

PLEADING WITH THE INDIFFERENT

NO. 3360

A SERMON
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“Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.”
Lamentations 1:12

THIS was the lamentation of Jeremiah. As he saw the desolation of the beloved city, as he marked the cruelties inflicted by the invaders upon the Jewish youth, children and maidens, and as he foresaw the long years of bitterness reserved for the captives in Babylon, he felt as if he were a peer in the realm of misery—indeed peerless. He stands foremost, a very emperor of grief, a king of sighs and tears. “Behold, and see,” he said, “if there was ever sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me.”

But may there not have been griefs as great as those of Jeremiah? Is the language that flows from his lips strictly accurate? Like most of the periods which flow from abundant grief, is there not some exaggeration here? If we take the words out of the mouth of Jeremiah and put them into the mouth of Jesus—if we suppose them to be spoken by Him, as, hanging on the cross, He did bear the wrath of God for us, then there is no hyperbole, no exaggeration. The words may be read as they stand—and stand as we read them—and their fullest weight shall not outweigh the truth.

This evening two things challenge our attention—an *earnest expostulation*—“Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?” And a *solemn question*—“Behold, and see, was there ever sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me?”

First—

I. AN EARNEST EXPOSTULATION.

The Son of God has become incarnate. He became man out of love to men. But men loved Him not, and though in Him was every perfection, they hunted and hounded Him to death. The story is told four times over by inspired authority in this Book, but the mass of mankind feel no concern in it.

I come here tonight and I say to many of you—Does not the story of Jesus at all interest you? You heard it read just now, did it fall flat and stale upon your ears? Did you say to yourselves, “It is dry work to listen to that. There is nothing there to strike the attention. If I had taken up a newspaper and had read of some murder there, my wits would have been all awakened, but in the hearing of this death of Christ, I feel not at all stirred.”

Well, then, I ask you—Why is this? Why is it so? If there is anything in all the world that ought to interest a man, it is the death of Christ. Yet I find men, learned men, spending year after year in sorting out butterflies, beetles, and gnats, or in making out the various orders of shells, or in digging into the earth and seeking to discover what strange creatures once floundered through the boundless mire or swam in the vast seas. I find men occupied with things of no sort of practical moment and which, to me, do not seem so wonderfully enchanting.

Yet the story of God Himself, who deigned to become a man, and as a man suffered, and bled, and died, is thought to be too small a trifle for minds to dwell upon it. O reason! Where have you gone? O judgment! Whither have you fled? Men spend their strength on trifles, but on God incarnate they turn their backs.

It is strange that even the *sufferings of Christ* do not attract the attention of men, for generally if we hear any sad story of the misfortunes of our fellow creatures, we are interested. The newspaper is accounted more than usually interesting which contains full particulars of shipwrecks, the blowing down

of houses, murders, shootings, killings, and I do not know what. Everybody has felt he could read such a paper as that because it concerned his fellow men—what they had lost and what they had suffered. Everyone stops to hear the tale of the ancient mariner. Even the wedding guest is held while he, with the earnest eye, tells how he suffered on the wide, deep, stagnant sea.

And yet this story of a man who came to our earth with no motive but love, and lived here to do nothing but good, and yet was so despised and rejected as to be nailed to a cross, and there made to die in the midst of jeers, and sneers, and pains, and unknown agonies—this does not interest men! I marvel, and yet I marvel not at the strange indifference of this age to the wonders of Calvary.

How is it earth does not stretch out her hands and say, “Come and tell us of the God that loved us and came down to our low estate, and suffered for us men and for our salvation”? How is it that the crowds of this great city do not come and besiege our houses and say, “Tell us yet again this strange, mysterious story of the sufferings of the perfect Son of God”? It ought to interest us, if nothing more. Is it nothing to you, however? Is it nothing to you, all you that pass by?

It ought to be more than interesting—it ought *to excite our admiration*. You cannot read of a man sacrificing himself for the good of his fellow creatures without feeling at once that you wish you had known that fine fellow, and you feel instinctively that you would do anything in the world to serve him if he still lives, or to help relatives left behind if he has died in a brave attempt.

Who does not esteem, though you never knew him, the good man at Bethnal Green who perished but lately in the explosion at the firework factory? He rushes in to seek to rescue others and is found at last a handful of ashes bewailed by a weeping wife! One felt at once, “There was a man who had a soul beating beneath his ribs.”

But is no admiration to be given to the Son of God who left a throne of glory without bound and came here below to poverty, to shame, to a life of contempt and toil, and then gave Himself up voluntarily to a death which never could have been inflicted upon Him if He had not given Himself up to die? Jesus Christ had no motive in suffering but the good of men. Nothing selfish ever crossed His soul.

Oh, men and brethren, it was pity that ruled His heart—pity, and only pity—and while we set up our statues in reverence of men who have loved their fellow men, and speak of such-and-such a man as “a great philanthropist,” is it nothing to you that Jesus should die for men, and shall this greatest of all philanthropists, this first and chief of lovers of the race of men, be altogether forgotten?

I would admire Him even if He had not saved me. If I had no share in His blood, I think I should love Him. The life of Christ enchants me. The death of Christ binds me to His cross. Even if I were never washed in His blood and were even cast away into hell, if that were possible, I still feel I must admire Him for His love to others. Yea, and I must adore Him, too, for His godlike character, His godlike sufferings for the sons of men. But why, why is it that such a Christ, so lovely and so admirable, is forgotten by the most of mankind and is nothing to them!

Now, my dear hearers, there are some of you to whom I might put this question very closely. You have heard about Jesus very often. This pulpit is always ringing with His name. And you have admired what Jesus did. I know you have, and if any spoke ill of Him, you would be very grieved—and you would be among the first to defend His name. And yet—and yet—is that all?

Are you always going to be interested and to admire, and are you never going further? Is it, after all, to come to this, that it is nothing to you that Jesus should die? You have no interest in that death, no part, no lot in the salvation which that death brings to the sons of men. I am afraid that with some of you it will be so all your days.

Fifteen years have I preached to some of you—fifteen years! And if those fifteen years have not brought you to Christ, is there any reason to believe that fifteen more years will do it? Nay, I fear that with some of you the harvest is past and the summer is ended—and you are not saved. There was a time when this voice did seem to cut into your soul and the truth that was uttered awakened your conscience, but it is all nothing to you now.

You could go to sleep under the sound of it and your soul does sleep under the sense of it. What, will you be lost? Have you resolved to be lost, with a Savior lifted up before you? Have you determined that you will never look to Him who is lifted up to save you from the serpent's bite? Shall Christ, the water of life, never be tasted by your lips? Do you elect to perish of thirst? Shall this bread of life be never eaten? Do you choose rather to starve than to come to Him?

No, you tell me you hope one of these days. Ah! but I have no hope of you for any day but today, and I wish you, too, knew that procrastination is of all things fatal. I would sooner that you resolved to be damned than that you only said, "Tomorrow, tomorrow," for if today you resolved upon your ruin, you might be startled at the resolution, and you might be led to see your folly and awakened to amend your steps. But if you always say, "Tomorrow, tomorrow," it will be the will-o'-the-wisp that will tempt you into the fatal morass, where souls have been lost by tens of thousands—as yours will be.

Oh! wherefore should I have to be always coming down these steps and into this pulpit, to say over and over, and over again to you that Jesus died—and that if you trust Him you shall live? Why should it need to be repeated thus? Great God of patience, such a story as this ought to be accepted of the heart at once. If You bear with men who reject it, we may well bear with them, too, but oh! we pray You let them not go too far with Your long-suffering, nor venture too much upon Your patience, lest You lift Your hand and swear in Your wrath that they shall not enter into Your rest, because they had the Gospel, but they counted not themselves to be worthy of it.

One thing I would say to you, to all of you to whom it seems as yet to be nothing that Jesus should die—that personally to me it is something that He should die. It is more than something—it is everything—and I will tell you why. It is much to me that Jesus died, for I know I slew Him. I sang those verses just now and I sang them with some bitterness of soul, I was forced to feel—

“Tis I have thus ungrateful been.”

If it were not that I had sinned, as one of the race, there had been no need for Christ to die, but as it was sin that pierced and nailed Him, I had a share in His death. But then I know another thing—that by that death I am delivered from the very guilt that put Him to death. I have looked to Him and I am forgiven.

Fleming tells us in a book of his, that a great culprit had been condemned to be hanged at Ayr. He had been a very great offender, but while he lay in prison, God granted him repentance, and he was heard to say continually as they took him to the scaffold, "Oh! but He's a great forgiver! Oh! but He's a great forgiver!"

And I have often felt as if I could stand and cry, yea, even dance and say it, "Oh! but He's a great forgiver! Oh! but He's a great forgiver!" My innumerable sins confessed to Him were blotted out each one, and peace and joy bestowed where all was fear and trembling before. Now, there are hundreds in this house that could say the same. If I were to ask it, and this were the proper time, there are thousands within this dome who could rise and say, "I, too, can say that it is much to me that Jesus died, for though I slew Him, yet by His death I live, and by the blood which I drew from His veins I have been washed and made white."

Now, if it is so much to us, we do sincerely wish, oh, unconverted ones! that Christ were as much to you, for we do think He ought to be. We desire that He should be. We pray that He may be and we tremble, even to horror, lest after all He should not be, for if Christ be nothing to you, it will be a hard dying for you, a hard dying—the bed shall be of iron and the pillow shall be cold as ice—and it will be hard passing into a disembodied state.

It will be hard coming before God. It will be hard you at the again-rising, in the day of the resurrection, when the trumpet sounds, and the sepulchers are burst open, and your body linked to your soul again, shall stand before the flaming throne of Christ. It will be hard for you—oh! so hard!—throughout eternity! An eternity without Christ! An eternity without Christ! "Nothing to you, nothing to

you,” you say now, but how will it be when conscience shall remind you in eternity, “You heard of Christ, but you said He was nothing to you. You listened to earnest admonitions, but you said they were nothing to you.”

How will this stir the fire? How will this fan the flame? How will this prick your conscience and vex your spirit, that Jesus died, and inestimable mercies dropped from the cross—pardons sealed with blood were distributed freely upon Calvary, and broken hearts were healed—and sins were forgiven and the dead were raised and the lost were saved? But it was all nothing to you, nothing to you.

Oh! before death comes—and he is on his way to some here present!—on his way to meet them soon—before death comes on the pale horse with hell following at his heels, I beseech you, as you love your souls, look to the crucified and be not satisfied till you can say, “He is everything to me. I slew Him, but He saved me. I looked to Him and I live.”

May God bless this admonition and my heart shall be glad indeed if He will but do it. Oh! how little can I do for you, unconverted ones, how little can I do for you! When I sometimes get a shake of the hands from some of you, and you say, “Well, I have been hearing you for years, sir, but I am not converted,” I look hopefully upon you, but I cannot help, when I get away, reproaching myself in part and saying, “Have I preached to these people as I ought to?”

You make me wake up at night to weep about you and to ask myself again and again, “What more can I say? How shall I put it? With what force and power can I deliver it, if perhaps I may reach their hearts?” Oh! I trust you may yet be brought—and God shall be praised and glorified world without end!

Now, let us change to a second point—

II. A SOLEMN QUESTION.

The Lord Jesus Christ may be represented here as bidding men see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow, which is done to Him. Now, observe, that it may be truthfully said that *the sufferings of Jesus were altogether unique and by themselves*. There were never any sufferings which could match His—and never was there such an illustrious sufferer put to such boundless shame.

He was the eye of heaven, the very sun and star of the bright world. It was the seraph’s bliss to do Him homage. King of kings and Lord of lords was He, and the government was upon His shoulders, and His name was called Wonderful, the Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. All the hallelujahs of eternity rolled up at His august feet.

But He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid, as it were, our faces from Him. He was despised and we esteemed Him not. They spat into His face. They plucked off His hair. They blindfolded Him. They smote Him with their fists. They scourged Him. The bloody scourges made the sacred drops roll. They gave Him a felon’s death, and then stood by and mocked His prayers, and made jests about His groans and pangs. Never was one so high brought so low.

“Behold and see if there were ever sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me.” Never one so innocent, so falsely accused. He had done no evil. He was no rival of Caesar. He said His kingdom was not of this world. Instead of doing evil, He had done boundless good. His meat and His drink were to do God’s will. His delight was to help the poor, to feed the hungry, to heal the sick. He was all gentleness, all goodness.

From both His hands He scattered His bounties lavishly among the graceless sons of men—and yet they said He was guilty of sedition and of blasphemy. He seditious! He a blasphemer! Lying could go no farther. Suborned witnesses could not be made to agree. The lie was too massive even for those to compass who were willing to have compassed it. Oh! was ever grief like His—then to be treated as a felon and be put to death as though guilty—when all the while He did no sin, neither was deceit found in His lips!

Remember, beloved, that in our Savior’s death there were aggravations of an extraordinary kind. Before He actually came to die, that dreadful night in Gethsemane had broken His already emaciated frame. There He sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground. In two or three cases, other

persons have sweat drops of blood, but they have invariably died. Our Savior did this and yet lived. Oh! how was the bitterness of His soul expressed in that awful overflow which fell upon Gethsemane's soil!

Then, remember, He was led, deserted by His friends, without any comfort from His God, to be tried by Herod, by Pilate, by Caiaphas—to be scourged, beaten, probably several times with rods and scourges. God forsook Him—“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” was the very depth of His agony, and without one to pity, one to administer comfort, forsaken utterly, our Savior died, with aggravations of agonies that were to be found in no other death.

Still, the singularity of His death lies in another respect. There was never sorrow like the sorrow which was done unto Christ, *because all His sorrow was borne for others*. Whatever you and I may suffer, we deserve it, and directly or indirectly we may trace it to the fact that we are sinners. But He was not a sinner. In Him was no sin, and neither suffering nor death could lawfully have been laid upon Him, had He not made Himself the substitute for His people. Behold, and see if there was ever sorrow like His sorrow. He bears the sin of many. He is numbered with the transgressors. He stands vicariously to endure what never could have been His if it had not been that He was a surety and stood in His people's stead.

Now, I want your thoughts just one minute. What was it that Christ, as substitute, had to endure? Answer—Although it may not have been precisely what we ought to have endured, it must have been something equivalent thereto. Now, what ought one sinner to have suffered? Answer—Eternal misery in hell. What, then, what then must have been the pangs which in Christ's case stood as the equivalent for the eternal agonies of *one sinner*?

But Christ died not for one sinner, but for tens of thousands, for countless multitudes, whom no one can number. Think, then, my brethren, what must have been the crushing blows which JEHOVAH laid on Him when those blows were to be an equivalent for the hells of ten thousand times ten thousand of those for whom He suffered.

Of course, it were not possible for Him to have endured, even for one, if He had not been God. His Godhead gave Him an infinite capacity for misery and infused a boundless degree of misery into all the pangs He bore. You have no more idea of what Christ suffered in His soul than you have when you take up in a shell a drop of seawater, power to guess from that the area of the whole boundless, bottomless sea.

What Christ suffered is utterly inconceivable. We are not just to think of Him as dying as another dies. His was a vast soul, so great a soul that it seemed to have all souls within it—and it had the capacity for suffering what all souls might have borne—and the whole of that vast nature which God had given, that wondrous nature which He Himself also essentially possessed—was put forth to make an atonement for human sin. “Behold and see if there was ever sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me.”

“Oh! let us now, instead of talking any more, sit down by meditation at the foot of the cross and look up. 'Tis the King. 'Tis the King, but He is crowned with thorns. It is the Prince of glory, but He is stripped naked to His shame. It is the Ancient of eternal days, but He bows His head to die. He is God, all-sufficient, yet He cries, “I thirst.” He is the angel's darling, but He is despised and rejected of men.

Hark, He fills heaven with honor. His presence gilds heaven with light, yet there upon the cross He is covered with darkness, and the music about Him is that of His own sighs, and cries, and groans. Was ever grief like Yours? Needless question. Needless question. All but shameful question, for were all griefs that ever were condensed into one, they were no more worthy to be compared therewith than the glowworm's tiny lamp with the ever-blazing sun.

What then, beloved, what then? If Christ's be thus alone in suffering, what then? Why, *let Him stand alone in our love*. High, high, high set up Christ in your heart. Now, brethren and sisters, you have many objects of your affection, but oh! lift up my Lord, your soul's Bridegroom, your spirit's Well-Beloved. Come now, if you have thought well of Him, think better of Him. If you have loved Him, oh! love Him more.

Now, ask to have your heart inflamed, as with coals of juniper, which have a vehement heat, and let that heart be all His own. Oh! let there be no such love as your love to Christ. Let it pass the love of women. Let it go beyond a mother's love, a brother's affection, a father's tenderness. Love Him—you cannot match His love to you, but at least seek to let your little stream run side by side with the mighty river.

If Christ is thus alone in suffering, brethren, let us seek to make Him, if we can, alone in our service. We do not do much for Christ, compared with what we should. Some have learned to give much, but yet what is our giving for such a one as He is? We only give what we can spare—how few of us ever pinch ourselves for Him? He smarted for us and gave up even His very garments for us, but we do not come to that.

In the olden times they did, and saints, and martyrs, and Christian missionaries made sacrifice of all, and counted it no sacrifice, out of love to Him. I wish we had more Marys who would break the alabaster box of precious ointment upon His dear head. Oh! for a little extravagance of love, a little fanaticism of affection for Him, for He deserves ten thousand times more than the most enthusiastic ever dream of rendering.

If He be thus, brethren, so far beyond all others in His sorrow, let Him also be first and foremost tonight *in our praise*. If you have poetic minds, weave no garlands except for His dear brow. If you be men of eloquence, speak no glowing periods except to His honor. If you be men of wit and scholarship, oh! seek to lay your scholarship at the foot of His cross.

Come hither with all your talents and yield them to Him who bought them with His blood. Come, hither, you with much and yet with little—come you with hearts so warm whom He loved so well.

*“Hither then your music bring,
Strike aloud each cheerful string;
Mortals join the hosts above,
Come and praise redeeming love.”*

The Lord give us such a frame of mind as that tonight, when we come to the breaking of bread, and His be the glory. Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

PSALM 69:1-21; MARK 15:15-23; LUKE 23:26-33

We shall read together at this time a part of the 69th Psalm and afterwards two passages in the New Testament. Although there is no doubt that this Psalm is intended to describe a very large class of sufferers, yet we think it never had its full meaning perfectly carried out until our blessed Lord and Master suffered at the hands of men.

We shall read the Psalm believing that it is full of Christ. It is absolutely certain that we have references here to His advent, His passion, and His resurrection.

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, a Psalm of David.

Verse 1. *Save me, O God; for the waters are come into my soul.*

The waves have not only tossed the bark, but they have dashed over the bulwarks and there is a flood within, as well as a flood without.

2. *I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters where the floods overflow me.*

We had this text explained to us last Friday night, when the traveler told us he saw a man sink in the mud, almost swallowed up by it, till by a very desperate grasp of the boat he made his escape. Christ was, as it were, sucked in by the great deeps of His afflictions, as if He would be swallowed up quickly.

3. *I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried:*

He had been so long in the garden in that awful agony, with strong crying and tears.

3-4. *Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head:*

See Him now in the street being led away to Mount Calvary—a vast multitude has congregated there, all eager to see Him die.

4. *They that would destroy me, being my enemies wrongfully, are mighty:*

They have the Roman soldiers at their backs, while the mob applauds them.

4. *Then I restored that which I took not away.*

Christ did not take away our innocence, nor our safety, nor our honor, but He restored them all to us. He has made us clean. He has made us accepted in the Beloved. He has put a crown of pure gold upon our heads and set our feet upon a rock.

5. *O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee.*

These words are not applicable to our Lord, except so far as they may refer to our foolishness and to our sin, which we know were all laid on Him, except that one commentator says that He is here speaking according to the manner of the people. They called Him foolish. They charged Him with sin, but He appeals to heaven, “Lord, thou knowest whether I have been foolish, whether I have any sins or not.” In that sense we might apply it literally to the Savior.

6. *Let not them that wait on thee, O LORD God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those who seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.*

Let not the shame of My cross destroy their faith. Grant unto them such confidence in Me that they may take up Your cross daily and follow Me, that they may even learn to say with My apostle, “God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

7. *Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.*

It was for His Father’s sake, that He might bring honor to JEHOVAH, that He thus suffered reproach. “Shame hath covered my face”—that face which is brighter than the sun and which angels desire to gaze upon.

8. *I have become a stranger unto my brethren,*

“Peter says he knows Me not. All of them have forsaken Me.”

8-9. *And an alien unto my mother’s children. For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up, and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.*

Every hard word that was spoken of the Father fell upon the Son—the iniquities which were rebellions against JEHOVAH all fell upon the Man of Nazareth.

10. *When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.*

That was scandal unto them.

11. *I made sack cloth also my garment; and I became a proverb unto them.*

Just as Michal said of David, “How glorious did the King of Israel become in the eyes of his handmaidens.” Out of mockery, so did they reproach Christ, “How glorious was the King of Israel, so daintily arrayed in a peasant’s robe, or stripped naked upon His cross.”

12. *They that sit in the gate speak against me;*

The judges who there dispensed justice, the merchants who there trade their wares, the idlers who were there to loiter, to hear the news—these speak against Me.

12. *And I became the song of the drunkard.*

They made ballads of Him, we may understand that to mean. They issued lampoons—every now and then there came out a caricature.

13-14. *But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation. Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.*

Think you hear your Master as He silently prays this prayer in the streets of Jerusalem—the mobs are hooting, but He is praying—women are weeping and He is weeping, too.

15-20. *Let not the flood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me. Hear me, O LORD, for thy lovingkindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies. And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily. Draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it: deliver me because of mine enemies. Thou hast known my reproach and my shame, and my dishonor: mine adversaries are all before thee. Reproach hath broken my heart.*

This is one of the most extraordinary verses in Holy Writ.

20-21. *And I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.*

Now, let us read the incidents in the history of Christ, of which this Psalm is a sort of prophecy and exposition.

MARK 15:15-23

Verses 15-23. *And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified. And the soldiers led him away into the hall which is called Praetorium; and they call together the whole band. And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head. And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him. And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him. And they compel one Simon, a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross. And they bring him unto the place called Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, the place of a skull. And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not.*

I shall have to show you that this was given to Him in mercy. The Romans always gave, before crucifixion, a cup of myrrhed wine, in order to lessen the sensibilities of the victim. In this case there was not only myrrh in the cup, but gall. A second cup of gall Christ did drink, but this cup, being intoxicating, He would not receive—when He had tasted thereof, He would not drink. He needed the possession of all His faculties—and in their clearest state—in order to do combat with the dreadful powers of darkness.

LUKE 23:26-33

Now, Luke supplies some particulars which Mark has left out. Turn, therefore, to the 23rd chapter of Luke and the 26th verse. Luke, also, tells us of Simon.

Verse 26. *And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.*

Now these are the things which Mark has not put in.

27-29. *And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.*

This was accounted a curse, but their curses should seem blessings to them when compared with the curse of the dreadful slaughter at Jerusalem.

30-31. *Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall upon us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree what shall be done in the dry?*

If they do these things while yet the Jewish State is standing, what will they do when that State is broken up? If they do these things to innocent persons—a green tree—what will they do to the unhallowed person, the ungodly and the rebellious who are like dry, rotten trees? How will the flame lay hold on those branches out of which the sap of virtue has long ago been dried?

32. *And there were also two other malefactors.*

It should be others—there should be an “s” there.

32-33. *Led with him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left.*

Shall we refuse to take up our cross and follow the Lord Jesus Christ? I think not. If any ask us whether we will leave Him because of the fears which may be excited by the world’s frowns, this shall be our answer—let us sing it—with regard to the world and all its temptations—

*“No, facing all its frowns or smiles,
Counting its gain but loss;
Without the camp we take our place,
With Jesus bear the cross.”*

Taken from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software. 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.