



THE CROWING COCK

Mary M. Bodie

"And Peter said, man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew" - Luke 22:60. The first thing I want you to notice about our Lord is that He served; He took the place of lowliness, that He might minister to all men. How wonderful He is, how great. There never was anyone like Him. We will all agree with that. "Never man spake like this Man." This was said when He was present, almost two thousand years ago; and we say the same today. He speaks to His apostles, saying "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations." Luke 22:28.

It is wonderful to continue with Christ in His temptations. We are in the day of His temptation yet, in a sense; for He is still rejected by the world, and we are continuing with Him. He knows who are with Him in His rejection. How wonderful to be continually in fellowship with Him, loving Him and watching with Him.

"And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon, behold, satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" - Luke 22:29-32. Peter was among them, that we read of in verse twenty-four, who were striving for the best place. The Lord had already told Peter that He would give him the keys of heaven, and he probably was asserting himself. "I will be the greatest, and you will have to be subject to me," he was saying. Jesus had told them He was going away, but they could not believe that it was the way of the Cross. Immediately Jesus spoke to Peter, "Simon, I know what you are talking about, asserting yourself, and saying you are a stone; but you are going to be sifted as wheat." Satan

cannot sift us except as wheat, no matter how foolish we are. The old man is just as foolish today as he ever was. But, thank God, for a Man who is not foolish; who does not assert Himself nor try to get a big place, because He already has the big place. We do not run after something we already have. We saints already have the best place, and we should not be striving for a better place.

Jesus said, "And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one" - John 17:22. This is so wonderful to me that I could stop and speak on every verse. Peter was humiliated by Jesus' words. We know how he felt, and his affected superiority; for he felt a little top heavy, feeling his oats. The Lord addressed him, calling his name; but did not say a word to the others. "Peter, you are going to fail, we will go on booming. That is the important factor. Peter said unto Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with Thee, both into prison, and to death." To paraphrase, he said, "Now, Lord, You don't quite know me. You are not giving me credit for what I am." He asserted himself against the Lord. "Lord, you know I would go into prison and death, and here You are calling me down." Loyalty was real in his heart. He was an impetuous soul, strong in himself, riding for a fall. He was ready, even as many of us are when we are young, to run through a troop or jump over a wall. Then when the time comes we do not do it, the wall is too high and the troop too big, ... especially when it is the cross that we must bear. Peter was ready to use a sword, which he did a little later and he cut a man's ear off; but the cross is a different thing. It is an offense to the flesh. When the cross is in view, we all get weak. We cannot stand the ridicule,

the mockery, the reproach, which Satan has in his sieve. The devil was after Peter; he knew how God was going to use this man, and he did not want Peter to be used of the Lord. He was trying to defeat him before he got started. Many folk are defeated before they get a good start on the racecourse.

Jesus said, "I tell thee, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest Me" - Luke 22:34. I am so glad the Lord knows all about us, all of our weaknesses. He knows us altogether better than we know ourselves, and better than anyone else knows us. He told Peter beforehand what he would do, so that he could take hold of His strength and not fail. How did the Lord know all that was going to happen? He was God and He had the Spirit upon Him. He had the discernment of the Spirit, and He knew what was in the offing. He had that rooster right there to crow, and he crowed at exactly the right time.

"And He said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing." That was said for Peter's benefit. He desired to encourage him at this time with the witness of His care. But now there will be a difference. He is going away. "Then said He unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one." He meant they would be tested and have trouble in the natural. He told them of the death He was going to die. He was to be "reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning Me have an end." They looked upon these things in the natural, and they thought He really meant them to take a natural sword. But He meant they must take the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and stand and fight the fight of faith. We see here the great contrast between Judas and Peter. Both got into trouble; but note the difference between the two men. One was a saint and one was a sinner. One believed that Jesus was the Son of God, and the other did not. That made the difference in their eternal destiny. One went out and "wept bitterly," and the other went out and "hanged himself."

Jesus was going to that Cross because of His Father's will. He had come to die. He was the only man that ever lived that knew He would die in the will of God. He wanted to do everything that was His Father's will. He would not let man glory over Him. He knew they could do nothing against Him unless the Father had willed it so. They led Him to the high priest's house, and it looked like He was absolutely in their control; but He was not. He was the Lamb "foreordained" to die "before the foundation of the world." So they brought Him and led Him and made Him go; but they did not have to do that He had to go to that Cross. He went in the will of God ... that Lamb that was bound to the horns of the altar, as it were. Peter was following afar off. He sat down among His rejecters; he did not quite want to be identified with this wonderful Man until he would see what He would do. Peter knew that the Lord was all-powerful. He need only to say a word and He would be loosed. Jesus Himself said, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels?" - Matt. 26:53. But the will of God must be done. Peter could not understand why Jesus was not delivered, why He was letting these men lead Him and take Him into trial. Is He really going to let them do what they want with Him? The disciples had seen Him heal the sick, raise the dead, and stop the raging sea.

They had seen Him in action, and why should they be fearful that He would not deliver

Himself? They thought He would save Himself, but here He was apparently yielding to the authority of the officers. We would not have understood it either if we had been there.

So Peter sat down among Christ's enemies, and a woman saw him. It takes a woman to see

things, does n 't it? First, the maid looked upon him and said, "This man was also with Him"; and he denied that he knew Jesus. This man who had said he would go "into prison, and to death" fails the test. Another said to him "Thou art also of them." Peter said, "man, I am not." I think he said this a little louder; he was getting a little hot under the collar. He felt he was under suspicion. After this it was a whole hour before he was again called on the carpet. Finally another man said, "Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee." He insisted that Peter was one of His followers. "Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest." Was he not a good liar? "And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew." I said the Lord had a rooster there. Where was that rooster? He must have been in a yard around there. He surely could not have been in that hall of judgment, but he was somewhere close. The Lord made that cock crow at exactly the right time. He had power to move that rooster.

Sometimes these unintelligent creatures obey God better than His own people. Maybe many times we do not crow at the right time. Sometimes when the due time comes we are floored. I have seen people not say a word for Jesus, but they can talk plenty about other matters. As soon as Peter denied the Lord, the cock crew. Peter had denied Him three times just exactly as many times as the cock crowed, as the Lord said he would do. Peter knew that was according to the word of God. "And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice. And Peter went out and wept bitterly" Luke 22:61,62.

That showed he was a true child of God. To deny the Lord is much worse than many other sins. It was his moral courage that was shaken, not his physical powers. He would have gone out and fought a natural battle for Jesus; but then the Cross was in view and the devil was there. Poor Peter was sifted when he fell into his sieve. Many sermons have been given about Peters failure. But we never heard one about the cock's victory; yet we may learn some valuable lessons from that rooster. He is a type of an overcoming Christian, intelligent in the things of God, following Jesus, and doing God's will.

Notice seven pertinent things regarding roosters, and compare them with the things of God.

ONE. He rises early and begins his God-given task to crow. Likewise, saints should rise early and begin praising God and exulting in His grace shouting "We are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" - Philippians 3:3. It is a profitable day when we start out praising God. We have something to crow about. We are the "cut off" folk even cut off from other Christians ... because we believe God, believe His Word, and are counted as refuse to win Christ. We see Him by faith and rejoice in Him. We count ourselves happy to be among those that are running this Christian race, those who have left the world behind. Again we read: "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." Crow, crow, crow always. It is a good thing to wake up rejoicing in the Lord. When we awaken praising God and ask Him to give us some Scriptures, we are strengthened.

It is this evil day we have to withstand the devil. If we let him have the least opportunity with us in the morning, we will be wishy-washy all day; but, if we meet him with the Sword of the Spirit and rejoice in the Lord that we are in Christ, we can crow, crow, crow all the day. Some one says, "You are one of those emotional sisters." Maybe I am, but we can all be emotional about these wonderful things. Notice another thing about the rooster:

TWO. He does not refuse to crow, because he cannot sing like a canary. But he does crow as if it was the most important thing in the world. Suppose we have not a good voice crow anyway, praise the Lord anyway. We do not have to have such musical ability to crow. Many times folk throw something at a rooster for crowing in the early morning and disturbing them, or at us because we boast so much. If you have been praised a whole lot, begin to crow a little louder for the Lord; and maybe some of your friends or neighbors will throw something at you. You never heard anyone say, "What a charming voice that rooster has." I have heard people almost swear at them, saying, "There is that old rooster again. Knock his head off." Men do not like to hear us talking about the Lord every day. The rooster does not stop crowing because no one praises him. So we can boast in the Lord even if folk do not like it. We "can do all things through Christ" which strengtheneth us. "But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God. But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" - Philippians 4:13,18,19.

It is Paul's God that meets the need of those that deny themselves like him. Praise God and yield to Him like Paul did, and He will come in abundantly for you as He did for Paul. He knew how to be abased and how to abound. Sometimes we have more victory when we are poor than when we are prosperous. Some saints have their noses on the grindstone and that is good if the Lord is turning the grindstone. You will not get hurt. God is wonderful. He will take care of His people. Paul says he was seeking the glory of God. He was crowing as if that was the most important thing in the world. Up or down, he was always praising God. That is a wonderful victory to have. The Word of God is so wonderful, the grace of God is so flexible; no matter what state a Christian is in ... trial or otherwise ... he can take it from his Fathers hand.

As one of our boys in the Army wrote, "I thank God that the grace of God has never allowed me to murmur at Him. I have never gotten peeved at God yet." We sometimes get a little peeved at His people; but if we just take everything from G o d s hands, He will work for our good. We could not stand too much adulation. We who want the best place must be willing for the trials. It is good to be praising God when we are down as well as when we are on the mountain top. Note the next point:

THREE. The rooster efficiently does the one thing that is never praised. No one ever says, "I like to hear a rooster crowing." He simply does the one thing that he can do. So, if we only have one gift, let us thank God for it and use it. Afterward, the Lord may give us another. If we do what we can, that is all God requires. "Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free" - Eph. 6:6-8. We will get from God exactly what we deserve ... "Whatsoever a man soweth,

that shall he also reap" - Gal. 6:7. We have a just Judge who will give us our just deserts, and then we can never find any fault with Him. Our works will all be manifested. He will show them up to us and make us acknowledge that we are getting exactly what we deserve. All the reward that we deserve because of our sowing and crowing we will receive, and nothing more. Even though we only have a little place in His great house, God can make that profitable. We may reap a great harvest. Look how He used a little servant girl's testimony to bring salvation and healing to that man Naaman, the leper. God wants us to do our little bit as though it was the most important thing in all the world, even as is the case

with the rooster. Here is another point for Christians:

FOUR. He crows at the set time which is most unseemly, and wakes up sleepers which is most unpopular. If there is here a sleepy head in the spiritual, we would surely like to awaken him and get him started on the racetrack running to win. In this day we need speedy racers boosters of this grace of God, of the wonder of this way of God's salvation, the manner of His leading, and the abundant grace that has been shed on our pathway. Grace is the message of the hour, the only message that God ever had, that brings salvation to man. From the beginning of time when man fell, the way of grace was taught Adam and Eve by the shedding of blood and their durable clothing with the skins of the animals. It was the message of the first days, and it is the message of the last days ... the message with which to awaken sleepers; "Wherefore He saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" - Eph. 5:14.

We know you have heard that many times, but calling attention to it symbolically may speak to some. It is sad to see so many sleeping saints, spiritually sleeping, we mean.... plenty of them all around us, sleeping among dead sinners and not making any attempt to awaken them. It is pitiful ... folk who are really alive, having salvation from God, never speaking to these poor people who are yet in their sins. The Spirit of God says, "Arise from among these folk and God will give you light." Separate yourselves from the world and worldly people, and God will let His light shine upon you. Folk will hear your crowing and they will begin to crow also. It is contagious. Sing and laugh and shout about Jesus and His grace everywhere you go, and you will see some folk heeding your testimony even though others deride and mock: Then the next point:

FIVE. The cock never complains, never pouts and quits his job, and does not appear to worry about competition nor recognition - Philippians 3:1; 4:6. He just keeps on crowing every day in the same old way. He appears oblivious to conditions. The other roosters may be loudly crowing and lustily blowing all around, but he does not seem to notice the competition he has. He has his job and attends to it faithfully, not desirous of vain-glory. We may learn many lessons from the crowing creature.

SIX. He is dependable. He is persistent. He is punctual. He is an excellent advertiser. He crows each morning rain or shine, and will not be daunted nor discouraged by rocks or bricks. His clock runs on schedule, and so does his crow. He persists in his God-given duty whether folk like it or not. He never stops crowing until he has finished and finished well. No half-done, soft-pedal job for him. Furthermore, he continues in his crowing even as Paul says to the Christian: "But continue thou in the things which thou has learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou has learned them." The apostle also instructs: "Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove rebuke, exhort

with all longsuffering and doctrine" - II Tim. 3:14, 4:2. Folk may not like it, may turn their ears away from the sound, but we must not let that deter us. The Truth must be preached. We must tell the people the Gospel. That is our duty. We must tell it with joy. It contains a wonderful story of love. The next point informs us further about the rooster and his crowing habit.

SEVEN. He is the announcer of good tidings. He declares every morning that a day with great possibilities is before the world. So we who have such hope in the spiritual must tell it everywhere we go. "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him" - Rev. 1:7. That refers to Jesus who is coming, the "King of kings, and Lord of lords." He will "put down all rule and all authority and power" - I Cor. 15:24. Everything will be under His feet. He will bind up the broken-hearted, loose the captives, heal the sick, and cause the lame to leap as the hart. Oh, there is good news for this old world. It will not always be a place of tears and tombstones. The night of weeping will pass away in the glory of the new

day. Jesus is coming to turn the darkness away and make all things new. Let us herald the dawning of that glad tomorrow like the rooster of today.

THE END