

bring judgment upon him after the feast of the Passover (translated 'Easter' in our Bibles).

This waiting-time was one of utmost importance to Peter. The assembly of saints (here translated as 'the Church') made *instant and earnest prayer to God for him*. Two very important points will be seen here—

FIRST.—The prayer was *earnest*, without *ceasing*: it was real, heartfelt prayer; very different to the mere repetition of words from a book, or from the lips of another, which such numbers of worldly-minded souls are content with, and who are not alive in Christ at all, but dead in trespasses and sins, and who by thus giving a sort of religious 'sop' to their consciences, vainly consider that they are doing that which is pleasing to God. Let such read *Proverbs* xxi. 27, and xxviii. 9, and mark what God thinks of such prayers, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (*Galatians* vi. 7): and if he sows the *wind*, he will reap the *whirlwind of his destruction* (*Hosea* viii. 7). What multitudes there are who every Lord's-day satisfy their consciences by going *formally* through various forms of service, under the idea that they are thus worshipping God, not knowing that *real worship* is praise offered to God for being brought out of darkness, bondage, and death, into light, liberty, and life everlasting, through Christ; and not also knowing that it is only those who are *true believers* in Christ and have access to God by the blood, as Abel had (*Genesis* iv. 4), that are accepted by God as worshippers at all; if we have not a living faith, the faith that worketh by love (*Galatians* v. 6), we have no access or title to go into God's presence as His worshipping children (see *Romans* v. 1, 2, and *Ephesians* ii. 18). Such are only doing what Cain did, going to offer an offering to God without the blood of reconciliation, thus really without the real acknowledgment that

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