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Our Pulpit.

A Blasphemous Taunt.

A WHOLESOME LESSON ON FAITH BY

REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him; for He said, I am the Son of God."—MATT. XXVII:43.

It is very painful to the heart to picture our blessed Master in His death-agonies, surrounded by a ribald multitude, who watched Him and mocked Him, made sport of His prayer and insulted His faith. Nothing was sacred to them: they invaded the Holy of Holies of His confidence in God, and taunted Him concerning that faith in Jehovah which they were compelled to admit. Beloved, the treatment of our Lord Jesus Christ by men in the clearest proof of total depravity which can possibly be required or discovered. Those must be stony hearts indeed which can laugh at a dying Saviour, and mock even at his faith in God! Compassion would seem to have deserted humanity, while malice sat supreme on the throne. Painful as the picture is, it will do you good to paint it. The Son of God, whom angels adore with veiled faces, is pointed at with scornful fingers by men who thrust out the tongue and mockingly exclaim, "He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him."

While thus we see our Lord in His sorrow and His shame as our substitute, we must not forget that He also is there as our representative. In Him we see what we have in our measure to endure. "As He is, so are we also in this world." We also must be crucified to the world, and we may look for somewhat of those tests of faith and taunts of derision which go with such a crucifixion. "Marvel not if the world hate you." You, too, must suffer without the gate. Not for the world's redemption, but for the accomplishment of divine purposes in you, and through you to the sons of men, you must be made to know the cross and its shame.

I. First, then my beloved brethren, you who know the Lord by faith, and live by trusting in Him, let me invite you to observe the acknowledgment which these mockers made of our Lord's faith: "He trusted in God." Yet the Saviour did not wear any peculiar garb or token by which He let men know that He trusted in God. He was not a recluse, neither did He join some little knot of separatists, who boasted their peculiar trust in Jehovah. Although our Saviour was separate from sinners, yet He was eminently a man among men, and He went in and out among the multitude as one of themselves. His one peculiarity was that "He trusted in God." This peculiarity had been visible even to that ungodly multitude who least of all cared to perceive a spiritual point of character. "Was ever any other upon a cross thus saluted by the mob who watched his execution? Had these scorners ever mocked any one before for such a matter as this? I trow not. Yet faith had been so manifest in our Lord's daily life that the crowd cried, "He trusted in God."

How did they know? I suppose they could not help seeing that He made much of God in His teaching, in His life, and in His miracles. Whenever Jesus spoke it was always godly talk; and if it was not always distinctly about God, it was always about things that related to God, that came from God, that led to God, that magnified God. A man may be fairly judged by that which he makes most of. The ruling passion is a fair gauge of the heart. What a soul-ruler faith is! It sways the man as a rudder guides the ship. When a man once gets to live by faith in God, it tinctures his thoughts, it masters his purposes, it flavors his words, it puts a tone into his actions, and it comes out in everything by ways and means most natural and unconstrained, till men perceive that they have to do with a man who makes much of God.

In addition to observing that Jesus made much of God, men came to note that he was a trusting man, and not self-confident. Certain persons are very proud because they are self-made men. I will do them credit to admit that they heartily worship their Maker. Self made them, and they worship self. We have among us individuals who are self-sufficient, and almost all-sufficient; they sneer at those who do not succeed, for they can succeed anywhere at anything. There was nothing of that sort of thing in our Lord. The words that

He spake He spake not of Himself, and the great deeds that He did He never boasted of, but said, "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." He was a truster in God, not a boaster in self.

It is evident that the Lord Jesus trusted in God openly, since even yonder gibing crowd proclaimed it. Some good people try to excuse faith on the sly; they practice it in snug corners, and in lonely hours, but they are afraid to say much before others, for fear their faith should not see the promise fulfilled. They dare not say, with David, "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad." This secrecy robs God of His honor. Brethren, we do not glorify our God as He ought to be glorified. Let us trust in Him, and own it. Faith must begin at home. Of what use were the longest arm if it were not fixed to the man himself at the shoulder? If you have no faith about yourself, what faith can you have about others? "He trusted in the Lord that He would deliver Him." Come, beloved, have you such a faith in the living God? May the Holy Spirit lead you to first trust the Lord Jesus for the pardon of sin, and then to trust for all things.

Certainly, dear friends, it is extremely comfortable to trust in God. I find it so, and therefore speak. To roll your burden upon the Lord, since He will sustain you, is a blessed way of being quit of care. We know Him to be faithful, and as powerful as He is faithful; and our dependence upon Him is the solid foundation of a profound peace. If you trust in men—the best of men—you are likely to be lowered by your trust. But when our reliance is upon the living God, we are raised by it, and elevated both morally and spiritually.

This confidence in God makes men strong. I should advise the enemy not to oppose the man who trusts in God. In the long run he will be beaten, as Haman found it with Mordecai. Content not with a man who has God at his back. When a believer stands out against evil, he may be sure that the Lord will not be far away.

II. Secondly, I want you to follow me briefly in considering the test which is the essence of the taunt which was hurled by the mockers against our Lord—"Let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him." Such a test will come to all believers. It may come as a taunt from enemies; it will certainly come as a trial of your faith. The arch-enemy will assuredly hiss out, "Let Him deliver him, seeing He delighted in him."

This taunt has about it the appearance of being very logical, and, indeed, in a measure, so it is. If God has promised to deliver us, and we have openly professed to believe the promise, it is only natural that others should say, "Let us see whether He does deliver him." This man believes that the Lord will help him; and He must help him, or else the man's faith is a delusion." This is the sort of test to which we ourselves would have put others before our conversion, and we cannot object to be proved in the same manner ourselves. Perhaps we incline to run away from the ordeal, but this very shrinking should be a solemn call to us to question the genuineness of that faith which we are afraid to test. "He trusted on the Lord," says the enemy, "that He would deliver him; let Him deliver him;" and surely, however malicious the design, there is no escaping from the logic of the challenge. Brethren, the test is fair. God will be true to every believer. If any one child of God could be lost, it would be quite enough to enable the devil to spoil all the glory of God forever. If one promise of God to one of His people should fail, that one failure would suffice to mar the veracity of the Lord to all eternity.

Much emphasis lies in its being in the present tense: "He trusted in God that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him now." I see Thee, O Lord Jesus; Thou art not now in the wilderness, where the fiend is saying, "If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." No. Thou art nailed to a tree; Thine enemies have hemmed Thee in. The legionaries of Rome are at the foot of the cross, the scribes and Pharisees and raging Jews compass Thee about. There is no escape from death for Thee! Hence their cry: "Let Him deliver Him now." Ah, brothers and sisters! this is how Satan assails us, using our present and pressing tribulations as the bars of his arrows. Yet here also there is reason and logic in the challenge.

A Christian man may be beaten in business, he may fail to meet all de-

mands, and then Satan yells, "Let Him deliver him now." The poor man has been out of work for two or three months, tramping the streets of London until he has worn out his boots; he has been brought to his last penny, I think I hear the laugh of the Prince of Darkness as he cries, "Let Him deliver him now." Or else the believer is very ill in body, and low in spirit, and then Satan howls, "Let Him deliver him now." Some of us have been in very trying positions. We were moved with indignation because of deadly error, and we spoke plainly, but men refused to hear. Those we relied upon deserted us; good men sought their own ease and would not march with us, and we had to bear testimony for despised truth alone, until we were ourselves despised. Then the adversary shouted, "Let Him deliver him now." Be it so! We do not refuse the test. Our God whom we serve will deliver us. We will not bow down to modern thought, nor worship the image which human wisdom has set up. Our God is God both of hills and of valleys. He will not fail His servants, albeit that for awhile, He forbears that He may try their faith. We dare accept the test, and say, "Let Him deliver us now."

Some of us who have lain for weeks together, peering through the thin veil which parts us from the unseen, have been made to feel that nothing will suffice us but a promise which will answer the taunt, "Let Him deliver us now."

III. I shall finish, in the third place, dear friends, by noticing the answer to the test. God does deliver those who trust in Him. God's interposition for the faithful is not a dream, but a substantial reality. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." All history proves the faithfulness of God. Those who trust God have been in all sorts of troubles; but they have always been delivered.

But God's ways of deliverance are His own. He does not deliver according to the translation put upon "deliverance" by the ribald throng. He does not deliver according to the interpretation put upon "deliverance" by our shrinking flesh and blood. He delivers, but it is in His own way. Let me remark that, if God delivers you and me in the same way as He delivered His own Son, we can have no cause of complaint.

What kind of a deliverance was that? Did the Father tear up the cross from the earth? Did He proceed to draw out the nails from the sacred hands and feet of His dear Son? Did He set Him down upon that "green hill far away, beyond the city wall," and place in His hand a sword of fire with which to smite His adversaries? Did He bid the earth open and swallow up all His foes? No: nothing of the kind. Jehovah did not interpose to spare His Son a single pang; but He let Him die. He let Him be taken as a dead man down from the cross and laid in a tomb. Jesus went through with His suffering to the bitter end. O brothers and sisters, this may be God's way of delivering us. We have trusted in God that He would deliver us; and His rendering of His promise is, that He will enable us to go through with it; we shall suffer to the last, and triumph in so doing.

It may be that some of us are in trouble about the church and the faith. We have defended God's truth as well as we could, and spoken out against deadly error; but craft and numbers have been against us, and at present things seem to have gone wrong. If we have not spoken in God's name we are content to go back to the dust from whence we sprang; but if we have spoken God's truth, we defy the whole confederacy to prevail against it. Let us drown the taunts of the adversary with our shouts of Hallelujah! The Lord shall reign for ever and ever. Hallelujah. Amen!

Our Story.

A Kitchen Colonel.

(Continued.)

Abel's head went up in a minute, and he was looking at her all alert. You don't say so, mother! Suddenly the old man put his hand up to his eyes and sobbed.

Why, how silly you are, father! said his wife. Then she went over to a window with a brisk step, and stood there as if looking out. When she turned around her eyes were red. I think you'd better go to bed father, an' not set there dozin in that chair any longer, she said sharply; you're all tuckered out.

The next day, when Abel had to stand a running fire relative to the Boston trip from Ephraim he gave one counter-shot

—the announcement of Fanny's engagement. He listened while Ephraim related the pleasures of his excursion and berated him; then he turned on him with an artfulness born of patience. S'spose you've heard the news? said he.

What news? Well, I s'pose our Fanny an' John Page's son have 'bout concluded to make a match on't.

Hm! Ephraim stood looking at him. When they goin' to git married?

Well, I dun know. Mother was saying she thought, mebbe some time in the Fall.

Hm! Well, there's slips. Mebbe she won't git him, arter all. It's best not to be to sure 'bout it.

But Ephraim turned on his heel and went home across the yard, and left Abel to his Sunday peace.

Abel had to work harder than usual that summer. It was Fanny's vacation time, and she had been accustomed to assist some about the house, so Abel's labors had been lightened a little during hot weather. But this Summer Fanny was sewing, getting ready to be married in the Fall, and she could not do much else, so her grandfather got no respite in his kitchen work through the long hot days. He grew thinner and older, but he never complained even to himself. He was radiant over Fanny. She was going to make a match that would lift her out of all his own struggles and hardships. Poor, old Abel in the midst of his hard, pitiful little whirlpool, watched Fanny joyously making her way out of it, and no longer thought of himself.

Fanny was married in October. There was quite a large evening wedding, and Mrs. Lee had wedding cake and pound cake, tea and coffee passed around for refreshments. Fanny and her bridegroom were standing before the minister, who had already begun the ceremony. Fanny, all in white, bent her head delicately under her veil; her cheeks showed through it like roses. The bridegroom kept his handsome boyish face upon the minister with a brave and resolute air. Abel and his wife stood near with solemn and tearful faces. The four boarders stood together in a corner. The rooms were crowded with people in creamy silks and Sunday coats, and the air was heavy with cake and coffee and flowers.

Suddenly, in the midst of the ceremony, Mrs. Lee nudged Abel. 'The milk is burnin' father,' she whispered; 'go out quick and lift it off.'

Abel looked at her. 'Be quick,' she whispered again; 'the milk for the coffee is burnin'! Don't stan' there lookin', for mercy's sake!'

Abel tiptoed out solemnly, with his best boots creaking.

When he returned, Fanny was married, and the people were crowding around her. He felt a heavy poke in his side, and there was Ephraim. 'Had to go out an' be kitchen colonel, didn't ye, Abel?' said he quite aloud.

The bridal couple drove away, and the guests dispersed gradually. Mrs. Lee had to stay in the parlor until the last of them disappeared, but as soon as Fanny and her husband had gone, Abel kitchened his clothes and went into the little things needed to be set to right before evening.

While the happy bridal pair rode away through the October night, and the warring guests chatted merrily in the parlor and hocked gaily down the street, the kitchen colonel fought faithfully in his humble field, where maybe he would some day win a homely glory all his own.—Mary E. Wilkins, in Harper's Bazar.

END.

Won by a School Ma'am.

The school directors of district No. 19, Perry township, were holding a meeting. Nobody would have thought it. The chairman was leaning against his front-gate, with his checked shirt-sleeves turned back and an axe in his hand, surveying the other two members of the board who stood outside the fence. It was a meeting, nevertheless, and its object was nothing less important than the election of a teacher for the fall term. 'Lyman Doty spoke to me about having the school,' said the chairman, dubiously.

'Lyman Doty!' exclaimed Steve Tenney, a stalwart young fellow, with thick brown hair, white teeth and square chin to make up for his lack of downright good looks. 'Why, Lyman Doty could not teach a baby. He quit school before I did long enough, and he hasn't studied

Continued on fourth page.