in accordance with Isaiah's prophecy—"When You shall make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed."

31. They shall come—The passion of Christ shall work for a certain deliverance for His people. What He has purchased, He shall surely have—"They shall come"—

31. And shall declare His righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that He has done this. Or, "it is finished." When our Lord had uttered these words, "He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost."

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