

Let Him Deliver Him Now

A Sermon

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"He trusted in God; let him deliver him now; if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God." [Matthew 27:43](#).

THESE WORDS ARE a fulfilment of the prophecy contained in the twenty-second Psalm. Read from the seventh verse "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." Thus to the letter doth our Lord answer to the ancient prophecy.

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. See, dear friends, what an evil thing is sin, since the Sin-bearer suffers so bitterly to make atonement for it! See, also, the shame of sin, since even the Prince of Glory, when bearing the consequences of it, is covered with contempt! Behold, also, how he loved us! For our sake he "endured the cross, despising the shame." He loved us so much that even scorn of the most cruel sort he deigned to bear, that he might take away our shame and enable us to look up unto God.

Beloved, the treatment of our Lord Jesus Christ by men is 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. You will need neither canvas, nor brush, nor palette, nor colours. Let your thoughts draw the outline, and your love fill in the detail; I shall not complain if imagination heightens the colouring. 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. That which appears in many a psalm to relate to David is found in the Gospels to refer to Jesus, our Lord. Often and often the student of the Psalm will say to himself, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this?" He will have to dis-

entangle the threads sometimes, and mark off that which belongs to David and that which relates to the Son of God; and frequently he will not be able to disentangle the threads at all, because they are one, and may relate both to David, and to David's Lord. This is meant to show us that the life of Christ is an epitome of the life of his people. He not only suffers for us as our substitute, but he suffers before us as our pattern. 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. Christ is the mirror of the church. What the head endured every member of the body will also have to endure in its measure. Let us read the text in this light, and come to it saying to ourselves, "Here we see what Jesus suffered in our stead, and we learn hereby to love him with all our souls. Here, too, we see, as in a prophecy, how great things we are to suffer for his sake at the hands of men." May the Holy Spirit help us in our meditation, so that at the close of it we may more ardently love our Lord, who suffered for us, and may the more carefully arm ourselves with the same mind which enabled him to endure such contradiction of sinners against himself.

Coming at once to the text, first, *observe the acknowledgment* with which the text begins: "He trusted in God." The enemies of Christ admitted his faith in God. Secondly, consider *the test which is the essence of the taunt*: "Let him deliver him, if he will have him." When we have taken those two things into our minds, then let us for a while consider *the answer* to that test and taunt: God does assuredly deliver his people: those who trust in him have no reason to be ashamed of their faith.

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." He was so perfectly a man that, although he was undoubtedly a Jew, there were no Jewish peculiarities about him. Any nation might claim him; but no nation could monopolize him. The characteristics of our humanity are so palpably about him that he belongs to all mankind. I admire the Welch sister who was of opinion that the Lord Jesus must be Welch. When they asked her how she proved it, she said that he always spoke to her heart in Welch. Doubtless it was so, and I can, with equal warmth, declare that he always speaks to me in English. Brethren from Germany, France, Sweden, Italy, you all claim that

he speaks to you in your own tongue. This was the one thing which distinguished him among men—"he trusted in God," and he lived such a life as naturally grows out of faith in the Eternal Lord. 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 anyone 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 out aloud, "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 the rudder guides the ship. When a man once gets to live by faith in God, it tinctures his thoughts, it masters his purposes, it flavours 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. The unbelieving world says outright that there is no God, and the less impudent, who admit his existence, put him down at a very low figure, so low that it does not affect their calculations; but to the true Christian, God is not only much, but all. To our Lord Jesus, God was all in all; and when you come to estimate God as he did, then the most careless onlooker will soon begin to say of you, "He trusted in 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 the credit to admit that they heartily worship their maker. Self made them, and they worship self. We have among us individuals who are self-confident, and almost all-sufficient; they sneer at those who do not succeed, for *they* can succeed anywhere at anything. The world to them is a football which they can kick where they like. If they do not rise to the very highest eminence it is simply out of pity to the rest of us, who ought to have a chance. A vat of sufficiency ferments within their ribs! There was nothing of that sort of thing in our Lord. Those who watched him did not say that he had great self-reliance and a noble spirit of self-confidence. No, no! They said, "He trusted in God." Indeed it was so. 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. Brethren and sisters, I desire that you and I may be just of that order. Selfconfidence is the death of confidence in God; reliance upon talent, tact, experience, and things of that kind, kills faith. Oh that we may know what faith means, and so look out of ourselves and quit the evil confidence which looks within!

On the other hand, we may wisely remember that, while our Lord Jesus was not self-reliant, *he trusted, and was by no means despondent*: he was never discouraged. He neither questioned his commission, nor despaired of fulfilling it. He never said, "I must give it up: I can never succeed." No; "He trusted in God." And this is a grand point in the working of faith, that while it keeps us from self-conceit, it equally preserves us from enfeebling fear. When our blessed Lord set his face like a flint; when, being baffled, he returned to the conflict; when, being betrayed, he still persevered in his love, then men could not help seeing that he trusted in God. His faith was not mere repetition of a creed, or profession of belief, but it was childlike reliance upon the Most High. May ours be of the same order!

It is evident that the Lord Jesus *trusted in God openly* since even yonder gibing crowd proclaimed it. Some good people try to exercise faith on the sly: they practise 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 honour. Brethren, we do not glorify our God as he ought to be glorified. Let us trust in him, and own it. Wherefore should we be ashamed? Let us throw down the gauge of battle to earth and hell. God, the true and faithful, deserves to be trusted without limit. Trust your all with him, and be not ashamed of having done so. Our Saviour was not ashamed of trusting in his God. On the cross he cried, "Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breast." Jesus lived by faith. We are sure that he did, for in the Epistle to the Hebrews he is quoted as saying, "I will put my trust in him." If so glorious a personage as the only begotten Son of God lived here by faith in God, how are you and I to live except by trust in God? If we live unto God, this is the absolute necessity of our spiritual life "the just shall live by faith." Shall we be ashamed of that which brings life to us? The cruel ones who saw Jesus die did not say, "He now and then trusted in God"; nor "he trusted in the Lord years ago"; but they admitted that faith in God was the constant tenor of his life: they could not deny it. Even though, with malicious cruelty, they turned it into a taunt, yet they did not cast a question upon the fact that "he trusted in God" Oh, I want you so to live that those who dislike you most may, nevertheless, know that you do trust in God! When you come to die, may your dear children say of you, "Our dear mother did trust in the Lord"! May that boy, who has gone furthest away from Christ, and grieved your heart the most, nevertheless say in his heart, "There may be hypocrites in the world, but my dear father does truly trust in God"! Oh, that our faith may be known unmistakably! We do not wish it to be advertised to our own honour. That be far from our minds. But yet we would have it known that others may be encouraged, and that God may be glorified. If nobody else trusts in God, let us do so; and thus may we uplift a testimony to the honour of his faithfulness. When we die, may this be our epitaph "He trusted in God."

David, in the twenty-second Psalm, represents the enemies as saying of our Lord "He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him." This *practical faith* is sure to be known wherever it is in operation, because it is exceedingly rare. Multitudes of people have a kind of faith in God, but it does not come to the practical point of trusting that God will deliver them. I see upon the newspaper placards, "*Startling New! People in the Planets!*" Not a very practical discovery. For many a day there has been a tendency to refer God's promises and our faith to the planets, or somewhere beyond this present every-day life. We say to ourselves, "Oh yes, God delivers his people." We mean that he did so in the days of Moses, and possibly he may be doing so now in some obscure island of the sea. Ah me! The glory of faith lies in its being fit for every-day wear. Can it be said of you, "He trusted in God, that he would deliver him"? Have you faith of the kind which will make you lean upon the Lord in poverty, in sickness, in bereavement, in persecution, in slander, in contempt? Have you a trust in God to bear you up in holy living at all costs, and in active service even beyond your strength? Can you trust in God definitely about this and that? Can you trust about food, and raiment, and home? Can you trust God even about your shoes, that they shall be iron and brass, and about the hairs of your head that they are all numbered? What we need is less theory and more actual trust in God.

The faith of the text was personal: "that he would deliver him." Blessed is that faith which can reach its arm of compassion around the world, but that 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? Do you trust in God through Christ Jesus that he will save you? Yes, you poor, unworthy one, the Lord will deliver you if you trust him. Yes, poor woman, or unknown man, the Lord can help you in your present trouble, and in every other, and he will do so if you trust him to that end. May the Holy Spirit lead you to first trust the Lord Jesus for the pardon of sin, and then to trust in God for all things.

Let us pause a minute. Let a man trust in God; not in fiction but in fact, and he will find that he has solid rock under his feet. Let him trust about his own daily needs and trials, and rest assured that the Lord will actually appear for him, and he will not be disappointed. Such a trust in God is a very *reasonable* thing; its absence is most unreasonable. If there be a God, he knows all about my case. If he made my ear he can hear me; if he made my eye he can see me; and therefore he perceives my condition. If he be my Father, as he says he is, he will certainly care for me, and will help me in my hour of need if he can. We are sure that he can, for he is omnipotent. Is there anything unreasonable, then, in trusting in God that he will deliver us? I venture to say that if all the forces in the universe were put together, and all the kindly intents of all who are our friends were put together, and we were then to rely upon those united forces and intents, we should not have a thousandth part so much justi-

fication for our confidence as when we depend upon God, whose intents and forces are infinitely greater than those of all the world beside. "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man; it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes." If you view things in the white light of pure reason, it is infinitely more reasonable to trust in the living God than in all his creatures put together.

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.

While it is comfortable, it is also *uplifting*. If you trust in men, the best of men, you are likely to be lowered by your trust. We are apt to cringe before these who patronize us. If your prosperity depends upon a person's smile, you are tempted to pay homage even when it is undeserved. The old saying mentions a certain person as "knowing on which side his bread is buttered." Thousands are practically degraded by their trusting in men. But when our reliance is upon the living God we are raised by it, and elevated both morally and spiritually. You may bow in deepest reverence before God, and yet there will be no fawning. You may lie in the dust before the Majesty of heaven, and yet not be dishonoured by your humility; in fact, it is our greatness to be nothing in the presence of the Most High.

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. He had been warned of this by Zeresh, his wife, and his wise men, who said, "If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him." Contend not with a man who has God at his back. Years ago the Mentonese desired to break away from the dominion of the Prince of Monaco. They therefore drove out his agent. The prince came with his army, not a very great one, it is true, but still formidable to the Mentonese. I know not what the high and mighty princeling was not going to do; but the news came that the King of Sardinia was coming up in the rear to help the Mentonese and therefore his lordship of Monaco very prudently retired to his own rock. When a believer stands out against evil he may be sure that the Lord of hosts will not be far away. The enemy shall hear the dash of his horse-hoof and the blast of his trumpet, and shall flee before him. Wherefore be of good courage, and compel the world to say of you, "He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him."

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.

It is peculiarly painful to have this stern inference driven home to you in the hour of sorrow. Because one cannot deny the fairness of the appeal, it is all the more trying. In the time of depression of spirit it is hard to have one's faith questioned, or the ground on which it stands made a matter of dispute. Either to be mistaken in one's belief, or to have no real faith, or to find the ground of one's faith fail is an exceedingly grievous thing. Yet as our Lord was not spared this painful ordeal, we must not expect to be kept clear of it, and Satan knows well how to work these questions, till the poison of them sets the blood on fire. "He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him;" he hurls this fiery dart into the soul, till the man is sorely wounded, and can scarcely hold his ground.

The taunt is specially *pointed and personal*. It is put thus: "*He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him*"; "Do not come to us with your fiddle-faddle about God's helping all his chosen. Here is a man who is one of his people, will he help *him*? Do not talk to us big things about Jehovah at the Red Sea, or in the Desert of Sinai, or God helping his people in ages past. Here is a living man before us who trusted in God that he would deliver him: let him deliver *him* now." You know how Satan will pick out one of the most afflicted, and pointing his fingers at him will cry, "Let him deliver HIM." 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 for ever. 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; they would publish it in the "Diabolical Gazette," and in every street of Tophet they would howl it out, "God has failed. God has broken his promise. God has ceased to be faithful to his people." It would then be a horrible reproach "He trusted in God to deliver him, but he did not deliver him."

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 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 the tree; thine enemies have hemmed thee in. The legions 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 barbs of his arrows. Yet here also there is reason and logic in the challenge.

If God does not deliver his servants at one time as well as another he has not kept his promise. For a man of truth is always true, and a promise once given always stands. A promise cannot be broken now and then, and yet the honour of the person giving it be maintained by his keeping it at other times. The word of a true man stands always good: it is good *now*. This is logic, bitter logic, cold steel logic, logic which seems to cut right down your backbone and cleave your chine. "He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him *now*." Yet this hard logic can be turned to comfort. I told you a story the other day of the brother in Guy's Hospital to whom the doctors said that he must undergo an operation which was extremely dangerous. They gave him a week to consider whether he would submit to it. He was troubled for his young wife and children, and for his work for the Lord. A friend left a bunch of flowers for him, with this verse as its motto, "He trusted in God; let him deliver him *now*." "Yes," he thought, "*now*". In prayer he cast himself upon the Lord, and felt in his heart, "Come on, doctors, I am ready for you." When the next morning came, he refused to take chloroform, for he desired to go to heaven in his senses. He bore the operation manfully, and he is yet alive. "He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him" then and there, and the Lord did so. In this lies the brunt of the battle.

A Christian man may be beaten in business, he may fail to meet all demands, 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 a while he forbears that he may try their faith. We dare accept the test, and say, "Let him deliver us *now*."

Beloved friends, we need not be afraid of this taunt if it is brought by adversaries; for, after all, no test will come to us apart from any malice, for *it is inevitable*. All the faith you have will be tried. I can see you heaping it up. How rich you are! What a pile of faith! Friend, you are almost perfect! Open the furnace door and put the heap in. Do you shrink? See how

it shrivels! Is there anything left? Bring hither a magnifying glass. Is this all that is left? Yes, this is all that remains of the heap. You say, "I trusted in God." Yes, but you had reason to cry, "Lord, help my unbelief." Brethren, we have not a tithe of the faith we think we have. But whether or not, all our faith must be tested. God builds no ships but what he sends to sea. In living, in losing, in working, in weeping, in suffering, or in striving, God will find a fitting crucible for every single grain of the precious faith which he has given us. Then he will come to us and say 'You trusted in God that he would deliver you, and you shall be delivered now. How you will open your eyes as you see the Lord's hand of deliverance! What a man of wonders you will be when you tell in your riper years to the younger people how the Lord delivered you! Why, there are some Christians I know of who, like the ancient mariner, could detain even a wedding guest with their stories of God's wonders on the deep.

Yes, the test will come again and again. May the gibes of adversaries only make us ready for the sterner ordeals of the judgment to come. O my dear friends, examine your religion. You have a great deal of it, some of you; but what of its quality? Can your religion stand the test of poverty, and scandal, and scorn? Can it stand the test of scientific sarcasm and learned contempt? Will your religion stand the test of long sickness of body and depression of spirit caused by weakness? What are you doing amid the common trials of life? What will you do in the swellings of Jordan? Examine well your faith, since all hangs there. 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. They have been bereaved. What a horrible bereavement was that which fell to the lot of Aaron, when his two sons were struck dead for their profanity in the presence of God! "And Aaron held his peace"! What grace was there! Thus will the Lord sustain you also should he take away the desire of your eyes with a stroke. Grave after grave has the good man visited till it seemed that his whole race was buried, and yet his heart has not been broken; but he has bowed his soul before the will of the ever-blessed One. Thus has the Lord delivered his afflicted one by sustaining him. In other ways the bush has burned, and yet has not been consumed. Remember the multiplied and multiform trials of Job. Yet God sustained him to the end so that he did not charge God foolishly, but held fast his faith in the Most High. If ever you are called to the afflictions of Job you will also be called to the sustaining grace of Job. Some of God's servants have been defeated in their testimony. They have borne faithful witness for God, but they have been rejected of men. It has been their lot, like Cassandra, to prophesy the

truth, but not to be believed. Such was Jeremiah, who was born to a heritage of scorn from those whose benefit he sought. Yet he was delivered. He shrank not from being faithful. His courage could not be silenced. By integrity he was delivered.

Godly men have been despised and misrepresented, and yet have been delivered. Remember David and his envious brethren, David and the malignant Saul, David when his men spake of stoning him. Yet he took off the giant's head; yet he came to the throne; yet the Lord built him a house.

Some of God's servants have been bitterly persecuted, but God has delivered them. Daniel came forth from the lions' den, and the three holy children from the midst of the burning fiery furnace. These are only one or two out of millions who trusted God and he delivered them. Out of all manner of ill the Lord delivered them. God brought this crowd of witnesses through all their trials unto his throne, where they rest with Jesus, and share the triumph of their Master at this very day. O my timid brother, nothing has happened to you but what is common to men. Your battle is not different from the warfare of the rest of the saints; and as God has delivered them he will deliver you also, seeing you put your trust in him.

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*. If the deliverance which he vouchsafed to us is of the same kind as that which he vouchsafed to the Only Begotten, we may well be content. Well, 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.

Yet God's way of delivering those who trust in him is *always the best way*. If the Father had taken his Son down from the cross, what would have been the result? Redemption unaccomplished, salvation work undone, and Jesus returning with his life-work unfinished. This would not have been deliverance, but defeat. It was much better for our Lord Jesus to die. Now he has paid the ransom for his elect, and having accomplished the great purpose of atonement, he has slept a while in the heart of the earth, and now has ascended to his

throne in the endless glories of heaven. It was deliverance of the fullest kind; for from the pangs of his death has come the joy of life to his redeemed. It is not God's will that every mountain should be levelled, but that we should be the stronger for climbing the Hill Difficulty. God will deliver; he must deliver, but he will do it in our cases, as in the case of our Lord, in the best possible manner.

Anyhow, he will deliver his chosen: the taunt of the adversary shall not cause our God to forget or forego his people. I know that the Lord will no more fail me than any other of his servants. He will not leave a faithful witness to his adversaries. "I know that my Avenger liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Is this also your confidence? Then do not sit down in sorrow, and act as though you despaired. Quit yourselves like men. Be strong, fear not. Cast yourselves on the love that never changeth and never fainteth, and the Lord will answer all the revilings of Rabshakeh, and the blusterings of Sennacherib.

There are times when we may use this text to our comfort. "Let him deliver him now," saith the text, "if he will have him." You, dear friends, who have never believed in the Lord Jesus Christ before, how I wish you could try him now! You feel this morning full of sin, and full of need. Come, then, and trust the Saviour *now*. See whether he will not save you *now*. Is there one day in the year in which Jesus cannot save a sinner? Come and see whether the 17th of June is that day. Try whether he will not deliver you *now* from the guilt, the penalty, the power of sin. Why not come? You have never, perhaps, been in the Tabernacle before, and when coming here this morning you did not think of finding the Saviour. Oh, that the Saviour may find you! Jesus Christ is a Saviour every day, all the year round. Whoever cometh to him shall find eternal life *now*. "Oh," you say, "I am in such an unfit state; I am in all the deshabelle of my carelessness and godlessness." Come along, man, come along, just as you are. Tarry not for improvement or arrangement, for both of these Jesus will give you; come and put your trust in the great Sacrifice for sin, and he will deliver you'deliver you *now*. Lord, save the sinner, *now*!

Others of you are the children of God, but you are in peculiar trouble. Well, what are you going to do? You have always trusted in God before; are you going to doubt him now? "O my dear sir, you do not know my distress; I am the most afflicted person in the Tabernacle." Be it so; but you trusted in the Lord the past twenty years, and I do not believe that you have seen any just cause for denying him your confidence now. Did you say that you have known him from your youth up? What! you seventy years of age? Then you are too near home to begin distrusting your heavenly Father. That will never do. You have been to sea, and have weathered many a storm in mid-ocean, and are you now going to be drowned in a ditch? Think not so. The Lord will deliver you even now. Do not let us suppose that we

have come where boundless love and infinite wisdom cannot reach us. Do not fancy that you have leaped upon a ledge of rock so high as to be out of reach of the everlasting arm. If you had done so I would still cry 'Throw yourself down into the arms of God, and trust that he will not let you be destroyed.

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. The good are timid, and the evil are false. They say, "He trusted in God: let him deliver him now." Sirs, he will deliver us now. We will throw our soul once more into this battle, and see if the Lord does not vindicate his truth. 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.

Peradventure, I speak to some missionary, who is mourning over a time of great trial in a mission which is dear to his heart. Ah, dear friend! Christ intended that the gospel should repeat his own experience, and then should triumph like himself. The gospel lives by being killed, and conquers by defect. Cast it where you will, it always falls upon its feet. You need not be afraid of it under any trial. Just now, the wisdom of man is its worst foe, but the Lord will deliver it *now*. The gospel lives and reigns. Tell it out among the heathen, that the Lord reigneth from the tree, and from that tree of the curse he issues his supreme commands. The self-same day in which Jesus died, he took with him into his kingdom and his inmost paradise a thief who had hung at his side. He liveth and reigneth for ever and ever, and calleth to himself whomsoever he hath chosen. Let us drown the taunts of the adversary with our shouts of Hallelujah! The Lord shall reign for ever and ever. Hallelujah. Amen!

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON'Psalm 119.

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK" 196, 34, 37 (Part II).