

HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

TWELFTH WEEK.

MORNING WORSHIP.

O GOD, our fathers' God, make Thyself known to us this day as the God of Zion. In Thy courts may we seek Thyself and find Thee there. Bless Thy day to us, so that in its sacred services we may have spiritual communion with Thee as the Father of our spirits. In Thy holy word may we hear Thy voice speaking to us, and may our psalms and hymns of praise help us to rise in spirit to that blessed world where our great High Priest now is, and where we humbly hope one day through His grace to be. We present our petitions to Thy throne, in and through Him as our advocate with the Father. Amen.

HYMN, *or PSALM xxxvi. 5-9.*

Far from these narrow scenes of night
Unbounded glories rise,
And realms of infinite delight
Unknown to mortal eyes.

Far distant land! could mortal eyes
But half its joys explore,
How would our spirits long to rise,
And dwell on earth no more!

O may the heavenly prospect fire
Our hearts with ardent love,
Till wings of faith and strong desire
Bear every thought above.

Prepare us, Lord, by grace divine,
For thy bright courts on high;
Then bid our spirits rise and join
The chorus of the sky.

EXODUS XVIII. 5-7, 13-27.

AND Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God: 6. And he said unto Moses, I thy father-in-law Jethro am come unto thee, and thy wife, and her two sons with her. 7. And Moses went out to meet his father-in-law and did obeisance, and kissed him; and they asked each other of their welfare: and they came into the tent. 13. And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat

to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening. 14. And when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest Thou thyself along, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even? 15. And Moses said unto his father-in-law, Because the people come unto me to enquire of God. 16. When they have a matter, they come unto me, and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God and his laws. 17. And Moses' father-in-law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good. 18. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. 19. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: 20. And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. 21. Moreover, thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. 22. And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. 13. If

thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said. 25. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. 26. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes thy brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves. 27. And Moses let his father-in-law depart; and he went his way into his own land.

Prayer.

O LORD, we adore thee as our Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer. Thou hast made Thyself known to us in the works which Thou hast made, and which proclaim Thine eternal power and Godhead. We see Thy presence in our lives, which are full of the proofs of Thy loving care. In Thy blessed Son, our Saviour, we behold the full glory of Thy grace, and can speak to Thee as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and as our God and Father in Him. We ask Thy help while we try to address our petitions to Thy throne. We feel we are unworthy of this privilege, and

but for Thy mercy we could not draw near to Thee. We are unable in any way to engage in Thy service, as we should do, and ask that Thou wouldst give us of Thine own wherewith to serve Thee.

Accept our thanks for the revelation of Thyself which Thou hast given to us in Thine own word. We desire to trace there the evidences of Thy wisdom, faithfulness, and love. Thou hast been true to all Thy promises, even when these have exceeded our highest expectations. May we learn to judge of Thee, not by ourselves, but as Thou art made known to us by the testimony of Thy truth. Unveil to us Thy glorious character as the Scriptures proclaim it to us, and not only with our minds but in our hearts may we now Thee as the Lord our God. Aid us in trusting Thee as the Omniscient Jehovah. May we not shrink back in unbelief from Thine all-seeing eyes. May we learn to repose confidence in Thy word, which tells us that Thy compassion is as infinite as Thy knowledge. When our faith is tried, and our penitence flows forth, may we be able to say, "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that we love Thee."

Guide us by Thy wisdom. Teach us to lean on it, and not on our own understanding. Keep us from going astray from Thy precepts. May our course ever be in that way whose fruit is unto holiness, and the end of which is everlasting life. We pray Thee to bless all Thy people. Be

with those in every place who seek to serve Thee in the gospel of Thy Son. Especially we commend to Thy care those who minister to men in the things of God. May their labours enjoy Thy blessing and conduce to the spread of Thy glory. Be kind to all sick and infirm persons. Draw nigh to those that are of a broken spirit. Lead those who seek Thee in a plain path; and may those that love Thy salvation say continually, "The Lord be magnified."

The grace of God be with our spirits. Our souls thirst for Thee, the living God. When shall we appear before Thee in Zion? Fit us for Thy service on earth and Thy presence in heaven. It is only through Thee that we can hope to come to Thee. With Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light we shall see light.

Blot out all our sins. Accept, sanctify, and deliver us from evil; for Thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory. *Amen.*

THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

RIGHTEOUS God, help us, as Thy children in Jesus Christ, like Him to love Thee with heart, soul, and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves. May the same mind of love

which was in Christ be also in us, so that we, in the possession and practice of love, may fulfil Thy law, and be followers of God as dear children. *Amen.*

PARAPHRASE LI. 4-7.

WE know, that when the soul, uncloth'd,
Shall from this body fly,
'Twill animate a purer frame
With life that cannot die.

Such are the hopes that cheer the just;
These hopes their God hath giv'n;
His Spirit is the earnest now,
And seals their souls for heav'n.

We walk by faith of joys to come,
Faith grounded on his word;
But while this body is our home,
We mourn an absent Lord.

What faith rejoices to believe,
We long and pant to see;
We would be absent from the flesh,
And present, Lord! with thee.

PSALM XVI.

PRESERVE me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust. 2. O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee; 3. But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight. 4. Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god: their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips. 5. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. 6. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. 7. I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel; my reins also instruct me in the night-seasons. 8. I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. 9. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope: 10. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 11. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy: at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

HEBREWS IX.

THEN verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. 2. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shew-bread; which is called the Sanctuary. 3. And after the second vail, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; 4. Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; 5. And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. 6. Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. 7. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: 8. The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing. 9. Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; 10. Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances,

imposed on them until the time of reformation. 11. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. 13. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; 14. How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God? 15. And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. 16. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. 17. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. 18. Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. 19. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, 20. Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. 21. Moreover, he sprinkled likewise

with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. 22. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. 23. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us, &c.

SERMON XII.

“WITHIN THE VAIL.” --Heb. vi. 19.

THERE is no vail in the Christian church. Christ took it away by His precious death, and when He died, “the vail of the temple was rent in twain.” Here, however, the inspired writer speaks of another vail, within which Christ entered. This can be no other place than heaven, into which Jesus the Son of God has passed, as our great high priest. He went in once for all, and now, our text tells us, He is “within the vail.” “Within the vail!” These are great and awful words! Think of what they mean. “Within the vail!” This is an arrangement of words that does not perhaps

arrest us at first, but let us once catch their meaning, and we cannot help repeating them. In the busy street as in the silent chamber, in the crowded church and by the grave's mouth, these are the words which we cannot utter without emotion: "Within the veil!"

We shall take the text as a brief description of heaven, and try to show that there are good reasons why that better world should be thus spoken of. It reminds us --

I. That entrance into heaven is effected by the death of Christ.

The place of the veil in the worship of the Old Testament church is made plain by its position, both in the tabernacle and the temple. It hung between the Holy of Holies, in which were kept all the sacred symbols of God's special presence with His people, and the holy place. Made in a peculiar and carefully prescribed way, it could be turned aside only once a year, and by the high priest alone. As he lifted up its awful folds, and stepped solemnly within the veil, he had to take incense and the blood of sacrifices with him, to sprinkle upon the mercy-seat, lest he died. Outside and far off the mass of the people stood awe-stricken and silent; all that was heard was the echo of the high priest's feet, or the tinkling of the bells upon his garments, as he moved to and fro in the discharge of his high duties. What could betoken more strikingly than this impressive order, the exclusion of men from the fellowship of God, and the

terrible chasm between them and the Holy One which their sins had caused? Hence, too, the need for this being done away by the gospel. The writer of this letter tells us, accordingly, of a new and living way into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and he adds, that it was consecrated for us “through the vail,” that is to say, His flesh. In other words, the completed sacrifice of our Lord Jesus on Calvary was accepted by God, the obstacles which stood in the way of man’s communion with his Maker were removed, the vail of the temple was torn asunder, and we may all now come boldly to the throne of grace. “The holiest” which is spoken of here is not confined to heaven. It denotes the manifested presence of the Most High everywhere. That is holy ground where God is seen and honoured, and we may draw near to it with all boldness by the blood of Jesus. On the other hand, however, all holy places on earth are but the shadows of heaven. It is there that the pure and perfect worship of Jehovah is presented, and of it the Holy of Holies in the ancient temple was only an apt emblem. Our admission into its blessedness is the result of our redemption to God by the blood of Christ, and this is unquestionably a prominent idea in the name given to heaven as “within the vail.” Separation from God and exclusion from heaven are the fruits of sin, for “the wages of sin is death.” Restoration to God and entrance into heaven are effected by the death of Christ, for “the gift of

God is eternal life,” and this life is in His Son. When He died He said, “It is finished,” and then He entered for us as a forerunner “within the veil.” Without that death of His for us on earth, there could have been no life for us with Him in heaven. Its sacred threshold was shut against us by a thick veil, which no hands could lift but those that were pierced for us by the nails. They are hands “mighty to save,” but their might comes from the strange fact that they were stretched out for us bleeding on the bitter cross. These are mysterious sayings, but they are often and plainly uttered in God’s holy word. They relate to a mystery as unfathomable as their own -- man’s sin against God. Over against it they set up the wonder of wonders, in God’s sovereign mercy and reconciling grace through that crucified Jesus, at the sight of whom faith exclaims, “Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.” Let us look, then, at this truth in its relation to the sinner’s entrance into heaven. His Lord has entered heaven before him, wearing his nature, and as the elder brother of the family. In the flesh -- that is to say, as a man -- he has gone within the veil. Taking possession of the heavenly places, He has thrown them open to all for whom they are prepared. That preparation of them has been made in virtue of what He has paid for it. His obedience and sufferings --the rending of His flesh -- that is the ground on which sinful men may go to heaven. With their feet resting on

this sure foundation, they can advance undismayed into the very presence of God, for they have a great high priest passed into the heavens. Thus it is, farther, that the nearer they get to the veil the more clearly they see Jesus within it. It seems at times to be lifted up for them before they pass through it, that they may behold the King in His beauty. From the sight they get of Him they draw courage for the last battle with death, and their desires grow more ardent to be absent from the body, that they may be present with the Lord. Their words bespeak their trust, and their hope shines through their countenance, as in the case of him whose face was seen as it had been the face of an angel, and whose transfigured beauty before he was within the veil Scripture thus explains, that “he looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.”

Heaven is spoken of as within the veil, because

II. *What separates us from Heaven is so slight, and may be so suddenly removed.*

It seems to be significant that between us and the better world there should be only a veil. It is so thin and slight, that it hardly needs any hand to raise it. The breath of the passing wind makes it tremble; and when it comes laden with the air of the grave, it forces it aside, and the spirit of man, which a moment before was with us, is away from us for ever, “within the veil.” That veil is the curtain

of time, woven by a divine hand, to be an almost transparent medium to separate this world from the world to come. Thin though it be, it is sufficient for its purpose. Nor is it without its resemblance to the old vail which hung before the Holy of Holies. Like it, it is of many colours, blue, purple, and scarlet. It has, likewise, curious handiwork all over it, not unlike the “fine twined linen of curious work.” It also bears to be supported strongly and yet beautifully, as it was on its four pillars of shittim-wood, overlaid with gold. Nay, it admits of being made glorious by the tokens of God’s presence resting on it, for it is never made aright unless there can be the cherubim upon it. Such then, is this vail which God has made. It hangs everywhere before our eyes. What but this is nature, and history, and the world, and life, and love itself? The blue of the sky, the sun’s golden rays, the heart’s varied experiences, they are all God’s vail, intercepting the view of His full glory, and yet with such traces of that glory shining through as help us to aspire after a clearer and fuller vision of it.

Meanwhile the vail is marked by mystery. We are continually endeavouring to understand it, but are constrained to own that we know it only in part. Its revelations we can do little more than guess at; and indeed they would be unintelligible, but for the light which falls upon them from the more sure word of prophecy. It is through that glass alone that we can read the writing on the

vail, so that with open face we may behold there the glory of the Lord. Even with this help we cannot comprehend the principle on which the veil is thrown open before those who have to pass within it. Each day brings a summons for some to leave time and become familiar with eternity. So soon as the message is delivered it must be obeyed; and those who get it rise up at once, because the Master is come and calleth for them. An ingenious writer speaks of the postman Time going his rounds, and bearing from house to house his burden of letters. He knows nothing of them but the address. He may not read their contents, and no one may but the man to whom they are sent; but any morning there may put into the hands of any of us this fatal missive. We may not boast ourselves of to-morrow, since we know not what a day shall bring forth. Now, it is evidently in mercy that God has constructed the veil of time so mysteriously. If we knew it better, such knowledge would be too great for us. Were we told the hour when the veil should be lifted up to separate our friends from us or us from them, we could not enjoy their society. That fixed hour of parting would be heard ringing its knell of woe through all our hours of joy. Let us not murmur, then, though our friends are suddenly snatched from our arms and borne away within the veil. There is love, as well as wisdom, in the manner of their removal from us. This world is like a great workshop, and we who are but visitors

in it are apt to get confused amid the crash of the machinery and the noise of the looms. The Master, however, knows all about the webs He has to weave, which shall be of the darker, and which shall be of the brighter threads. He knows the lights and the shades alike -- how to begin His work, and when to cut it short -- so that whenever we are tempted to raise our voice against His ways of working, we may hear His own voice speaking to us these words of warning, "Be still, and know that I am God." The great lesson we have to lay to heart is preparation for passing within the veil ourselves. Let us look at the time and life as given to us for the purpose of being spent in the service of God, and to make us meet for heaven. The veil they form should be so looked at and used by us, that through means of it we shall be getting ready for things unseen and eternal. Let us try in some degree to enter into the spirit of the poet, when speaking of it he says: --

"O could I see as in truth they be,
The glories of heaven that encompass me;
I should lightly hold the tissued fold
Of that marvellous curtain of blue and gold.
Soon the whole, like a parched scroll,
Shall before my amazed sight unroll,
And without a screen at one burst be seen
The Presence wherein I have ever been."

Heaven is spoken of as within the veil, because
Lastly, *It hides from our view much which we long to know.*

Behind the veil in the temple of the Jews were all the precious symbols of their faith and worship. The golden censer, the ark of the covenant, Aaron's rod, the tables of the covenant, the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat -- these were all within the veil. With these divine emblems only one representative man was brought into contact, the type of Him who is our high priest for ever, the ascended Intercessor at God's right hand. If we pass from the actual case to the spiritual reality, we see that heaven contains much which at present is hidden from our gaze as by a veil, but which we are sure to become acquainted with so soon as we pass within the veil ourselves. The subjects which this idea suggests are very numerous, and we can only select two or three leading aspects of them. Let us select --

The influence of the Saviour's presence. -- There can be no doubt that this is a chief element in the life of heaven. Even on earth Christian principle just means faith in Christ. The more distinctly He is seen, the stronger and firmer is the hold which the believer has of spiritual and everlasting life. Hence it is that so much stress is to be laid on the use of the various means of grace, which are in fact the hem of

our high priest's garment, so that the virtue which comes out of them is all derived from Him. Even it, alas! often grows stiff and cold in our hands, and then the living connection between the hand of faith and Christ's person and work is lost. Within the veil that connection shall be cemented never to be again broken, and all who follow the Forerunner into heaven shall know what it is to be like Him, because they see Him as He is. The very sight of the Lord Jesus must exert a transforming influence on the natures of those who have learnt to know and love Him. To be with Him is equivalent to being like Him, just as it is impossible to enjoy the sun's rays and yet be in darkness. The Lamb who is in the midst of the throne is the light of heaven. He is the spring of spiritual life to all its inhabitants, as well as the source of all their blessedness, for of that city which is without a sun we are told, not only that the glory of God doth lighten it, but that the Lamb is the light thereof. Even here we have at times such views of Christ as help us to apprehend this truth in part, but they are so imperfect as to prompt a desire to understand it better -- a desire which shall be fully gratified only when, being absent from the body, we shall be present with the Lord.

Again, the veil hides from our view

The conditions of a sinless state. -- Our best experience in the worship of God here is that of those who can only

venture to approach Him with a sacrifice in their hands. We are, it is true, all priests to God now, with one great high priest over the house of God. Our hearts tell us, that although we have access into the holiest of all, we are still unholy as we draw nigh to God. It is our hope, but not our attainment, to be in a sinless state. We long for the period when we too shall pass within the veil, and be holy as those who are holy there; when there shall be no impurity in our motives, and no imperfection in our service, when we shall be at home in the unsullied purity of heaven; and when, looking in upon our sinless hearts, we shall see only the spotless holiness of God reflected from their untroubled depths. We should not be impatient of the blessed bondage of earthly ties and human love, and yet we cannot but feel how hard it is to bear the one and cherish the other without soiling the worship which the heart owes to God. We would not cast them off, but we would fain put on above them the fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints. What would we not give to belong to that great multitude that stand before the throne and before the Lamb, singing the song of salvation, with white robes, and with palms in their hands! Only in our best moments here does this condition of things stand out to our view as a living reality. The curtain of the present for the most part hides it from our eyes. When it is lifted up, and we step into the invisible kingdom of Christ beyond the

grave, we shall realize what it is to live knowing the truth without being condemned by it; seeing what is right and still evermore cleaving to it; near to God, but not afraid of Him; in the possession of the blessedness of the pure in heart who see God.

Finally, the veil hides from our view

The imperishable and perfect happiness of our departed Christian friends.

Our advantages in this respect, as compared with those of just men of old, are indeed great. Their high priest went within the veil, and he came back alive; but he died at last as other men died, and he gave no sign. Our great high priest went within the veil by the dark passage of death, but when He came back it was to die no more, and to rise to heaven to receive to Himself there all who live and die in Him. Them that sleep in Jesus God brings with Him. Yet, simple as all this seems to be, it requires deep and earnest faith to rest in its simplicity. Indeed faith must summon hope to her aid, as an anchor of the soul sure and steadfast, and entering into that within the veil. That those who were so lately living by our side are living somewhere, though their bodies lie in the cold grave; that they are conscious and happy, though their voice to us is silenced, and they are far away from those they loved so well and by whom they are so much beloved; that they have no cares to distract and no sorrows to grieve them now, though lately they had so

much to make them anxious, and were torn from our arms amidst lamentations and woe -- all this we believe of the dead in Christ; but, ah! how hard it is to make faith here what it should be -- the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen! Within the veil! They are there; but how the poor lonely heart of the mourner presses against that veil, like some imprisoned bird that beats its wings and breast against the cage in its vain attempts to join its lost companions in the distant sky. The bereaved are made to feel that in their imperfect faith they cannot reach so far as they fain would; that those they have loved and lost are indeed severed from them by more than land or sea; and that their utmost attainment is to say with David of his child, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." What then, shall it be at last, when we, too, pass within the veil? When we find our beloved ones all safe and all at rest? When again we shall feel ourselves near those from whom we once thought we could never live apart, and when we awake from this life's troubled frightsome dreams to the inconceivable and unending blessedness that is within the veil? How it shall be with us and them then, how they shall look and what they shall say, let us not try too anxiously and pryingly to learn. Heaven is our home, but there is a veil hiding it from our view. Let us not seek to strip it of its mystery. Let us not play childishly with its awful folds. They are to be looked at, and not handled; and

if we behold them with trustful eyes, our hearts shall bow submissive to His will, which makes heaven to all who are on earth a world “within the veil.”

With these suggestions of those striking words before us, let us hear them bidding us beware --

First, *of the veil that is on the heart.*

The apostle describes some who have veiled hearts when they read the Scriptures. They are those whose minds are blinded, and who are under such a thick covering of unbelief and prejudices, that they will not look to Christ at all. We are exposed to this danger too. The truth about the Lord Jesus is set before us, and if we will not receive it we judge ourselves unworthy of eternal life. Ah! there is no veil so dreadful as that of the unbelieving heart. It sees no love in God, no truth in His promises, no grace in His Son, no ground for faith, no hope of heaven. Surely, of all sins this is the most inexcusable, to close our eyes against the clear full light of the blessed gospel-day. Let us be persuaded to look to Him whom that light reveals, and turning to the Lord the veil shall be taken away.

Let us be encouraged, in fine,

To acquire the habit of looking within the veil.

It is there we can alone see that which shall make us happy. Some are seemingly happy without it. Their life is prosperous, and their cup is full. Their happiness, however, is insecure, and it is often seen to be like the prophet's

gourd, which came up in a night, and perished in a night. In all such cases, when that happens to men which makes them say, "It is better for me to die than to live," God, their great Teacher, wants them to learn this lesson of looking within the veil. Do our hearts despond under our many trials and amidst the thick mists of this worldly state? let us think of the church as it is within the veil. Does a strong wind beat upon our house, break down its supports, and dash its darling idols to the ground? Let us long the more for the reunited hearts and the inseparable friendships within the veil. In sorrow itself there is no sin, but only in the sorrow with the downward look. Over sorrow, when it looks within the veil, death itself has no power. It may take from our eyes the visible form of the objects of our love, but from our souls it cannot take away that love which is given to us for ever, and which shall one day find freest scope in a higher sphere. "It is but a little while when this thin veil of clouds hanging its darkness between us and that region of brightness shall break away, and our God shall put to shame all our weeping, giving us back our lost, clad in heaven's own garb, and beaming in all the light and health of that happiness and glory in which they have been kept, and nursed, and nourished." --Alexander MacEwan, D. D.

THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

SOMETHING MORE OF HOW JOSEPH'S DREAMS CAME TRUE.

THE sore famine still continued. The stock of corn in Jacob's household began to get low. So one day he said to his sons, You must go down to Egypt again, and buy some food. His sons were quite willing to go. But there was one great difficulty. Joseph had told them that, when they came back, they were to bring Benjamin with them. Benjamin was his full brother, the child of his mother Rachel, as well as of his father Jaob. Now when Reuben, Judah, and the others came back from their first visit to Egypt, and told how the lord of the country wanted to see their youngest brother next time, their father broke out into a cry of distress, and said he would not let Benjamin go. He said that his brother was dead, and he only was left of his mother Rachel's sons, and if any mischief were to happen to him, his own gray hairs would be brought down with grief to the grave. When Jacob, therefore, bade his sons go down to Egypt again, there was this great difficulty to be got over. He could not bear the thought of letting Benjamin go with them, and he even blamed them for letting the ruler of Egypt know that they had another brother. At last, however, Judah, having reasoned with his father, and

promised to take every care of Benjamin, got him to yield, and he sent them all away with wise advice and earnest prayer. I am sure it must have been a sad and anxious time to Jacob while they were away. Only his heart was subdued now, and, I think, he was waiting on the Lord.

So ten brothers of Joseph came before him a second time. Another, you recollect, was in confinement in Egypt. When Joseph saw Benjamin with the rest he told his steward to bring them all to his house to dinner. The steward took them away from the public office to Joseph's private house, without telling them, at first, why he did it. This made them very much afraid indeed. They thought they were to be found fault with for not paying for the corn they brought the first time: for Joseph, on sending them away, had told his servant to put their money into their sacks without their knowing it, and when they found it out they did not know what to make of it. So now they thought they were to be taken to task about it. But when they spoke to the steward, and told him how their money had been put in their sacks they did not know how, and that they had brought it back along with more for more corn, he made light of it, and said he had got their money the first time all right. Then he behaved very kindly to them, and at mid-day they were all brought in to dine with Joseph. Joseph did every thing to put them at their ease, and yet managed to keep them from discovering who he was,

although at first when he saw Benjamin, he had to go away to another room to weep. During dinner he paid them all attention, sending them meat from his own table, but he was especially kind to Benjamin. All the while, however, not even Benjamin knew him. Next morning Joseph told his steward to give them the corn they wanted, putting back their money as before, and putting also a particular silver cup into Benjamin's sack. The steward did all this, and the eleven (for Simeon was with them now) left the city, very happy indeed. They had not gone far, however, before they saw the steward of Joseph coming after them, and when he came up to them he taxed them roundly with stealing his lord's cup -- a special cup that was of great value to him. They were astonished to hear this, and said if any thing belonging to his lord could be found with them, they all deserved to be made slaves, and the one that had been the thief should die. You may judge then of their wonder and distress, when taking down their sacks one by one, they came at last to Benjamin's, and opened it to find the very cup in the mouth of it. They had not a word to say, but were torn with grief. With rent clothes and sore hearts they went away back into the town. Judah was saddest of all, thinking of his promise to his father to take care of Benjamin, and bring him safe home. So when Joseph proposed to keep Benjamin as his slave, Judah went near to him, and made such a touching speech, asking to be kept in

his youngest brother's stead, for fear of killing his father with grief, that Joseph was not able to stand it any longer. So he told every body to leave the room, except his brothers; and then, with loud weeping, he told them who he was. He said, I am Joseph -- is my father really living yet? At first his brothers could not believe him; they stood quite bewildered, but he talked with them about what had happened to him after they sold him, and how God made him lord of Egypt. He said to them not to be vexed about their conduct to him, for it was God that meant to use him for the saving of many lives. At last they came to believe him, and there was such embracing, and tears of joy, as had never been known. In a short time the news spread, and were carried to the king, and he was delighted to hear that Joseph's brethren had come. So he sent to say that Joseph should ask them to leave Canaan and come down to Egypt and stay there. This was what Joseph intended for he longed very much to see his father, and be near him again. Away, therefore, he sent his brethren, and told them to make haste and bring his father down. He sent provisions with them for the journey, and waggons for his father and the women and children to ride in. And then, I can well believe, he counted the days till they could return.

Jacob was waiting anxiously for their coming back from Egypt, to see if Benjamin was with them, and Simeon, and to hear how they had sped. You may be sure he was

very glad when he saw them all coming; but when they met him, and said, Joseph is yet living, and it is he who is lord of all Egypt, and who has been selling us corn, the old man's heart grew sick within him. He could not believe them, and thought they were but mocking him, and bringing up his great sorrow afresh; but they went over the whole story to him, and told him how Joseph wanted him to go down to Egypt and end his days there, and had sent carriages to fetch him. He came then to see that they were telling the truth, and his spirit revived, and looking at the carriages, he said, Say no more; I will go and see my son before I die.

They had a bustling time of it for a little, making ready to go to Egypt. But they were soon on their road; and when they had got as far as Beer-sheba, Jacob offered sacrifices to the God that had been so good to him. No doubt he asked God to be with him, now that he was going into a strange land. And God spoke to him in a dream, and told him not to fear. So next day Jacob went gladly on his way. At length the company came near to Egypt, and Judah went to tell Joseph. Immediately Joseph rode out in his grand chariot, and went to meet his father. When the father and son met, it was a sight to see. They fell on each other's necks, and wept a long time; and Jacob said, I can die now, for I have seen my child's face, whom I have mourned so long as dead. He lived, however, a good many years after that, and

Joseph had the duty of taking care of him in his old age, and of standing beside him when at last he gave up the ghost, after bidding his sons carry him up and bury him along with his fathers in the promised land.

Such was the way in which the boy's strange dreams were brought to pass.

QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Do you remember the name which Benjamin's mother gave him, and for what reason?
2. Can you find a text where a good man advises to wait on the Lord in trouble, and repeats his advice, as if he could give no other so good?
3. Do you remember a feast, given by a brother to brothers, that ended in blood?
4. Who was it that showed special attention to a guest, by setting a particular portion of meat before him?
5. Can you find a text to show that Joseph got the best revenge on his brethren by doing them kindness?
6. Can you give instances of persons weeping on each other's necks -- 1, Of two brothers meeting; 2, Of two friends parting; 3, Of a number of friends parting?

7. In what other case, greater than even Joseph's, did men mean to kill, while God meant to save many lives?

8. Can you name two cases where people could not believe good news for very joy and wonder?

CONSULT, if necessary, for answers to the above -- Gen. xxxv.; Ps. xxvii.; 2 Sam. xiii.; 1 Sam. ix; Rom. xii.; Gen. xxxiii., 1 Sam. xx., Acts iii.; Luke xxiv. and Acts xii.

QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSON.

1. What was the occasion of the first dissatisfaction which arose in the church at Jerusalem?

2. What did the apostles recommend with a view to put an end to the murmuring?

3. What were the special gifts or qualifications required in those who should be set over the services of the church referred to?

4. Who is the Author of all spiritual gifts?

Prayer.

O LORD, Thou art a God that doest wonders. Thou hast thine own strange, but wise and beautiful ways, of bringing Thy purposes to pass. Thou dost often make the wrath of man to praise Thee, and out of evil Thou bringest good. We give Thee thanks, especially, that Thou didst design mercy for the world in the death of Thy son, although he was taken and crucified and slain by wicked hands. We praise Thee that after he was delivered unto death, Thou has raised him again, and set him at Thine own right hand. We would bow the knee to Him. We pray to be fed, and guided, and cared for by Him. We would serve Him all our days on earth, and dwell with Him for ever. O Lord, grant us this, for His name's sake. *Amen.*

EVENING WORSHIP.

ALMIGHTY God! We lift up our eyes to Thee, who art the fountain of life, Thyself the living one. Thou givest life to those who look to Thee! Help us, by Thy Holy Spirit,

to seek thy face. Shine upon us with the light of Thy truth, and bring us in Thine own way, home to Thyself, that we may dwell for ever in the light of thy countenance, though Jesus Chist our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm xix. 7-11.*

O FOR the wings of faith to rise
 Within the vail, and see
The saints above, how great their joys,
 How bright their glories be!

Once they were mourning here below,
 And wet their couch with tears;
They wrestled hard, as we do now,
 With sins, and doubts, and fears.

We ask them whence their vict'ry came
 they, with united breath,
Ascribe their conquests to the Lamb,
 Their triumph to His death.

They mark'd the footsteps that He trod;
 His zeal inspir'd their breast;

And foll'wing their Incarnate God,
Possess the promis'd rest.

Our glorious Leader claims our praise
For His own pattern giv'n,
While the bright Cloud of Witnesses
Shows the same path to heav'n.

ACTS VI. 1-7.

AND in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. 2. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. 3. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. 4. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. 5. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor,

and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch; 6. Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. 7. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly: and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

1 CORINTHIANS XII. 1-11.

NOW concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. 2. Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. 3. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. 4. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit, &c.

FATHER of all mercies, we come into Thy presence as Thine unworthy children. We own that we are unworthy of Thy kindness. We have gone astray from Thee and from Thy ways. Hadst thou left us to ourselves, we should have been alike without help and without hope. Blessed be Thy name! Thou didst raise up a Saviour for us. In everlasting

love Thou didst take pity on us, and didst send forth Thy well-beloved Son to be our Redeemer from sin and death. For Thy great gift of Him for our salvation, we give thee humble, hearty thanks. We lay hold of Thee as our strength, because Thou hast let us know Thee as the Lord our Saviour. We confess our exceeding sinfulness in lightly esteeming the Rock of our Salvation. Give us, we pray, a deeper sense of our own necessities, a clearer view of the infinite excellencies of the Lord Jesus Christ, and a more earnest desire to cleave to Him and to Him only, as all our salvation and all our desire. Be graciously pleased to make us like Christ as our blessed example. Take away from us the selfishness and the self-seeking which mar our resemblance to our Lord. Form in us the mind which was also in Him. May the words which He has spoken to us be spirit and life to our souls. Help us to look to Jesus habitually, that our likeness to Him may grow, and men may take knowledge of us that we have been with Him. Keep us from being unduly cast down by the consciousness of our slow progress in the Christian life. May we learn to hold on in the good work and way of the Lord. Enable us to follow our Master by faith into the heavenly world. Looking within the veil, may we see Him as the Forerunner there; and seeking to be admitted into the fulness of His joy hereafter, may we be found here walking in His footsteps.

We give Thee thanks and praise for Thy goodness to Thy servants who have already finished their course and kept the faith. We rejoice to think of them as delivered from sin, and conquerors over death. May we be followers of them, as they were followers of Christ, so that at last we too may be joined to their blessed fellowship above.

Comfort all mourners as they lament the loss of friends who have been taken away from the present evil world. Be the father of the fatherless and the widow's judge. Send Thy strengthening Spirit into all hearts that are even now in the bitterness of sorrow. When we suffer from the rod of Thy chastisements, may we remember that it is in our Father's hands, and as obedient children may we accept its inflictions with trustful and uncomplaining hearts. Draw near to those who are in pain or sickness; aid them in bearing their trials, and in preparing for what may still be in store for them; make Thy grace sufficient for them, and perfect Thy strength in their weakness.

Make us all ready for our latter end. We bless Thee that there is a rest which remains for Thy people. May we even now enter into it, that when we pass within the veil we may be received into its full blessedness. Give us such firm, clear faith in our adorable Redeemer, that we shall feel assured of our safety in His hands. May we abide in Him, and then we know He will never leave, never forsake us. O that we may be assured, on good grounds, that He is our

shield and buckler in this world; and when we go into the world beyond the grave, may it be our joyful experience that neither death nor life, nor any other creature is able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Hear our prayers, good Lord, and give us a gracious answer to them, for Thine own mercies' sake.
Amen.

MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

MONDAY.

Morning.

Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord.

And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him.

But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

Lev. xix. 18, 33, 34.

John xiii. 34.

Evening.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Matt. v. 44, 45, 46, 48.

TUESDAY.

Morning.

Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Rom. xii. 9, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

Evening.

Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Rom. xii. 14, 15, 16. Rom. xiii. 9, 10.

WEDNESDAY.

Morning.

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God.
Honour the king.

Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

For this is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

Heb. x. 24. 1 Pet. ii. 17, 18, 19, 20.

Evening.

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

1 Pet. ii. 21, 22, 23, 24.

THURSDAY.

Morning.

He that covereth a transgression seeketh love.

A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly;
and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh,
with the affections and lusts.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one
another, envying one another.

Prov. xvii. 9. Prov. xviii. 24. Gal. v. 22, 23, 24, 25, 26.

Evening.

**And the Lord make you to increase and abound in
love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we
do toward you.**

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that
ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering,
forbearing one another in love;

Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

1 Thes. iii. 12. Eph. iv. 1, 2, 3.

FRIDAY.

Morning.

If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem the other better than themselves.

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Phil. ii. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Evening.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

Phil. ii. 5. 1 John iii. 16, 17. Matt. v. 47.

SATURDAY.

Morning.

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

John xiii. 35. 1 Peter iii. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Evening.

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.

And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

1 John iii. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.