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Substance of Sermon preached by our Pastor  
on Sunday Morning, February 14. 1982.

Lesson. Exodus 15.

For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture, and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.

Psalm 75. 8.

The spiritual and discerning hearers of the gospel will recognise that this Scripture is complex, and it is applicable to more than one class of people. Undoubtedly - I must speak according to inspiration and spontaneously - there is reference according to our judgment to our blessed Saviour Himself. I do not believe the sweet Psalmist of Israel in his Messianic prophecies would refer to the cup which is majestic symbolism, without having by faith a view and understanding of the cup the Lord Jesus Christ Himself partook of and drank quite up in His Passion in Gethsemane. Therefore I will venture a word before you as a gracious and spiritual people, that we believe there are parts of Scripture that must belong exclusively to the living people of God. I may tell you why. It is a cup which is in the hand of the Lord, and the hand of the Lord I am thinking of is, "My times are in thy hand," blessed hand, and as Toplady says in our terminal Hymn, "My Father's hand." There is no wrath or curse there. So exclusively, blessedly, utterly, in the whole entity as it appears to me, it belongs primarily to the people of God.

And further, "For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture." There was no mixture in Christ's cup, nothing to mitigate the curse, agony, wrath, vindictive anger of God against sin when He judged the sins of the ransomed people and condemned them in the Person of a Substitute, the only Substitute there could be, His own beloved Son incarnate in the bosom of the Father, full of grace and truth. He partook of all the vindictive anger, wrath and curse of God due to, I hope, my sins and yours. Pause for a moment to think how it would be with you this morning if you had no hope in the blessed Substitute, that He bore your sins away, being imputed to Him.

Only the sins of those God loves eternally were imputed to Him. How would it be this morning if you had no hope in a glorious Substitute and the vicarious Passion and agony He suffered for you? I have said, with no mixture. With God's people, and it is exclusive to them, it must be, the cup is full of mixture. I will speak concerning the cup and receiving it, and the mixture. You will notice in the early part of the verse, "the wine is red." If we take some facets of meaning this can belong to the wicked. God's fiery wrath is red in the cup. I will make a venture to suggest that we have before us the sufferings of Christ. The wine is red. He trod the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with Him. What foundation have you in the Text unless another glorious Substitute consumed, drank the cup of wrath for you so you should have a cup of divine blessing? "The wine is red." "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me." So seek to worship, adore, exalt our beloved Saviour for His infinite stopp we shall never fathom. We shall go on knowing more through Eternity in Heaven, that He <sup>suffered</sup> for me, for the vile crimes I have done; the dear, harmless, separate from sinners Lamb of God. This will break your heart, poor sinner, if you know the Saviour suffered for all your sins so God could not take those sins and impute <sup>them</sup> to you, which means damnation. It is wonderful to get to the end of life and no debt to be paid; all paid: no sins the Father can justly take and impute to you because they have already been imputed to His Son incarnate. This is to enter into peace, "they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness," the ~~righteousness~~ uprightness of a Substitute. Poor sinner, bless your God this morning if you have a sweet hope in a Substitute, that He suffered for you.

I go aside to say, with all the process of life, the various professions, work, toil, care, getting to the end of a week, a month, another year, a brief respite, the beautiful scenery of Sussex or other parts, in the midst of it all stop and think. This life is coming rapidly to a close. Where shall I spend Eternity? There will be a last week with you, a last week of labour, toil, of viewing the beauties of Nature, and full stop for this life. Where shall I spend Eternity? Will it be that

God will meet you and impute your sin to you? Not if you are a believer in Christ. You may say you are in a dreadful state because of your vile sins. I understand you. You wonder if God will impute all the guilt of your sin to you. If so there will be no hope. If you know Christ and His atonement, (that is why I have spoken to Gethsemane and Calvary recently) you will want to go to see - could you bear it? to see the spotless Lamb of God in agony for you and to die for you? could you? That is why Gethsemane and Calvary are so remarkable to the people of God, because that is how they live, while they behold Him die. How many have a sweet hope in this blessed Person that He received the imputation of your sin and you are washed in the atoning blood of Christ? How many know what it is to be forgiven, your debt paid for you so you owe nothing? You owe all to Him, but not to Justice; full payment has been received. Think of it this morning. The sands of time are sinking rapidly; the place that knows us now will soon know us no more for ever. Presently we are going home, or we come to the end of a week. Where shall I spend Eternity? Have I a sweet hope because 'the wine is red' that He trod the winepress for me and is red in His apparel? Have you a sweet hope that the Saviour's obedience has been imputed to you, pardon and peace, so for you when you come there, and in foretastes of it, it is peace, perfect peace? Think, beloved, of these things. I am not concerned with all the dry formality, the officialdom, the traditions of men which may be good in their place. You may know all that and be lost absolutely. You are as a shell, no substance, no life, no grace, all external; a good, pious attitude and walk, stance of your body, Chapel piety and be lost. Do you know Christ drank the cup due to you, all the wrath, curse due to you, the fiery, unmitigated wrath of God so you are free? God awaken careless sinners if any have come into this Sanctuary with no concern for their souls. It is not a matter of just coming: we welcome you with <sup>all</sup> our heart, and all in the parish: it needs more than that. If you are in trouble concerning sin you will never rest until you know Christ, and you will have a sweet hope that He suffered for you, and when you know that it will be bliss. The cup is full of mixture.

"But the dregs," the sediment, all that is left at the bottom. You say there is nothing in sediment, we can cast it away. Not in this cup.

The wicked drink, wring out and drink with no abatement of the fiery curse of God, nothing to diminish it. I thought there may be a poor soul saying in a path of sorrow and trial, "The cross I bear is almost like wringing out the dregs of sin; as though it is the dregs of my ~~transgress~~ transgression I am wringing out." Not all understand this, it is too deep. I believe there are a few in the congregation who feel the path they tread is as the dregs of sin. What a mercy if there is no curse! if your sufferings are the chastening of the Lord so your sins go before to judgment, not follow after. What a path! and it is inescapable. You come into things in the journey where it is like wringing out the dregs of sin.

By His help I will speak to the part of the verse as it relates to the people of God. "For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup," a vessel, and the vessel may be the cup of providence. "For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup." I know what you want, poor sinner. You want the cup that is red with the blood shed for you, if I may reverently put it thus, as in the Communion. For "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." How do you eat His flesh and drink His blood? As by faith you believe in Him so you partake of Him. This is a grand mystery. As you believe in His rich atonement you will partake of the cup. It is a cup of love, cleansing, pardon for you and it is a cup in the hand of the Lord, the cup of His providence. A Scripture for your meditation is, "Thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup." We do not know what tomorrow may bring forth, but the cup is in the hand of the Lord. In the cup are your various experiences and the cup is full of mixture. Remember, God is love. He is infinitely kind, merciful, just, true, faithful, so the cup contains chastening, correction, His rod: it contains also the consolations of the gospel, His precious love, sweet mercy, divine compassion, His glorious Covenant faithfulness.

I will demonstrate Biblically. Hannah had in her cup persecution, deprivation. She was not alone: she had the mercy of God, the goodness of God in it teaching her, bringing low and lifting up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes. She had a blessed mediator listening to her prayer and seeing her fears, and telling her her

petition was heard and answered. "Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him." Hers was a cup of mixture. Hezekiah, the renowned, gracious, spiritual King of Judah had what appeared to be a terminal illness. "Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live." Many of the people of God think they will die before they do. It is one of the temptations of Satan often. You feel you are going to die, and you will do, but it is a temptation to you. The poor man was on the borders of death and his poor soul was not sure of the forgiveness of sin, and the dear city was besieged. There was the love of God in it, the compassion of the Lord. He said, "The Lord was ready to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord." Look at the compassion of the Lord. He saw his tears, heard his prayers, delivered and protected the city, blessed him, and cast all his sins behind His back. You may see the same with all the dear saints. Poor soul, what is your mixture? Don't tell me. I am interested, but you know more that you can tell any, not even God. You say, "O Lord, Thou knowest." He knows the sorrows of your breast, the complications of the case, the acute pain and loneliness you feel. He knows what the intractable case is, and the things that are impossible with men. It is a cup of mixture. We read for a specific reason how the Israelites came to Marah and the waters were bitter. Poor soul, you will come to Marah and you will not be able to drink the waters they are so bitter. It is a cup of mixture. You will say, "For though our cup seems filled with gall, - it wasn't.- There's something secret sweetens all."

It is a cup of mixture. Poor dear heart, dear child of God, little one, humble, lowly one, praying soul, what is your cup of mixture? You have tried to get everything right as you wanted it, and the eagle has stirred up her nest. She "fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings" to teach them to fly. You have got to learn how to fly and not be landlubbers. Poor soul! I am thinking of one I heard of, a man and his wife in conjugal love over the years and the husband was retiring and they moving to a bungalow. They began to get everything as they wanted it so it was just right, and by that time she died. I have seen it over the years. There was an old lady so

anxious to get into her new bungalow, and I was afraid what would happen to her. I do not know if she got in. You have been trying to get everything right, and it is a cup of mixture. The Lord knows what it is. It will hurt you, it will affect you in the place where you feel it most. It is not out there; it is in here: it comes right in. It goes into the inner core of your personality. It is a cup of mixture. There are sorrows, pains, infirmities, afflictions, disappointments, a thorn, a cross, various things, loneliness and solitude.

I will tell you something about this cup of mixture. It is this. His love is in it, not His curse. When the cup is in your hand and you begin to drink it, and you will in a certain way which I will speak of later, you will taste the sweetness of His love in it. You will say, "This is true religion, it is vital godliness. It is my Saviour, His great goodness vouchsafed to me." I will tell you three things that will be for your comfort in the cup of mixture, The ~~three~~ three graces, faith, hope, love. Faith will give sweet confidence in the Lord. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." And the comfort of hope, living hope. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance." And the sweetness of His immutable, ineffable love. Blessed be God.