

HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

TENTH WEEK.

MORNING WORSHIP.

MOST holy and loving Jesus, teach us ever to acknowledge Thee as our only Lord and Master, and ourselves as Thy servants and disciples, that so we may ever sit at Thy feet, and with meekness learn of Thee. Grant, O Lord, that we may so believe, think, feel, and act, that we may never hinder, but ever advance by our faith and life, Thy holy cause and kingdom. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm xc. 14-17.*

Come, gracious Lord, descend and dwell,
By faith and love, in every breast:
Then shall we know, and taste, and feel
The joys that cannot be express'd.

Come, fill our hearts with inward strength;
Make our enlarged souls embrace
The depth and height, and breadth and length,
Of thine immeasurable grace!

Now to the God, whose power can do
More than our thoughts or wishes know,
Be everlasting honours done,
By all the church, through Christ his Son!

GENESIS XLVIII. 1-12, 20-22.

AND it came to pass after these things, that one told Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick: and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. 2. And one told Jacob, and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee. And Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed. 3. And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, 4. And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession. 5. And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt, before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine: as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. 6. And thy issue, which thou begettest after them, shall be thine, and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance. 7. And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the

way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: the same is Beth-lehem. 8. And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who are these? 9. And Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them. 10. (Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, so that he could not see.) And he brought them near unto him; and he kissed them, and embraced them, &c.

GENESIS XLIX. 29-33.

AND he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite; 30. In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite, for a possession of a burying-place. 31. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah. 31. The purchase of the field, and of the cave that is therein, was from the children of Heth. 33. And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.

GENESIS L. 1-2, 7, 12-15.

And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. 2. And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel. 7. And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt. 12. And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them: 13. For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field, for a possession of a burying-place, of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre.

Prayer.

O LORD, our heavenly Father, we adore Thee as the Father of spirits, and the bounteous Giver of every mercy both for this life and for the life to come. We bless Thee for permitting us to enter upon another sacred Sabbath, and implore Thee to sanctify its privileges to our eternal good.

We confess with sorrow that we have sinned against Thee, times without number, in thought and word and deed;

may our convictions of the evil of sin be deep and penitent; give us the broken and contrite heart, and dispose us earnestly to seek Thy forgiving mercy. Through the death and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, blot out all our sins, and receive us to Thy favour.

May we consecrate this sacred day to the duties of devout thankfulness, spiritual worship, and active service for the good of others. Let all our social intercourse be seasoned with grace to promote our mutual edification. Grant us the assistance of Thy Holy Spirit in the duties of public and private worship. May our confession of sin, our prayers and praises, be the language of contrite and believing hearts, and acceptable to Thee through Christ our Lord. May Thy word, read and preached, be received by us in pure affection, and applied by the Holy Spirit to our own hearts. What we know not, teach Thou us, confirm our faith, encourage our hopes, purify and quicken our affections, and fit us to serve thee, in wisdom and faithfulness, in our several stations in life. Assist Thy servants who may this day labour in the ministry of Thy word; convince sinners of their guilt and peril, and reveal Christ to them as the only way to the Father. May they who seek to teach others know for themselves that Christ is the power of God unto salvation; thus out of the fulness of a grateful and believing heart may they successfully commend

Christ Jesus to others, and find Him more and more precious to their own souls.

We plead with Thee on behalf of the thousands of our fellow men who may misspend this Sabbath day in desecration, negligence, and sin. Show them the guilt and folly of wasting these sacred seasons, and the peril that must one day overtake them, and give them repentance to salvation.

Look in mercy on houses of mourning, with their varied scenes of suffering, want, or trial. Give them patience and strength equal to their day, and a happy deliverance from all their sorrows. Be graciously present with us throughout the day, and with all with whom we have at any time gone to the house of God in company; let our prayers, though now separated, be accepted for each other. Receive our thanksgivings for all Thy mercies, temporal as well as spiritual; may we and all who may worship with us be edified with Thy truth this day, and Thy name be increasingly glorified in us and by us, through the merits and mediation of Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD, our Heavenly Father, our preserver and guide, as Thou has brought us to the beginning of another Sabbath, grant us the continuance of Thy gracious favour; direct, sanctify, and govern us in all our thoughts, words, and acts, that by Thy almighty grace we may be preserved in body and soul, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm xxxiv. 1-7.*

O HOLY Saviour, Friend unseen!
The faint, the weak, on Thee may lean;
Help me throughout life's varying scene,
By faith to cling to Thee!

Though faith and hope awhile be tried,
I ask not, need not, aught beside;
How safe, how calm, how satisfied,
The souls that cling to Thee!

They fear not life's rough storms to brave,
Since Thou art near and strong to save;
Nor shudder e'en at death's dark wave,
Because they cling to Thee!

Bless'd is my lot, whate'er befall,
What can disturb me, who appal,
While, as my strength, my rock, my all,
Saviour! I cling to Thee!

HEBREWS XII. 1-13.

WHEREFORE, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. 2. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. 4. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. 5. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons: for what son

is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8. But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9. Furthermore, we have fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10. For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. 11. Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. 12. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; 13. And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

SERMON X.

“BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH, AND I WILL GIVE THEE A CROWN OF LIFE.” -- Rev. ii. 10.

THE crown of life here promised as strong encouragement to the suffering Christians of Smyrna is connected with counsels which must be diligently considered; for whenever the Holy Scriptures hold forth a prize, they take care to remind the combatants of the warfare whereby it is to be gained.

The Christian is engaged in a *severe and unceasing conflict*. The life of faith is everywhere represented as full of hardship and struggle. Look at Scripture characters, from Abel to the last chapter of Malachi, and from the birth of John the Baptist to the exile of John the Evangelist, every page of their eventful lives is inscribed with the records of conflicts, sometimes darkened by sorrow and defeat, and sometimes illumined by triumph. It is true that children in their baptism are admitted among the soldiers of Christ. But each young Christian expects somehow to be exempted from the severer conflicts which beset others. But he has not long given his heart to Christ, before he discovers that his pathway to heaven is beset with enemies. There are but two great parties in the world -- those who are for

Christ, and those who are against Him. The eyes of the young convert are opened to see the ways before him peopled with combatants, still he is not dismayed; formidable as the prospect is, his course is taken, and his resolutions fixed to be on the Lord's side; in humility and faithfulness he girds himself for the conflict, and puts on the whole armour of God.

He soon discovers that his first and great conflict begins with *his own heart*. Like Moses, who expected that as soon as he offered himself to be their Deliverer, the Israelites would accept him, so the young Christian imagines that the enmity of his own heart will soon give way, and it will be an easy task to bring every thought to the obedience of Christ; but he finds it otherwise. The flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; the law of sin in his members warring against the law of Christ in his mind; the presence of evil among the desires to do good, and all that spiritual contention which St Paul describes so vividly in his seventh chapter of Romans -- this becomes now a matter of constant and humiliating experience. Doubts and fears too, misgivings about Christ's willingness, and mistaken ideas about his own fitness, trouble his soul and hedge him round with difficulties, that he fears he shall never find peace at all; and all the way through, even when he has found Christ and obtained mercy in Him, there is not a day he lives, nor a step he takes heavenward, but he finds himself hindered and

mortified by the indwelling of sin and the plague of his own heart.

Then, *the world* in which he lives adds immensely to the Christian's conduct. Some have to contend fiercely with things forbidden: the flesh spreads its enticements; the eye is tempted by vanity; the course of daily life presents a series of allurements fitted to gratify a carnal mind. Treading this dangerous ground, the Christian must watch and pray with unceasing diligence lest he enter into temptation.

Or it may not be with the world's vanities that the believer is set to contend, so much as against its *hatred and persecuting spirit*; just as Satan first accosted the Lord with the temptations of the wilderness, and failing in these, assailed Him by the malice of the Pharisees and the terrors of death. This was the trial of the Christians at Smyrna. Satan had cast some of them into prison, to try whether hunger and thirst, darkness and chains, would be effectual to break their courage and tempt them to renounce their faith in Christ. But even trials like these are only for a short and definite season. Their days of tribulation are limited to "ten." So exactly the Lord assigns the duration of his people's sufferings, that He appoints even the time and place where their enemies may assault: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further."

What particular mode of conflict the new convert will have to meet, and the position to be assigned to him in the great battle-field with evil, no one can foresee. But sin is, ever and everywhere, the grand enemy which, in some form or other, he must meet as one warrior meets his antagonist face to face. There is an obvious difference in this conflict between the Christian and the man of the world. Sin lives in the Christian, while the worldly man lives in sin. Both may contend with it, but in a different spirit and with different results. The Christian overcomes sin, but sin overcomes the worldly man; with him it is ever a losing game; he has no power to fight; his half-hearted struggles with sin are but a succession of defeats; whereas the Christian, regarding sin with deep and righteous abhorrence, is animated in his conflicts by the conscious presence of his great Captain, who inspires him to bolder deeds. He ever seeks to emulate their brave exploits, and share their success, who “overcame by the blood of the Lamb.”

But in this great life-conflict, the Christian soldier must be *“faithful.”* Faith is the master principle in the soldier of Christ; faithfulness is the character which that principle produces. Faith is the ruling power which controls, informs, pervades his everyday actions. Faith brings unseen and eternal things near, and keeps them before him; he realizes the power and presence of the world to come every hour of his life. True, he cannot see the glories of that world. His

eye is too feeble to discern the glitter of their crowns, and his ear too dull to catch the distant music of their harps; but they are all present to his mind as if he actually saw and heard them with his bodily sense. Invisible, yet by faith he beholds them; future, yet to his conscious faith they are verily present. He is persuaded of them, and embraces them --

“His treasure and his heart are there,
And his abiding home.”

Now, place that man of faith among the vain pomps and diversified evils of the world, and how will he act? He sees others eagerly pursuing earthly things, “seeking their gain from their quarter;” some grovel among the sordid things of the world, others flutter after its follies; some aspire to wealth, others are greedy for power, while pleasure has everywhere her crowd of wanton admirers. But to the man of faith all such attractions have lost their charm. He can turn away from them all, saying with the Apostle -- “None of these things move me.”

He is equally unmoved in his endurance of trial. In whatever form the trial comes, whether in the scorn of an infidel persecutor, as Abel found it, or the derision of a world sunk in grossness and sense, as Noah experienced; or the going out from kindred and home with no guide but

God, and no home but heaven, as Abraham: still, amid the changes of life and the varied devices of evil, he never loses that principle of faith which brings God near and keeps eternal things in view, and he goes on, through change and grief and joy, steadfast in faith, suffering all, fulfilling all, awaiting all, knowing that he has in heaven a better, that is, an enduring inheritance.

Then, moreover, *his character is moulded by faith*. He is a steward in God's household, and is required to be found faithful. Feeling his responsibility, he takes an accurate account of the talents committed to his stewardship -- his powers of mind and body, his time and strength, his property and position, his social relationships enlarging his sphere of influence, his religious advantages, with full liberty of conscience as to creed and worship, gifted too as to the ministry with purity of doctrine and simplicity of service, while many around have neither; but above all, he has the atoning virtue of the Saviour's blood, the striving and guidance of the Blessed Spirit, the teaching of his inspired Word, the bright example of many living saints, and the blessed memory of others who have finished their course and entered into rest. In his employment of these and numberless other helps committed to his stewardship, he must be faithful. Some may gain more by their talents than others; some seeds may yield sixty or a hundred fold, others but thirty. We are not responsible for the amount of

visible success. Let your own personal salvation be the first thing. Seek first the kingdom of God yourself. Lay the foundation in repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as your peace and righteousness before God; then seek to gain deeper knowledge of the mysteries of God's eternal salvation, a maturer experience of its blessings and hopes, and diligent obedience to its precepts. Thus you will fulfil the first duties of a faithful steward in receiving *for yourself* the full salvation of Christ.

Then see that you *live for others*. Fulfil your character as a witness for Christ. Live and move as a lamp in a dark place, diffusing the light of life, and always guiding some inquirer or other into the way of peace. Spend your days as a labourer sent by the great Master to work in his vineyard. The time is short, and much remains to be done. Ignorant wanderers in the world's highway are to be brought in and instructed; mourners, stricken for sin and weeping with godly sorrow, to be directed to Christ; and many an awakened penitent, anxious about eternal things, wants a friendly hand to lead him to the Father's way of peace. Thus the Christian lives daily under the solemn impression of his stewardship. Life, with all its comforts, helps, privileges, is a great responsibility. His one great purpose, pursued with many defects and frequent discouragement, is to be found faithful; not self-seeking, not coveting praise or power or gain, but to be "faithful;" not self-indulgent,

indolent, or supine, but “faithful;” not seeking to please men, or to obtain their commendation, but to obtain the approval of the Lord Himself in that great day -- “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

But count the cost. It is very easy to sail in smooth waters, fanned along by gentle breezes and charmed by bright skies of azure and gold; but when the heavens gather blackness and waves swell mountains high, when the masts are shivered in sunder and sails rent to pieces, strong men look at each other with dismay, and fill the air with desponding cries for deliverance. Sailing is difficult in these rough waters of life. Still, faithfulness to Christ takes no account of perils. It rests with Him to appoint in what way your faith is to be tried. If little is given and little duties are assigned you, be faithful in little things. If your lot be fixed in perilous times, and fidelity to your Divine Master demands stern sacrifices, “add to your faith virtue;” strengthened with all might by the Spirit in the inner man, let your courage rise with your dangers. If it were so that things must be surrendered which men hold dear, if ease or fortune, if name or wealth, if friends or kindred, if home and country, yea if life itself be demanded as the test of your fidelity, let not the terror of that scene, or the costliness of the sacrifice, make you flinch, but be willing to surrender yourselves to the darkness of a dungeon, and to join the noble army of martyrs, rather than forsake your Master and

deny the faith. “For whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.”

Such fidelity is richly requited: “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” The recompense of the believer is said to be a crown. St. Paul designates it “a crown of righteousness;” St. Peter, “a crown of glory;” Isaiah, “a crown of beauty;” and St. James, as here, “a crown of life.” The crown promised is rather that emblem of supreme power which sits upon the heads of kings, than the chaplet of bright but perishing flowers that sometimes lends a fading glory to the conqueror’s brow.

Yet it is no crown of gold such as earthly monarchs wear, brilliant and costly, but still a short-lived and unenviable distinction; the crown of life sheds an immortal glory around the brow that wears it. Earthly crowns often sit heavily on the monarch’s head: --

“O polished perturbation! golden care,
That keeps the ports of slumber open wide
To many a watchful night.”

But this crown confers the dignity of empire without its care, and the grandeur of royalty divested of its perils. Other kingdoms must decay, and the crowns fall, or at least the head that wears them must slumber in the grave; but the crown of life is the emblem of that kingdom which cannot be

moved -- its glory is unfading as the inheritance to which it belongs.

But the value of the gift is enhanced by the giver. In the near prospect of his great prize, St. Paul anticipated with adoring satisfaction, that as soon as he had finished his course, his Divine Master would summon him to his immediate presence, and with his own hands place the crown upon his faithful brow. None has such perfect knowledge of us, and the good fight we have fought, as He. He taught our hands to fight, appointed our post of conflict; when weary with long warfare, He encouraged our fainting spirits, and "having done all," enabled us to "stand" against our enemies. And now, our warfare ended, He calls us to his feet; not just to receive some slight token of commendation, or to be rewarded by a smile, though this were requital enough for a life of toil and conflict, but to stand forth surrounded by an innumerable company of angels, and the general assembly and church of the first-born, to hear the immortal King himself proclaim that this man, and that, whose names He confesses before the Father, are among the called and faithful and chosen whom He accounts worthy of that kingdom.

All this seems incredible. For what have the best of his people done for Him, that they should be received with such distinction as this? True, they earnestly desire to serve Him. Nothing is dearer to their heart than that name which

is above every name; to glorify Him on earth has been the great business of their lives. But now to be called to his presence and receive such marks of honour, --

“Make slaves the partners of his throne,
And deck them with a glorious crown,”

Lord! this is too much! Were we just permitted to enter those pearly gates and occupy the lowest place among the least in the kingdom of heaven -- just to escape, as it were “so as by fire,” the due reward of our deeds -- this were unmerited goodness ever to be gratefully remembered. But that Thou shouldst reserve for us a crown of life unfading and eternal, and, with thine own blessed hands still bearing the print of the nails, place it on our unworthy brows, designating our poor services as betokening good and faithful servants, Oh! what incredible condescension is this!

It is all true. God’s people strive sincerely to serve and please Him. This is the one aim and effort of their daily life; “whether they live, they live unto the Lord.” They bless God from the heart that He gave them the desire, and power to bring that desire to good effect. But the idea of receiving any recompense, as if their services merited any reward, this never entered their minds. They have done good, following the example of their Lord, but their memory retains no recollection of services done for Christ which

deserve any mention there. "Lord," they ask, as it were, bewildered and surprised, as in the twenty-fifth of Matthew, "when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When we saw thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?" True, we would have done all this; it was in our heart to do it, and more a thousand times; for what do we not owe to Thee? It was thy grace first inclined our hearts; we have loved Thee, but Thou first lovedst us; Thou deignest to call us faithful, but it was thy grace that made us faithful and kept us safe. We only gave Thee back thine own. This crown, and all the felicities of thy kingdom, we ascribe for ever to the praise of the glory of thy grace!

In all human competitions, the success of one insures the defeat and disappointment of another. But there are no such envious results among spirits made perfect before the throne. Our obtaining the crown will not involve any loss or privation to others. No matter how many competitors may contend for the prize -- no matter if others distinguished by greater gifts, or higher privileges than we, achieve greater things. It is faithfulness to what is committed to us that carries off the prize. If a husband and father fulfil the will of God amid the anxieties and temptations of a sinful world, and rule his household well, such fidelity will receive the crown. If the wife and mother be faithful to her calling,

appointed it may be to patient suffering as well as to active service, her crown is equally sure. And so even with children. God's people vary in their positions and gifts, their conflicts and duties. Some receive much, others but little; some stand prominently before the world, others are concealed in the unobtrusiveness of private life. But the question is not where we are, or what we have, but are we faithfully fulfilling the will of God with steadfast and immovable purpose in that state of life where He places us. Now, the church is militant, and every member is pledged to fight manfully against the world, the flesh and the devil, and continue Christ's faithful soldier to his life's end. The struggles of active warfare meet us on every side -- "the battle of the warrior and the garments rolled in blood." Some are harassed by temptation; others groan under their weary burdens; while many are wounded and sore broken. See them in their chambers alone with God: --

"Their couch is wet with tears,
They wrestle hard, as we do now,
With sins and doubts and fears."

But in a little time these things will all have passed away. These same persons will then be gathered around the throne of the great King, clad in robes of victory, and wearing their crowns of life; no enemy henceforth disturbs their repose, nor sin defiles the soul; no tears or sorrow

dims the brightness of their faces; they have finished their courses, they have kept the faith; they have obtained joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing are fled away. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

-- W.B. MACKENZIE, M.A.

THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

OF TWO PRISONERS' DREAMS, AND WHAT CAME OF THEM.

I AM now going on to tell you how the strange dreams which Joseph had when a boy were yet to be made good, and how his being sold for a slave, and lied on, and cast into prison, was just God's way of bringing it about that his brethren should bow before him. Not, certainly, that God approved these bad things that were done to him, but he allowed them. He did not say to his brothers and to Potiphar that they were to do what they did, but he let them do it, that he might show more fully his own truth, and power, and grace. Just as, in a far greater case, he let the wicked Jews and others put Christ to death, that he might

raise him from the dead and give him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God.

A good man conducts himself rightly in every situation. So Joseph, being a prisoner, behaved so well and wisely that the jailer soon found him worthy of trust, and a great help to him in the management of the prison. Perhaps he had come to know that it was not for crime that Joseph was sent there. He was aware that in those days people who had done no wrong were often put in prison, from whim or rage, without cause. So, finding this Hebrew slave to be a very true, good man, he gave him the care of the whole prison. And every thing went well under his hand, for the Lord was with him, and prospered him. The jail in which Joseph was confined was the king's prison, to which offenders against Pharaoh were sent. So it happened that two persons that had given him offence were committed to jail while Joseph was there -- the chief butler of the court and the chief baker. Of course they came under Joseph's charge, and he took care of them. Now one morning when he went into them, he saw them both looking very troubled, as if something sad had happened to them. He asked what was the matter, and they said that they had both dreamed a strange dream the night before, and there was no one to tell them the meaning of it. If they had been still in the king's house, they would have sent for some magician or soothsayer, and asked him to tell them, but here in the prison what could they do? When

Joseph heard this, he said that God alone who was everywhere could explain these things, and he asked them to tell him what they had dreamed about. He felt that God would show him what was meant. So the butler began, and told him that he had dreamed he saw a vine before him, which had three branches; and as he looked it began to blossom, and then three clusters began to form, and to ripen, till they hung ready for pressing. (Things, you know, go on very rapidly in dreams.) Then, said the butler, having the king's cup in my hand, I plucked the grapes, and pressed them into the cup, and went and gave it into the royal hand, just as I was wont to do. Joseph said that was a good dream -- that the three branches of the vine were three days, and as for the rest, it meant that within time, he would be taken back into his place again, and be chief butler as before. You may be sure the dreamer was very glad to hear this, and would not be displeased when Joseph added, When you go back to your place, think kindly of me, and ask the king to take me out of this prison. I belong to another country, and was stolen away from my home among the Hebrews, and while I have been here I have done no one wrong, that I should deserve to be cast into this dungeon. Surely the chief butler would promise to be Joseph's friend, on hearing his story, and getting God's word through him. I have no doubt he did, and that at the same time he intended to speak to the king, he was so glad to hear that

Pharaoh was to take him back again to his old situation. The chief baker was glad to find so good an interpretation given of the other's dream, and began to tell his own. He said, I dreamed that I had three white baskets on my head, full of all nice bake-meats for the king: but as I was carrying them along, the birds came flocking round about me, and ate them out of the baskets. The Joseph told him that the dream was sad and solemn, for it meant that in three days Pharaoh would hang him on a tree and leave him to be pecked at and eaten by the fowls of the air. Both these things happened exactly as Joseph foretold. For on the third day from the time of this conversation, King Pharaoh made a great feast to his servants, and sent for both the prisoners who had lately displeased him. They were brought into the palace, and allowed to take their places among the other servants; and perhaps, at first, the baker would begin to hope that the interpretation of his dream had been wrongly given, and would not prove true. If so, it would be a terrible shock to him to find public sentence given, to take him forth to death, while his companion in the prison was to be restored to his office. But this was what the king did -- he bade the chief butler take his old place, and commanded the chief baker to be hanged, just as Joseph said.

And now, you would be ready to say, the prison-doors will soon be set open to let Joseph go free. The butler will

take an early opportunity of speaking to the king; he will tell him about the dream he had; how a Hebrew youth had interpreted it to him quite truly, and how he had told him that he had been stolen from his own country, and unjustly treated here. He will not rest till he repays Joseph's kindness by getting him brought out of prison. But it was not so. After being restored to his place, the butler forgets all about it, or did not like to take trouble for a stranger. Perhaps he began to excuse himself for doing nothing, by trying to believe that he was not much indebted to Joseph after all. I daresay, however, he just delayed at first, and then forgot. He came after a while to confess his fault in this; but it required that God should send other dreams to wake him up to the remembrance of it. These were sent, however, not to the butler, but to the king himself. They were so striking, and so much came out of them, that I must make them the subject of another story, to find room for a full account.

In the meantime, I would like to ask you to think of two lessons which the events now related teach us. The first is, always to be careful to do what is right, and to be useful, in the humblest place. Never think anything is too little to be done well. Never think that any situation is too mean for anything to come of faithfulness to its duties. This, at least, will always come of it -- your character will grow; and very often, this will come of it, that in God's providence you will

be asked to step up higher. It will be so, if not in this life, yet in the next world, if duty be done as to Christ. In trials, too, do not sit down in despair, but up and make the best you can out of it. You see how it was with Joseph; he did not, when thrown into prison, spend his time in moans and tears. He made himself useful, proved himself faithful, got a charge, had an opportunity of doing a kindness and of showing that the Spirit of God was with him, and all this led him at length to great honour and power. The other lesson I wish you to think of is one of thankfulness for the freedom and security of our times and country. Our good queen has it not in her heart to deal with her servants as Pharaoh did with his; but even if she had, she could not do anything against the laws. She governs according to the laws; and they are such as to protect the person and freedom of the meanest, unless they should be guilty of real crime, which we do not know that Pharaoh's servants were. Pray for your country, then, and for your queen, and thank God for a land so free, and a reign so just.

QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you give me an example of very wrong things in the history of Jacob, which God allowed, and made to bring about his own purposes?
2. Can you give examples of other persons than Joseph who were imprisoned without fault?
3. Can you mention a lady that had a very painful dream, and was in much trouble about it?
4. Do you remember an instance of two persons who were, like the butler and the baker, placed in the same circumstances, and of whom also “one” was “taken and the other left?”
5. Do you know the name of another royal cup-bearer?
6. Can you name a person who was put to death after he supposed that he was to escape?
7. Can you name instances of ingratitude, in a son, in a king, in a people?

ANSWERS will be found by consulting Gen. xxvii.; Matt. xiv.; Acs iv., xii., xvi.; Matt. xxvii.; Luke xxiii.; Neh. i; 1 Sam. xv.; 2 Sam. xv., 2 Chron. xxiv., Ps. lxxviii. Other passages will furnish answers to some of the questions.

QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSON.

1. How do we come to know that there shall be a resurrection of the dead?
 2. How will the bodies in which believers are raised differ in many important respects from those which were laid in the grave? 1 Cor. xv. 42-44.
 3. When shall the power of death be completely put down?
 4. Through whom do believers obtain the victory over the last enemy?
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PRAYER.

O LORD, who in thy wise and holy providence dost order our lot in life, teach us, in whatever condition we are to be content therewith, not repining nor envying. When we are in trouble help us to be patient, asking Thee to deliver us, but waiting Thy will. Whatever place of duty we fill make us faithful. Make us diligent, useful, true now, at school, at home, wherever we are, that we may be good and brave workers when we grow older. Lord, bless our native land, and make it to abound in righteous men, more and more.

Save and prosper our beloved Queen, for whose rule we give thee thanks; and bless all her house. These things we ask for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

EVENING WORSHIP.

O HOLY and blessed Spirit, inspire us with wisdom, knowledge, spiritual understanding, and such a holy faith as may ever work by love to God and man. Glorify the Son to us and in us, that we may by all we are and do through Him glorify the Father. Shed abroad the love of God in our hearts. Enable us to mortify the deeds of the flesh, that we may live. Lead us into all truth and holiness, that so we may enjoy Thy peace and comfort for evermore. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm lxviii. 32-35.*

Long as I live I'll bless thy name,
My King, my God of love!
My work and joy shall be the same
In the right world above.

Great is the Lord, his power unknown,
And let his praise be great;
I'll sing the honours of thy throne,
Thy works of grace repeat.

Thy grace shall dwell upon my tongue,
And, while my lips rejoice,
Thy saints shall hear the sacred song,
And join their cheerful voice.

Fathers to sons shall teach thy name,
And children learn thy ways;
Ages to come thy truth proclaim,
And nations sound thy praise.

MATTHEW XXII. 29-32.

JESUS answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of god. 30. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. 31. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, 32. I am the God of

Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 42-57.

SO also is the resurrection of the dead; it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: 43. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. 44. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. 45. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. 46. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. 47. The first man is of the earth, earthly; the second man is the Lord from heaven. 48. As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. 49. And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. 50. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption, 51. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. 52. in the twinkling of an eye, at the last

trump, (for the trumpet shall sound;) and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56. The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 5. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 THESSALONIANS IV. 13-18.

BUT I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise

first: 17. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Prayer.

O MOST holy and gracious Lord, who of Thy goodness hast granted us the privileges of another Sabbath, we desire now to review this sacred day as in Thy presence, to whom all hearts are open. We confess, O Lord, that even our holy duties yield abundant matter for humiliation and sorrow. Pardon, we beseech Thee, whatever Thou hast seen amiss in us or our services this day -- the dulness of our hearts -- our ignorance in not understanding Thy truth, and unwillingness to receive it -- our want of reverence, love, and gratitude. Deepen our repentance, strengthen our faith, and may we worship Thee in spirit and in truth. Forgive every thought, word, or action by which we have grieved Thy spirit or dishonoured Thy holy name. Cleanse us from all sin, through the atoning blood of Christ. Give us the comfort of Thy pardoning love, and assure us of Thy favour, before we close our eyes in sleep.

Dispose us to meditate on the truths of Thy gospel with self-application and fervent prayer; may we become more spiritual in mind, established in faith and hope -- our affections more set on things above, and our will more submissively obedient to Thy will. May we carry the instructions of Thy word and the savour of Thy holy worship into the duties and events of the ensuing week. Teach us to be wise and circumspect, arm us against temptation, and order our goings in Thy ways, that our footsteps slip not.

Prosper the labours of Thy servants who have sought to make Christ known as the almighty and all-sufficient Saviour of sinners. May Thy people be edified in the faith, and sinners in great numbers be converted to Thee. Hear the supplications presented before Thee this day, and may they return in abundant blessings on Thy church and the world. May Thy truth everywhere spread and prevail. Check the growth of false doctrine, frustrate every attempt to promote infidelity and sin, and may the blessings of Thy salvation more and more abound.

We commend ourselves to Thy guardianship this night. Give us the assurance of Thy protecting care, and the comfort of refreshing sleep. May our days and weeks be thus continued and ended in Thee. And may we who now unite in prayer, and enjoy Sabbath-day fellowship with Thee and Thy people on earth, meet at length before Thy

throne, and dwell with Thee in Thy everlasting kingdom.
Grant this, O Lord, through Jesus Christ our Mediator and
Redeemer. *Amen.*

MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

MONDAY.

Morning.

**Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace:
thereby good shall come unto thee.**

Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.

If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles.

For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face unto God.

Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows.

Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee; and the light shall shine upon thy ways.

Job xxii. 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28.

Evening.

Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass:

And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day.

Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O Lord, held me up.

In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.

Ps. xxxvii. 4, 5, 6, 7. Ps. xciv. 18, 19.

TUESDAY.

Morning.

So they did eat, and were filled, and became fat, and delighted themselves in thy great goodness.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful:

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Neh. ix. 25. Ps. i. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6.

Evening.

Praise ye the Lord. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.

His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

Wealth and riches shall be in his house; and his righteousness endureth for ever.

Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

A good man soweth favour and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.

Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

Ps. cxii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

WEDNESDAY.

Morning.

With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Blessed art thou, O Lord! teach me thy statutes.

With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.

I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.

I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

Ps. cxix. 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16.

Evening.

I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.

But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap.

Song ii. 3. Mal. iii. 1, 2.

THURSDAY.

Morning.

Thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.

When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.

I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.

I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree; I will set in the desert the fir-tree, and the pine, and the box-tree together;

That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.

Isa. xl. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

Evening.

The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel; my reins also instruct me in the night-seasons.

I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope:

Ps. lxiv. 10. Ps. xvi. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

FRIDAY.

Morning.

He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

And in that day ye shall ask me nothing Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

1 Cor. i. 31. John xvi. 22, 23, 24, 27.

Evening.

Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

1 Peter i. 8, 9. Rom. v. 10, 11.

SATURDAY.

Morning.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed.

O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.

Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.

Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts.

Ps. c. 1, 2, 3. Ps. lxv. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Evening.

Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy.

If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting.

Deut. v. 8. Isa. lviii. 13, 14. Ps. c. 4, 5.