

self-questioning and the black treachery of him, the betrayer, who could sin and violate the sacred rites of hospitality by eating from the same dish with Him. The fate of Judas is forever settled by Christ's own statement, "Good if he had never been born." This, too, teaches that for the lost there is no restoration, for if an eternity of happiness could be enjoyed, even after long suffering, it would be good that he had been born.

4. Instituting the supper, vs. 22-25. The last Passover had been completed, and now He takes the bread and breaks it with a new meaning. The bread broken and the wine poured out He gave them to represent His body broken and His blood shed for the sins of men.

The Passover had forever ended and the Lord's supper had taken its place. That upper chamber points back through the Passovers of bygone generations to the Exodus and forward through the communions of the centuries to Christ's coming again.

"He would drink no more, etc.," i.e. He would have no more social meals with them. This was the last. He points them forward, however, to the time when in another place, in another sense, they will rejoice together again.

There is an incident of the supper given in John 13:1-20. Washing the feet on entering the house was a duty of common courtesy. It was usually performed by a servant. The disciples should have attended to it. Probably they thought it too menial. Instead of that they were disputing who should be greatest, Luke, 22:24.

To set them an example Jesus Himself rises from the table and did what one of them should have done had it not been for their false pride. Then He speaks to them of the spirit they should manifest.

LESSONS.

1. We should be careful if we eat with Christ at His table not to betray Him by our lives.
2. Our first care should ever be an earnest watching of self. "Lord is it I?"
3. For all who finally reject Christ, "Good were it if they had never been born."
4. There is no atonement for sin but the broken body and shed blood of Christ.
5. The "blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin."

THE AGONY IN GETHSEMANE.

5 May.

Les. Mark 14:32-42. Gol. Text, John 18:11. Mem. vs. 34-36. Chatechism. Q. 18.

This lesson follows immediately after the last one, the institution of the supper. Christ and His disciples left the upper room towards midnight and went out of the city, down the ravine, across the Kedron to the Garden of Gethsemane at the base of the Mt. of Olives, and there in the beginning of the last day of His life on earth took place the solemn mystery of this lesson.

When He came to the outside of the garden He left all of the disciples but three, as an outer guard or watch. He went a little farther and the sorrow of soul came upon Him so that even they could not understand Him and He wanted to be alone with God, and left Peter and James and John as an inner guard, while He went alone to pray. A walled enclosure with eight gnarled old olive trees is to-day shown by the monks as the site of the Garden. It is probably near the place.

1. *His agony.* Its depth none can fathom, its cause none can fully know. It is probable that the great cause was the fact that He was the sinner's substitute, and was taking for the time

the sinner's place, suffering for the time in that place the withdrawal of God's favor, being, as the sinner must finally be who clings to his sins, "God-forsaken;" for His cry of agony was "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me."

How this could be; how He could be conscious of being God forsaken, or lose consciousness of His own power and Divinity, none can tell. We stand in the presence of a awful mystery.

2. *His prayer.* "If it be possible, let this cup pass." "This cup," whatever that may mean, was what caused the agony. But bitter as it was, He immediately added, "Not My will, but Thine, be done;" leaving us an example of true prayer for all time. The prayer was repeated once and again, and in this we have another example regarding prayer, viz., perseverance.

3. *The answer.* He had His answer. The cup was not removed, but an angel appeared, strengthening Him. Answer to prayer is sure.

4. *The sleeping disciples.* It was night, the time for sleep, but He had asked them to watch. When He awakens them He bids them watch and pray lest they enter into temptation. The temptation soon came in the way of fear, for when Judas with his band came, they forsook Christ and fled. Had they watched and prayed they might not have been so cowardly.

LESSONS.

1. What an awful burden Christ bore in taking the sin of the world.
2. If He suffered so much what must the sorrow of soul be of those who cling to their own sins and bear the penalty.
3. What must the love have been to lead Him to bear such sorrow and agony for sinners.
4. True prayer desires God's will more than its own will.
5. It is right for us to pray for what God may not see fit to grant. Christ did this.
6. An answer always comes to true prayer. If the burden be not removed there is strength given to bear it.
7. If we slumber at the post of duty we are liable to fall into temptation—Satan never slumbers.

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