

## Holy Utterances

Mark. 15: 34; Mark. 5: 41; Mark. 7: 34; Mark. 14: 36.

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Mark only gives us the four utterances of our Lord in the actual language in which He spoke. Outstanding amongst them is the cry from the cross, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani*" (Mark 15: 34). This alone of the four is given also by Matthew, and in its English translation is found again in Psalm 22. This is thrice holy ground; and as attempting to touch such a theme we are conscious of the searching word in Exodus 29, "whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy." The many times the word "holy" is used in Exodus (God moving towards us in blessing), and in Leviticus (our movements towards God as worshippers), is surely a matter of deep significance.

The word "sabachthani" implies "a cry of distress" — "Thou hast left me."

"Love made Thee here a Man of grief,

Distressed Thee sore for our relief,

Oh mystery of love!"

Here, at Calvary, love — eternal love — shone in all its brilliance, triumphing over the guilt and power of sin, whilst that Holy One was Himself experiencing the complete separation from a holy God which sin entailed! "But Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel." No other voice but His could fully answer the question which that awful cry of abandonment had raised.

How thankful we are to discern something of the "joy that was set before Him" as "He endured the cross." "To the Chief Musician. Upon Aijeleth Shahar," (The hind of the morning), so reads the inspired heading of Psalm 22. The morning of a new day was in view, a time of singing — "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee" (Hebrews 2: 12). A new generation is in mind — "Behold I and the children which God hath given Me." "They shall . . . declare unto a people that shall be born, that *He hath done this*" (Psalm 22: 31). What wondrous grace that we should have our part in this precious testimony! The night of sorrow over, "joy cometh in the morning;" the bright rays of the coming day of glory had already shone into a heart hitherto darkened by sin, sin that found its apex in the reviling of that Holy Sufferer. Soon the whole earth will be radiant with the glory that must follow the suffering, and eternity itself shall reveal a still holy God dwelling with men — their God, and they in holy blessed nearness to Him — His people.

"*Talitha Cumi*" (Mark 5: 41). The glorious Person who spoke these words is none other than the Son of God — "marked out Son of God in power . . . by resurrection of (the) dead," Romans 1: 4 (New Trans.). Into a scene of sorrow and death He brought the perfection of a love which "casteth out fear" and "is strong as death." The darkness of death's night is dispelled by the mighty power of His voice of love, using the words with which a mother would awaken her child at the commencement of a new day — "Talitha Cumi." Embedded in the salutation "Talitha" is the thought of "freshness;" "Cumi" carries the suggestion of "established;" "standing up in strength." Happy indeed are those who, in response to the voice of the Son of God, are made to live, and to "walk in newness of life." The voice of power which breaks the fetters of death, is also the voice of compassionate love which indicates the availability of food to sustain the features of life.

What precious depths of power and love the words of Jesus reveal! Luke 4 speaks of that truly remarkable incident in the synagogue at Nazareth, when "the eyes of *all*" were fixed upon Jesus as He read the Scriptures, and they "wondered at the *gracious* words which proceeded out of His mouth" (verse 22). Then in verse 32 of the same chapter we read, "They were astonished at His doctrine; for His word was with *power*". Truly we may sing of Him "Who is over all, God blessed for ever" and yet perfect Man

"Thy truth and grace their strength combine  
To draw our souls along."

"*Ephphatha*" (Mark 7: 34). How much hangs upon this one word from the lips of Jesus! Much for God; much for men! "One that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech" — or "could not speak right." Let us look most carefully at the attitude of the Lord Jesus as they bring this deaf-mute to Him. "Looking up to *heaven* He groaned" (New Trans.). Surely this suggests that He was regarding this man's condition *as it affected God*. Estranged from the life of God, held in Satan's grip, man's ear is not attuned to the speaking of God. In the Old Testament we read of the many times God pleaded with His earthly people — "Hear, My people"! In John 8 the Lord Jesus has to say to the Jews of His day, "Why do ye not understand My speech? even because ye cannot hear My word." Some 9 or 10 times in the gospels we have the appeal "He that hath ears to hear let him hear," and Luke, the beloved physician, tells us that when Peter had cut off the right ear of the high priest's servant, the blessed Lord "touched his ear, and healed him."

Deaf to divine communications men are unable to "speak aright." The men of Athens, fully competent to discuss every new thing, could but, by their inscription, reveal their total ignorance of God. Even Job's friends, doubtless men marked by worldly wisdom, were rebuked by God, "Ye have not spoken of Me the thing that is right."

How keenly the Lord Jesus felt the lack of man's response to God, and how gladly He took the man "aside from the multitude . . . and touched his tongue" saying, "Be opened." "And he spoke aright." What a precious, far-reaching service is this! Mark alone gives us the exclamation of the astonished onlookers — "He hath done all things well: He maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak." Wonderful epitome of the service of our blessed Lord! Opening men's ears to the gracious revelation from God — and unloosing their tongue to respond intelligently to His speaking. With what delight God could say in an earlier day "The daughters of Zelophehad *speak right*" (Numbers 27: 7). They had the inheritance in their hearts — and their speaking was in relation to it.

*Our* inheritance is centred in Christ. Let us ever seek to be near Him, valuing increasingly all He would speak to us of — The Father's things — the Father's Name — causing our hearts to respond in intelligent praise to Himself and His God.

Thus shall we learn something of the hidden depths in that other word which came from His holy lips "*Abba*" (Mark 14: 36). This garden scene is one which deeply moves our affections towards our blessed Lord as we hear His words, "Abba, Father, . . . not what I will, but what Thou wilt."

"Obedience to His Father's will,  
And love to Him did all fulfil."

As we with reverence contemplate these four sayings in the actual words of Christ, we adoringly own that the awful cry of abandonment from the cross was His *alone*. It was there the holy claims of God's throne were met, and the basis laid for the display of eternal glory to God and blessing to us. His

voice *only* has power to penetrate the grave; He *only* can open deaf ears and unloose dumb tongues. "Eloi, Eloi lama sabachthani;" "Talitha Cumi;" "Ephphatha," are His words *alone* — but blessed be God, *we* too can take upon our lips the precious name of "Abba." As the result of His precious death and mighty victory we "have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Romans 8: 15). Brought into the intimacy of sonship — having the Spirit of God's Son in our hearts, we cry "Abba, Father" (Galatians 4: 6).

"Now the Father's Name Thou tellest,  
Joy is in Thy heart:  
In His love in which Thou dwellest  
We have part."

With what holy joy He says, "I will declare Thy Name unto My brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee." Gladly do we respond in the lines of a hymn written nearly 1,200 years ago

"Glory, honour, praise and power  
Be unto the Lamb for ever!  
Jesus Christ is our Redeemer!  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!  
Hallelujah! Praise we the Lord."