

“AFTER TWO DAYS IS THE PASSOVER”

NO. 2522

**A SERMON
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DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON
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*“Ye know that after two days is...the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.”
Matthew 26:2*

ONE likes to know how a great commander feels before a battle. What is his state of mind and how does he look forward to tomorrow’s struggle? While yet the balances are trembling, how does he act? How does he bear himself? One likes to know the condition of heart of one’s fellow in the prospect of a great trial. There is a serious operation to be performed, how is the sufferer supported in the prospect of the surgeon’s knife and of the danger that will attend it?

Or perhaps, death itself is rapidly approaching, in what condition of heart is our departing friend? How does he anticipate the great change? I take it that it is sometimes much harder to look upon a battle than to fight one—more difficult to foresee an ill than it is to bear it and peradventure, the foresight even of death is much more trying than death itself ever proves to be to a Christian. Can we be confident before the battle begins? Can we be calm before the clouds burst in the time of storm? Can we rest in God before the iron gate is opened and we pass through it into the unknown world? These are questions well worth asking.

I thought that it would be very profitable to us if we tried to look at our Master in this condition—the great Captain of our salvation before the battle—the great Sacrifice led to the altar where His blood is about to be shed. How does He behave Himself? May there not be something specially instructive in this last word of His, when He seems, as it were, to take off the robes of the teacher and prophet, and to put on His priestly garments? May there not be something for us to learn from the state of His mind and spirit, and from His language, just before His Passion? It is a small window, but a great deal of the light may come through it. The Master said to His disciples, “Ye know that after two days is...the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.”

I. The first thing I would say upon these words to you, beloved in Christ Jesus, is, ADMIRE YOUR SAVIOR. Hear Him speak and regard Him in holy contemplation, on purpose that admiration of Him may be greatly excited.

Admire *His calmness*. There is no token of any disturbance of mind, there are no evidences of dismay, there is not even a quiver of fear, nor the least degree of anxiety about Him. He speaks not boastfully, else we should suspect that He was not brave. He speaks very solemnly, for it was a terrible ordeal that lay before Him, look at it as He might, but still, with what true peace of mind, in what tones of quiet serenity, does He say to His little band of followers, “Ye know that after two days is...the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.”

This calmness is very wonderful, because there was so much that was bitter and cruel about His approaching death. “The Son of man is betrayed.” The Savior felt that betrayal most keenly. It was a very bitter part of the deadly potion which He had to drink. “He that eateth bread with me has lifted up his heel against me,” was a venomous drop that went right into His soul.

David, in his great sorrow, had to say, “For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid

myself from him; but it was thou, a man my equal, my guide, and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked into the house of God in company.”

And it was a very, very, very bitter thing to Christ to be betrayed by Judas, yet He talks of it calmly and speaks of it when it was not absolutely necessary, one would think, to mention that incidental circumstance. He might have said, “In two days I shall be crucified,” but He said, “In two days the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.”

Do not forget, also, the extraordinary bitterness that is concentrated in that word, “crucified.” Somehow, we have become used to the cross, and the glory which surrounds our Lord has taken away from our minds much of the shame which is and should always be associated with the gibbet. The cross was the hangman’s gibbet of those days, it implied all the shame that the gallows could imply with us today, and more, for a freeman may be hanged, but crucifixion was a death reserved for slaves.

Nor was it merely the shame of crucifixion, but it was the great pain of it. It was an exquisitely cruel death, in which the body was tormented for a considerable length of time to the very highest degree, and the nails passing through the flesh just where the nerves are most plentiful, and tearing and rending through those parts of the body by the weight which had to be sustained on hands and feet, caused torture of a kind which I will not attempt to describe.

Beside that, remember, veiled beneath the words, “to be crucified,” lay our Savior’s inward and spiritual crucifixion, for His Father’s forsaking of Him was the essence, the extreme gall of the bitterness that He endured. He meant that He had to die upon the accursed tree, deserted even by His Father. Yet He talked of it, truly and with all solemnity, but yet without the slightest trace of trembling. “Ye know,” said He to His disciples, “that in two days is...the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.”

Admire, then, the calm, brave heart of your divine Lord, conscious—far more conscious than you and I can be—of what was meant by being betrayed and being crucified, cognizant of every pang that should ever come upon Him—the bloody sweat, the scourge, the thorn-crown, the fevered thirst, the tongue cleaving to the roof of His mouth, and all the dust of death that would surround and choke Him, yet He speaks of it as though it were no more an unusual event than the passover itself. “Ye know that after two days is...the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.”

I want you to admire, next, your Savior’s *strong resolve*, His resolute purpose to go through all this suffering that He might effect our redemption. If He had willed it, He might have paused, He might have gone back, He might have given up the enterprise. You know how the flesh, in sight of all that pain and grief, cried, “If it be possible, let this cup pass from me,” but here we see, before the Passion came, that strong and firm and brave resolve which, when the Passion did come, would not, could not, and did not flinch or hesitate, much less turn back.

He could sweat great drops of blood, but He could not give up the work He came to do. He could bow His head to death, but He could not, and would not, cease to love His people whom He loved so much as to end His life for their sakes upon the accursed tree. Here are no regrets and no faltering. Our Lord speaks as you and I would speak of something about which our mind is quite made up, concerning which there is no room for argument or debate. “Ye know that after two days is...the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.”

If He had said, “After two years,” I could understand something of His purpose concerning an event that was so distant, but within two days to be betrayed, within forty-eight hours to be betrayed for crucifixion, and yet to talk of it so, O my Lord, truly Your love for us is strong as death, Your jealousy o’ercomes even the grave itself!

Admire Him, then, dear friends. Let your inmost heart adore and love Him. But I want you to also notice *how absorbed He was in His approaching betrayal and death*. That truth comes out in the words of our text, “Ye know that after two days is...the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.” Ah, dear Lord, You did speak the truth! They did know it and yet You did speak to them with loving partiality, for they did not really know it. They did not as yet understand that their Master must

die and that He would rise again from the dead. He had often repeated to them the assurance that it would be so, but somehow, they had not truly believed it, realized it, grasped it.

Ah, but He had! He had and you know, it is the way of men who have realized a great truth to talk to others as if it were as real to them as to themselves. You remember how the spouse asks the watchmen of the city, “Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?” She does not tell them any name, but she talks of her Beloved as if there were no other “him” in all the world. And the Lord here so well knew and was so wholly absorbed in the great work before Him, that He said to these forgetful, these ignorant disciples, “Ye know that after two days is...the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.”

Why, they had only a little while before walked with Him through the streets of Jerusalem! The people had strewn the road with their garments and with branches of palm trees. Scarcely had the sound of their hosannas died away out of the disciples’ ears, yet Jesus says to them, “Ye know that after two days is...the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified; you have not forgotten that, have you?”

Ah, but they had! They were still dreaming of an earthly sovereignty, and He was dreaming of nothing, but sternly, solemnly setting His face like a flint to go to prison and to death for their redemption, and for yours, and for mine, sacredly resolved to go through with it, and even “straitened” till His baptism of blood should be accomplished, and He should be immersed in unknown deeps of grief and suffering.

Having all His thought taken up with that subject, our Lord therefore talked to His disciples as if they were taken up with it, too. This is the language of One who is altogether absorbed with this gigantic enterprise which He has made to be the very summit of His ambition, though He knows that it will involve Him in shame and death. Admire Him, brothers and sisters, that He should be so taken up with the passion of winning souls as to forget everything else, and have this only upon His mind, and upon His lips, “After two days is...the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.”

I cannot help adding one other thing in which I admire the Savior and that is, *how wise He was to tell His disciples this!* You see, all He cared for was their good. He was not mentioning His suffering that He might ask for their sympathy. There is no trace of His crying, like Job, “Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.” No, our Lord told His disciples this for their sakes.

First, that they might not be surprised when it came to pass, as though some strange thing had happened to them—that when He was betrayed and crucified, it might not be quite so dire a blighting of all their hopes since He had prepared them for it beforehand. And moreover, it was intended to strengthen them when they should come into the trial, so that they could say, “It is all just as He told us it would be. How true He is! He told us about this sorrow beforehand and therefore, if He spoke the truth, then, we will believe that all the rest that He said is also true. And did He not say that He would rise again from the dead? Then, depend upon it, He will do so. He died when He said He would die and He will rise again when He said He would rise again.”

This saying of our Lord was well and wisely uttered, that the crucifixion should not come upon them as a thing unknown to Him, but that when they were in the midst of the trial, they should remember that He told them all about it and so they would be comforted.

I ask you, then, dear friends, to think with reverent affection of this calm speech of your divine Master, this resolved and determined utterance, this all-absorbing thought of His concerning the purchase of His people by His blood, and this generous wisdom of His in making it all known beforehand to those who were around about Him and who truly loved Him. I do not want to turn from that thought until you have felt in your own heart this intense admiration of your Lord.

II. But, secondly, I want to take your thoughts a little way—not from the text—but from that particular line of meditation and to ask you, now, to CONSIDER YOUR SACRIFICE.

The Master says, “Ye know that after two days is...the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.” I cannot help reading it like this, “Ye know that after two days is THE passover. All the

other passovers have been passovers only in name, passovers in type, passovers in emblem, passovers foreshadowing *the* passover. But after two days is the real Passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.” At any rate, I want you to notice how true it is that our Lord Jesus Christ is our Passover, “Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.” What the paschal lamb was to Israel in Egypt, that the Lord Jesus Christ is to us. Let us think of that for a few minutes. Put the passover and the cross together, for indeed they are one.

And first, *here is a lamb*. Was there another man who ever lived who was so worthy to be called a lamb, as was Jesus Christ? I have never heard or read of any character that so fully realizes what must be meant by “the Lamb of God.” Other men have been like lambs, but there is a touch of the tiger about us all at times. There was none about Him. He was the Lamb of all lambs—the Lamb of God—the most lamb-like of all men who ever lived or died, for there was no trace of anything about Him that was contrary to tenderness, and love, and gentleness. There were other qualities, of course, but none that were contrary to these. There were some that were as necessary to a complete character as even gentleness was, and He failed in nothing. But still, if you only view Him from that one side of His gentleness, there was none so worthy to be called a Lamb as He.

The lamb of the passover, however, *had to be perfect*. It must be without spot or blemish. And where can you find the likes of Jesus for spotlessness and perfection in every respect? There is nothing in Him redundant. There is nothing in Him deficient. The character of the Christ is absolutely perfect, insomuch that His very enemies, who have denied His Deity, have been charmed with His humanity, and those who have even tried to undermine His teaching, have, nevertheless, reverently bowed before His example. He is the Lamb of God “without blemish and without spot.”

The paschal lamb also *had to be slain*. You know how Christ was slain. There is no need to dwell upon the sufferings and death of our Well-beloved. The lamb *had to be roasted with fire*. That was the method by which it was prepared and truly, Christ our Passover was roasted with fire. Through what fiery sufferings, through what consuming grief did He pass! There was nothing about Him that was sodden at all with water, but every bit of Him was roasted with the fire of human hatred, and also with the divine and righteous ire of the thrice-holy God.

You remember, too, that in the paschal lamb *not a bone was to be broken*. Our Lord stood in imminent jeopardy of having His bones broken, for with iron bars the Roman soldiers went to break the legs of the three crucified persons, that they might die the more quickly. But John tells us, “When they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they broke not His legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bares record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For those things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, a bone of him shall not be broken.” And again another Scripture says, “They shall look on him whom they pierced.” In all this is Christ our true Paschal Lamb.

But you know, dear friends, that the chief point about the paschal lamb lay in *the sprinkling of the blood*. The blood of the lamb was caught in a basin, and then the father of the family took a bunch of hyssop, dipped it in the blood, and struck the lintel and the two side posts of the house outside the door. Then, when the destroying angel flew through the land of Egypt to smite the first-born of men and of cattle, from the first-born of Pharaoh that was on the throne to the first-born of one that was in the dungeon, he passed by every house that was sprinkled with the blood. And these are the Lord’s memorable words concerning that ordinance, “When I see the blood, I will pass over you.”

God’s sight of the blood was the reason for His passing over His people and not smiting them. And you know, beloved, that the reason why God does not smite you on account of sin is that He sees the sprinkled blood of Jesus under which you are sheltering. That blood is sprinkled upon you, and as God sees it, He knows that expiation has been made, the substitutionary sacrifice has been slain and He passes you by. Thus is Christ, the true Passover, accepted in your stead, and you are saved through Him.

Remember, too, that the paschal lamb *furnished food for a supper*. It was both a security and a feast for the people. The whole family stood round the table that night and ate of the roasted lamb. With bitter

herbs did they eat it, as if to remind them of the bitterness of their bondage in Egypt. With their loins girt and with their walking staves in their hands, as men who were about to leave their homes, and go on a long journey never to return—thus they stood and ate the paschal lamb.

They all ate it and they ate it all, for not a relic of it must be left until the morning. If there was too much for one family, then others must come in to share it. And if any was left, it must be destroyed by fire. Is not this, dear friends, just what Christ is to us, our spiritual meat, the food of our souls? We receive a whole Christ and feed upon a whole Christ—often with bitter herbs of repentance and humiliation, but still we feed on Him and we all eat of the same spiritual meat, even as we are all sprinkled with the one precious blood, if indeed we are the true Israel of God.

O beloved, let us bless our Lord for the true Passover! It was a night to be remembered when Israel came out of Egypt, but it is a night to be remembered even more when you and I, by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, are once for all passed over by the angel of avenging justice and we live when others die—a night to be remembered when our eager lips begin to feed on Him whose flesh is meat indeed, and we eat and live forever.

Is not that the teaching of this text? Did not the Savior mean this when He said, “Ye know that after two days is...the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified”? These two things are bracketed together, as in mathematics there is a sort of mark of “equals” put between them to signify that the one is equal to the other, the feast of *the* passover, and the fact that the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

III. Now I turn to a third point, and I think I shall have your earnest attention upon that, because there is something in it which very deeply interests all of us who belong to Christ. I have already asked you to admire your Savior and to consider your sacrifice. Now, dear friends, ADORE YOUR LORD.

I ask you to adore your Lord, first, for *His foresight*. “After two days...the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.” We cannot prophesy concerning the future. The man who can tell me what will happen in two days must be something more than man. As to many events, it is as difficult to foresee two minutes as to foresee two centuries, unless there are some causes operating which must produce certain effects.

In our Lord’s case, the influences seemed all to point away from betrayal and crucifixion. He was extremely popular. To all appearance He was beloved by the mass of the people, and even the scribes and Pharisees, who sought His death, were thoroughly afraid of Him. Yet, with that clear foresight of the eyes which shines in no head but that which is divine, Jesus says, “After two days the Son of man will be betrayed.” He sees it all as if it had already happened. He does not say, “*shall be,*” but He so fully sees it, He is such a true Seer, that He says, “The Son of man *is* betrayed to be crucified.”

Now, beloved, if He thus foresaw His own betrayal and death, let us adore Him, for *He can foresee our trials and death*. He knows all that is going to happen to us. He knows what will happen to me within two days. I bless Him that I do not. I would far rather that the eyes which see into the future should be in His head than in mine, they are safer there.

But brethren, if within two days, or two months, or two years, you are to pass through some bitter agony, some scourging and buffering, which looks very improbable now, you may not see that it may be so, but there is One who sees it. The sheep’s best eyes are in the shepherd’s head. The sheep will do well enough if he can see what is just before him, especially if he can see his shepherd, that is all he wants to see. The shepherd can see into the cold winter. The shepherd can see into the wild wood where lurks the wolf, the shepherd can see everything.

And I want you, dear friends, to adore your Lord, because if in His humiliation He foresaw His betrayal and death, from the vantage ground of His glory He can now see your grief and your woes that are yet in reserve. And it ought to be enough for you that He knows all about you. He knows what your difficulty will be and He will pray for you that your faith fail not. Adore your Lord, then, for His foresight.

I want you, next, to adore Him for *His wonderful providence*. There was a providence which surrounded the Christ of God at that time. It was according to the divine purpose and will that He should

die at the passover, and at that particular passover, and that He should die by being betrayed and by being crucified. Without entering into the question of the responsibility and free will of men, I am sure that the providence of their Lord and Master wrought this all out. I wonder that they did not take up stones to stone Him, but they could not, for He must be crucified.

I wonder that they did not hire an assassin, for there were plenty in those days who would have stabbed Him for a shilling. But no, He must be crucified. I marvel that they had not slain Him long ago, for they did take up stones again and again to stone Him, but His hour was not then come. There was a providence working all the while and shaping His end as it shapes ours. He was immortal till His work was done. But when the two days of which He spake should be over, He must die.

With cruel and wicked hands, and of their own voluntary and evil will, they crucified and slew the Christ, yet it was all according to “the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.” I never yet pretended to explain how free agency and absolute predestination can both be true, but I am sure that they are both true, both written in Scripture, and both facts. To reconcile them is no business of mine or yours, but to admire how they are reconciled in fact is a business of yours and mine, and therefore let us do so now.

I want you, next, to admire your Lord by recognizing His *extraordinary correctness as a Prophet*. Let me read on beyond our text, “Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified. Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, into the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast day”—mark that—“Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.”

Now note this, it must be on the feast day and it shall be on the feast day, and it shall be on the feast day. Yet they said, “Not on the feast day.” But what does it matter what they say? Do you not observe how they were checkmated all round, how their purpose was like the whistling wind, and the eternal purpose stood firm in every particular? They said, “We will take him by subtilty, and kill him.” But they did not, they took Him by force. They said, “We will kill him.” But they did not, for He died by the hands of the Romans. They meant to slay Him privately, but they could not, for He must be hung up before high noon in the midst of the people.

And above all, they said, “Not on the feast day. Not on the feast day.” I think I hear old Caiaphas there, with all his wisdom and all his cunning, saying, “Not on the feast day,” and Annas and all the priests join in the chorus, “Not on the feast day. Postpone it a little till the million have departed, the vulgar throng who, perhaps, would make a riot in His favor.” There they stood with their broad-bordered garments and their phylacteries, and they were of the opinion that what Caiaphas had proposed, and Annas had seconded, should be carried unanimously, “Not on the feast day.”

But Christ had said, “After two days is the feast day, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.” We do not know how it all came to be hurried on against their deliberate will, but Judas ran to them in hot haste and said, “What will you give me?” And they were so eager for Christ’s death that they overleaped themselves. “We will give you thirty pieces of silver,” they said, and they weighed it out to him, little thinking how quick he would be about his accursed business. Soon he comes back and says, “He is in the garden. You can easily take Him there while He is in prayer with a few of His disciples. I will conduct you thither.” And before long the deed of darkness is done. These crafty, cruel men had said, “Not on the feast day,” but it *was* on the feast day, as Jesus had foretold that it would be.

Now, beloved, when our Lord tells us anything, let us always believe it. Whatever may appear to be against His statements, let us make nothing of it all. A man in Jerusalem at that time might have said, “The Christ cannot be put to death unless these scribes and elders of the people agree to it. And you can see that they have resolved not to have it on the feast day. He will not be crucified on the passover, the whole type will break down and it will be shown that He is not what He professed to be.” Ah, but they may say, “not on the feast day,” till they are hoarse, but He has said, “After two days is the feast day, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified,” and so it came to pass.

Our Lord has said that He will come again, yet men ask, “Where is the promise of his coming?” Brothers, be you sure that He will come. He has always kept His word and He will come, as He said. Ah, but they say that He will not come to punish the ungodly who have defied Him, but He will! The Son of man shall sit upon the throne of His glory and before Him shall be gathered all nations. He shall separate them the one from the other as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats, and He will say to those on His left hand “Depart, ye cursed,” as surely as He will say to those on His right hand “Come, ye blessed.”

Every jot and tittle that has ever fallen from the lips of Christ is sure to come to pass, for you know that He said, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” Rest you upon the eternal purpose of God and the faithful promise of Christ, which shall never fail, for not one of Christ’s words shall fall to the ground unfulfilled.

Let us adore Him, then, as our true Prophet. “Very God of very God,” “the faithful and true Witness,” “the Prince of the kings of the earth,” we do adore You this very hour!

IV. Now, fourthly, and lastly, dear friends, I want you to IMITATE YOUR EXEMPLAR.

I will not detain you more than a minute or two upon this point, but I want you, as far as your Lord is imitable, to imitate Him in the spirit of this verse. I have told you that there was no boasting in Him, but that there was a deep calm and a firm resolve even in the immediate prospect of a cruel and shameful death. And I think that you should imitate your Lord in this respect.

Suppose that, in two days, there shall come a “post” from the New Jerusalem to tell you that the silver cord is about to be loosed, the golden bowl to be broken, and that your spirit must return to God who gave it? In such a case, it behooves you, dear follower of Christ, to receive that message with as much calmness as Christ delivered His own death warrant, though it had to be spoken in such language as this, “Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.”

It will not run like that with you, but it may be that in two days consumption will end in hemorrhage, or that old age will bring down the frail tent of your mortality, or that disease which is now upon you will drag you to the grave. Well, if it is so in two days, ah, if it were so in two hours, or two minutes—it is for the child of God to say, “Thy will be done,” just as the Master did.

Happy was that woman who said, “Every morning, before I come downstairs, I dip my foot in the river of death, and I shall not be afraid to plunge into it for the last time.” They who die daily, as we all should, are always ready to die. I like Bengel’s notion concerning death. He says, “I do not think that a Christian should make any fuss about dying. When I am in company and somebody comes to the door and says, ‘Mr. Bengel is wanted,’ I let the company go on with their talk and I just slip out and I am gone. Perhaps, after a little while, they say, ‘Mr. Bengel is gone.’ Yes, that is all, and that is how I would like to die, for God to knock at my door and for me to be gone, without making any fuss about it.”

*“Strangers into life we come,
And dying is but going home.”*

I do not think that there ought to be any jerk on the metals when we arrive at the heavenly terminus. We just run straight on into the shed where the engine stops—nay, into glory, where we shall rest forever and ever.

I think I have heard of a captain who was so skilled that when he had arranged all the steering gear, he had not to alter a point for thousands of miles. And when he came to the harbor, he had so guided the vessel that he sailed straight in. If you get the Lord Jesus Christ on board the vessel of your life, you will find that He is such a skillful steersman that you will never have to alter your course. He will so set your ship’s head that, between here and heaven, there will be nothing to do but to go right on. And then, all of a sudden, you will hear a voice saying, “Furl sail! Let go the anchor!” You will hear a little rattle of the chain, and the vessel will be still forever in that port which is truly called the Fair Havens.

That is how it should be and I am going to finish by saying that I believe that is how it will be. If I say to you that it ought to be so, you will perhaps say to me, “Ah, sir, but I am often subject to bondage through fear of death.” Yes, but you will not be when you come to die. O poor Little-Faith, you want to have strength now to die! But God knows that you are not going to die for some time yet, so what would you do with dying grace if He were to give it to you now? Where would you pack it up and lay it by? It will be quite time to get dying grace when you come to die.

Have I not seen some fidgety old folk who have been really a trouble to other people through their getting so worried and anxious? But all of a sudden there has come upon them such a beautiful quiet. It has been said, “Oh, grandma is so different! Something is going to happen, we feel sure.” One day she had not anything to trouble her. Everybody could see that she was seriously unwell, but her dear old eyes sparkled with unusual brightness and there was an almost unearthly smile upon her face, and she said at night, “I don’t feel quite as well as usual. I think tomorrow morning, I shall lie a little later.” And she did.

So they went up to her. She said that she had had a blessed night, she did not know whether she had slept, but she had seen in the night such a wondrous sight, though she could not describe what it was like. They all gathered round the bed, for they perceived that something very mysterious had happened to her. And she blessed them all and said, “Good-bye, meet me in heaven.” And she was gone. And they said to me afterwards, “Our dear old grandma used always to be afraid of dying, but it did not come to much when she really came to die, did it?” I have often seen it so. It is no strange story that I am telling you now.

A Christian man has been so unwise as to be always fearing that he would play the fool when he came to die, and yet, when it has come to the time of night, the dear child of God, who had long been in the dark, has received his candle. His Lord has given him his bedroom candle and he has gone upstairs, and by its light he has passed away into the land where they need no candle, neither light of the sun, but the Lord God gives them light. I believe that many of us will die just like that.

I believe that you will, my dear sister. I believe that you will, my dear brother. As your days, your strength shall be, and as your last day is, so shall your strength be. And I should not wonder if, one of these days, you or I will be heard saying, “Now, dear friends, the doctor has told me that I cannot live long. I asked him how long, and he said, ‘Perhaps, a week,’ and I was a little disappointed that I had to wait so long.”

I should not wonder if those around us should hear us say, “Well, it is only two days according to their reckoning, and perhaps it will not be two days. I think that I shall go next Sunday morning, just when the bells are ringing the people into the house of prayer on earth. Just then, I shall hear heaven’s bells ringing, and I shall say, ‘Good-bye,’ and be where I have often longed to be, where my treasure is, where my Best-beloved is.”

So may it be with you all, for Christ’s sake! Amen.

EXPOSITIONS BY C. H. SPURGEON

LUKE 4:16-30 AND JOHN 8:37-59 (R.V.)

We will read, from the Revised Version, two passages which record attempts made to kill our Lord before His time had come. You will see, from the sermon, why we read them. [Sermon came *after* the exposition.]

Luke 4:16-21. *And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and he entered, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And he opened the book, and found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor: he hath*

sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down: and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, Today hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears.

Alas, not in their hearts! They had heard Christ read the prophecy that related to Himself, but they had not accepted its message.

22-27. *And all bare him witness, and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth: and they said, Is not this Joseph's son? And he said unto them, Doubtless ye will say unto me this parable, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done at Capernaum, do also here in thine own country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is acceptable in his own country. But of a truth I say unto you, There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when there came a great famine over all the land; and unto none of them was Elijah sent, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.*

Thus the Savior taught God's absolute right to deal out His mercies as He pleases. To that great doctrine of divine sovereignty, Christ's hearers would not submit, even as many in the present day will not yield.

28. *And they were all filled with wrath in the synagogue,*

They admired Christ's style of speech, but when He came to that man-humbling and God-glorifying doctrine, they were filled with wrath.

28-30. *As they heard these things; and they rose up, and cast him forth out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might throw him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way.*

John 8:37-59. *I know that ye are Abraham's seed; yet ye seek to kill me, because my word hath not free course in you. I speak the things which I have seen with my Father: and ye also do the things which ye heard from your father. They answered and said unto him, Our father is Abraham. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I heard of God; this did not Abraham. Ye do the works of your father. They said unto him, We were not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I came forth and am come from God; for neither have I come of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father thereof. But because I say the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convicteth me of sin? If I say truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth the words of God: for this cause ye hear them not, because ye are not of God. The Jews answered and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye dishonour me. But I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my word, he shall never see death. The Jews said unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my word, he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? Jesus answered, If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing: it is my Father that glorifieth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: and ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be like unto you, a liar: but I know him, and keep his word. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. The Jews therefore said unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast*

thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. They took up stones therefore to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple.

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.