

*Preached on Lord's Day morning, 5th January, 1964.*

Text: "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no."—Deut. viii. 2.

THAT which is recorded in God's Holy Word is there for our instruction, for our direction, for our encouragement. We are to give heed to the exhortations of God's Word, and when His blessing is realized in our souls, we are then enabled to draw sweetness from the Word. "Out of the strong came forth sweetness" (Judg. xiv. 14), and so out of God's Word there is sweetness, there is honey to be drawn forth.

Some of you may remember that very recently we tried to preach from that word, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord" (Ps. cxviii. 17). I want, as helped, to declare the works of the Lord to me, and in me. For some months now this has been an exercise with me, that, if spared, the first Lord's Day in 1964 would be the appointed time for me to tell you, dear friends, of the three distinct calls I hope the Lord has made towards me; that is to say, my call by grace, as I humbly trust, secondly my call to the ministry of the Gospel, and thirdly my call to West Street. Yet I feel I could not have ventured unless the Lord had been pleased to bless my soul during the past week, and He has. I feel, therefore, that this must be the appointed time, and I want to remember the works of the Lord toward me. The Holy Spirit is the Remembrancer of His people, and He causes them to remember all the way which He has led them these forty years or so in the wilderness.

At the beginning of the past week, I had to venture on something (I need not tell you the nature of it), and it occupied half the week. I did trust that the Lord would favour me, if it was right, if His blessing rested upon it, to greatly help me to preach His truth one evening in the past week, and especially so in a place where I very much

### FOREWORD

The promise to the ancient Church was: "I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer. iii. 15), and we would, in humble gratitude to the Lord, acknowledge His gift in sending to us at West Street, Croydon, Mr. R. J. Moore, whose exercised ministry has been made very acceptable in our midst and whose constant travail for souls has been made very manifest.

As will be seen from a perusal of these pages, the 4 sermons reported were preached at the beginning of 1964, after the completion of the first year of his Pastorate, and are of a somewhat personal nature, setting forth his exercise in grace and in the call to West Street.

Desires were expressed that they might be issued in printed form, but it was not the wish of Mr. Moore that this should be done, until recently, when he felt he could accede to the request.

We trust that the sending forth of these pages may prove to be to the honour and glory of the Lord and to the profit of souls.

C.V.C.

Croydon, March, 1966

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feared to go. I went there some time ago and it was real hard labour to preach. It seemed just words, words. I came away very disheartened; but on this occasion, going back there, I did pray that the Lord would help me in a most unusual way, and He certainly did, blessed be His dear name. This encourages me to hope that the Lord will again help me to declare His works to me, in calling me by His grace. I do want to remember what God has done for me.

I was born into this world of sin and sorrow, dead in trespasses and sins; I went forth from the womb speaking lies; I was without hope and without God in the world; I was lost, but did not know it. I never knew what it was to be brought up in a godly home; this was not my happy and favoured lot. I was not brought up in the fear of God; I was left to myself, and for some years never went into a place of worship. I was in the world and delighted in worldly things, although I did not go to the lengths to which some are left to go. I had no-one to instruct me in the truth of God, but the Lord's appointed time came: what a mercy! In the wondrous providence of God He led me to His house, namely to Jireh Chapel, Haywards Heath. I was born in Lewes in Sussex, and lived there until 7 or 8 years ago, but the Lord was working in my life and in my circumstances in directing my way to Haywards Heath Chapel. I know I had relations who attended that chapel, but the Lord, I hope, had a favour toward me.

I had a very godly grandmother, who is now in glory. She was a member of Hope Chapel, Blackboys. She went home in the year 1940, and not until that time did the Lord begin to work in my own dear mother. She was in the world, as I was. The Lord used the death of her own godly mother to be the means of life to my mother.

When the Lord led me to His house at Haywards Heath, I felt that these people were different from any other people I had known, and there was given me a desire that these people should be my people, and their God my God. I began to esteem the Lord's dear servant there, who was the late Mr. William Groombridge, and I still remember some of the texts he preached from.

I also commenced to attend Jireh Chapel, Lewes, which is an Independent Cause of Truth, and the Lord first spoke to me there. These were the words, "For the ways of the Lord are right". They arrested me. I did not know the words were in the Word of God, and it was a long time before I found them in the last verse of Hosea—"For the ways of the Lord are right". This meant there had to be a laying aside of worldly things. Cinema-going was one of my regular pursuits, and how it completely took hold of my young mind! together with novel-reading, crime stories in particular, and what a crime that was! These all had to go; I had to leave them and come out from among them, and touch not the unclean thing, and "be ye separate" (II Cor. vi. 17). This is a word to the Lord's people—"Touch not the unclean or accursed thing, bring it not into your houses". I see this word is right before me, "Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing" (Deut. vii. 26). These cursed things had to be relinquished, they could not continue.

From that time I began, like the prodigal son, to be in want. I believe the Lord opened up to me, in some measure, the sins of my heart. I believe He brought me to my knees, with an oft-repeated prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner". Well, God *was* merciful to me, and when I was in France, as a young soldier, the Lord, in His mercy, revealed Himself to me for the first time. I was sitting in a tin hut, eating the little ration that was allotted to us, when the Lord so gave me, as I believe and trust, a view of Himself as being the satisfaction for my sins.

I find I am not recalling these things in the right sequence, and I remember the Psalmist said, when desiring to record the Lord's mercies to him, "They cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee" (Ps. xl. 5). Prior to this there was such a depth of self-righteousness working in me; there was a legal striving to mend the broken law of God. But when the Lord revealed Himself to my soul, all this was put right for the time. I believed Him to be mine, and I felt that for a few moments, and it brought

me in spirit to His dear feet. My heart went out to Him in love and praise. I could take you to that spot.

The Lord wonderfully preserved my life in France in the midst of many dangers. Being in the Medical Corps, I was instructed to prepare a hospital office for the reception of the wounded. This hospital had been evacuated by the former staff, who had returned to this country because of the approach of the enemy, and we were to move in. Perhaps you can imagine how I felt there alone, yet I believe, not alone, for with my eyes up to the Lord, I noticed a bible on the window sill. I do not remember whether it was open or whether I opened it, but my eyes fell upon this word in Isaiah, "Fear not, for I am with thee" (Is. xliii. 5); and He was with me. For forty-eight hours we were taking in the wounded and we had incessant bombing and shelling. Shortly before I left that country, we were in a wood, with the German shells overhead, and it was as though a voice told me to move away from the foot of a tree where I was lying. I did so, and immediately a large piece of shrapnel fell where a few seconds before I had been lying. "Fear not, for I am with thee". In this case the word relates to a providential deliverance, but it does show how the Lord spared my life, and, I hope, for a gracious purpose.

After that, I had to go to India for nearly three years, and the Lord again watched over me, preserving my unworthy life in the many journeys and dangers of the way.

Returning to civil life, after nearly seven years in the army, I settled in Lewes, my home town, and with my wife, attended Jireh Chapel, but we could not stay there. We both had the same feelings, although we were not then aware of it, but found out later that neither of us felt to be at home; yet we knew not what to do or where to go. During one sleepless night, when my constant cry was, "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me", the Lord was pleased to direct us to Croydon, and there we met two of the Lord's servants, who kindly enquired of us, knowing just a little about us. They both gave us good, wise counsel, which, to sum it up was this, "Commit thy way unto the Lord" (Ps. xxxvii. 5). The Lord helped

us to do this, and without putting our hand to anything, after a while He directed us to attend "Zoar", The Dicker. From the first time we attended there, we both felt, "This is home". There the Lord began to deepen the work of grace in my poor heart. The ministry was made as my meat and drink. We had our trials there and one in particular, when the Lord brought us down to the gates of death, and when He wrought willingness in my heart to suffer loss by death in our little family. There was that falling down before the Lord in this matter. I cannot now say much about this, but one Lord's Day, I went to the House of God alone. My dear one was not with me, because of the severe and sudden illness of one of our little daughters. One of the friends at the mid-day Prayer Meeting read the account containing the words of Christ, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God" (Mark x. 14; Luke xviii. 16). When I heard these words I felt that I could freely give up our dear child, and I believed that that might indeed have been the Lord's will; but He spared her, and from that moment there was a change for the better in her condition. And the Lord blessed my soul in that dispensation. "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep" (Ps. cvii. 23-24), and they shall record His blessings. "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord" (v. 43).

I remember one Saturday night at Lewes, feeling most unlike one of the Lord's children, and begging for a word to my soul, when this verse dropped upon my spirit very sweetly:—

"And lest the shadow of a spot  
Should on my soul be found,  
He took the robe the Saviour wrought,  
And cast it all around." (109)

This brought fresh life and hope into my soul, and I felt the Lord was mine. I felt my sins, which are many, were all forgiven though these actual words were not spoken to me.

And then, whilst at The Dicker, the Lord laid His hand on me and brought me very low, in spirit and body. I felt stripped of all my own righteousness, and I wanted Christ; I wanted the assurance of salvation for my soul. I went to the House of God feeling to be in the depths, and praying to the Lord that He would appear for me. The text that day was, "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart" (Is. lvii. 1). The Lord's servant commenced to describe a righteous man, and I thought, "Now I shall be cut off". He went on to show wherein a sinner was counted righteous; not in himself, but by the imputation of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ—"The Lord our Righteousness". Instead of my being cut off, the Lord implanted faith in my heart, and I viewed the Lord Jesus as my righteousness. My inmost feeling and language was,

"No more, my God, I boast no more  
Of all the duties I have done;  
I quit the hopes I held before,  
To trust the merits of Thy Son." (112)

and in confirmation, and to the joy of my heart, the deacon gave out this hymn at the close of the service.

This was at the end of 1959, and the Lord blessed me with His presence for four or five weeks. I have never had a blessing like this. All my prayer was turned into praise, and, believing that the Lord was mine, I felt to be the happiest man in the world. The devil tried hard to rob me of the blessing, but I was able to resist him with this verse—"With Christ in the vessel, I smile at the storm" (232). At the Christmas morning service, we commenced with hymn No. 11, "Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song", and it was. Mercy that had watched over me in unregenerate days; mercy that had reached my poor soul.

But we must now close. May the Lord forgive all amiss. Amen.