

The Great Sacrifice

O GOD our Father, we do remember well when we were called to Thee, with many sweet and wooing voices we were bidden to return. Thou didst Thyself hang out the lights of mercy that we might know the way home and Thy dear Son Himself came down to seek us. But we wandered still. It brings the tears to our eyes to think that we should have been so foolish and so wicked, for we often extinguished the light within and conscience we tried to harden and we sinned against light and knowledge with a high hand against our God.

Thou hast often brought us very low even to our knees and we cried for mercy, but we rose to sin again. Blessed was that day when Thou didst strike the blow of grace—the effectual blow. Then didst Thou wither up our comeliness and all our perfection was rolled in the dust. We saw ourselves to be slain by the law, to be lost, ruined, and undone, and then we rolled to and fro in the tempests of our thoughts and staggered like drunken men and were at our wits' end—then did we cry unto Thee in our trouble, and blessed be Thy name forever, Thou didst deliver us.

O happy day that sealed our pardon with the precious blood of Jesus accepted by faith. We would recall the memory of that blessed season by repeating it. We come again now to the cross whereon the Savior bled. We give another look of faith to Him. We trust we never take away our eyes off Him, but if we have done so, we would look anew. We would gaze into the body of the Son of God, pierced with nails, parched with thirst, bleeding, dying,

because "It pleased the Father to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief."

Lord God, we see in Thy crucified Son a sacrifice for sin. We see how Thou hast made Him to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him and we do over again accept Him to be everything to us. This is the victim by whose blood the covenant is made through faith. This is that Paschal Lamb by the sprinkling of whose blood all Israel is secured, for Thou hast said, "When I see the blood I will pass over you." This is the blood which gives us access into that which is within the veil. This is the blood which now to our souls is drink indeed and we do rejoice in the joy which this new wine of the covenant hath given unto our spirits.

We would take afresh the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. We would pay our vows now in the midst of all the Lord's people and in the courts of His house, and this is a part payment of our vow that we bless the Lord Jesus who hath put away our sin. We bless Him that He hath redeemed us unto Himself not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with His own precious blood and we do avow ourselves today to be the Lord's.

We are not our own. We are bought with a price. Lord Jesus, renew Thy grasp of us, take us over again, for we do even with greater alacrity than ever before surrender ourselves to Thee, and so "Bind the sacrifice with cords, even with cords to the horns of the altar." O Lord, I am Thy servant and the son of Thine handmaid. Thou hast loosed my bonds. The Lord liveth, and blessed be my

Rock. Henceforth within that Rock I hide myself. For Him I live. The Lord enable all His people with sincere hearts, with undivided hearts, thus again to give themselves up to Jesus, and do Thou set in them anew the marks and tokens of Thy possession till every one of us shall say as many of us can say, "From henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ."

We bless Thee, Lord, for that mark to which some of us can look back with much joy. It is not in our hand, nor in our forehead, nor on our foot, nor on our heart alone. Our whole body has been buried with Christ in baptism unto death and now the whole body, soul, and spirit, by our willing consecration, belong unto Christ henceforth and forever.

Our Father, there is one prayer which has kept rising to our lip even while we have been thus speaking to Thee. It comes from our very heart. It is, Bring others to Thyself. Hast Thou not said, O God of Jacob, "Yet will I gather others unto Him that have not been gathered?" Hast Thou not given to Thy Son the heathen for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession? Lord, give Thy Son the reward of His travail. Give Him a part of that reward this day wherever He is preached. Oh! that some might be moved with the love of Christ.

Lord, some know not who Thou art. Convince them of Thy deity and Thy power to save. Lord, many of them do not think. They live as if they were to die and there would be an end of them. O divine Spirit, convince them of judgment to come. Set before each careless eye that day

of terrible pomp when for every idle word that men shall speak they must give an account. O divine Spirit, teach unreasonable men true reason. Teach the obdurate sensitiveness. Look upon them, Jesus, just as Thou didst on those of the synagogue, not with anger, but still being grieved because of the hardness of their hearts. "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do," and bring many, many, many this very day to the dear feet that were nailed to the cross. Oh! how we long for it. Deny us what Thou wilt, only bring sinners to Thyself.

Lord Jesus, Thou art gone from us. We rejoice that this is the fact, for Thou hast taught us that it is expedient for us that Thou shouldst go and that the Comforter should be with us, but oh! let us not miss that promised presence of the Comforter. May He be here to help and succor in all works of faith and labors of love, and may we feel that He has come among us and is dwelling with us because He is convincing the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come.

O Spirit of God, bring men to accept the great propitiation, to see their sin washed away in the purple flood whose fount was opened when the heart of Christ was pierced, and may blood-washed sinners begin to sing on earth that everlasting anthem which shall be sung by all the redeemed in heaven.

We beseech Thee now, Lord, to look upon all Thy people and grant everyone a blessing. Some are in great trouble. Deliver them, we pray Thee. Others may be in great peril, though they have no trouble. The Lord save His people from the evils of prosperity. It may be some of Thine own

people find it hard to worship because of cares. May they be able, like Abraham, when the birds came down upon the sacrifice, to drive them away.

O Spirit of God, make us all more holy. Work in us more completely the image of Christ. We do long to be as the Lord Jesus Christ in spirit and temper, and in unselfishness of life. Give us the character of Christ, we pray Thee. Redemption from the power of sin is purchased with His blood and we crave for it, and pray that we may daily receive it. Let the whole militant Church of Christ be blessed. Put power into all faithful ministries. Convert this country. Save it from abounding sin. Let all the nations of the earth know the Lord, but especially bless those nations that speak our own dear mother tongue, where our same Lord and Christ is worshipped this day after the same fashion.

The Lord bless His people. Bring the Church to break down all bonds of nationality, all limits of sects, and may we feel the blessed unity which is the very glory of the Church of Christ. Yea, let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Our prayer can never cease until we reach this point, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." Nothing less than this can we ask for. And now hear us as we pray for the Sovereign and all in authority, and ask Thy blessing to rest upon this land, and let Thy blessing extend over all the family of man. We ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.