

## SECOND SABBATH.

by a man, and John tells us that it was made by several persons. Peter (Matthew 26, 72) denied still more emphatically. Finally, a man who, as John tells us, was brother to him whose ear Peter had cut off, asked him if he had not been with Jesus in the garden; Peter again denied with oaths and imprecations, and immediately the cock crew the second time. The cock usually crows twice—once at midnight, and again in the morning, and the term "cock crowing" is especially applied to the latter. This will explain the difference between Matt. 26, 34, and Mark 14, 30.

3rd. Let us look at the heinousness of Peter's sin, both in itself and in its aggravations. It was a direct lie, thrice uttered, and in the end accompanied by an appeal to God to witness the truth of that which he himself knew to be false. It was committed against a Master who loved him, and whom he loved—who was the noblest Master that any man ever had, who had distinguished him above his fellows by peculiar marks of His regard, and who had recently warned him against this very sin. Lastly, it was committed in the very presence of Jesus, and must have inflicted an additional pang on his suffering human heart.

4thly. Let us consider the causes which led to it. (a) *Self-confidence*. Trusting in his own strength, he ceased to ask for and obtain his Master's aid. (b) *Fear*. He not only dreaded that he might be involved in the fate of his Master; but he had reason on his own account to fear the vengeance of the brother of Malchus. (c) *Shame*. He shrank from the contempt and scorn of the haughty Priests and Pharisees, as well as from the coarser insults of their followers.

The sin of Judas was followed by remorse, which hardens the heart; but Peter's sin was followed by repentance, by which the heart is melted. First, it was *true repentance*. His sorrow was sincere, and proportioned to the awful offence that he had committed. He wept *bitterly*. 2ndly, *It did not originate in himself*. Luke alone mentions the touching circumstance that the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. That look of mingled sorrow, love, and compassion, pierced Peter's heart; and reminded him of his Master's predictions and his own promises. Then, as now, it was the promise of Jesus to give repentance to Israel.

Let us be careful not to fall into Peter's sin. The boy who is ashamed to pray when he lies down at night or rises in the morning, in the presence of others,—the youth who is deterred by ridicule from attending church, or keeping holy the Sabbath,—the man who is kept from doing what he knows to be right from the fear of losing his trade—deny Jesus as actually, though not as grossly, as Peter.

## DOCTRINES.

To trust in our own strength is dangerous. Exalted privileges will not secure us from sin. The way of sin is ever downward, leading deeper and deeper into guilt. God permits his people sometimes to fall. True repentance is deep and bitter. A look from Jesus melts the heart.

SUBJECT:—*The Crucifixion*, Mark 15: 22  
59. Par. pass.: Matt. 27: 33—54; Luke 23:  
32—47; John 19: 17—30.

Vv. 22.—*Golgotha*, so called, either because it was the place for executions, or more probably from its resemblance to a skull.

Vv. 23.—It was customary to give to criminals before execution wine medicated with myrrh, for the purpose of deadening their sensibility to pain. As this wine was a cheap sour wine, and as the term myrrh is sometimes used for the whole class of bitter substances, there is no discrepancy between this passage, and Matt. 27, 34, where the drink offered is called *vinegar mingled with gall*. Christ received it not, because he would not render himself insensible to pain, but would suffer the full penalty.

Vv. 24.—As customary, his garments were regarded as belonging to the executioners. A fulfilment of the prophecy in Ps. 22: 18.

Vv. 25.—The Jews counted the hours from sunrise to sunset. Three o'clock with them would correspond with our 9 o'clock in the morning.

Vv. 26.—According to Roman custom, the charge laid against the person crucified was written and placed over him. Christ's was written in three languages. The Jews wished it changed so that it might be more explicit, but the governor would not consent.

Vv. 27.—These two robbers were probably associates of Barabbas, and the fact that they were crucified at this time does not necessarily imply that it was done to heap indignity upon Christ, as it was customary to execute a number at once.

Vv. 28.—See Is. 53: 12. This was a partial fulfilment of the prediction.

Vv. 29, 30.—Not only those who happened to be passing, but those who were present at the crucifixion, and who walked to and fro before him, heaped contempt upon him. Christ had said, "Destroy this temple," &c., and had been understood literally. The taunt is, If thou hast such great power, exert it now."

Vv. 31.—All parties assisted in insulting Christ—not only the populace but the chief priests, scribes and elders. See Matt. 27: 41.

Vv. 32.—Luke says that one of the thieves reviled Christ, while Matthew and Mark represent them *both* as doing so. This apparent discrepancy may be explained by the supposition that Matthew and Mark speak generally—even the *thieves* reviled Him; or by the supposition that *at first* both reviled, but afterwards one was converted.

Vv. 33.—The sixth hour,—our 12 o'clock, the ninth,—our 3 o'clock, P. M. This darkness could not have been caused by an eclipse of the sun, for the full moon preceded the passover. It was miraculously produced.

Vv. 34.—*Eloi, &c.*, Aramaic or Syro-Chaldaic words. See Ps. 22: 5.

Vv. 35.—These could not have been Romans, for they knew nothing of Elijah. They must have been Jews. But did they mis-