

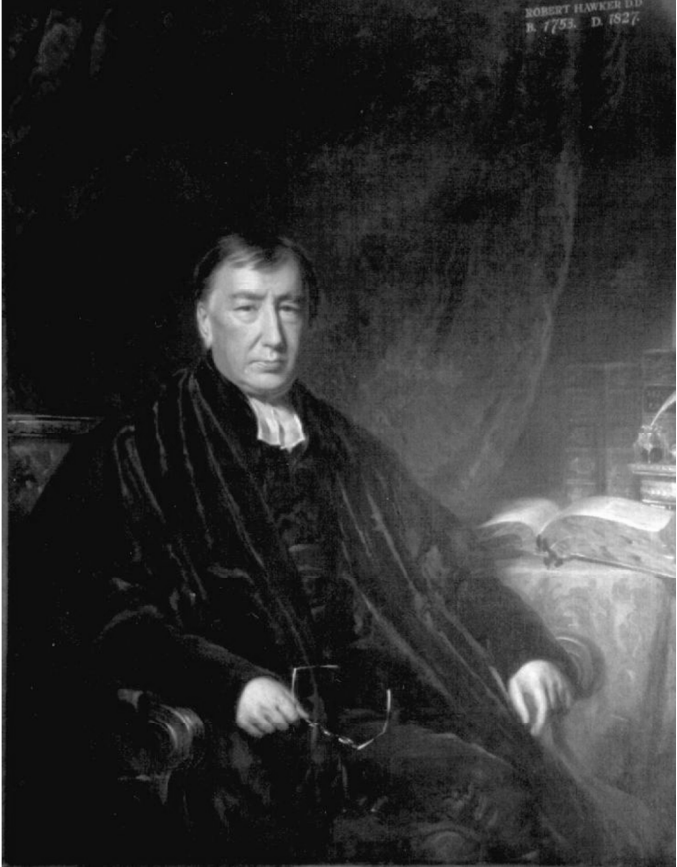
CONSIDER HIM



MEDITATIONS ON THE SUFFERINGS AND
DEATH OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

— ROBERT HAWKER —

CONSIDER HIM



Robert Hawker

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A Meditation on
the Sufferings and Death of the
Lord Jesus

Taken from
*The Poor Man's Morning and Evening
Portions*

by

Dr Robert Hawker (1753-1827)
Vicar of Charles, Plymouth

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Publisher's Note

The Gospel Standard Trust issues this book with the hope that it might be spiritually profitable. Although we only issue books we feel set forth a Scriptural standard, there will be differences in opinion and interpretation, and the most gracious of men still have to say, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." We trust our readers will prayerfully "prove all things" and "hold fast that which is good", whilst bearing in meekness with any imperfections.

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Preface

“No sweeter subject can invite
A sinner’s heart to sing”
(John Newton)

“The sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow” are the substance of the joys experienced above by the Church triumphant. It should therefore not seem inappropriate to exhort the “Church militant” to engage her thoughts on the same precious theme and so fulfil the exhortation of Paul to the Hebrew believers: “Consider Him ...”. Thus, after remembering the great cloud of witnesses of the Old Testament worthies of faith, the apostle turns to the true and faithful Witness, Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

In this series of meditations, Robert Hawker, the well-loved nineteenth Century evangelical vicar of Charles, Plymouth, leads his readers in sacred meditation of the unspeakable sorrows of Christ in His suffering suretyship, and then on to the immeasurable fruits of His soul travail which are the source of the hope of the true believer.

If like Solomon, we are enabled to “sit down under His shadow,” as we follow the sacred theme, I believe all true lovers of the Saviour will find His

“fruit sweet to their taste” and know the delight
which only Christ’s church can appreciate.

“A bleeding Saviour seen by faith,
A sense of pardoning love,
A hope that triumphs over death,
Give joys like these above.”

(John Newton)

G D Buss
March 2016

Publisher's Note

Dr Robert Hawker (1753-1827) was a minister in the Church of England. Hawker trained first in medicine, and after qualifying joined the Royal Marines as an assistant surgeon. In 1778 he entered Oxford University, and was ordained in the Church of England in 1779. From 1778 he served as curate at Charles Church in Plymouth, Devon, until he succeeded to the living in 1784. From then until his death, he served faithfully as vicar of Charles Church, drawing a large and loyal congregation. More importantly, the work of the Holy Spirit was seen amongst his congregation and his ministry was blessed to the good of many souls. Although a churchman, he had a large heart for those who loved the gospel he delighted to preach and had many friends in different denominations, including Strict Baptists such as William Gadsby and John Warburton, and Independents, such as Henry Fowler.

Hawker was a voluminous author, and his works extend to in excess of eight volumes, excluding his commentary on the Bible. While Hawker always aimed in his ministry at the poor and uneducated man in his congregation, titling many of his works "*The Poor Man's ...*", he was a man of no mean learning, being awarded the

degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Edinburgh for his work on the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sadly, today Hawker is little known. The publishers of this volume hope that by making a small selection of his writings available in an attractive and readable format, the appetite of the reader might be roused to read more of Hawker's works.

These selections are taken from Hawker's book of daily devotional readings, *The Poor Man's Morning and Evening Portions*. We have lightly edited them; removing references to the originally prescribed morning and evening format, and re-ordered them, grouping them together in general themes to assist the flow of the material.

Above all else, we hope that the reading of these meditations may raise the thoughts of the reader to dwell on the most sublime of all subjects – the death of our Redeemer and Saviour, and thus call forth a song of praise from a broken and contrite heart “unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

The Saviour

Meditation 1

The righteousness of Jesus

“And this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” – Jer. 23. 6.

Begin my soul, with contemplating thy Jesus in this glorious distinction of character; and beg of God the Holy Ghost, who hath here declared that, under this character, Jesus shall be known and called, that every day, and through the whole of life, thou mayest find grace and strength so to know and so to call Jesus, as to be everlastingly satisfied that thou art made the righteousness of God in him. And first, my soul, consider who and what this Holy One is. He is the Lord Jehovah. In the glories of his *essence*, he is One with the Father. In his *personal* glories, he is the Lord thy Mediator. And in his *relative* glories, he is thy righteousness. For, by virtue of his taking thy nature, what he is as Mediator and as the Surety of his people, he is for them. Pause over this blessed view, and then say, what can be more blessed than thus to behold Jesus as what he is in himself *for* his people. Look at him again, my soul, and take another view of him in his loveliness; in what he is *to* his people. This precious scripture saith, that he is the Lord *our* righteousness; that

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is, by virtue of his Godhead he is our righteousness, in such a sure way, and with such everlasting value and efficacy, as no creature could be. The righteousness his redeemed possess in him, and are entitled to in him, is the righteousness of God; and therefore impossible ever to be lost, and impossible ever to be fully recompensed in glory. Sweet and blessed consideration! it seems too great to be believed. And so it would indeed, if the authority of Jehovah had not stamped it, and made the belief of it the first and highest act of a poor sinner’s obedience. And observe, my soul, yet further, there is this blessed addition to the account – “he shall be called so.” By whom? Nay, by every one that knows him. The poor sinner shall call him so, who is led to see and feel that he hath no righteousness of his own; he shall call Jesus his Lord, his righteousness. He shall call him so to *others*; he shall call upon him for *himself*; he shall be that true Israelite, that very one whom the prophet describes – “Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.” The redeemed upon earth, the redeemed in heaven, the church of the first-born, shall call him so. The whole army of patriarchs, and prophets, and apostles, all shall know Jesus as the Lord our righteousness. Nay, God himself, our Father, shall call his dear Son by this glorious name; for it is He who hath constituted and appointed him as the Lord our righteousness. And

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that Jesus is our righteousness is from this very cause, that he “of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption: that ... he that glorieth, Let him glory in the Lord.” Now, my soul, what sayest thou to this sweet view of Jesus in this most precious scripture? Is not this name of Jesus most grateful to thee, as ointment of the richest fragrancy poured forth? Can any name be as sweet and delightful to one convinced, as thou art, that all thy righteousness is as dung and dross, as that of Jesus the Lord our righteousness? Witness for me, ye angels of light, that I renounce every other; and from henceforth will make mention of his righteousness, and his only. Yes, blessed Jesus, my mouth shall daily speak of thy righteousness and salvation; for I know no end thereof.



Meditation 2

The righteousness of Jesus made ours

“And this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness.” – Jer. 33. 16.

My soul! the subject of thy last meditation would not be complete, if thy personal interest in it were not taken into the account; and therefore let thy mind be led forth now, in sweet contemplation upon what the Holy Ghost hath said, in this

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scripture, by his same servant, the prophet, concerning the church of Jesus. If Jesus be called “the LORD our righteousness,” and be, as he is well known to be, the husband of his people, surely his wife shall be called by her husband’s name. She shall be called so because it is her husband’s name; “the LORD our righteousness.” And as he became sin for her, when he knew no sin; so she, when she knew no righteousness, shall, by virtue of her union and relationship with him, be righteousness, even “the righteousness of God in him” (2 Cor. 5. 21). Now, my soul, seeing that these things are certain, sure, and unquestionable, do thou follow up the transporting meditation in every way, and by every way, and by every consideration, in which the blessedness of it is confirmed and assured. Married to Jesus, thou hast an interest in all he hath as Mediator, as the glorious Head of his body the church, “the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” And indeed, it is such an union and oneness, as nothing in nature can fully represent: for “he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit,” (1 Cor. 6. 17). It infinitely transcends the marriage union, which is only in natural things, and at death is dissolved; for this union is spiritual and continues for ever. Hence Jesus saith, “I will betroth thee unto me for ever” (Hosea 2. 19). Never lose sight of this high union, and the infinitely precious blessings to which, by virtue of it, thou art entitled: and while thou art called by his name, see that

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thou hast a conformity to his image. A union of grace should be manifested by a union of heart. What thy Jesus loves, thou shouldest love: and what he hates, do thou hate. Let his people be thy people; and his God and Father thine also. And from being one with him in heart, in mind, in sympathy, and affection; receiving life *from* him, living *on* him, and being *in* him; then will he be everything to thee, of grace in this life, and of glory in that which is to come. Precious Lord, and husband of thy people, be thou made of God to me, and all thy redeemed, “wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”



Meditation 3

Jesus the sin-bearer

“And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited” – Lev. 16. 21,22.

Pause, my soul, and behold the tender mercy of thy God, in thus causing to be represented to the

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church of old, by so striking a service, that grand and most momentous doctrine of the gospel, which, in after ages of the church was fully set forth and completed, when Jehovah laid upon our Lord Jesus Christ the iniquities of his people. And do, my soul, attend to those several most interesting points here graciously revealed. As first – this was at the express command of God. Yes, who but God could transfer or permit a change of persons in the transferring of sin! This is one of the most blessed parts of the gospel, that when Jesus bore our sins in his own body on the tree, it was by the express will and appointment of Jehovah. The Lord Jesus *took* not those sins on himself; but the Lord *laid* on him the iniquity of us all. Mark this down in strong characters. Then next consider – that as Jesus had a transfer of all the sins of his people, consequently they were no longer upon the people, for whom they were transferred. Here faith finds full scope for exercise, in giving God the credit due to God. The sending away of the goat was intended to represent the full remission of sins; and by the goat bearing them away into a land not inhabited, intimated that those sins should never be seen nor known any more; according to that precious scripture of the Holy Ghost by the prophet – “The iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found” (Jer. 50. 20). And there is one sweet thought more, not to be overlooked in this blessed

scripture, concerning those sins. Observe, my soul, the particularity of the expression. The confession of Aaron, the great high priest, was not only of all the iniquities of the children of Israel, but all their transgressions *in* all their sins. Pause, my soul, over this view, and recollect that there are many, and sometimes very heinous and aggravated circumstances of transgression in thy sins. Now what a sweet thought of relief to thy mind is it, under particular and galling circumstances of sin, to behold thy Jesus bearing thy sins, and all the transgression of all thy sins. The Lord caused *to meet in him*, as the passage might have been rendered, the iniquities of us all (Isa. 53. 6). Jesus was made as the common receiver, the drain, the sink, into which all the sins, and every minute and particular sin, was emptied. “He shall drink of the brook in the way”, said the Holy Ghost (Psa. 110. 7). Was not this the black and filthy brook of Cedron, into which all the filth from the sacrifices of the temple was emptied?¹ Here it was Jesus passed, when, in the night of his entering on his passion, he went into the garden. Look to this, my soul, and see whether it doth not strikingly, though solemnly, at the same time, set forth Jesus

¹ An alternative interpretation of the brook in Psalm 110. 7 is that it refers to Jesus Christ being sustained in his sufferings by the Holy Spirit with which he was endued without measure, and to the strength afforded by his own divinity.

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bearing all and every particular transgression in all thy sins. One thought more. The goat thus laden with all the sins of the people was to be sent away by the hand of some fit man into the wilderness. As none but Jesus could be competent to bear sins, so none but Jesus could be fit to bear them away into a land of everlasting forgetfulness. It doth not lessen the beauty of this blessed scripture in the representation here made, in Jesus being set forth under two characters; for he is so in many. None but Jesus can indeed accomplish all: he is the High Priest, the Altar, and the Sacrifice, through all the law; and he is the fit man here represented, as well as the burden-bearer of sin. Hail! thou great High Priest! Blessed for ever be thou who hast borne away all the sins of thy people into a land not inhabited. Thou hast crossed out, in God’s book of account, each and every individual sin, and the transgression of all our sins, in the red letters of thy blood; and never shall they appear again to the condemnation of thy people.



Meditation 4

A man of sorrows

“A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” – Isa. 53. 3.

My soul, there is one feature in thy Redeemer’s character, which, in the unequalled abasement of

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his person, demands thy constant contemplation. I fear it hath not been considered by thee as it ought. And yet it is so sweetly accommodating and lovely, that the more thou beholdest thy Jesus in this tender light, the more endeared he must appear to thee. The prophet, under the Holy Ghost, hath here in a few words sketched the outlines of it – “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief”. It was most essential that Jesus should be all this, because it belonged to the curse which he became for his people, when he offered himself as their surety. You will remember, my soul, the curse which God pronounced upon the earth, and man’s passage through it, when he broke the divine law. The ground was cursed; the product of it was to be thorns and thistles; in sorrow, and in the sweat of the brow was man to eat bread; and at length, death was to close the life. Now it behoved him who undertook to remove the curse, to bear that curse before the removal of it; and, as such, it behoved Jesus to be “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” Hence all these seized on the Lord Jesus in the first moment he assumed our nature. And though he had no sin in his nature; not being born in the ordinary way of our nature, yet, as a Surety, he was at once exposed to all the frailties in the sinless sorrows, and travails, and labours of it. This sentence would not have been fulfilled, had not Jesus eaten bread in the sweat of his brow. So interesting a part, therefore, was it in

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Christ's life, that he should labour in a common occupation, that this part of the curse might not go by, without being accomplished. And how eminently, my soul, was this part indeed fulfilled, when, in the garden, the sweat of his brow was drops of blood! How full of thorns and thistles was the earth to Jesus, may be in some measure considered, when we behold him in the unequalled sorrows of the opposition he met with from the world, the unkindness of friends, the malice of enemies. The thorny crown put upon his sacred head was little considered by those that put it there; but yet it was, in reality, crowning him Lord of sorrow and grief, beyond all men that ever were exercised with affliction. So great, indeed, was the continued load he bore of grief, and so much did it tend to waste and wear the spirits, that according to that expression of the Jews to him – “Thou art not yet fifty years old,” evidently proved, that he had the visage of one of fifty, when only thirty. And it is remarkable, though we are told that Jesus rejoiced in spirit, yet we never read that he was once seen to laugh during his whole life. Precious Jesus, enable me ever to be looking unto thee, thou meek and lowly Lamb of God! And may I never lose sight of this sweet part of thy character also; that whilst thou didst bear our sins, so didst thou carry our sorrows; and in fulfilling the law, didst take away the curse also, when in sorrow thou didst eat bread all the days of thy life.

Meditation 5

Jesus anointed for the work of redemption

**“For him hath God the Father sealed.” –
John 6. 27.**

My soul, hast thou ever remarked the peculiar glory of those scriptures, which comprise within a small compass all the persons of the Godhead, as concurring and co-operating in the grand business of salvation? No doubt, all scripture is blessed, being given by inspiration of God; but there is a peculiar blessedness in these sweet portions, which at one view, represent the Holy Three in One, unitedly engaged in the sinner's redemption. My soul, ponder over this divine passage, in thy Saviour's discourse, as thus: who is the *Him* here spoken of, but the Lord Jesus? And whom but God the Father could seal Christ? And with whom was Christ sealed and anointed, but by God the Holy Ghost? Would anyone have thought, at first view, that in seven words, such a blessed testimony should be given to the glorious foundation-truth of the whole Bible? “For him hath God the Father sealed.” Precious Jesus! enable me to behold thy divine authority as the warrant of faith in this gracious act of thy Father. And while I view thee as infinitely suited for my poor soul, in every state and under every circumstance, let my soul find confidence in the conviction that the validity of all thy gracious acts of salvation is founded in the seal

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of the Spirit. Yes, thou dear Lord, it was indeed the Spirit of Jehovah that was upon thee, when thou wast anointed to “preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” And art thou, dearest Lord, thus held forth, and thus recommended by the grand seal of heaven, to every poor sinner who feels a conscious want of salvation? Oh then, help, Lord, by thy blessed Spirit, all and every one of this description, so to receive a sealed Saviour, as to rest in nothing short of being sealed by him; and while every act of love, and every tendency of grace proclaims thee, blessed Jesus, as him whom God the Father hath sealed, so let every act of faith, and every tendency of the soul, in the goings forth after thee, be expressive of the same earnest longings as the church, of being sealed and owned by thee, when she cried out, “Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.”



In the Garden of Gethsemane

Meditation 6

Gethsemane

“A place called Gethsemane” – Matt. 26. 36.

My soul, let thy meditation now be directed to the garden of Gethsemane, that memorable spot, sacred to the believer, because so much beloved and resorted to by Jesus. Here Jesus oft came with his disciples. And here, my soul, do thou often take the wing of faith, and flee in devout contemplation. Was this place dear to thee, thou precious Redeemer? And was it not because here thou didst enjoy the sweetest refreshing in communion with the Father? Was it not because here thou knewest would begin the conflict and the agony, in which the great business for which thou camest on earth would be accomplished. Didst thou abide here, Lord, a whole night after a day's constant preaching to the people, the week only before thy crucifixion? (See Luke 21. 7.) And when the night was past, didst thou again repair to the temple to the same employ? Was Gethsemane dear to Jesus? Was here his favourite haunt? And shall not my soul delight to be oft here in solemn meditation? Will not my Lord lead me there, and go with me there, and sweetly speak to me there; that while,

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in imagination, I tread the sacred ground, my soul may view the several spots, and say – Here it was, perhaps, my Redeemer was withdrawn a stone’s cast from his disciples, that the powers of darkness might more furiously assault his holy soul; and here stood the angel sent from heaven to strengthen him; and here the Lord Jesus was in his agony, when the sweat of his body forced through all the pores great drops of blood, falling down to the ground! Is this Gethsemane? And why Gethsemane? The Jews call it Ge-hennon, or hell; for here it was that Josiah burnt the idol vessels. (2 Kings 23. 4-10). And it is the same as Tophet, the only word the Jews used for hell after their return from the Babylonish captivity. The field of Cedron was indeed a dark and gloomy place: and by its side ran the foul and black brook which Jesus passed over when he went into Gethsemane. Here David, of old, went mourning and lamenting, when Ahithophel, like another Judas, betrayed him, and his life was sought after. (2 Sam. 15. 23). And here the Son of David passed also, when the man of whom David by the spirit of prophecy spake, (Psa. 41. 9), which ate bread with Jesus, lifted up his heel against him. And was this Gethsemane the favoured spot of Jesus, because here he had so sweetly enjoyed communion with his Father, and because he here should encounter the powers of darkness? Learn then, my soul, from thy Jesus where thou oughtest to seek grace in a

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refreshing hour, to comfort a trying hour. Say, my soul, where should be thy dying place, but where thy God hath most blessed thy living place? There Jesus, make my seasons (if needs be) of conflict, where thou hast sanctified and made blessed by thy Bethel visits. And was a garden the favoured spot of Jesus? Yes, it was in a garden the first Adam lost himself and his posterity; there, then, Jesus will recover the forfeited inheritance. Did the devil begin in heaven to ruin man? Why, then, in Gethsemane Jesus will begin to conquer hell for man's recovery. Did Satan, from the garden, bind and carry captive the first Adam? Then from a garden also shall he cause to be bound, and carried away to the cross, the second Adam, "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Solemn Gethsemane! awful, but hallowed spot! Here would I often come, here contemplate Jesus, my blessed Surety, groaning, yet conquering; pressed under all the hellish malice of the devil, yet triumphing over all; deserted by his disciples, sweating a bloody sweat, sustaining the wrath of offended justice, drinking the cup of trembling? Is this Gethsemane? Oh, thou Lamb of God, thou paschal Lamb! here oft bring me; here show me thy loves: and as thy joys were here turned into sorrows, give me to see how the curses which I deserved, but which thou didst

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endure, were converted into blessings; and that by thy stripes I am healed. Hail sacred Gethsemane!



Meditation 7

The soul sufferings of Jesus

[Thy rebuke] “hath broken my heart”² – Psa. 69. 20.

Hast thou, my soul, still upon thee the solemn savour of thy last meditation? Surely Gethsemane is not forgotten by thee! Pause over the subject; and from the whole mass of the soul sufferings of thy Lord, behold what crowned the whole: “Thy rebuke, (saith Jesus to the Father,) thy rebuke hath broken my heart.” To search into the depths of this scripture is impossible; for who shall describe it? What human, or even angelic intellect can fathom the profound subject? That this was the greatest and heaviest weight in the whole curse, we may venture to suppose: because we read of nothing which bore so hard upon the holy Jesus, amidst all his agonies, as the Father’s rebuke. It was this which broke his heart. My soul! repeat the solemn scripture, as if Jesus was in the moment uttering the words: “Thy rebuke hath broken my heart.” Precious Lord! could not this have been

² The text is “Reproach hath broken my heart; 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.”

In the Garden of Gethsemane

spared thee? Pause, my soul! Lamb of God! must the rebuke of thy Father be also in the curse? Pause again, my soul! When Jesus made his soul an offering for sin, would not the Father of mercies, and God of all consolation, show the least portion of favour to his dear, his beloved, his only begotten Son? Pause, my soul, yet once again, and ponder over the solemn subject! "It pleased the [Father] to bruise him; he hath put him to grief" – But, my soul! though neither thou, nor perhaps angels of light, can explain the extremity of the Redeemer's sufferings, in the rebuke of the Father for sin, which broke his heart; yet in the contemplation of the *lesser* sorrows of the curse which Jesus endured, thou wilt be led to form some faint idea, however small, in comparison of the real state of it, to induce a train of the most solemn meditations. When the Son of God assumed our nature, though in a holy portion of that nature, untainted by the fall, being not derived by ordinary generation, yet coming as the sinner's surety, he took upon him the curse for sin; he was first made *sin*, (2 Cor. 5. 21), and then a *curse* for us (Gal. 3. 13); as such, he was invested with everything belonging to the frailties of our nature, which might expose that nature to sorrow, and suffering, and death. The sentence of the fall was, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3. 19); so that the curse, then seizing the human nature of Christ, at once tended to waste all the animal

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spirits, and to induce a state of mind peculiarly low and dejected. Agreeably to this, we find, that the holy Jesus, though it is once said of him, that in that hour he “rejoiced in spirit,” when the devils were subject to his name (Luke 10. 18-21,) yet is it never said of him, that he was once seen to laugh. As the sinner’s surety, he sustained everything of sorrow which belonged to God’s curse against sin; and became eminently marked with affliction; and in a way which none but himself ever waded through; yea, to make the horrors of death more tremendous and bitter, the very sun became darkened at mid-day; not so much, I humbly conceive, as some have thought, to intimate by the miracle God’s displeasure at the act of the Jews in the crucifixion of Christ, as to manifest the Father’s rebuke of sin, which Jesus then stood as the sinner’s surety to answer for, and which Christ, as if summing up the whole of his misery, declared to be the finishing stroke, which had “broken [his] heart.” My soul! look up, and thus behold the Lamb of God! Oh! thou precious, precious Redeemer! The sons of thy Zion, but for this blessed undertaking of thine, would have fainted for ever! They would have lain “at the head of all the streets: as a wild bull in a net they [would have been] full of the fury of the LORD, the rebuke of thy God.” But now, Lord, thou hast swallowed up death in victory: “the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his

In the Garden of Gethsemane

people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it.”



Meditation 8

Christ's agony in the garden

“Being in an agony.” – Luke 22. 44.

My soul, art thou still in Gethsemane? Look at Jesus once more; behold him in his agony; view him in his bloody sweat, in a night of cold and in the open air, when we are told the servants in the high priest's hall were obliged to make a fire of coals to warm themselves. In such a night was thy Jesus, from the extremity of anguish in his soul, by reason of thy sins, made to sweat great drops of blood. Look at the Lord in this situation; and as the prophet, by vision, beheld him coming up with his dyed garments, as one that had trodden the wine fat; so do thou, by faith, behold him in his bloody sweat; when, from treading the winepress of the wrath of God, under the heavy load of the world's guilt, his whole raiment was stained with blood. Sin first made man to sweat: and Jesus, though he knew no sin, yet taking out the curse of it for his people, is made to sweat blood. Oh thou meek and holy Lamb of God! Methinks I would, day by day, attend the garden of Gethsemane by faith, and contemplate thee in thine agony. But who shall unfold it to my wondering eyes, or

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explain all its vast concern to my astonished soul! The evangelists, by their different turns of expression to point it out, plainly show, that nothing within the compass of language can unfold it. Matthew saith, the soul of Jesus was “exceeding sorrowful, even unto death” (Matt. 26. 38). The sorrows of hell, as is elsewhere mentioned, encompassed him (Psa. 18. 5). My soul, pause over this. Was Jesus’s soul thus sorrowful, even with hell sorrows, when, from the sins of his people charged on him, and the penalty exacted from him as the sinner’s surety, the wrath of God against sin, lighting upon him, came as the tremendous vengeance of hell? Mark describes the state of the Lamb of God as “sore amazed.” The expression signifies the horror of mind, such a degree of fear and consternation, as when the hairs of the head stand upright, through the dread of the mind. And was Jesus thus agonized, and for sins his holy soul had never committed, when standing forth as the surety of others? John’s expression of the Redeemer’s state on this occasion is, that he said, his soul was troubled (John 12. 27). The original of this word *troubled*, is the same as the Latins derive their word for hell from. As if the Lord Jesus felt what the prophet had said concerning everlasting burnings, (Isa. 33. 14), “My heart,” said that patient sufferer, “is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels” (Psa. 22. 14). Hence Moses, and after him Paul, in the view of God’s

In the Garden of Gethsemane

taking vengeance on sin, describe him under that awful account – our God “is a consuming fire,” (Deut. 4. 24, Heb. 12. 29). Beholding his Father thus coming forth to punish sin in his person, Jesus said – “Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, ... therefore my heart faileth me” (Psa. 40. 12). And Luke folds up the account of Jesus with “being in an agony;” such a labouring of nature as implies an universal convulsion, as dying men with cold clammy sweats; so Jesus, scorched with the hot wrath of God on sin, sweated, in his agony, clots of blood! My soul, canst thou hold out any longer? Will not thine eye-strings and heart-strings break, thus to look on Jesus in his agony! O precious Jesus! were the great objects of insensible, unanimated nature, made to feel as if to take part in thy sufferings; and am I unmoved? Did the very grave yawn at thy death and resurrection; and were the rocks rent, while my tearless eyes thus behold thee? O gracious God, fulfil that promise by the prophet, that I may “look on [him] whom [I] have pierced, and ... mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and ... be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

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# *The Trial and Crucifixion of Jesus*

## **Meditation 9**

*The willingness of Jesus to die*

**“Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.” – John 18. 4, 5, 6.**

What a glorious scripture is this! Ponder it well, my soul; for of all the miracles of thy Jesus, there is not one more sweet and satisfactory to contemplate. Thou hast seen thy Redeemer under a heavy cloud in the garden of Gethsemane. Look at him as he is here represented, for he is still, in this transaction, in the same garden; and behold how the Godhead shone forth with a glory surpassing all description. Observe what a willing sacrifice was Jesus. He knew the hour was come, for he had said so. He doth not wait to be taken, and by wicked hands to be crucified and slain: but he goeth forth to surrender himself. Yes! Jesus did not go to the garden of Gethsemane for nothing; he knew Judas would be there; he knew the powers of darkness would be there; he knew his whole soul

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would be in an agony; but there Jesus would go. He had said at the table of his disciples, "Arise, let us go hence." Precious, precious Jesus! How endearing to my poor soul is this sweet view of thy readiness and earnestness to become a sacrifice for the sins of thy people. Thou hast this baptism, Lord, to be baptized with; and how wast thou straitened until it was accomplished! There was a time, dear Lord, when the multitudes sought for thee to make thee a king; so convinced were they, for the moment, who thou wert; and then thou didst hide thyself from them. But now thine enemies come to make thee king with a crown of thorns, and to nail thy sacred body to the cross, thou didst hasten to meet them. Well might the prophet say, thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people. Look at this scripture again, my soul. "Whom seek ye?" said Jesus. Did they not know him? It was a light night, most probably; for the moon was then at the full; besides, the seekers of Christ had lanterns and torches. How was it they did not know him? Didst thou for the moment, dearest Lord, do by them as thine angels at the gate of Lot by the Sodomites, so cause their eyes to be holden that they should not know thee? Was there somewhat of a miracle in this also? But, my soul, behold the wonder of wonders that followed: no sooner had Jesus said to their inquiry, "Whom seek ye? ... I am he," then they went backward and fell to the ground. Was there indeed some sudden overpowering emana-

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tion of the Godhead, breaking through the vail of Jesus’s flesh, which induced this effect? Was it ever known, ever heard of, in any age or period of the world, of such an effect before? Supposing all the monarchs of the earth, with the mightiest armies of men, could be assembled together, how should such an event be induced by the breath of their mouth? Contemplate this, my soul, again and again. Rejoice, my soul, in this view of thy Saviour: for never, surely, was a greater miracle of thy Redeemer’s wrought; and remember how soon it took place after his agony. Never go to Gethsemane in meditation, without taking the recollection of it with thee. “Behold the man!” behold the God! Here was nothing exercised by Jesus; no weapon, no threat, no denunciation, no appeal to the Father. Jesus only simply said, “I am he,” and they fell to the earth. Precious Jesus, what a volume of instruction doth it afford. If such was the effect in the day of thy flesh, how sure is that scripture concerning the day of thy power, in which it is said that the Lord shall consume the wicked with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy them with the brightness of his coming (2 Thess. 2. 8). And if, my soul, there was such power in the word of thy Saviour, when he only said to his enemies, “I am he,” why shouldst thou not feel all the sweetness and gracious power of his love, when he saith, “Fear not, I am he; behold I am with thee: it is I; be not afraid.” Ponder, my soul, in this view also, the

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awful state of a soul hardened by sin. The enemies of Jesus, though they fell to the ground at his mere word, felt no change, no compunction, at the display of it. Judas also was with them. Yes! he fell also; but Satan had entered into him, and a reprobate mind marked him as the son of perdition. Oh, precious Jesus! how fully read to thy people, in every part of thy word, is the solemn truth, that grace makes all the difference between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not. Oh, keep me, Lord, and I shall be well kept; for unto thee do I lift up my soul!



**Meditation 10**

*The sword smiting the shepherd*

**“Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered” – Zech. 13. 7.**

That this blessed scripture points to Christ and to him only, the Lord Jesus himself fully confirmed in his discourse with his disciples at the Mount of Olives, (Matt. 26. 31). And indeed of whom could Jehovah thus speak, as “fellow” to the Lord of Hosts, but to Him, who, though “in the form of God,” and with whom it was “not robbery to be equal with God,” yet “took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men”?

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But what call is this to the sword? Was it the flaming sword at the gate of Paradise, which was placed there to guard the way to the tree of life? And had the sword been for so many ages sleeping? Could none presume to enter but Jesus? And if he enters, the sword of God’s justice must first awake, and be sheathed in his heart. And is it God the Father himself that thus commands the sword to awake, and smite his only begotten Son? Did God indeed so love the world, that he thus gave his only begotten Son, to the end that all who believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life? Pause, my soul, over these solemn but blessed thoughts. And is he God, on whom these things are to be transacted? Yes; for he is “fellow” to the Lord of Hosts. And is he man also? Yes; for “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us”! Such is the mystery of godliness; “God was manifest in the flesh”! And, what! is he both God and man in one person? Yes; for so only could he be Christ. Well might the prophet exclaim, “Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth!” My soul! take thy stand now, at the foot of the cross, and contemplate, among the prodigies of that memorable day, that great wonder concerning him crucified, who was fellow to the Lord of Hosts. View both his natures; he was truly and properly *man*; for it was one express article in the covenant of redemption, that “since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.” And “as by one man’s

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disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” Moreover, the first promise of the Bible, which came in with the fall, was express to this purpose, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head. The devil had triumphed over the nature of man in the fall; and the same nature of man was promised to conquer death, hell, and the grave; and as both the law and the justice of God were solemnly concerned that the same nature which had rebelled should obey, and the same nature which had sinned should atone; and all the divine perfections were concerned, that he who undertook the purposes of redemption, should be the man that was fellow to the Lord of Hosts, even Christ Jesus. Secondly, as none but man could be suited for a Redeemer, so none but God could be competent to accomplish redemption. Hence he must be fellow to the Lord of Hosts. In point of dignity, in point of merit, the glory due to a Redeemer when redemption should be accomplished, and the adoration, love, and praise to be ascribed to him, could never be suitable to any less than God. Hence by the union of both natures, Jesus, and Jesus only, who thus formed one Christ, became the very person here described, and was, and is, and ever must be, “the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts”. Now, my soul, whenever thou lookest up to the cross, (let it be daily, hourly, continually, yea, unceasingly) never

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lose sight of this glorious union of God and man in thy Jesus. Fix thine eyes, thine heart, thy whole affection upon him; and while thou art resting all thine assurance of pardon, mercy, and peace, the joy of this life, and the glory of that which is to come, wholly upon thy Jesus; Oh! let thine ear of faith receive in transports of delight, the proclamation of God thy Father concerning Him, “the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts.”



## **Meditation 11**

### *Golgotha*

**“A place called Golgotha” – Matt. 27. 33.**

And wherefore called Golgotha? It was “a place of a skull”; not a charnel house; not a sepulchre for the great; but probably where a number of unburied skulls of poor criminals lay together, or scattered here and there, as the feet of those who visited this place of sorrow, might kick them. Luke calls it Calvary, (Luke 23. 33), but both mean one and the same place. And was this a suited place for thee, Oh thou Lord of life and glory? Yes, blessed Jesus! if thou wilt become sin, and a curse for thy redeemed; then, surely, this of all places becomes thee, where thy people must have lain for ever, hadst thou not interposed, and undertaken all that behoved them to suffer, that they might be made

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the righteousness of God in thee! My soul, did Jesus suffer at Golgotha? Go thou forth to him "without the camp, bearing his reproach." And is this Golgotha? And was it here that Jesus "then ... restored that which [he] took not away"? Oh! how blessed the review! How memorable, how sacred the spot! Who would have thought that a place so wretched should have produced so much good! Confusion had been introduced into all the works of God, by reason of sin; here Jesus restored perfect order to all. God's glory had been tarnished; God's law had been broken; God's justice despised. At Golgotha, Jesus restored all. And as man had lost the image of God, the favour of God, the acquaintance with God: at this memorable spot, Jesus restored to God his glory, and to man God's favour. My soul! do thou often visit the place called Golgotha; and to endear the sacred haunt still more, look at thy Lord as thou goest thither, and figure to thyself thy Jesus going with thee. Here it was that his person and all his sacred offices were blasphemed. Is Jesus the Lord God of the prophets? Then will the rabble vilify his prophetic office. "Prophecy", say they, "thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?" Is Jesus the great High Priest of Jehovah, after the order of Melchisedec? This also shall be despised. "Save thyself and us," said one of the thieves crucified with him. And is Jesus a king? "Come down then," say they, "from the cross, and we will believe." Yea,



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and as the most aggravating circumstance of cruelty, and which, as far as I have ever heard, or read, was never practised upon the most abject criminal, his very prayers were turned into ridicule. “My God, my God,” said the holy sufferer, “why hast thou forsaken me?” “This man calleth for Elias”, said they; “let us see whether Elias will come to save him.” Pause, my soul! over the solemn view: and as thou takest thine stand at Golgotha, ask thine heart, is this Jesus, who is “the brightness of [his Father’s] glory, and the express image of his person”? Is this he, whom angels worship, and at whose name every knee shall bow, “of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth”? Oh! thou bleeding Lamb, that art now in the midst of the throne! often let my soul ruminare over the affecting scenes of Golgotha. Solemn is the place, but blessed also. Here would I sit down, and as I contemplate Jesus, in this endearing part of his character, I would hear his voice, speaking in the tenderest manner, “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.”

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Meditation 12

Christ's soul anguish in death

**“He hath poured out his soul unto death” –
Isa. 53. 12.**

My soul! from the garden to the cross, follow Jesus. Behold him apprehended and hurried away, both to judgment and to death. He who struck to the ground the band that came to take him, might surely, by the same breath of his mouth, have struck them to hell, and prevented his being apprehended by them. But one of the sweetest and most blessed parts of Jesus's redemption of his people, consisted in the freeness and willingness of his sacrifice. Yes, thou precious Lamb of God! no man (as thou thyself hadst before said) had power to take thy life from thee; but thou didst lay it down thyself: thou hadst power to lay it down, and thou hadst power to take it again. Delightful consideration, to thee, my soul! Now, my soul, let your meditation be sacred to the view of thy Redeemer pouring out his *soul* unto death. And then, if the Lord spare thee, let the solemn subject of thy study be the sufferings of Jesus in his *body*. Pause, then, my soul, and call up all the powers of thy mind to the contemplation of what the scripture teacheth concerning thy Redeemer's pouring out his soul unto death. Seek the teachings of the Holy Ghost in this solemn and mysterious subject. The original curse pronounced

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on the fall, which Jesus took upon himself, and came to do away, contained somewhat vastly great. For as the blessing promised to obedience, “This, do, and thou shalt live,” certainly meant somewhat much greater than mere animal life, and implied sweet fellowship and communion with God; so the curse to disobedience, “Thou shalt surely die”; as plainly intimated much more than the mere return of the body to the dust out of which it was taken: it meant what in scripture (Rev. 20. 6.) is called the “second death”, meaning hell and everlasting misery. Hence, in the recovery of our lost and fallen nature from this awful state, when Jesus undertook the salvation of his people, he was to sustain all that was our due; and, in the accomplishment of this, he not only died in his body, but he poured out his soul unto death. As the sinner’s representative, and the sinner’s surety, he bore the whole weight and pressure of divine justice due to sin; according to what the Holy Ghost taught – “indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil” (Rom. 2. 8, 9). Not that the Redeemer needed, in the accomplishment of this, to go down into hell to suffer the miseries of the damned; for when the avenging wrath of God came upon him, he endured it here. The wrath of God may be sustained in earth as well as in hell; witness the evil spirit that is called the prince of the power of the air, (Eph. 2. 2); for wherever the apostate angels are, they still

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endure divine wrath. Hence, when the Lord Christ poured out his soul unto death, by reason of the extremity of his soul sufferings, and soul's travail for his redeemed, he sustained all this as the sinner's surety, in becoming sin and a curse, to feel and suffer all that was the sinner's due. Oh! who shall say, what heart shall conceive, the greatness and extensiveness of thy sufferings, precious, precious Lamb of God! Oh! who shall undertake fully to show the infinite suitableness of Jesus to every poor humble convinced sinner, in delivering him from the wrath to come! Here, my soul, fix thine eyes; here let all thy powers be employed in the unceasing contemplation, while beholding Jesus, thy Jesus, pouring out his soul unto death; while numbered with the transgressors, and bearing the sin of many, and making intercession for the transgressors (Isaiah 53. 12).

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### **Meditation 13**

*Christ counted among the thieves*

**“And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.”**  
– Mark 15. 28.

Look up, my soul, to the cross, and behold thy Lord hanging with two thieves; yea, in the middle of them, as if the greatest malefactor of the three; and, what is the most awful part of the subject, not