

**THE REVELATION OF THE
SEVEN WORDS
FROM THE CROSS. A
SERIES OF ADDRESSES**

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The Revelation of the Seven Words from the Cross. A Series of Addresses by J. H. Lester

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J. H. LESTER

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**The Revelation of the
Seven Words from the Cross.**

The Revelation
of the
Seven Words from the
Cross.

A SERIES OF ADDRESSES.

BY THE REV.

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PREBENDARY OF LICHFIELD AND DIOCESAN MISSIONER.

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PSALM XXXIX. 4.

"MY HEART WAS HOT WITHIN ME, AND WHILE I WAS
THUS MUSING THE FIRE KINDLED, AND AT THE LAST I
SPAKE WITH MY TONGUE."

THOUGHTS are expressed in words ; and there are times when heart and mind are stirred with a deep emotion, and the broken utterances of the lips become the spontaneous expression of the hidden power which absorbs and controls the soul.

What, then, is the meaning of the words of the dying Redeemer ? For surely no human heart was ever moved as the heart of the Man of Sorrows in the last tragedy of the Sacred Life !

Those broken sayings were not the result of an over-pressure of intense agony; nor mere expressions of sympathy with the laws of human life: they were a revelation.

The Passion was a destined work of sacred toil and not a chance accident. Just as the manifestation of the Incarnate Word is the central point in the world's history, to which, through long ages, the work of preparation tended, and from which the work of human restoration has spread; so the Passion of our Redeemer is the meeting point of His historical life of human example and His eternal life of intercession—of His Incarnate life under the limitation of a humanity not yet reconciled, and His glorified life of unlimited power, and consequently of infinite possibility for mankind. "I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how am I straightened till it be accomplished!" were His words before He went to die. Afterwards He says: "All power is given to Me in Heaven and in earth: . . . lo! I am with you always." Hence the Passion is an act in which the fundamental truths of salvation are centred—an act of intense and universal interest to the Redeemed.

It is the act which underlies all the missionary advance of the Church, for, as her Evangelists go forth with the Word of God, it is under the preaching of the Cross that souls have ever been subdued to the Empire of Jesus Christ, and filled with a loyal enthusiasm for the Kingdom of God.

Look at its place in the Christian year. What does Lent, with its solemn penitential teachings, mean, but that it is the Church calling her sons and daughters to look at sin according to the true estimate formed of it in the Passion of the Redeemer? And, as Lent deepens into Passion-tide, hearts saddened by the realization of faults and failings—sins against the love and grace of God—are led to gaze upon the atoning sacrifice with its wonderful revelations, and to enter into the power of the Precious Blood. Then Easter morning breaks with gladness, not because of the close of a season of restriction from the world, but because of a realization of holy joy and blessed freedom in communion with the risen Lord. Thus penitence issues in a real advance in newness of life; but the point of transition is at the Cross.