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Prayer Meeting Address by Mr. J. Delves at "Ebenezer" Clapham on 18.10.54

Hymns: 70, 397    Reading: Mark 10.21-52; John 18.1-11

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The Lord Jesus is here speaking to His disciples and they are indeed words of very gracious and timely instruction. There are just three points I might mention; the first is an intimation or prediction. As they were in the way going up to Jerusalem the Lord Jesus, as He had done before, but here more particularly fore-tells His sufferings. They seem ever to have been before Him, fully to realise what He would have to suffer and the bitter cup He would have to drink, but notwithstanding this we read that "He stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem", and this is what would come to pass, "The Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles: and they shall mock Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall kill Him: and the third day He shall rise again". This is what came to pass, this was included in the Redeemer's cup that His Father gave Him; there were some very bitter ingredients, afflictions like the floods of great waters. The cup here indicates great afflictions, ingredients in the cup that He was about to drink, and had been continually drinking, bitter ingredients in that cup were His temptations, mockery, opposition, blaspheme, contempt, reviling and false witnesses against Him, spitting, buffetting and, far deeper than all this, the inconceivable load of imputed sin and guilt, the conflict of the Garden and the agony and suffering of the Cross, pouring out His soul unto death, all this was included in the cup and yet with what wonderful willingness the Lord Jesus did undertake to drink to the very dregs every ingredient of this cup for poor sinners, for His dear people. He lay down His life, endured their hell in order that there should be for them an opened way to heaven.

The second point has regard to the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, who came to Him and said would He do for them what they should ask of Him, "And He said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? They said unto Him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory". It would seem that these two disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ soon lost sight of what the Lord had been saying and their thoughts turned very quickly to some future prospect of honour and dignity and position, to be one on the right hand and the other on the left hand of Christ in glory, but the Lord's answer is a very timely truth, He said, "Ye know not what ye ask", that is often true is it not, these two disciples, good men, but at that time they seemed to be just thinking of honour for themselves, if we two can sit each side of Thee in heaven that will suit us very well, if we can have a place of honour that is our desire Lord. Why, He said, you do not know what you ask, you do not know what

it means, I have just referred to the cup I have to drink, of what I have to suffer, but that seemed lost sight of and they were just thinking of themselves and the Lord said, "can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto Him, We can". Poor disciples, they did not know what they were saying, they had no conception of what their redeemer was about to go through, of the ingredients in that cup that He was to drink, a cup of penal wrath, no one else but the redeemer could ever have drunk that cup, it was needful that He should have done, God and Man, which He was to drink to the very dregs. Every ingredient in that bitter cup of affliction and suffering and wrath and death. Where grace is there are still some very sad indications of the uprising of fallen nature, it was evidently pride in these two good men, nothing else, and the Lord said, "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercised lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.". The nature of the Gospel is humility.

The third point is an example, wonderful example, the Lord refers to Himself again. He says, "So it shall not be among; but whosoever will be great among you". What ever may be required in the nature of an office or service we are to look upon one another as serving the Lord and one another, "whosoever will be great among you shall, be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all". "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister", as though He would say, I have not come to be waited on, but to serve. I have come to a low place to manifest that true humility that behoves all my followers to come there, to be willing to take the lowest place, to remember that before honour is humility, here is a wonderful example to all His followers everyone, even the Son of Man, though He be Lord of all, though He be God, though He possess all worlds, though all is in His hand, though He was so rich, yet for your sakes He stooped so low, took such a low place, showed such patience, such forgiveness, such love and all to serve. There is the minister and servant, and He gave His life a ransom for many, that is to say the ransomed price for the redemption of all His dear people at a tremendous cost and here He is an example in humility and, according to the teaching, an example for us all to follow, everyone of us, we shall never go wrong if we have grace enough to set the example of the Lord Himself before us and walk in that path of humility and love towards Him and towards one another. Amen

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