

PLYMOUTH CONFERENCE

MAY 19th—22nd, 1934

SATURDAY EVENING. *Prayer Meeting*, 6.30 p.m.

Hymns sung : 156, 260, 6, 283, 5.

LORD'S DAY MORNING. *Prayer Meeting*, 7.45 a.m.

Hymns sung : 200, 140, 194, 34.

Breaking of Bread, 10.45 a.m.

Hymns sung : 217, 200, 99, 251, 216, 287, 48.

Scriptures read : John xvii. ; Rev. xix. 1-9.

LORD'S DAY AFTERNOON. *Bible Reading*, 3 p.m.

Hymn 201. Hebrews xiii. 10-25.

The apostle takes the Jewish believers, who were familiar with the temple, back to the wilderness experience of their nation. We who walk by faith have an altar (*ver.* 10) ; and in our sacrifices of praise through Christ, that altar, we have communion with God the Father and with one another.

The camp was Jehovah's normal dwelling-place ; but when it was defiled by the golden calf Moses set up his tent or tabernacle outside the camp, as Jehovah's centre for the faithful (Ex. xxxiii. 7). In *ver.* 13 the Jew is called to come out of Judaism into Christianity, to come to the Rejected One outside the gate, where He suffered. Some Jews who had learned Christianity

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had abandoned it (vi. 4-6: x. 26-31). The camp signifies worldly religion, whether Judaism or professing Christendom. Both have not been faithful, and those who seek the Lord must take their place outside (*ver.* 13), separating from the evil inside the camp.

Those that have the rule over the saints (*ver.* 17) are to be regarded as leaders or guides and obeyed. In *ver.* 7, the reference is to leaders who had passed away, but were to be held in esteem for their word's sake. A leader considers the welfare of those he leads, and by personal interviews and practical example gives Christian advice. He may also be a teacher (*see* 1 Thess. v. 12, 13). The Jews had been accustomed to hypocritical leaders, such as the Pharisees and lawyers. The standard and object for Christian leaders are given in 2 John 7, 8.

LORD'S DAY EVENING. *Preaching of the Gospel*, 6.30 p.m. Mr. J. Weston.

Hymns: "Jesus, Lover of my soul," "Behold the Lamb of God," "Come, thou weary, Jesus calls thee."

Matt. xxvii. 24-36: "*And sitting down, they watched Him there*" (*ver.* 36).

I have chosen these words because of their connection with the cross of Christ. The words themselves contain neither doctrine nor argument, but the cross of Christ is both the one and the other. Not only do all the great truths of the gospel cluster around it, but the preaching of the cross is the power of God. Drunkards have been made sober, thieves have been made honest, the impure have become chaste, through beholding Calvary. When Paul preached to the Galatian sinners, he portrayed Christ crucified to them.

"And sitting down they watched Him there." The four soldiers were watching the cross to guard against

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any attempt being made to release the Divine sufferer, but you cannot watch Christ there, and go away as you came. "And all the people that came together to that sight . . . smote their breasts, and returned." But what did these soldiers gain by it? Listen! "The centurion, *and those that were with him, watching Jesus, . . .* feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God" (*ver.* 54). May we not hope to meet them in heaven? Surely they, who were merely doing their rough duty, were included in the Lord's prayer, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Thousands of people, like those in *ver.* 39, do not stop to think what the cross means. Little wonder if they "wag their heads" in unbelief and "pass by." You say, "What has the cross of Christ to do with me?" Only this, He died for you! Call a halt at Calvary, and may God reveal to you the wonder and love of the death of Christ.

"The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness." If the cross of Christ is nothing to you, it is a sure sign that you are perishing. "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost"—not *may* be lost, but "*are* lost," now. Every man who does not see the substitutionary work of Christ proves by his blindness that he is going down to the pit to perish eternally. Our prayer for such an one is, "Lord, open this man's eyes, that he may see."

None have ever been saved apart from the cross, though some have seen it but dimly in types and shadows. Adam beheld it in type in the "coats of skin." Abel gazed at the cross through "the firstlings of his flock." Cain saw and rejected it when God said to him, "A sin-offering lieth at the door." Noah beheld it in "the ark of gopher wood." Abraham's eyes lighted on it when he saw the "ram caught in the thicket." Isaiah saw it with prophetic eye when he cried, "He was wounded for our transgressions."

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The cross of Christ stands between every sinner and heaven; you can never enter heaven without passing it. But it also stands between every sinner and hell. Many have—not without an effort—passed it by, and hurried on to perdition.

“Sitting down,” means thought, reflection, time to think. Have you sat down and watched Him there until you have realised that His death was for you? To some the cross of Christ means nothing. These soldiers were gazing at the most stupendous wonder in the world’s history, yet at first their blinded eyes saw nothing.

Thank God, to some the cross means everything. Peter, an eyewitness of His sufferings, speaking of the cross, says, “His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree.” He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. John, who stood by the cross almost to the end, says, “God . . . loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” Paul wrote, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . The Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” Every Lord’s day believers gather around the emblems of His death—the cross of Christ means everything to them. He took upon Himself our sins, and bore God’s judgment due to them that we might be delivered from their penalty.

Jesus said, “And I, if I be lifted up . . . will draw all men (not Jews only) unto Me.” The most awful thing that can happen is to pull back when Christ draws you. When He was here, He said, “Ye will not come unto Me, that ye might have life.” Every person who hears the cross preached feels in some measure its drawing power. Do not resist the Holy Ghost. If the cross does not break or win you, no power in heaven or earth will. If the cross does not touch your heart, you are twice dead, and it is impossible to

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hope for your conversion unless perchance the cross may yet speak to you. It is God's great magnet to fill heaven.

Hymn : " Just as I am."

Dr. H. Wreford.

All kinds of men and women were watching the cross but the only One Who could bring them to heaven was hanging on it. The attitude of millions of sinners in the world to-day is that of sitting down, caring nothing for Christ, occupied with their own plans and desires. They are blind to His passing, deaf to His call.

The picture of the crucifixion has been before you, may you watch Him to-night to your eternal salvation. Rise from your place of ease, fall down before His pierced feet, and cry from the depths of your soul, " Lord, I believe : I need Thee."

The tragedy of the cross has been before us ; think of the wonder of it—the Son of God thus becoming the Saviour of the world.

We are expecting the Lord to come, the crucified One to take those redeemed by His precious blood. There is no prophetic event to happen before His coming—He may come to-night. When I was a boy, the fear that the Lord had come and taken my parents was the means of bringing me to Christ. How many of you are ready for His coming ? Can you look up to heaven and say, " Lord Jesus, come " ?

You may have wept over the sorrows of your crucified Redeemer, but is He your Saviour ? If not, He will be your judge. May you gaze upon the cross, and see the Son of God, Who " loved me and gave *Himself* for me." Not heaven's glory, not all the riches of earth, but Himself, the Maker of heaven and earth by His word, Who was made flesh and dwelt among us. Believe on Him !

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Our tears for you cannot save you, real as they are ; only the One in heaven with wounded side and thorn-scarred brow, Who died, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God, can do so. Be ready for His imminent coming !

Hymn : " When, wounded sore, the stricken soul."

MONDAY MORNING. *Prayer Meeting*, 7.45 a.m.

Hymns sung : 139, 68, 344.

Scriptures read : Psalm ciii. ; Romans viii. 31-34.

Open Meeting, 11 a.m.

Hymns 276, 262.

J.N.V. Matt. ix. 35.

" And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people."

We live in a time when our Lord wishes us to abound in His work. In years past the Lord worked amongst Christians in Plymouth so that they learned the truth of the unity of the Spirit, and understood what was His mind for His people and the church. The brethren were then full of zeal for souls ; but now we must bow our heads in humiliation for our lack of zeal and ask Him to work in each of us.

There is always hope in the Lord for believers. If ever there was a hopeless time in Israel, it was the time of which we have read, for the Pharisees said that the Lord cast out devils through the prince of devils (Matt. xii. 24). Yet the Lord went into all the cities and villages preaching the gospel of the kingdom.

In the beginning the brethren, like those in Phila-

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delphia, though feeling their feebleness, counted on the Lord, and unitedly asked His help. They separated themselves from all worldly things and wanted to be holy and true, like Christ. Then they were great preachers, and the One Who opened the door for the gospel so that no man could shut it made their zealous testimony a help to all saints and sinners.

But now there is not the same zeal for souls. It is a great blessing to have the truth of the church, but we have to go all over the world, preaching the gospel. It is a mistake to be only a testimony to the truth and leave gospel preaching to others. The apostle Paul did both. He even exhorted Timothy not only to stand fast in the truth but to "do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim. iv. 5). In every country people are longing for the gospel, and we have our responsibility for their souls. Let us not keep the truths to ourselves, but ask other Christians to attend the meetings or to read the magazines, and show we each wish to help others, both saints and sinners. It is always difficult to visit far countries, but the Lord is opening doors everywhere for us to enter in weakness.

But we must be moved, not by a sense of compulsion, but by compassion for those who have not the blessings we enjoy. While we are on the way we have found from God's word to be right, we must try to gain, not rebuke, those who are not on that way. We must invite them to share our blessings, counting on the Lord to give the right word to the right person.

The Lord had open eyes to see the multitudes: so we must not shut our eyes to the people of the world, but have compassion on them in their sins, as sheep without a shepherd. The Lord was the Shepherd, Who went round all the cities and villages, looking for souls. He taught, too, in the synagogues, Israel's official assemblies. We have the same Jesus now, and we must follow Him. Again we read of the Lord's compassion

in healing the sick (Matt. xiv. 14), feeding the hungry (xv. 32) and in opening blind eyes (xx. 34). So we must go through the world with open eyes, with compassion on the lost estate of its peoples, and with prayer to the Lord to bless them.

There was never a time when souls were as hungry and when there was such a need of real shepherds. Let us not leave the work of the gospel to other Christians, but let us ask the Lord what He has for us to do. We should all seek to bring the truths we know to other Christians, and to proclaim the gospel to all men. In Matt. xxviii. 19, the Lord Jesus said, "Go, and teach all nations." All power in heaven and on earth has been given to the Mighty One Who rose from the dead, and from Mark xvi. 20 we learn that not only did the disciples go everywhere preaching, but the Lord opened doors for His fellow-labourers, and was their help and strength.

Let each ask himself, "Has He not called me to preach?" and ask the Lord, "Hast Thou something for me to do?" The answer may involve years of waiting, but we must be patient, and ready to answer, "I will" when the clear call comes. The Lord can use young or old; He wishes to have our whole lives.

In 1 Cor. xv. 58, all brethren, not only all labourers, are exhorted to be firm in the truths they know to be the Lord's will, and always to "abound" in the Lord's work. Obedience to His call will make others happy as well as yourself.

Are we ever moved with compassion, as the Lord was, because the multitudes are unhappy? What a precious thing it is to be able to say, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters" (Ps. xxiii. 1, 2). From Is. xl. 11 and Ezek. xxxiv. 14 we see that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. Tell the people around what they miss with-

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out such a Shepherd ! He was always full of compassion and love, and He shows it in our business and homes and meetings as well as for eternity. The Prince of life has set us free to have communion with Him and serve Him.

The Lord sent the disciples forth to be a blessing to the multitudes, but the service would be so difficult that He likened them to sheep in the midst of wolves. Yet He assured them that if they needed silver or gold, He would be there to help, and if they were persecuted, He would comfort and sustain them.

Many of us have a heart for the gospel, but why have so few of us gone to the heathen ? Do we not realise our responsibility ? Do we fail to have confidence in the Lord, compassion for men and prayerful hearts ? The harvest is great, everywhere souls are longing to be saved, the fields are white unto harvest, let us bring the gospel to the people.

At harvest time there must be haste to gather it in, working early and late. And the Lord is coming soon to take His bride to glory. Many labourers are needed : we must pray the Lord to give them. But it is not easy to become a labourer in the Lord's harvest. Some who volunteer are not called of Him. Others have to wait years before they are ready. But we can all pray and supplicate the Lord to "push forth" those He has chosen, though at first they do not like to go. Let us, who have such a Shepherd, pray for those who have no shepherd, and be ready, if He calls, to say, "I will go out for the blessing of souls, for Thy Name's sake."

Hymn 312.

T.R. Hebrews i. 10, 11 ; Revelation iii. 11, 12.

"Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth ; and the heavens are the works of Thine

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hands: they shall perish; but Thou remainest." "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God . . . and I will write upon him My new name."

The history of the church of God on earth is a history of revival and failure, very much like the history of Israel under the various kings that followed Solomon. Sin, followed by revival, then another lapse and again recovery by the mercy of God through the ministry of the prophets, covered a long period of years.

The Lord's message to four of the seven churches in Revelation ii. and iii. speaks of the truth being given up. Before the apostle John passed away, one of the seven assemblies was in the terrible condition of Laodicea: and even in Philadelphia overcomers were needed. How much more now? To whom shall we go but to that One of Whom this word in Hebrews i. reminds us, "But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail."

About seventy years ago some thought we had come to the time of Laodicea, and that the Lord was outside, knocking at the door, ready to sup with any who would open to Him, Philadelphia as a condition having passed away. We do not believe this, whatever the general condition of the professing church may be. Why? Because "Thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment."

One great feature that distinguishes the present time of the church's history on earth must not be forgotten, although it leaves us without excuse; and that is the presence of the Holy Spirit in the church. In the former days, during Israel's history, He was a visitor (speaking with due reverence); now He is a resident. He shall be "*with you, in you, upon you*" (John xiv.).

"I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not

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consumed," was the Lord's message to a desolated Israel (Mal. iii. 6).

May our faith be sustained, and our hearts held by that blessed word, "Thou remainest."

Brothers' Meeting, 2 p.m.

Sisters' Meeting, 2 p.m.

Foreign Work, 3.15 p.m.

Hymn 33.

Mr. W. J. Hocking spoke of his visit to *Egypt* with Mr. Bayly and three Continental brethren, and of the work there.

Mr. E. B. Dolamore spoke of the work in *Jamaica*.

Mr. W. H. Sewell spoke of the work in *Demarara*.

Hymn 390.

Young People's Meeting, 5.45 p.m.

Hymn 241 (1st verse).

Address by Mr. W. G. Turner. Numbers xix.

Though the water of separation might appear to belong properly to Leviticus, it has perfect fitness in the book of Numbers, which is a wilderness book, and its historical records are typical (2 Cor. x. 1-10). Our chapter deals with God's provision for restoring and maintaining communion with Himself when defilement by wilfulness, accident or ignorance might sever it. It is therefore instructive as we pass through a world of death and defilement: many believers are perplexed and distressed as to their broken communion and

lack of real joy caused by worldly contacts, sights and sounds, apart from wilful sin and forgetfulness of God.

Must such be cleansed afresh by Christ's precious blood? Does not His one sacrifice avail for ever? The ordinance of the Red Heifer is the typical answer to these questionings.

Clearly the blood of Christ is of eternal efficacy, for "the worshippers once purged have no more conscience of sins" (Heb. x. 2) and "the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). Note that the present tense affords the effectual abiding ground of our being cleansed from all sins. "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet" (John xiii. 10)—what he walks on through the wilderness.

In the chapter emphasis is laid on four important things for the clear understanding of how the defilement of sins after conversion can be removed and communion restored.

(1) *The spotlessness and freedom of the victim (ver. 2).* No blemish and no bondage marks the victim, of which the Antitype is our blessed Lord as "holy, harmless (guileless) and undefiled." He was never under any yoke in nature or relationships—"in Him was no sin": "the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me" (John xiv. 30). At His first public appearance the Father could testify, "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." He Himself challenged, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" Whilst from unexpected quarters came the testimony, "I find no fault. This man hath done nothing amiss. Certainly this was a righteous man."

(2) *The slaying, sprinkling of the blood, and burning of the whole victim outside the camp.* These features, with the casting of cedar, hyssop and scarlet into the burning, mark this sacrifice's unusual character. There is nothing here for the offerer, nor even for the priest;

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the whole sacrifice is consumed. It therefore presents rather the application of Christ's work to our sin. Nature, from its most elevated form, as the cedar, to the lowly hyssop, and worldly glory, typified by the scarlet wool, are all consumed with the victim.

The victim is not slain by the priest, but "before his face." Christ is both Victim on earth and Priest in heaven; He is "holy, harmless and undefiled, separate from sinners." By the Holy Spirit and the word, the "living water" of the chapter, He applies the effect of His sacrifice to those with consciences purged once for all by His blood, but yet conscious of defilement by wilfulness, accident or even ignorance.

(3) *A standing memorial, "a statute for ever," a heap of ashes.* This is composed of the whole of the consumed red heifer, the cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet wool, all speaking of Christ's death, when the fire of judgment consumed our sins, all that springs from nature alone, and the pomp of this world. "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. vi. 14).

For cleansing, a little of this heap of ashes was mixed with living, or running, water. This formed the water of separation or purification, and as occasion arose was applied by a clean man sprinkling it with a sprig of hyssop on the defiled person. So God's Spirit by the word brings somewhat of what Christ's death involved to bear upon us when conscious of defilement, and this, not a fresh application of the precious blood, cleanses us from all unrighteousness if we confess our sins. For God is faithful and just to Christ to forgive us upon confession to Him. Confession is not merely saying we are sorry, but bitter consciousness of broken communion through sinning against holiness and love, and turning back in contrition: then faithfulness to the One Who bore our sins ensures that we shall be forgiven.

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(4) *The stringent regulations guarding this ordinance.* These deal with its application to the defiled person, and prescribe that the application of the water was to be made on the third, and repeated on the seventh, day. Thorough dealing was essential to complete cleansing (See Pss. xxxii. and li., where the royal penitent discloses his spirit's painful exercises whilst the joy of God's salvation is being restored to his soul). Salvation can never be lost, but its joy may easily be forfeited.

The third day would make us conscious of our defiled condition, and of what suffering it caused our Saviour; while the seventh day, after prolonged reflection, would lead to a sense of His unchangeable love in spite of our failure, and assure us that His love and tenderness are the same as when we were first made to rejoice in His salvation. But we should feel less confident of ourselves and more dependent upon Himself.

What a merciful provision for God's ancient people, but typical of a much greater one for us, as Christ's sacrifice exceeds that of the red heifer.

Hymn 241 (last 2 verses).

MONDAY EVENING. *Address* by Mr. W. J. Hocking,
6.45 p.m.

Hymns 434, 48.

Psalm lxxxiv.—*A psalm for the sons of Korah.*

This is one of the wilderness psalms, composed specially for those passing through desert ways with their faces towards God's habitation in Zion. Hence they are very helpful to us who are also passing through a wilderness and have before us bright visions of the glory.

Three of the wilderness psalms (xlii., lxiii., lxxxiv.) deal with the privations and limitations experienced both by the Israelites and us Christians. It is characteristic of them all that the sorrows and suffering draw

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out the heart's affections and the soul's desire to God Himself.

Thus Ps. xlii. opens "As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God . . . when shall I come and appear before God?" Such cries show the power of God's Holy Spirit, enabling a person to rise above his circumstances, and, instead of regarding them as disasters and occasions for bitterness, to have in his heart a desire for God Himself. He is able to leap over his trials and rejoice in what is beyond. Visible things become temporal, and his soul yearns for what is eternal, realising that the difficulties are but a mist through which by faith the glorious realities founded upon God Himself are seen. The Psalm ends with the satisfaction of his desires by God, and through his tears he sees God's face looking down in love and, seeing Him as his deliverance and power and joy; he exclaims; "Why are thou cast down, O my soul? . . . hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him, Who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

So, in Psalm lxiii., David, in the wilderness, estranged from his home, persecuted and hunted like a partridge on the mountains looks away from the enemy's power to God—"Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee." When the clouds come, and the tempests blow, do our untoward experiences make us thirst for God? Christ is faithful to His own and remains with us, though all human organisations disappear in fragments. Should not our souls be driven to cry to Him, "Oh, Lord, that I might see Thy face and realise Thy presence. My soul thirsteth after Thee." The Lord Jesus knows our feelings as we gather around Him. Have we come together because we were thirsting after Him? Are we always prepared to face difficulties and inconvenience in order to gather for one hour in His realised presence? If our souls are longing after Him, and feel the privations of the desert about us, we shall have much joy in our

gathering together and our souls will be "satisfied with marrow and fatness." The presence of the Lord banishes sorrow and troubles and our souls are lifted up to praise and bless Him, so that we feel this kind of wilderness experience is good.

So in Ps. lxxxiv., the pilgrims travel over the dreary way, looking ahead to Jehovah's dwelling-place in Zion. They forget the trials of the way by anticipating the pleasures of the goal.

This Psalm and three of the following ones, like the group in the second book beginning with Psalm xlii., are for the sons of Korah. Korah was of the tribe of Levi, and was privileged to minister in the tabernacle. But he was a grasping, ambitious man, and wanted to be a priest also. His wickedness came out, but God vindicated His choice of Aaron and his house, and Korah and his rebellious company were swallowed up alive.

The Lord had said that the father's sins should be visited on the children (see Exod. xxxiv. 7), but in this case God's mercy overflowed and the remnant of Korah's family was preserved. For Korah's descendants these Psalms were specially written. They will have a special place in Israel's future history, but, as partakers of God's abundant mercy, they represent believers to-day (see 1 Pet. i. 3 ; ii. 10). Judgment came upon the Jews because of Christ's crucifixion, but a remnant was spared and brought into blessing through faith. God shewed thus His mercy towards them, and they became a company of priests offering spiritual sacrifices, (1 Pet. ii. 5-9). We, as Gentiles, also come into that mercy, so that this Psalm affects us, since we partake of divine mercy like the sons of Korah.

To some the world has many attractions and does not appear a wilderness. Then a coldness to the Lord enters the heart. Joy, peace, readiness to pray and desire to search God's word, all disappear. To them the spiritual desert has come, hunger has seized the soul and weakness

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the loins. The power of the wilderness is starving the soul. In pleasing the eye and mind, the new nature is robbed of its needed nourishment.

The wilderness is real, and the test for all our experience is that what gives spiritual joy to our hearts, brings us nearer to Christ, and makes us strong when tempted, is of the Father, and not of the world. The real food for our new life Christ gives. The world gives poison, weakening our desire for communion with God. The great feature of this Psalm is the wilderness provision for the sons of Korah, while on the way to Zion.

1 Chron. ix. shows us that the line of Korah's sons was continued to the Babylonish captivity. They were keepers of the threshold of God's house, and that office was maintained after the disruption between the ten and the two tribes, so that when Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, the sons of Korah were doorkeepers of the temple in Jerusalem, and some returned with Ezra and Nehemiah.

Their office was hereditary and secured to them by God's promise. This illustrates that what was of God remained permanent. The sons of Korah were porters from the time of the original tabernacle, with the duty of attending to the threshold. The office was not a great one; even little Samuel could open the doors of the tabernacle at Shiloh. But the honour lay in its being connected with God's dwelling-place on earth. Hence, wherever they were, even in Babylon, they loved the Lord's house and their own service there; "*I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness,*" comes from the heart of a true son of Korah.

Then in 1 Chron. ix. 31 we read, "Mattithiah . . . had the set office over the things that were made in the pans." His service was connected with one kind of meal offering. The fine flour, made into a cake, was in one instance cooked in a flat open pan, so that the fire acted on it as

it was exposed. This differed from other meal offerings, which were cooked in the oven.

The meal offering refers to the Lord in His holy walk as a Man here. What pleasure He gave to God in this walk and how this pleasure was accentuated by His trials and adversity beyond all others! For the effect of these "fiery" trials was only to bring out the fragrance of His life here below. What bitter experiences our Lord had when before His judges! The sport of wicked soldiers, they smote Him and spat upon Him; they mocked Him with a crown of thorns, bowing the knee, and heaping all manner of indignities upon Him. But the effect of the playing of these fiery trials upon Him before all the people was that on His face, the meek and gracious One's, the light and life of heaven shone through all. Man strove to quench the heavenly light from His face, but it was there in all its beauty and glory, as God had witnessed, "Thou art My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased."

The loving hearts of those who care for the Lord's glory in His manhood have charge of the "offerings in the pans" to-day. As they think with adoring hearts of His sufferings their worship is acceptable to God. Some upon earth can, through all the scorn heaped on Him, still see His glory and rejoice in the grace He then displayed. Such servants have their hearts tuned to praise the Lord, as the Korahites had.

Again, in 1 Chron. ix. 33 we see the singers mentioned, those whose work was to chant Jehovah's praise, and who were engaged in that work "day and night." Are we not exhorted to "offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually" (Heb. xiii. 15)? Because we are Korahites and saved by grace, our hearts are to take special care of the offerings in the pans and to praise Him for the fullness of grace and glory He displays.

We are dull and dumb in the worship meeting because we are looking in the wrong place and our souls are not

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thirsting for the Saviour. The world was to Him a wilderness of brigands, seeking His life, eating the bread He provided and then shouting for His death. Shall not our tongues bless His name down here day and night? as we shall certainly do in that place where there is no day or night.

Though a psalm for the sons of Korah, we can regard it as Christ's own experience of the world. It was a desert to Him, as the psalmist felt it to be, and looked beyond his immediate circumstances to God's house on mount Zion.

When the Lord came into the world, He first appeared publicly when eight days old in His Father's house, in accordance with the prophecies. A witness, who had waited for years for their fulfilment in his lifetime, was there to declare their truth. Salvation had now come to God's house. Again, at twelve years old, our Lord stayed in the Temple, speaking with those instructed in the law and attending to His Father's things.

His next appearance, when about thirty years old, was different. Before He began His public ministry, He came to His Father's house (John ii.) to hear the song of praise, but instead heard the cattle lowing in the Temple courts and the brawling of the traders. He knew the ineffable bliss of the Father's house above, and here He found a desecrated house of merchandise. Did it not reveal the intrinsic character of Judaism, which had spoiled the very centre of worship on earth?

We read of another visit to His Father's house on earth before His crucifixion. The children were singing His praise, but the temple had reverted to the unholy trafficking of which He had cleansed it before. Now He calls it a den of thieves and cleanses it again (Matt. xxi.).

Do you wonder the Lord said to the woman at the well of Sychar that in future men should not worship in Jerusalem, but in spirit and in truth? It was finally

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and fully proved that this world and its ways can give nothing in tune with heavenly worship and service.

And yet our Lord had His joy in this desert scene. Was it not a joy when the woman came to the well and He gave her the water of life? He Himself was the wellspring of life in the desert, and so He gave her the water which would spring up to its source—everlasting life (John iv. 14).

Though His feet trod this world's dusty way, His heart was with His Father on high, and so He said to His disciples, "In My Father's house are many mansions, a place where your hearts may be, as Mine has always been. My joy and peace are always there, unaffected by the world, and you may have that joy and peace also." It is our calling to walk in His steps, Whose all-absorbing desire was to please Him Who had sent Him and to find His joy in doing it.

It was a joy to the Lord to heal the blind, and raise the dead, and give peace and joy to man: but His deeper joy was that both suffering and doing seemed good in His Father's sight (Matt. xi. 26). Are we treading that pathway, participating in His joys and learning His faithfulness?

The feature running through Psalm lxxxiv. is that the writer takes his stand upon what is unchangeable, upon what is of God. "*How amiable are Thy tabernacles*"—God was on mount Zion, and hence the place was lovely and to be loved.

Solomon's temple was "exceedingly magnificent" architecturally, but when this Psalm was written it was in ruins, and it never regained its first standard. But the temple had something else beside the carving, the priesthood and the ritual—Jehovah was there. Hence the writer calls it not a temple, but tabernacles, or dwelling-places where Jehovah was always present.

So we must have the Lord daily before our eyes, the constant, unchangeable One Who abides in His beauty

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and majesty, whatever our difficulties. There is a place where His presence is guaranteed. It may be an unattractive back room, but we can reckon on the Lord being where two or three are gathered together in His name.

The first part of verse 3 is probably a parenthesis, describing the provision made for the sparrow and the swallow—but the psalmist's heart and flesh cried out for the living God and His altars.

There were two altars, the brasen speaking of Christ's sacrifice, judgment and death; and the golden of the incense of praise, and the psalmist's desire is for both. We, too, want a constant remembrance of Christ's sacrificial death, and then comes our sacrifice at the place where we can enjoy the astounding mercy, the proof of God's goodness, of offering what is acceptable to Him, the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. If we can speak before God rightly of Christ's beauties and excellency, of His wonderful work and exceeding love, if we can use the language of scripture which He, the God of eternal truth, can never deny, it is an offering that He must receive, because it speaks to Him of Christ.

Some brethren paraphrase scripture to its detriment, but these distortions never rise to God acceptably. When we speak of the Lord Jesus, may God preserve our tongues from offering anything detrimental to His glory, of Whose honour God is jealous. Let us cling to the words of scripture.

The psalmist knew that the anointed king of David's line would abide and the anointed priest of Aaron's house would continue to the end, for the priesthood and sovereignty coalesced in the Lord Jesus Christ. So he prayed, "*Behold, O God, our Shield, and look upon the face of Thine Anointed.*" When God looked there instead of upon the struggling pilgrim in the wilderness, there was joy for His heart. God could not deny the

prayer of the pilgrim going on to His courts, presented with such a plea. x

We can still say that we have God's dwelling-place in the midst of His own ; the altars, the place of sacrifice and praise ; and in God's presence the anointed Priest and Sovereign. Are we not rich ?

It is blessed to look at what lies beyond, but the flesh makes us feel the real barrenness of the wilderness, and brings us down to the painful fact that we still have to reach the courts of the Lord on Mount Zion, and that it is a difficult and toilsome way. But, "*Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee.*" The One Who is there is our strength here. In the wilderness Epistle for Christians the apostle says, "I can do all things"—not in my own strength, but—through Him Who strengtheneth me (Phil. iv. 13). He takes up a weak, foolish thing and makes it strong—an oxgoad (Judg. iii. 31), or a nail driven by a woman (Judg. iv. 21). He uses the little things, for the strength is in Himself.

"*Who passing through the valley of Baca*"—suffering, and trial—"make it a well ; the rain also filleth the pools." Rain comes down from heaven, a well is water coming up from beneath. God provides refreshment to the pilgrim unexpectedly in both ways. In the wilderness, Israel's leaders scratched the desert sands and a well appeared (Num. xxi. 17, 18), a source of continual refreshment in answer to their obedient faith. So the wells of God's satisfaction are often found in the very things that distress us. In John xi. we see how the Lord turned the valley of Baca at Bethany into a well for the two sisters, as they folded their restored brother in loving embrace. The refreshing waters sprang for Martha and Mary from the desert of bereavement itself.

In 2 Chron. xx. 26 we read that these very Korahites in the days of Jehoshaphat sang in the valley of Bera-chah, or blessing : they had turned their valley of

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Baca into a valley of blessing. So we may turn the dross of this world into the fine gold of heaven by faith in His strength and power, and be more than conquerors. There is a heavenly satisfaction that fills the heart of the man of faith when his difficulties lift and he knows that God has been strengthening him.

Finally, "*Blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee*": for the wilderness we need that confidence that lays hold on God. In many a little meeting brothers and sisters have been keeping on for years; their faith has not failed. They love the Lord and His word, they enjoy coming together in His name, the one thing on earth they prize above all else is to feel His presence at His table. Their trust in the Lord has kept them faithful, and made them blessed.

The man who trusts his own heart is a fool, but one who trusts in God has that blessedness that He alone can give. May God give us in our difficulties to have the psalmist's spirit that reached out to the things known only to faith, the unseen eternal things that never deteriorate, but enhance in value. The Lord Jesus remains true amid all the despairing conditions about us. He is our Saviour and Lord; our God is faithful; and He will not deny nor forsake those that trust in Him.

TUESDAY MORNING. *Prayer Meeting*, 7.45 a.m.

Hymns sung: 384, 174, 314, 1 (last verse).

Scriptures read: 2 Thess. ii. 13-17; iii. 1-5.

Open Meeting, 11 a.m.

Hymn 325.

T.W.B. Psalm i.

"*Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly . . . But his delight is in the law of the Lord*" (vers. 1, 2).

A brother once said that we should not be gathered

on the ground of rejecting evil doctrine, but on the ground of positive truth. But the first Psalm begins with a negative, and positive truth does not come till the second verse. This order may not seem to be important, but it is the spirit of God's word. "Cease to do evil, learn to do well" (Is. i. 16, 17). Since sin came into the world, we must begin with a negative. We cannot be occupied with positive truth, delighting in the law of the Lord, unless we have decided not to listen to the counsels of the ungodly. Some Christians study the unprofitable thoughts of man's philosophy, but it is well for us not to be curious regarding the counsels of the ungodly.

Ungodly means not only grossly wicked, but following the teaching of the human philosophies that discredit God's word in some way. We must make up our minds to be separate from such. Our testimony may be but weak, but this has always been true of those who sought to stand faithful to the Lord.

Gideon in his time could not understand this weakness, and asked, "If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?" But God looked upon him and said, "Go in this thy might . . . have not I sent thee?" (Judges vi. 13, 14).

The Lord said to His disciples, "I am with you alway, even unto the end" (Matt. xxviii. 20), and this applies to all who seek to keep His word. He was with those who began a testimony about a hundred years ago: they were encouraged to gather together in the name of the Lord, separating from evil, by the message to Philadelphia (Rev. iii. 7-12), which means love to the brethren. Then came the question, "With whom should we be breaking bread?" They felt they could count as brethren only those who were really born again, who confessed with their mouths the Lord Jesus, and believed in His resurrection (Rom. x. 9). Thus they sought to walk according to the truth manifested in the address

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to the saints at Philadelphia, to whom the Lord said, "Hold that fast which thou hast." No further development is to be expected regarding the principles of Christian fellowship down here; for to be told to hold fast is a sign of actual possession: "hold that fast which thou hast."

Is there no way in which we can provide for progress among brethren? The Lord, our Hope, will soon come, and meanwhile we should be grateful that we are gathered to His name alone, to wait for Him from heaven.

The Lord does not despise a day of small things, so we should not. From the beginning the Lord has come to those who were very weak. "I am with you, saith the Lord" through Haggai (i. 13): "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels" through Malachi (iii. 17). We should remember that "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened" (Mal. iii. 16). Such faithful ones are precious to His heart.

So we must not think that the Lord's testimony is weakened, or that He will give it up. He will never forget those who seek to be faithful. He does not expect more from us than to "strengthen the things that remain" (Rev. iii. 2). Nor should we be shaken in our confidence in Him, knowing that what we have is according to His word.

In the Psalms, the first thing is to cease to do evil, then to delight in the law of the Lord. It is also of great importance for us to bless the Lord, knowing that He will not forsake His testimony, and to go on quietly with Him, even when little strength is manifested among us. Thank God, His work is progressing in all parts of the world. We humble ourselves that it is not so here, but trust Him, if it be His gracious will, to give a revival before He comes.

W.G.T. Psalm i.

" In His law doth he meditate day and night " (ver. 2).

We find in scripture those who, in dark and evil times analogous to our own, walked with God, stood before the Lord, and sat before Him. Such are Enoch, Elijah and David.

Walking not with the abounding ungodly, but with God, Enoch had this testimony, that he pleased God (Heb. xi. 5). Not standing in the way of sinners, but before the Lord, Elijah boldly confronted the king who did more to provoke God than all that were before him (I Kings xviii. 1, xvi. 33). By bravely vindicating God's claims, His people's unity and His power to help, Elijah stood for God against overwhelming odds and was vindicated (I Kings xviii.). By sitting not in the seat of the scornful, but in worshipful contemplation before the Lord Who had blessed and would bless him, David revealed true restfulness of heart. Psalm i. is part of the three-fold cord used in scripture to bind true spiritual success to meditation upon God's word.

In Joshua i. 8, as soon as the written law existed, good success is bound up with reading and obeying it. In Psalm i. 2, 3, seasonable fruitfulness and perennial freshness find their source in the same attitude towards the law of the Lord. In James i. 25 continuing to look into the law of liberty is stressed as the true means of being blessed. Looking into God's revealed word, lingering over it, and living it out in daily practice is here shown to be the divine method for spiritual health, growth and activity.

A leading brother once said that our sole object, if we would serve God acceptably, must be to *do* the Lord's will, to do *nothing but* it, and to do it *all*. Great grace is needed to-day, with the temptations to emphasize one truth at the expense of another, and to seek a wider sphere at the cost of faithfulness. Yet the Old Testa-

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ment enjoins us to "buy the truth and sell it not" (Prov. xxiii. 23), and the New Testament affirms that "we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth" (2 Cor. xiii. 8).

There is no other means of attaining spiritual usefulness, success and fruitfulness save the way trodden by the saints, and repeatedly stressed in Psalm cxix., where God's word, His laws, commandments, statutes and thoughts are the recurring theme. But what encouragement is afforded, in a world of conflicting opinions on almost every spiritual subject, by remembering that through mercy we have God's word in our hands, expressing His will for our lives; and that "he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John ii. 17). May it be ours to do His will, nothing but His will and all His will, as we discover it from His word.

W.Y. 1 Cor. xv. 50-57.

"Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (vers. 51-53).

We sang this morning, "We wait for Thee, O Son of God, and long for Thine appearing." Is it true of us? If so, is it because He will take us out of this world of unrest and tribulation? We should love His appearing, for Himself, not to forsake the trying circumstances only, but to see the One we are waiting for, and Who is waiting to receive us to Himself. May His coming have a practical effect on our daily lives.

The Old Testament saints looked for the fulfilment of God's promise, a city whose Builder and Maker was God, but we have been shown a "mystery," something

hidden from them, a prospect they did not have, of seeing the One Who came in grace to give His life for sinful men.

What hope should we have, were the Lord not risen from the dead, the accepted One on the throne? May it be the longing of our hearts to see Him.

How wonderful that we are called to be members of His body, so united to Him by the Holy Spirit as to be "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. i. 23).

Here the apostle speaks of the mystery in connection with those who have fallen asleep, but he says, "We shall not all sleep." Are we looking for the dissolution of this earthly tabernacle and the building of God? (2 Cor. v. 1). If so, we are not looking for His coming. He will not come before His purposed time, but the hour is fixed—His coming will be in the twinkling of an eye. There will be no time to put matters right then—do that now, and leave nothing to grieve your heart if He comes to-day.

"At the last trump" the saints of God from the beginning of the world's history will be raised in a moment to meet the Lord in the air. What a burst of praise when we see Him for the first time! He will be the Object of every eye. May we be so living as not to be ashamed before Him at His coming.

He Who said, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me" and, "I am the Way," will lead us the way He went to heaven "in a moment." We will drop our business, our homes and everything else, all our sorrows and weakness, and go to be with Him. Well might the apostle speak of victory!

"The last trump" will summon God's people from the earth, the grave and the sea. Only the Lord's wondrous power has ever made the grave yield up its prey. But a Voice will speak, and the grave will have to yield; probably without disturbance, just as our Lord rose before the stone was rolled away, leaving the napkin

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and grave clothes in perfect order. Pilate said, "Make the sepulchre as sure as ye can," but when the moment came the keepers were all as dead men. We have a Lord in Whose hands is all power, Who could say "Lazarus, come forth," and in a moment brought forth one who had been dead four days.

"This corruptible" refers to the sleeping saints: scripture does not speak of living ones as corruption. The apostle said elsewhere that he did not want to be unclothed, but clothed upon with the house from heaven (2 Cor. v. 2, 3).

We, too, have something in us causing trouble, and that has to be changed by the One Who said, "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. xxi. 5). "This mortal must put on immortality."

Have any of us a plan or aim that we wish to attain before the Lord comes? If so, it is an object, planted in our minds by the enemy of Christ, that has displaced the Lord in our affections, and would hold us here.

May the Lord encourage us, not to wish to escape the tribulations that Heal lows, together with the constant cleansing and sanctifying by His precious word, in order to present us to Himself a glorious church, fit for Himself. May He give us to remember that He is coming at any moment, in the twinkling of an eye. "Behold, I come quickly" (Rev. xxii. 7).

Hymns 261, 325 (3rd verse).

TUESDAY AFTERNOON. *Brothers' Meeting*, 2 p.m.

Young People's Meeting, 2 p.m.

Hymn 342.

Address by Mr. J. Weston. 1 John i. 4; Psalm xvi. 11; John xv. 11; xvi. 24; Acts ii. 28.

"*Your joy may be full.*"

This world is full of sorrow, even for Christians. Tears come to all of us at some time. "Jesus wept,"

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because of the sorrow in the world (John xi. 35). Yet the Spirit of God says that going through this sorrow-filled world our "joy *may* be full." An unconverted person rarely uses the word "joy." He speaks of smiling, laughing, or being happy, but "joy" is the heritage of the Christian. Not that a Christian is to live as though there is nothing sad in the world, but still, whatever the sorrow, his "joy *may* be full." This is not experienced by *every* Christian: there are certain paths that lead up to it, and only as we walk in them can we possess this "fulness of joy."

The first of these paths is in Ps. xvi. 11, "*Thou wilt show me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy.*" We will call this the road to conversion. We can only obtain this life and this "fulness of joy" from the Lord Jesus Christ. Only God can discover the path to you. Cry to God to shew you "the path of life." My misery almost drove me to despair until I came to Christ; then I cried tears of joy.

The next path is in 1 John i. 4, "*These things write we unto you that your joy may be full.*" "These things" are our fellowship with the Father and His Son (*ver.* 3), consequent upon forgiveness and cleansing, through confession of sins committed (*ver.* 9). It is the road of confession and communion. This joy comes from walking with Christ, but we lose it when we lose touch with Him through sin and it is only restored to us when we confess the sin. No converted person who has wandered away from Christ, or fallen into sin, is really happy, whatever may be his outward appearance. If you are doing what the Lord would not have you do, turn from it and confess it to Him. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." There is a certain mixed joy in the very act of confession, which steals into the heart as the tears roll down the face. It is beautiful to know that the Lord is never weary of hearing our confession. Never be afraid to

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tell Him a thousand times, "I have got into a wicked temper again," and He will cleanse you.

We have another road to "fulness of joy" in John xv. 11, "*These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*" This is the joy of service and fruit-bearing, as you will see from the previous verses. "If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch," but not as a Christian, for a believer can never be lost. "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." There is joy in service, and in bearing fruit for God, even if the work is hard. Do you remember bringing a soul to Christ or being used to restore a child of God to happiness in the Lord? Was not your joy full?

Then we have John xvi. 24, "*Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.*" This is the joy of answered prayer. Some of our prayers are not answered, but that is generally our own fault. If we are living near the Lord, we ask what is according to His will, and rarely pray a prayer that is not answered. The happy Christian is the one who is continually having answers to prayer. We ought to ask God about everything, in the simple way that children do their parents—"What am I to put on? Where shall I go? What shall I take?" The Lord says, "In *everything* by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. iv. 6). You can pray about your school lessons, you can pray that you may not make mistakes in your daily work, without kneeling down you can ask to be given the right answer to business questions or the solution to grave difficulties. Ask the Lord, confessing anything that has grieved Him, and He will help you every time, and "your joy will be full."

Finally, in Acts ii. 28, quoting from Psalm xvi we have, "*Thou shalt make me full of joy with Thy countenance,*" i.e., the Lord's approval of our ways. When

you go home after doing something right, you can see by your mother's face that she is pleased: so the Lord shows the light of His countenance to us when we seek to walk well-pleasing in His sight. Christ was made "full of joy" by the light of God's countenance when God said, "Thou art My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." We get the opposite when the Lord looked on Peter after he had sinned. When Peter looked at the Lord's face, he had no joy, but went out and wept bitterly. But if you try to please the Lord, you will have the light of His countenance, and "your joy will be full." People may misunderstand you and get angry with you, but in spite of all this "your joy will be full."

Some texts are so rich and full that their message opens out to us at once, and if merely quoted, we are greatly helped. Surely this is one of them—"Your joy *may* be full."

TUESDAY AFTERNOON. *Open Meeting*, 3 p.m.

Hymn 62.

J.N.V. Luke xxii. 39-46.

Jesus "went, as He was wont, to the mount of Olives."

I shall never forget the two hours I spent a few weeks ago on the mount of Olives, because of the knowledge that our gracious, glorious Lord had so often been there. It was His custom to go there to be alone with His God, as it was His custom, as a Jew, to go into the synagogue on the sabbath day (Luke iv. 16), and to teach those who resorted to Him (Mark x. 1).

We read of an earlier visit of our Lord to the mount of Olives in John viii. 1, where in a time of difficulty, when some would have taken Him (vii. 44), and when every man went to his own house, "Jesus went to the mount of Olives." Again in Luke xix. 29-44, Matt. xxi. 1-11,

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it was at the mount of Olives that He sent two of His disciples to fetch the colt for His entry into Jerusalem : and " at the descent of the mount of Olives," the disciples began to praise God for the mighty works they had seen, saying, " Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord " : and it was as the Lord beheld Jerusalem that He wept over it.

From Luke xxi. 37, 38 we learn that He spent hours during the night in prayer on the mount of Olives, and preached in the temple during the day.

It was on this spot that our blessed Lord " in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him out of death, was heard in that He feared " (Heb. v. 7), His prayer being given to us in Luke xxii. 42, " Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me ; nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done." The association of the garden of Gethsemane with this scene so overwhelmed my spirit that I knelt and poured out my soul in thanksgiving for such a loving Saviour.

From Luke xxiv. 50, Acts i. 9-12 we learn that the Lord led the disciples out to Bethany, and was taken up from them from the mount called Olivet. The Lord of glory went up from the mount to which the glory of the Lord was seen by Ezekiel to move when it left Jerusalem (Ezek. xi. 23).

Finally, in a day that is coming, " His feet shall stand . . . upon the mount of Olives . . . and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof . . . and there shall be a very great valley " (Zech. xiv. 4).

Hymn 202.

R.G. Matt. xi. 25-30.

" At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast

hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father : for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

That blessed One, Who laboured and loved as none other man did, was rejected at this time. Many of His disciples had gone away ; and He turns to the twelve and says, " Will ye also go away ? " But they reply, " To whom shall we go ? " And may we not say in these last days, " If we turn from Him, to whom shall we go ? "

The meat offering speaks of the Lord's pathway here : but the heart of man did not respond to Him, so that He had to say, " Woe, woe " (*ver. 21*). He had apparently laboured in vain, and spent His strength for naught : but God gives Him a wonderful answer, " It is a light thing that Thou shouldest be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob . . . I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth " (*Is. xlix. 6*).

It was in view of all this that our Lord uttered the precious words we have read. His resource was in His Father. As the perfect, dependent Man He had learned in subjection the secret of peace in this world of unrest ; and now He says, " Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me : for I am meek and lowly in heart : and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." Blessed Sanctuary for His people !

Hymn 174.

TUESDAY EVENING. *Address* by Mr. T. Davis, 6.45 p.m.

Hymns 420, 1.

1 John v. 6—" *This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ ; not by water only, but by water and blood.*"

John's testimony related as a whole not so much to sins and their putting away as to the bestowal of eternal

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life upon those who were dead in sin : in his Epistle he brings out the characteristics of that life. These, which were seen in Christ, ought to and will be shewn in us who believe in Him, and possess His eternal life.

By the special stress upon the blood here John would have us never forget the value of that precious blood. He has been witnessing to the glory of the Son of God and to the faith that overcomes the world, and then he points to a Person, but before naming Him brings forward this characteristic, He "came by water and blood." He points to the *means* of the Saviour's redeeming work, not to the work itself, that we may set our eyes there. Then he emphasizes, "not by water only, but by water and blood," as if to say that it is *only in the power* of the same means that His work had its efficacy.

"Came" here includes all that happened to our blessed Lord. The essential thing in His coming was lacking until the water and blood were revealed—at the cross, where a soldier pierced His side (John xix. 34). Christ's coming is here spoken of almost as though the door of His exit were this coming. This is done to impress on our minds the richness and truth as well as power and point of this phrase, "by water and blood." Just as a tree does not grow for leaves or blossom, but for the fruit that comes last, so the Son of God *came* by water and blood.

The absolute form of the statement is very striking : "this is He that came"—not for what, from Whom or to whom He came. The gospel told us "He came unto His own" and that He came from the Father to do His will. But in the Epistle the coming itself is stressed, both here and in iv. 2, where confession has to be made of Jesus Christ "*come* in the flesh" and in v. 20, "we know that the Son of God is *come*." Surely this repetition enforces the necessity to hold fast the simple

fact ; stamped upon time and eternity is the event of His coming.

This statement, " He came," is grand in its simplicity, but has a glorious fulness. Wherever God's word is plainest and most direct, the well of truth is deepest and the refreshing water coolest. We sit under His shadow with great delight, knowing Him in heaven and remembering He " came." Nothing can alter that fact, and though the world rejected the Lord's anointed, *He came*—blessed be His name!—by water and blood, and finished perfectly what He came to do, to God's honour and glory.

This statement must not be taken up philosophically. Many would-be Christians to-day let go the truth of scripture from the desire to reconcile it with man's thinking, and so generalise this truth of Christ's coming as a law of God in the spiritual realm. His coming is not the emergence of divine life from some spiritual protoplasm, some vital spark in human nature. No, it is a glorious truth about a single Person, and everything depends upon His coming by water and blood.

The Lord's second coming will be rather by fire and glory : yet, however glorious and widespread in its results, there will be nothing so basic as this truth relating to the past coming.

The Lord Himself blamed His disciples gently, " If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father " (John xiv. 28), and sent them a message by Mary, " I ascend unto My Father and your Father ; and to My God and your God " (John xx. 17). He set before them His going and His ascending, not His coming. But now having learned Christ's heavenly place and ours, in and with the Father, we are led back by the Epistle that we may hold fast evermore that *He came*.

A similar difference in point of view between the Epistle and the Gospel is seen in John i. 18 ; xvii. 6, where the

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Son's manifestation of the Father's Name is the theme, as compared with the Epistle's presentation of the Father's witness to the Son, for example in 1 John i. 2, v. 11. Yet another example of such difference is the apparent contradiction between the Lord's statement in John ix. 5, "As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world," and 1 John ii. 8 (N. Tr.), "The darkness is passing and the true Light already shines," which is explained by the fact that though the whole world lies in the wicked one, the light has not gone from us: it is lighted in us. For faith He is more than given back—Christ is in us, though no longer seen in the world.

Further, John's Epistle does not *develop* Christ's rejection and man's wickedness, but unfolds the divine purpose. Things did not go wrong with the Lord, as some think nowadays, for the will of God was accomplished: and this purpose is unfolded by John. Whoever (except by divine inspiration) would have said, "He came by water and by blood"? Yet to teach us the purpose of the Son of God's coming, attention is centred upon that final scene here. The water and blood are shewn as the Saviour's insignia. God designed these means of salvation, and His Son carried out His design to His utter satisfaction and glory. This truth we must hold, and take to the perishing—the Son of God has come.

In the tabernacle ritual, water was not sprinkled upon God's throne, but was used to cleanse the priests' bodies when consecrated (Lev. viii. 6) and to wash their hands and feet when they entered the Holy Place. The bathing of the whole body has its antitype in the new birth, the cleansing of the whole man by the imparting of a new nature from God. The giving of the life of God means not merely the washing away of sins and never-ending life, but that our beings are, in the sight of God, already thoroughly and eternally cleansed.

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The water was provided for cleansing, the blood to have its effect before God, as, for example, when sprinkled on the day of atonement before and on the mercy seat. Israel, about to leave Egyptian bondage, was under the shelter of the blood, and God's testimony to them was, "When *I* see the blood, I will pass over you."

The blood answers to God for our sins, and we have merely to receive this truth by faith. Thus are our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience (Heb. x. 22).

This new life is not a promise, but now "He that hath the Son hath life" (1 John v. 12). We are made partakers of the divine nature, and the indwelling spirit of God is the power to show no other life in us than that of God's Son. How it will help us if we acknowledge this in faith, and seek grace to behave worthily of it! Is God getting His due from that life He has conferred? What are we rendering to Him? Devotion can be shown at home, in business or factory, as well as on the mission field.

This entire cleansing of the spiritual man is represented in Heb. x. 22 by the words "our bodies washed with pure water." This water is the means, by the Spirit's power, of imparting the new life (John iii. 5). The Lord referred to this bathing when He said, "He that is washed (bathed) needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit" (John xiii. 10). A new creation by divine power was there, cleansing the disciples' persons in reality before God, with practical effect. Because they trusted His word, their hearts were purified by faith (Acts xv. 9).

In his Gospel John had spoken of the necessity of Christ's death, "Even so must the Son of man be lifted up," etc. (John iii. 14-16). It does not say the believer would have his sins forgiven, but would have life; and although it asserts the necessity of the death of the Son of man, and connects the life given with faith

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in His person, neither propitiation is set forth nor faith in His blood, but in the One Who died that life might result through His grace. So in vi. 53 the Lord says, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." It is faith appropriating Him Who met our deepest needs by His death, without defining those needs further: life and communion are made to depend on so appropriating Him. In the Gospel, generally speaking, it is belief on the Lord's Person upon which eternal life is granted; "he that believeth on the Son hath life."

Although in God's word water is frequently shown to be that word itself ("the washing of water by the word," Eph. v. 26), it is striking that John reveals (xix. 34) that its source is the riven side of Jesus. It is a very significant sign, like the smitten rock in Ex. xvii. 6, in that only as having its rise in that death is the word a cleansing, life-giving message, albeit He from Whose side the water issued was ever the Son of God with life-giving voice.

The blood and water are represented in two ways: firstly, personified as witnesses bearing evidence, and secondly, as the testimony of God Himself. That stream of water and blood was the last thing the soldier expected to see. So are we taught that the eternal source of propitiation and cleansing is the pierced side of the Lord. This utterly condemns our old nature: whatever capacity we have for worship and communion is in virtue of this "double cure," of being brought near in His own relationship to the Father.

We must distinguish between propitiation and its appropriation. Propitiation is for God alone, but He always makes our joy dependent upon faith's apprehension of what He has done. He might have concealed all that has been done in the sanctuary, since the blood has to do with His glory, outraged by sin. Because men cannot understand its necessity to satisfy God,

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they deny it. We need to lay hold of the truth by faith, and doing so is part of our cleansing by the water.

In 1 John iv. 9, 10 we have the water and the blood again side by side, but in their effects, and without mention of the means: "God sent His only begotten Son . . . that we might live through Him . . . and . . . to be the propitiation for our sins."

Hymn 412.

A cable of greeting from Sydney quoting Titus iii. 15 was read on Monday morning. A telegram from the Egyptian brethren, praying the Lord's rich blessing on the Conference, and quoting Hebrews xiii. 20, 21, was by error received too late for reading at the Conference.

The full text of some of the addresses will, God willing, appear in forthcoming numbers of "The Bible Monthly" or the "Words of Help."