

# Soul Trouble

by Thomas Bradbury

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*Thomas Bradbury's sermon 'Soul Trouble' explores the profound suffering of Christ and its significance for believers in their own trials and tribulations.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 38:14, John 12:27, 1 Thessalonians 3:3, Hebrews 2:18, Hebrews 11:13

**Topics:** "Christ's Suffering", "Spiritual Comfort"

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## Description

Thomas Bradbury preaches on the spiritual instruction found in John 12:27, where Jesus expresses His soul's trouble and submission to the Father's will. Bradbury emphasizes the deep suffering of Christ physically, mentally, and spiritually, as He faced the weight of humanity's sins and sorrows. He highlights the importance of experiencing a spiritual oneness with Christ in His sufferings to truly understand the depth of His love and compassion. Bradbury encourages believers to find comfort in Christ's sufferings and to trust in God's sovereignty even in the midst of trials and tribulations.

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## Transcript

"Now is My soul troubled: and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." (John 12:27)

THE circumstances surrounding the words I have read for our consideration are full of spiritual instruction, and when opened up by the teaching of God the ever-blessed Spirit to our enlightened understanding, yield much that is blessedly interesting. Encouraging and establishing to those who have been brought by omnipotent and sovereign grace, to see in the Lord Jesus Christ everything that blesses and refreshes them; and out of the Lord Jesus Christ everything that makes for their misery, sorrow, and soul-distress. At the time these words were spoken, our blessed Lord was nearing the close of His earthly pilgrimage, and approaching that dread spot for which He had anxiously and ardently waited with desires and longings, which none of us can truly understand or sufficiently appreciate. As we are taught to apprehend the seeming cross purposes with which the Man of sorrows had to contend, our minds are filled with reverence and godly fear, and we wonder that poor, weak, short-sighted mortals like ourselves can have any understanding in the mysteries of Divine grace, and in those openings of Divine love as revealed in the afflictions of the God-Man, styled in one of the ancient liturgies, "Thine unknown sufferings."

It is a mercy to be privileged to meditate upon these things while the religious world is endeavouring to paint, picture, and represent to the natural mind that which can never be represented. Some are fond of displaying the form of a cross and styling it the emblem of redemption. Ah, my dear friends, it is the

emblem of the curse a sign of reprobation, and not of God's election. Others bring before our natural eyes a crucifix representing a human being in all the agonies and pangs of dissolution; but this can only affect the natural senses and work upon the natural emotions. We may come a little closer home and question ourselves in this matter. We may contemplate the physical and mental sufferings of our blessed Lord as they are described with unerring accuracy in the words of this blessed Book; we may see Him hated and persecuted by the world and rejected by His own; we may see Him scourged, nailed, and pierced; but all these sink into nothingness before the revelation of those unparalleled sufferings which He experienced during His bloody sweat in Gethsemane and His dreary desertion upon Calvary, which found vent in those doleful words, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" It is well for our minds to be exercised in the physical and mental sufferings of our blessed Lord and Master; but we must ever remember, that without an experimental and spiritual oneness with Him therein and the fellowship of His sufferings, all our knowledge will be but superficial and destitute of that soul prosperity which we hold as precious as life itself.

It is our lot this morning, in humble dependence upon the guidance and grace of the eternal Spirit, to look at this precious portion, and may He so teach us to profit in our own heart's experience and for those with whom we may be brought in spiritual association. Many portions of the written Word reveal to us the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, especially in those prophetic Psalms left on record by David and others through the inspiration of the Spirit of Christ who was in them.

Those precious Psalms, such as the 18th and 22nd, and 69th breathe out the soul's sorrows and spiritual sufferings experienced by the "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," during His sojourn here upon earth. In looking at these with a spiritually enlightened understanding, we rejoice in the blessed fact that every revelation of God's Christ given to us in the Scriptures of truth is, the Head in union with the members, and the members in union with the Head. One has very well said, and I think it could not have been said better, "I know of no Christ apart from the Church, and I know of no Church apart from Christ."

Speak of the one without the other and you speak of that which has no existence in the mind and will of the Father, in the pages of the written Word, or in the spiritual understanding of those whom He has brought into living union with Himself. What is God's Christ? It is His Anointed. The anointed Head in union eternal and indissoluble with all those whom the Father gave to Him before the worlds were framed. Look at the declaration of this spiritual union which the Saviour made in the ears of His Father as recorded throughout John 17.

Does He speak of Himself? It is in union with His people. Does He speak of His work? It is on their behalf. Does He speak of the words given to Him? They are words of life, comfort, and consolation for them. Does He speak of His sufferings? They are the sufferings He endured for them. And mark you, we as members of His body, His flesh, and His bones, are brought to know our painful and pleasurable interest therein; "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." (2 Cor. 1:5) What are the sufferings of Christ to me if I am not conscious of a spiritual apprehension of these sufferings for me and in me?

What will it avail me of Christ suffering for me on Calvary if I have no experimental realization of my oneness with Him in His sufferings? Tell me, ye who may be martyrs to that painful effect of sin, the headache, is your whole body in a comfortable state while enduring such a malady? You can testify full well that when your head is splitting with its nervous aches, the whole body is out of sorts. Let me ask you who are blessed with the grace which God has given you and the honesty of purpose which He has

bestowed upon you, to look Him in the face, and say, what are your wishes under such painful experiences as these.

Do you not wish to be gone, according to the longings expressed in the words of the Psalmist: "Oh, that I had wings like a dove: for then would I fly away, and be at rest." (Ps. 55:6) Is there not the anxious feeling which you fear to express to any mortal, that you would rather die than live? Ah, you long to be divested of the burden of the flesh and enter with joy into His unveiled presence, into that blessed land where there is "neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away," where cares, despondencies, sighs, and groans are for ever hushed in that sweet repose experienced by the redeemed and glorified ones in the presence of God and the Lamb.

Well, it is a mercy, through the teaching of the Holy Ghost, and the guidance of a Father's hand amid the varied phases of an all-wise but perplexing providence, to enjoy, if it be only for a moment, the sweet companionship of the Brother born for adversity. His sweet love visits and gracious communications are few and far between to many of the tried and tempted children of God; but they are worth waiting for, and when they are enjoyed, the child of God can thank Him for all the bitters He has mingled with his sweets, for the cloud which has carried His message of love, and for the crook He has appointed in the lot. It has been my delight for a long time to rummage through my Bible and search with intensity of spirit for that which ofttimes I find not; for I can only find what He intends for me, as He is graciously pleased to put it in my way. I seek for the presence of the consolation of Israel; but I cannot find at will either comfort, consolation, revelation, or manifestation. Some of you, perhaps, may be clever enough for all this; but, depend upon it, I do not sit on the same form with you in school. My prayer is to be led and guided in His own way the old-fashioned way in which weary pilgrims and outcast strangers are led to their rest up yonder. Yes, I love to be found in that path described in Psalm 107:7, as "the right way," although it may be very rugged and rough, and frequently "a solitary way," long distances of which must be trodden without the company of a single pilgrim. Yet, mark you, it is the right way, and the spot He has designed for me upon the earth is right, according to that glorious declaration in Hosea 14:9, "The ways of the LORD are right and the just shall walk therein." O my poor, lonely, tried, and tempted pilgrim brother or sister, the morning may be breaking upon thee with many clouds, clouds of doubt, of fear, or care and anxiety as to thy place or position in the wilderness; yet, as assuredly as He has given thee a little faith in Himself, a little hope in His mercy, a little trust in His goodness, and a little confidence in His covenant, His bow shall be seen in the cloud, the silver lining shall appear, and the glory of His grace and salvation shall rise upon thee.

But here we have to do with a suffering Christ and a suffering people a suffering Head with His suffering members. From Bethlehem's manger to Calvary's cross our great and glorious Head was a suffering Stranger.

"A Pilgrim through this lonely world,

The blessed Jesus pass'd;

A Mourner all His life was He,

A dying Lamb at last."

Sufferings were His from His mother's womb to the very last sigh that escaped His sorrowing spirit. In-looking through the pages of God's most Holy Word, it is encouraging to find that all those in

experimental oneness with Him were brought through the very same spots of anxiety, care, and perplexity, and were the subjects of much soul-trouble with darkness and gloom, like as we are. The truly-taught child of God would not be without them if he could, for when His rich, magnanimous, and sovereign grace be enjoyed, the child will thank Him for troubles, temptations, and tribulations knowing that these have been only so many calls upon His Fatherly notice and His care.

Let us now look at a few portions of His blessed Word in connection with this precious subject. In 1 Cor. 12:26,27: "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." Such is the perfect union existing between the varied members of the one body that what one member suffers affects the whole, and draws forth the living sympathy of the Head in glory to the suffering one.

Look again at Acts 14:22, "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." This is God's testimony in connection with confirmation. Confirmation? Yes. This is our confirmation when the Shepherd and Bishop of souls lays His hand upon the little ones of His scattered flock who are gathered together in His name. This is the confirmation of souls which those sorely need who are battered and shattered by Satan, and who, from the temptations and tribulations of the wilderness, from the experience of their own heart's depravity and the incorrigibility of their nature, are oftentimes wavering in their judgment, and wandering in their dispositions.

These will run hither and thither seeking for guidance and grace according to Amos 8:11,12: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the North even to the East, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the LORD, and shall not find it." Some of you may say such a famine does not exist in these days, but let me tell you, if you are rightly taught, you will know what it is to experience a famine in your own souls, though you may be privileged to sit under the preached Word stately.

It is one thing to hear with the outward ear, another thing altogether to receive the engrafted Word. Now, those who waver and wander, who are shaken like so many broken reeds, but, blessed be God, not bruised reeds to be destroyed, but to be supported, strengthened, and confirmed in the gracious testimony of JEHOVAH concerning them, and glory in the fact that through much tribulation they must enter the kingdom. Then listen to the sound of heaven's own music as it is wafted to us across the border lands of eternity.

Turn to Rev. 7:13,14: "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence come they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat."

Mark you, when this exercised heart is crushed and broken with a sense of my sinfulness and corruption, and bubbling up of the realization of the tender mercy and patient grace of my God to me, I long to be gone, to bow before His throne, divested of the burden of the flesh, and all sin, all lust, all corruption, and all blasphemous thoughts gone for ever. But surely, say some of you in astonishment, you are not such a

character as that! Ah! my dear friends, I am not going to tell you all about what sort of a creature I am, having something better to talk about.

I have just given you a hint that you may know where and what I am in respect to the beaten track of tribulation, and the temptations and trials peculiar to the suffering members of the one body in blessed and hallowed communion with their once-suffering Head.

Now turn with me to 2 Cor. 1:5, "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." Mark you! It is not as my sufferings for Christ abound in me. It is not that. The Arminian would have it so, and the poor deluded Papist would say the same. Yes, he lacerates his flesh, reduces his natural body by fasting, and calls that suffering for Christ, which is pure delusion. But the Holy Ghost by Paul leads us into a marvellous secret here. He speaks not of sufferings for Christ, but of the sufferings of Christ abounding in us realized in blessed and hallowed sympathy with Him and He with us. You see the same in that, to many, mysterious portion, very frequently misquoted and perverted Col. 1:24, "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you." Paul, as a God-made and God-sent minister knew that all the sufferings he endured were for the benefit, encouragement, comfort, and consolation of the members of the one body to whom he ministered. It is mine to know, that as a pastor of a people whom God has separated to Himself, as a minister of the New Testament, whom He has taught and sent with His message to His people, if I am to be of any real service to them, the devil will assault me, the world will annoy me, and my wretched nature will aggravate me. If it is not so, I shall be of very little use to the poor and afflicted in Zion. If I do not know the spirit of what my blessed Lord and Master spake to His disciples, "Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:19) I shall not minister to the necessities of those whom He has separated from the world. The flesh must be a burden to me if I am to be a blessing to those who are

"Sick of self and fond of Him."

Here I am about to use a Scriptural expression which may shock the very nice and precise among you. In Rev. 3:16 God speaks of spewing out of His mouth certain persons who were neither cold nor hot. Do you know what it is to spew yourself out of your own mouth? according to that (in Ezek. 36:31) which I have frequently quoted to you of late: "Then shall ye loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations." I do not talk like this for talking's sake, or that I may appear to be something before you, but because it is the very experience of my heart in the presence of Him with whom we have to do, and because I know it is the experience of those whom He has taught to judge themselves in the light of His glorious perfections, who mourn over the deceitfulness and plague of their own hearts, and who feel week by week, and day by day, that in them that is, in their flesh dwelleth no good thing. See! "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you." I do not know of anything so heart-melting, yet so spirit-encouraging, as when I have been battered and shattered by the devil and driven to my wits' end, I have been brought, in the providence of God, face to face with one, the features of whose spiritual countenance have agreed with mine, and there before the throne, at the feet of a suffering Saviour, to bow with him, not like the hypocrite with pretentious genuflexious, but as Israelites indeed, who bow in spirit and true adoration in the presence of the King, who blesses all such with His sweet sympathy and gracious encouragement. "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church." (Col. 1:24) Papists and Ritualists would pause at the end of the word "Christ" thus, "and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." Oh! say they, this is proof positive that something is required from us to make the sufferings of Christ efficacious; the faithful must go through a course of religious discipline here, or through purgatorial cleansings hereafter. This is a

villainous perversion of Paul's words. Look at them! He speaks of "the afflictions of Christ in my flesh," not on the cross. These afflictions are so many blessed evidences of my union to Him, who, by His sufferings, His agony, His bloody sweat and cruel death, eternally redeemed from hell, from the curse of the law, from sin, from self, from the world, and from deceit and violence, all the election of grace in union with Him. "For His body's sake, which is the Church." It is a glorious and spiritual advantage to the child of God when He knows that every pain, perplexity, or anxiety he experiences, is a member of Christ's body, flesh, and bones, and for the comfort and consolation of those with whom he is brought into communion and fellowship.

Now, it is ours to look at these precious words spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ to His Father, and in the hearing of His disciples: "Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." I have told you that our Lord Jesus Christ suffered physically, mentally, and spiritually. In His body, in His soul, and in His spirit. His body was lashed and lacerated. His soul was surcharged with sorrow. His spirit was overwhelmed within Him.

The load of His people's sins, the burden of their griefs and sorrows, with the hidings of His Father's face, were terrible realities to Him. Read at your leisure Psalms 22, and 69, in which you see described the breathing out of His sorrowing soul into the ears of His Father. In this we hear the language of the Head for the members, ay, and the language of the members in experimental oneness with the Head. In the latter Psalm He cries, "I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing."

This is the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief of whom Isaiah said: "He was taken from prison and from judgment," or, as it reads in the margin: "He was taken away by distress and judgment." (Isa. 53:8) Can this be true? Indeed and in truth it is. Why was He in distress? Why was His soul troubled? Because He sank in spirit in the midst of all the mire of corruption, depravity, filth, iniquity, which His people inherited from their first parents' transgression in Eden. Yes, and He sank in the midst of all the sickness, infirmities, ailments, headaches, heartaches, griefs, and anxieties which His poor people suffer here below.

Just think of this! The Lord Jesus Christ coming into contact with sin, not one sin, but the accumulation of all the sins of all those whom He represented in covenant before the worlds were framed. It is my mercy to see that He who is my Lord and Master, He who is my Saviour and sympathizing Friend, came down to the depths of my sorrows, and in the school of human suffering learned how to come feelingly to the very spots of my soul trouble. Did you notice the identity existing between the first sentence of the text and the opening of His consolations to His disciples in John 14:1, when Judas the devil had gone out?

"Let not your heart be troubled." This is a gracious covenant command from that blessed One who obeyed every one of His Father's commands for you and for me. Is your heart troubled? From whence does your trouble spring? You may point to the world with its changes, to your trying circumstances, to your wretched surroundings, to your painful bereavements, to your losses in trade, and to the difficulty you have to be honest and make ends meet and tie. Well, these are hard things for a child of God to grapple with, but they are not the cause of spiritual heart trouble.

What is? Sin, that accursed hell-dog! crushing me down to the dust, and experiencing no sense of a dear Redeemer's pardoning love; but He who was troubled with the weight of His people's sins and infirmities, sends forth His covenant command: "Let not your heart be troubled," and peace, quietness, and assurance possess the heart of the troubled one. Sin is my daily trouble; I hate and loathe it. The

experience of it gives me errand after errand to the footstool of sovereign mercy, and causes many a heart-melting before Him, and true spiritual compassion for those who are of the same passions with me, subject to the same infirmities, liable to the same weaknesses, troubled with the same distresses, and harassed with the same temptations.

"Now is My soul troubled." One prolific source of the Saviour's soul trouble was Satan's temptations. See! "The prince of this world cometh." (John 14:30) When did he come? Throughout the life of the Man of sorrows. He came in the person of the bloodthirsty Herod, but was disappointed and defeated. He came again in the person of Judas with seeming success, but was destroyed in all his designs against the Christ of God. Yes, he seemed to succeed when Jesus died, for in that death was buried all the hopes of those who were one with Him then. "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." (Luke 24:21) It is when all hope is gone, when all strength is gone, when the death of every earthly thing we hold good takes place, that God reveals Himself in His true character, as the God of resurrection. Ofttimes we tarry and linger on the judgment side of the cross of Christ, but when He appears, we are graciously led to the resurrection side, where He ever lives, and life and immortality are brought to light by His Gospel. (2 Tim. 1:10) We shall never be able to get to the depth of the meaning of that word, troubled. There is a fullness in it which we cannot see in the mere word. It has reference to a ship in distress where many seas meet and contrary winds are raging. The ship moves, but is only to be driven back with winds and waves of redoubled violence; according to Ps. 107:26,27: "They mount up to the heavens, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. Thy reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end." (Margin: all the wisdom is swallowed up.) It may have reference to a novice wholly at the mercy of a trained and scientific pugilist, and knocked hither and thither until his thoughts are reduced to sheer consternation. Where is he? He knows not. So our Lord Jesus Christ at this dread moment felt the Father, the world, and all hell moving against Him. His Father's justice was moved against Him because of the sins He bore. The world because of its hatred to Him. Satan because of his envy and malignity against Him. All these pitted against the Lord of life and glory. See! He who is thy Surety and mine, thy Saviour and mine, came into the very spot where we deserve to be eternally, oppressed by the devil; where we deserve to be unceasingly, hated by the world. If He had not loved us, where should we have been? But He does love us, and for us He was troubled at the very thought of contact with our enemies, sin and Satan; troubled with the prospect of the hidings of the Father's face.

"And what shall I say?" There is something marvellous in this declaration. No wonder that a poor stammering wretch like me should be sometimes in soul agony and bitter exercise before my God with the felt inability to order my cause before Him, or to find words to express the sorrows of my soul. Nay, when I stand in His name before my fellow-sinners, to whom I would speak words of comfort and consolation, the Lord sometimes puts a stone upon the well's mouth, and if He takes the stone away, the well is deep and I have nothing to draw with, I may well cry out, in the words of my suffering Master, "What shall I say?" The Lord Jesus Christ in whom were hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, who could say to His Father, "I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me" (John 17:8) who knew all men, all that was in them, all their concerns, circumstances, sorrows, and perplexities when He came into contact with judgment and condemnation on the behalf of His people He was troubled as to what He should say. Look at that description given on Him in Mark 14:33, "And He taketh with Him Peter, and James, and John, and He began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy." My dear friends, we shall only be able fully to understand this when in the heights of glory we gaze on

"Those dear tokens of His passion

Which His dazzling body bears,

Cause of endless exultation

To His ransomed worshippers:

With what rapture

Gaze they on those glorious scars."

It will only be when, without a cloud between, we shall gaze upon the slain Lamb in the midst of throne, that we shall have opened up to our ravished ears, and revealed to our adoring hearts, sufferings unknown to us before, sufferings from God and from devils, from friends and from foes, and all for us.

"And what shall I say?" Why should our Lord Jesus Christ be brought to such a spot as this? That He might be a Saviour just suited to you and to me. That He might be able to sympathize with us when we are led into like spots: "For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted." (Heb. 2:18) This is a marvellous mystery. I wish I could understand it more fully. I sigh for a deeper knowledge and more precious insight into it; but I must wait the time of the Father's revealings. Here the Lord Jesus Christ comes down to the spot felt by some of us this morning. We know not how to order our cause before Him; but we know what it is to sigh and cry, to breathe and groan, and, blessed be His holy name, He has promised not to pass by these. Turn to Isa. 38:14,15: where you will find Hezekiah in the very same spot using the very same words: "O LORD, I am oppressed; undertake for me. What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me, and Himself hath done it." Is sin for ever put away? Himself hath done it. Do the sufferings of Christ abound in us? Himself hath done it. Are we groaning under the burden of the flesh? Himself hath done it. Are we mourning on account of the seethings of indwelling corruption? Himself hath done it. Do we desire to live and reign with Him? Himself hath done it. "And what shall I say?" cried the Head. "And what shall I say?" is the cry of the living members. The necessities of the members were experienced by the Head. The fullness of the Head is enjoyed by the members.

"Father, save Me from this hour." Have you been brought to an hour of soul trouble when no cry has escaped you but, "Save me from this hour? Save me from this bitterness, from this tribulation, from this bereavement, from this wretched discontent?" At such times we little think that we are praying to God for deliverance from that which He has appointed for us, and to which He has appointed us. (1 Thess. 3:3) However perplexing the crosses and crooks of my pathway may be, the paradoxes of Divine experience can only be explained to me by Him who sent them.

Through the hour of darkness, desertion, and death Jesus must go, though the sorrows of His heart wrung from Him the bitter cry, "Father, save Me from this hour." How would He be saved from it? Listen to His own words in gloomy, dark Gethsemane: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." (Matt. 26:38) Death preferable to the gloomy horrors He must experience previous to His death upon Calvary. Know ye aught of this! Have you been brought into such spots of fellowship with Christ in His sufferings, after a participation with Him in the glory of His Father's rich, sovereign, free, uninfluenced grace (no other grace will do for me), you have been left to the buffetings of the devil, the hidings of the Father's face, darkness, despondency, and self-despair, that you see no deliverance but from the hands of a covenant God?

I know all that in the bitterness of my own heart, and in the sorrows of my soul before Him. Just think that such a worm of the earth should dare to stand before a people tried and tempted, exercised and taught by

Him to speak of these things which I know but oftentimes feel not, and experiencing the cruel suggestion of Satan: "If thou be a son of God, why shouldst thou be left in gloom and distraction?" This accursed "if" is often thundered down to the depths of my spiritual necessity, causing my soul to tremble.

Can it be possible that such was the experience of our Lord Jesus Christ? We will throw the idea of possibility to the winds. It is more than possible, it is a fact recorded for the comfort and encouragement of those who experience their oneness with Him. Look at Jonah when his God-prepared gourd was destroyed by the God-prepared worm. All my comforts come at God's command, and the cares which eat them all away appear at His bidding. When these distress me, let me ask you, What must be the feelings of my heart as I am thus left to myself?

Like those of Jonah when "he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live." Ay, and like those of Elijah when he sat down under the juniper tree, and requested for himself that he might die; and said: "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life." (1 Kings 19:4) Nay, look still further, and I know some will not like this, but what is that to me? It is mine to declare God's testimony as He has given it to me. Read Heb. 11:13, "These all died in faith," or, according to faith.

This was the faith of God's elect, the faith that overcame the world. See! The world appeared in those wretched Philistines who hounded Samson to the very death. Samson the strong was a glorious type of Jesus the stronger. In the bitterness of his soul he cried: "O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray Thee, and strengthen me, I pray Thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." (Judges 16:28-30) God strengthened him, and with the strength he pulled the house down upon himself and upon the wretched Philistines.

Samson slept in the burying-place of Manoah his father, while, from the very spot where his soul was exceeding sorrowful even to die, and where he wreaked vengeance upon his enemies, he was safely conducted by a precious Christ to the heights of glory, to rejoice in the presence of his God, and bask in the sunshine of everlasting felicity. He died in faith. Ah, but see, it is recorded in this precious chapter, "These all died in faith." Our old friend Rahab was among them. People may say what they like to pollute her fair fame with their pious babble, but yonder she stands in the faith and beauty of Him who said to the Father for her, and for Samson too: "Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." Mark those last words:

"For this cause came I unto this hour." This is a glorious declaration one breathing submission and resignation to His Father's will. Blessed and most precious it is when in the most trying dispensations, when, in the midst of the most perplexing and bewildering providences, I can trace my Father's hand of power, and feel His heart of love, knowing that all things work together for good to me, a poor vile sinner, that does love Him, and oftentimes weeps and mourns because I cannot love Him more.

May He add His blessing for His own name's sake. Amen.

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