

of Isa. 53. 2. The conduct of these two men is related in Luke 23. 39-43. To one of them Jesus spoke the second sentence from the cross. "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." (3) *On those two crosses were represented all the world—those saved by faith on one side, and those lost by unbelief on the other.*

**39. 40. They that passed by.** Either the assembling multitude, or those who passed in and out of the city; for the cross was planted near a public thoroughfare. **Reviled him.** By their attitude, their manner, and their spoken words. The feet of the sufferer were quite near the ground, and his face was within reach of a blow had they chosen to give it. **Thou that destroyest the temple.** A perversion of Jesus's words, John 2. 19. **Come down from the cross.** He could have come down from the cross if he had so chosen and his remaining there to suffer showed not lack of power but strength of self-denial. (4) *If he had descended from the cross how could we have ascended to the crown?*

**41. The chief priests.** The heads of the twenty-four sections in the Jewish priesthood. **Mocking him.** There was greater wickedness in the taunts of these sacred officials than in the abuse of the ignorant people. **With the scribes and elders.** The interpreters of the law of Moses, and the members of the Sanhedrin or supreme council, many of whom were present to show their scorn of Jesus.

**42. He saved others; himself he cannot save.** They taunted him with the declaration that he who had wrought other miracles had now lost his power, just when he needed it for himself. But they failed to realize that he held his power not for himself but for others. (5) *He who lives to save others must in the same measure forget himself.* **Come down and we will believe.** Those who had already resisted the proof of miracles like the raising of Lazarus would not have been convinced if Jesus came down from his cross. (6) *Men do not need evidences, but willingness to examine them.*

**43. He trusted in God.** Rev. Ver. "He trusteth in God." **Let him deliver him.** Meaning, "Let God deliver him if God will recognize him as one under his special care." They had a false, though a very common view of divine providence, that God will interpose to save from death one for whom he cares. (7) *But what if death proves to be the greater blessing to the dying one and to the world?*

**44. The thieves also.** Matthew may here speak in general terms; or both may have reviled at first, and

one have repented afterward, as related by Luke. Soon after this came the third utterance from the cross, "Woman, behold thy son; son, behold thy mother," address to the mother of Jesus and his beloved disciple, John 19. 26, 27.

**45. From the sixth hour.** Twelve o'clock; as the first hour began with sunrise. **Darkness over all the land.** Either over the land of Judea, having its center at Jerusalem, or over the whole earth. The early Christian writers appealed to the statements of pagan historians in confirmation of this darkness. It could not have been an eclipse of the sun, for it was the time of full moon, when an eclipse is impossible. It was a miraculous event, typical of the dark hour through which the Saviour was passing. (8) *Dark as the day was to Jesus, it ushered in brightness to the world.* **Unto the ninth hour.** Three P. M., when the evening sacrifice was laid on the altar before the temple, and when the Saviour died.

**46. Jesus cried.** This was the fourth utterance from the cross, **Elhi, Elhi,** etc. A sentence in the Aramaic dialect of the Hebrew tongue, such as Jesus had spoken in his childhood. Among the many explanations of its meaning, that seems the best which considers it as representing "that phase of Christian experience in which, while the intellect still holds fast to its belief in God, the heart feels it no more, and the soul is in darkness, in spite of its faith in God."—Abbott.

**47. 48. Callest thou Elias.** The words may not have been fully understood, or may have been intentionally made the subject of a heartless jest. **One of them ran.** This was not in response to the fourth cry of Christ, but to the fifth, "I thirst." John 19. 28. **Sponge.** The only way in which the draught could be pressed to the lips of the sufferer. **Vinegar.** As before, sour wine; but this time not mixed with the stupefying draught. **Gave him to drink.** An act of kindness to a dying man.

**49. 50. The rest.** Others standing near, in mockery, call upon the one giving the drink to **cried again,** and see if Elijah will not come to his relief. **Desist again.** The sixth utterance, "It is finished" (John 19. 30), and the seventh, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," Luke 23. 46. **Yielded up the ghost.** Rev. Ver., "yielded up his spirit." The words, used by all the gospel-writers of the death of Christ, intimate that it was a voluntary death, a dismissal of his spirit.

## HOME READINGS.

M. Jesus crucified. Matt. 27. 33-44.

Th. Jesus crucified. Matt. 27. 45-53.

W. Before Pilate. John 18. 28-40.

Th. Before Herod. Luke 23. 6-16.

F. Delivered by Pilate. Matt. 27. 24-32.

S. Despised and rejected. Isa. 53.

8. "It is finished." John 19. 25-37.

## GOLDEN TEXT.

He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Phil. 2. 8.

## LESSON HYMNS.

No. 27, Dominion Hymnal.

In the Cross of Christ we glory,  
T'owing o'er the wrecks of time.

No. 26, Dominion Hymnal.

Jesus keep me near the Cross,  
There a precious fountain.

No. 28, Dominion Hymnal.

There is a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins.

TIME.—30 A. D. Early on Friday.

PLACES.—Jerusalem. Calvary.

RULERS.—Same as before.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The atonement.

## QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. The Cross.

Where was the place of the crucifixion?

To what people was this form of punishment peculiar?

What were the usual practices that attended the crucifixion of criminals?

What ones of them are mentioned in Matthew's story?

What was the nature of this punishment in relation to physical suffering?

What class of persons only were subjected to this punishment?

In what estimate was it held by society?

2. The King.

What had Christ long claimed himself to be?

How early in his ministry had this title been used of him? John 1. 49.

What had been the charge upon which he was put to death?

How had the Jews used this claim of Jesus to influence Pilate?

What ignominious use of the title did the chief priests make when he was suffering on the cross?

How did Jesus show the depth of his sufferings?

What attestation did God give to him in the closing hour?

What testimony did the closing scenes draw from a Roman soldier?

## Practical Teachings.

"They watched him there," and the world has watched him there ever since. To such as see him by faith he is a Saviour. Can you say "my King?"

"He trusted in God." Even his enemies gave this testimony to his wonderful life. Do you trust, as he did, in God?

"Himself he cannot save." Of course he could not. But his love saved us. There is no salvation without it. Are you saved?

"Forsaken." What did he not leave for us; and we,