

HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

FOURTEENTH WEEK.

MORNING WORSHIP.

O LORD our God, Thou knowest all things, and Thou knowest that we now desire to worship Thee in spirit and in truth. Remove from our souls, we pray Thee, all that would distract and hinder us; and cause to be present, within us all, those thoughts and feelings which are necessary for acceptable service. May our minds and hearts be entirely and consciously under Thy guidance and control. Unto Thee, our Father in heaven, we now yield our spirits, in the name of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm.* cxix. 11-16.

LAMP of our feet, whereby we trace
Our path when wont to stray;
Stream, from the fount of heavenly grace,
Brook, by the traveller's way;

Bread of our souls, whereon we feed,
True manna from on high;
Our guide and chart, wherein we read
Of realms beyond the sky;

Word of the everlasting God,
Will of his glorious Son;
Without thee how could earth be trod,
Or heaven itself be won!

Lord, grant us all aright to learn
The wisdom it imparts;
And to its heavenly teaching turn,
With simple, childlike hearts.

NUMBERS XIII. 1-3, 17-21, 23-33.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 2. Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I gave unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them. 3. And Moses, by commandment of the Lord, sent them from the wilderness of Paran: all those men were heads of the children of Israel. 17. And Moses sent them to spy out the

land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward and go up into the mountain; 18. And see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; 19. And what the land is that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds; 20. And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not; and be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. (Now the time was the time of the first ripe grapes.) 21. So they went up, and searched the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath. 23. And they came unto the brook of Eschol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs. 24. The place was called the brook Eschol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence. 25. And they returned from searching of the land after forty days. 26. And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. 27. And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. 28. Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled,

and very great: and moreover, we saw the children of Anak there. 29. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south; and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. 30. And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. 31. But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. 32. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. 33. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

Prayer.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, giver of every good and perfect gift, help us now, we beseech Thee, to worship Thee in spirit and in truth. We thank Thee for the Sabbath day, for Thy holy word, for the revelation which Thou hast

given to us of Thyself as our Creator, Preserver, Provider, and Friend. We thank Thee for the invitation which Thou hast given to us and to all men, known to draw near to Thee to make known our requests and to pour out our hearts before Thee.

We are utterly unworthy to speak to Thee, or to hope for any favour from Thee; for we have wandered from thy ways like lost sheep. Thou hast nourished and cherished us as Thy children, but we have transgressed Thy holy law, and rebelled against Thy righteous government. We have not loved Thee with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength; we have not sought our happiness in communion with Thee and in obedience to Thy commands. We have worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator; we have said in our hearts to the Father of mercies, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways."

Blessed be Thy holy name that Thou hast not granted this our wicked desire, nor left us to perish in our own corruption. Thou hast pitied us in our low estate, because thy mercy endureth forever. We bless Thee that where sin hath abounded, Thy grace hath much more abounded. We have impoverished and ruined ourselves, but Thou hast brought forth from Thy treasury the pearl of greatest price, wherewith to enrich us even unto boundless wealth. We praise Thee that Thou didst send Thy beloved Son as the good Shepherd, to seek and to save that which was lost.

We adore Thee that when He offered to lay down His life for us, Thou didst accept the sacrifice; Thou didst deliver Him up to death, even the death of the cross, and didst lay upon Him the iniquity of us all.

We magnify Thy name that Thou didst bring again from the dead that great Shepherd of the sheep, that Thou didst receive Him to glory, and set Him at Thine own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. We glorify Thee, O Redeemer of the world, that, being exalted to shed forth abundantly upon the children of men Thy Holy Spirit, to convince and to convert, to comfort and to purify their souls.

And now, O God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, hear our cry for complete deliverance from our sins, and entire conformity to Thy will. We know from Thy word that Thy will is our sanctification; help us to unite our will with Thine in the unceasing pursuit of holiness. Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Cleanse us, we beseech Thee, from secret faults; keep back thy servants from presumptuous sins; let no iniquity have dominion over us. Fill our souls, O God our Father, with admiration of Thy character, as manifested in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ upon earth. Teach us to follow in his footsteps, to devote ourselves to His service, to show

forth His praise; beholding, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord, may we be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

We ask of Thee, our Father, to bless every member of this household. Grant that we may dwell together in peace and love, as fellow-members of Christ, and fellow-heirs of everlasting life. We pray for all the churches of Christ, that Thou wilt this day manifest Thy presence among them, when they are gathered together, in the name of our Saviour, to worship Thee and hear Thy word. Pour down upon them, we beseech Thee, showers of heavenly grace. Revive them, refresh them, enlighten and purify them, by the power of Thy Spirit. Bless all ministers of the gospel in this land, all missionaries of the cross among the heathen, all who preach or teach in the name of Jesus. Make them faithful, prayerful, and pitiful toward the souls that are ready to perish, and successful in winning multitudes to their Redeemer and Lord.

O God, be gracious to our native land, to our colonies, and to the whole British empire. O Lord, save the Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the members of the royal family. Give wisdom, we beseech thee, to our statesmen and senators; establish the government of our country in the righteousness and peace, and make our nation a blessing to the world. O God, save the poor of the people, and provide for the children of the needy; may they

all know Thee as a father of the fatherless and a judge of the widows in Thy holy habitation. Look in compassion on the sick and upon all the suffering, the aged, and the helpless; grant to them peace and rest of soul amidst the weakness and pain of the body. May Thine afflicted children, who are pining for the privileges of the sanctuary, be enabled to bear with patience their detention at home. Manifest Thy presence to them in their own dwellings and give them a bright hope of an abundant entrance into Thine everlasting kingdom.

And now, O Father, we ask of thee to grant us thy blessing in all our meditations upon Thy holy word. Shine into our hearts by Thy Holy Spirit, to give us the light of the knowledge of Thy glory in the face of Jesus Christ. O gracious Spirit, Comforter divine, take of the things of God and show them unto us. Teach us, O Lord, to love that which Thou dost command, to desire that which Thou dost promise, and to expect, with humble confidence, the answer of these our prayers. We present our confessions, and supplications, and thanksgivings in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD we thank Thee for the Holy Scriptures. Help us to receive into our hearts the truths hereby revealed, that they may be within us the seed of eternal life. Strengthen us that we may ever hold fast thy blessed word, so that it may bring forth fruit even a hundred fold to Thy honour and glory. Open now our minds to the teachings of Thy holy book, and give us the blessed influences of Thy Holy Spirit, for the sake of our beloved Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxix. 15-18.

FATHER of all, in whom alone
We live, and move, and breathe,
One bright celestial ray dart down,
And cheer thy sons beneath.

While in thy word we search for Thee,
We search with trembling awe,
Open our eyes, and let us see
The wonders of thy law.

Now let our darkness comprehend,

The light that shines so clear;
Now the revealing Spirit send,
And give us ears to hear.

ACTS XVI. 1-13.

THEN came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: 2. Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. 3. Him would Paul have to go forth with him, and took and circumcised him, because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. 4. And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. 5. And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily. 6. Now, when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, 7. After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. 8. And they, passing by Mysia, came down to Troas. 9. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: there stood a man of

Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. 10. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them. 11. Therefore, loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis; 12, And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony; and we were in that city abiding certain days. 13. And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river-side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.

ACTS XVII. 1-13.

NOW when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: 2. And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath-days reasoned with them out of the scriptures; 3. Opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. 4. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. 5. But the Jews which

believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. 6. And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; 7. Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus. 8. And they troubled the people, and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. 9. And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go. 10. And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea; who, coming thither, went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether these things were so. 12. Thereafter many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men not a few. 13. But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people.

SERMON XIV.

“AND THAT FROM A CHILD THOU HAST KNOWN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES WHICH ARE ABLE TO MAKE THEE WISE UNTO SALVATION THROUGH FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS.”

-- 2 Tim. iii. 15.

THESE words were addressed to Timothy in a letter written by the apostle Paul.

Our first acquaintance with Timothy is made through St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles. In the sixteenth chapter of that book, the apostle Paul is represented as visiting Derbe and Lystra, and as meeting a certain disciple there named Timotheus. This was the second visit of Paul to these parts: *Was Timothy a fruit of the former visit?*

Paul calls Timothy “my own son in the faith,” and “my dearly beloved son;” but these terms of relation and of endearment may have reference to “the gift of God which was in Timothy by the putting on of the apostle’s hands” -- to the calling of Timothy to the ministry, and to his ordination, and to the service which he had rendered as a helper of Paul. Hence we read, Phil. ii. 22, “But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.”

Returning to the testimony of St. Luke we are informed that when Paul visited Derbe and Lystra for the second time, Timothy was a disciple and well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. So powerfully drawn was Paul to this young disciple, that he chose Timothy as a companion in his labours; and desiring that nothing might hinder the acceptableness of his services, Paul circumcised Timothy.

The mother of Timothy was a Jewess, but his father was a Greek. The mother was, however, a disciple when Paul became acquainted with her son, as was also the grandmother; so that this family presented the interesting spectacle of three generations disciplined to the Saviour. Thus in the second epistle of Timothy (i. 5) we read, “When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee which dwelt in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.”

The text carries us back to days in which Timothy was not disciplined to Jesus Christ. From a child Eunice's son had not known our Saviour, but from a child he had known the Holy Scriptures. The writings of Moses and of all the prophets, and the book of Psalms, were read by Timothy during the years of his childhood -- read no doubt by his mother's influence and under her guidance. We seem to see Eunice, in the midst of the idolatries of Lycaonia, leading the mind of her infant boy from the false gods, Mercury and

Jupiter, to the true God, Jehovah; storing the child's memory, not with the mythology of the ancient heathen, but with the poetry and history and prophecy of Holy Scripture. The father, it may be, looked at one of the heroes of Greece as the mould into which he would cast the character of his boy; the mother with her skilful fingers shaped it after models furnished by the sacred line of her ancestors. Her ambition for Timotheus was that he might be like Abel and David and Samuel and Josiah. The father's prophetic hopes, perhaps, clothed the lad with military honours; but Eunice, like Hannah, lent her son to the Lord. Grandmother and mother had, like Simeon and Anna, waited for Israel's Consolation, and Timothy was taught to watch for the Messiah as the anxious and sad in the night-watches wait for the morning. Happy son to have such a mother! Blessed mother to have such a son! Mothers who tread in Eunice's steps may hope to be partakers of Eunice's joy.

1. The first object inviting our attention is -- *The character given to the Old Testament Scriptures.*

They are "holy," sacred or consecrated to God. They are designed to make God known. Taking his existence for granted, and not attempting to prove it, the Scriptures exhibit the character of God. This they do largely by recording His actions. The history of creation shows the Creator: the account of the making of man exhibits his

Maker: the record of judgments reveals the Judge; and of mercies, the Father of all gifts. But the Scriptures also contain verbal descriptions of God himself. Originally man needed not this testimony; he knew God. Now a sense of the divine existence remains, but the knowledge of the divine attributes is lost. God throws himself into his words about himself, and thus the Scriptures are our guide in searching for God, and are “holy” because they thus direct us. In this respect there is a difference between God’s revealing works, and God’s revealing words. His works make God known, but this is not their exclusive or primary object. Hence we do not say, the “holy” heavens declare his glory. But because the revelation of himself found in the Scripture is the primary object of such words, these writings are called “holy” Scripture.

The Scriptures are designed not only to make God himself known, but also to reveal his will. What he would have us to do appears on every page. Everywhere we read, “Thou shalt,” and “Thou shalt not,” and therefore the book is “holy.” And these writings are “holy” because produced for the object of leading apostate men back to God. They exhibit God, not for the sake of showing to man a great sight. They reveal the will of God, not simply for imparting information, but that the prodigal may return to his father, and the sheep be restored to the fold. Hence in the Scriptures there is, as we all know, the revelation of an

atonement, and of a Mediator, and of a new and living way unto the Father. The Scriptures are an instrument of God, for God's special redemptive purpose and work.

These few remarks will suffice to remind us why the Scriptures are called "holy." They are written for objects immediately connected with God. They are not sacred to literature or to science, to the arts or to wealth. The Bible is not written for the arts or to wealth. The Bible is not written for the poet, though in it are poetic gems the like of which no un-Godmoved mind has conceived. The Bible was not written for the philosopher, though full of the divinest wisdom and profoundest knowledge, and discussing questions the broadest, deepest, highest, divinest, which can occupy created minds. The Bible is not written for the student of natural science, though alone narrating creation, and giving hints and clues of priceless value to the investigator of the works of God; nor for the historian though precious as a book of history beyond all comparison; nor for the politician, though expounding the only true and good political principles; nor for the merchant or trader or artificer, though a book profitable for all things. It deals with practical questions between God and man. The poetry of the Bible is a lyre strung and tuned by God, whose strings are touched by the fingers of God, whose sweet tones are the blessedness of God, and whose compass is the infinitude of God. The science and philosophy and history

of the Bible are like the gold and frankincense and myrrh which were laid at the feet of the Saviour: they are sacred to God, and they are like rivers which run into the sea--they find their end and issue in God. Holy Scriptures -- writings by God in which the "all in all" is God.

2. The Scriptures are "able to make wise unto salvation." They contain all the information necessary to personal redemption. Salvation! this is the great necessity of our nature. The taint of sinfulness pollutes us; the poison of sin threatens us with destruction; our cleaving to sin enslaves us; the guilt of sin degrades us; and the punishment of sin is over our head as a storm cloud. Salvation is our great need. We have manifold and urgent necessities -- but salvation is our great need. When the flood was coming, *the* need to Noah and to his family was the ark. When Sodom was being destroyed, *the* need to Lot was a place of refuge. When Israel was groaning in Egypt, *the* need was the Exodus. The need of the sick is health, and of the captive liberty. And as God made Noah wise for the deliverance of Israel, so the Scriptures make us wise unto salvation.

The Scriptures tell us of our sin and of our need of salvation from sin. They define sin, describe it, record its entrance to our world, show its exceeding sinfulness and charge it upon us all.

They exhibit a scheme of salvation and a provision for salvation, and this chiefly by revealing of a God-given, personal, living Saviour. Him the Old Testament reveals by promise and by prophecy, in poetry and symbol; and all who saw him, all who looked unto him were saved. Hence the apostle adds -- "Wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

These, then are the characteristics of the book which Timothy knew from a child. The Scriptures with which he was acquainted were "holy" and "able to make wise unto salvation" -- sacred to God's purposes, and adapted to meet the great and urgent need of mankind.

"From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures."

II. Let us look secondly, *at that acquaintance with Holy Scripture which a child may attain.*

The word here rendered "child" is the same as that translated "infants" in Luke xviii. 15. "From a child means from the earliest years. So soon as possible Timothy heard, read and understood. Thou hast "known." This word has a very wide range of signification. The Scriptures may be *known* in the facts of their history and biography, and in the forms of their poetry and prophecy. But this is the lowest kind of knowledge. The words of a man, when he speaks truthfully and sincerely, contain the thoughts of the man, and thus the man himself. In like manner the word of God hath in it God -- his thoughts, his mind, himself. And to

know the thoughts, and mind, and end, and spirit, and character of God from the Scriptures, is the highest kind of knowledge.

What kind of knowledge of Scripture Timothy had as a child, I cannot tell. It may have been mere knowledge of the letter, it may have been such knowledge as made him ready for salvation, or it may have been knowledge involving salvation; but we assert that a child is capable of the highest knowledge -- highest, I mean, in kind, not, of course, in degree.

This assertion will variously affect different minds. Some will exclaim, "What a truism!" but such do not know that there are many Christian parents who have no faith in the piety of children, and in the salvation of the young; so that it is necessary to assert what appears self-evident. Others will remark, "This style of speech ignores the Spirit of God as the agent in salvation." We would respond, "God forbid." In full view of the need of the work of the Spirit of God, we say, that "from a child" the human being is capable of the highest knowledge of Holy Scripture.

1. There is nothing in a child, as such, to forbid this view. A child is ignorant, foolish, inexperienced, and weak in purpose; but its mind is accessible and free from prejudice. The seeds of sinfulness are in a child's nature, and the motions of sins are developed in action; but a child is less under the dominion of sin than an adult.

2. In Holy Scripture there is no lack of adaptation to a child. There are deep and wildly rushing rivers, which an elephant alone can ford; but there are still waters at which a timid lamb may drink. There is strong meat for men but there is milk for babes. There is bright light for the eagle-eyed, and soft morning light for the weak in vision. There are strong voices which would stir a giant, and gentle voices which would soothe a babe.

3. The working of the Holy Spirit is not limited to adults or to any age. He can bend the twig as well as rend the oak. He can cultivate the flower as well as prune the vine. He can carry the lambs in his bosom, while he leads the sheep. He can clothe the grass of the field in beauty, while He causes the palm tree to flourish and the cedar to grow.

4. The voice of the Holy Spirit saith not to the child, To-morrow, but to the child as to the adult, ‘To-day if ye will hear his voice.’ To-day, though to-day be but the small years of the child, and the years which are reckoned by units; To-day, though to-day be the day of play rather than work, and of merriment rather than mourning; To-day, though no great burden be carried, and no crushing sorrow be felt, and no grave responsibility be recognized; To-day, saith the Holy Ghost to the child, To-day.

5. And surely the lesson which Jesus taught when little children were brought to him, and his disciples rebuked

those who brought them, and Jesus said “Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not,” is this, that we are to bring all to Christ whom we can bring, and to despair of none whom we do lend to him.

6. Thanks be to God, however, we are not left to reason, or to imagination, or to speculation for light upon this subject; we have the testimony of facts; we have heard with our ears, many have told us; we have read with our eyes, many have recorded cases; we have seen with our eyes, and have known for ourselves, children who have known the Holy Scriptures, and who have personally been made wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. So that we may say, without doubt or reserve, that a child is capable of the highest knowledge of the Holy Scriptures.

III. Let us now consider, thirdly, *the blessedness or advantages of such knowledge.*

The lowest kind of knowledge of Holy Scripture is not without advantage. Even mere knowledge of the words may be of future use, as illuminating many objects, illustrating many subjects, suggesting thoughts, and exerting some kind of moral influence. The same remark will apply to a very partial understanding of the words of Scripture; they have given so much information upon the most important topics. It is true, the responsibility of the child has been increased, and thereby its guilt and danger if

it neglect the Holy Writings; but this remark applies to all advantages and to privileges of every class and kind. Every blessing tends to life or to death, tends to benefit or to curse the recipient; and we cannot keep good things from our fellows, because they may not use, or because they may abuse them.

It is a good thing to put a lamp into the hand of a benighted traveller, whether he use it or not as a light to his feet; it is good to give bread to the hungry, whether he eat it or reject it. To give is our duty and our privilege; and whenever we give, we may give in hope. If the lowest kind of knowledge of Scripture be an advantage, what shall we say of the highest kind?

If a child through the Holy scriptures be made wise unto salvation, we may declare of that child such things as the following: --

1. The child is delivered from the chief evil to which our human nature is heir. There are ills and evils beside sin; but these have their foundation in sin, and their root and trunk and stock in sin.

2. The child, when saved, is safe from all real future harm. He may lose property, but he cannot lose his soul; he may want the bread that perisheth, but he shall be fed with the bread of life; he may have disease of body, but shall know health of soul. No good will God withhold; all things shall work together for this child's good.

3. The chief need of the child's nature has been supplied -- a need, which if all other wants had been met, would remain an aching void, a restless craving, an agonizing hunger.

4. The child made wise unto salvation has received the best and greatest and most enduring gifts which even God can bestow. He has nobility of birth and of character because born of God; and made godly, he has wealth, for all things are his as an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ.

5. The child made wise unto salvation begins to live the eternal life -- that life so pure, that life so holy, that life so happy, that life so blessed, that life so godlike.

6. The multitude of sins avoided and of miseries escaped is very great. As is the child so is the youth, and as is the youth so is the man. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he shall not depart from it." Among the evils escaped are bitter recollections, and evil mental associations, which often bear down and half crush those who are saved later in life; also misspent time and wasted opportunities.

7. The child made wise unto salvation is being early qualified for usefulness in the world. He will be of those to whom Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth, ye are the light of the world."

8. In such a child a deep and broad foundation is laid for stability of character. He promises to be like a tree

planted by the rivers of water which bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

We who have known the Scriptures from our childhood should be thankful, and careful of this treasure of knowledge. But let us not rest in literal information. The wheat avails us not while it stands ripe in the field, but only when it is reaped; nor does it serve us while it stands in the beauteous sheaves, but when it is threshed; nor does it serve us as grain, but when it is converted into meal and made into bread; nor even then does it serve us until eaten and digested, and assimilated and made part of our own blood and flesh. We may perish with the words of scripture within us, but imbibing their spirit we cannot die.

If we have so known the Holy Scriptures as to be made wise unto salvation then let us continue in the things which we have learned; hold fast the faithful word as we have been taught; retain our treasure of knowledge, and for it praise the Lord. But let us go on unto the perfection of knowledge. In the scriptures there are heights to which we have not mounted, even though we should have risen sometimes as on wings of eagles. In the Scriptures there are depths we have not fathomed, though we have sounded them with our longest heaviest line. In the Scriptures there are lengths and breadths we have not comprehended, even did our knowledge surpass that of all our fellows. Then let

us still read, mark, learn and inwardly digest God's most holy word; and while all should read the Scriptures, whether old or young, let these be especially the daily study of the young. A child is the offspring of God; a child is a creature born in sin; a child is a creature lost and wandering; the child is the father of the man; a child has an immortal destiny; a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame; a child may be ruined for ever; a child may be saved, and the knowledge of Holy Scripture is the means of making him wise unto salvation.

To parents and tutors who labour that their offspring and pupils may from childhood know the Holy Scripture we say, Account the Scriptures *able*. Add not to them, take not from them, but account the Scripture *able*. Teach the word of God with faith in it as *able*. God Almighty grant, that in every Christian household the Holy Scriptures may be known by the children from childhood as able to make wise unto salvation. -- SAMUEL MARTIN.

THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

OF MORE WONDERS WROUGHT BY THE STAFF.

AFTER the people of Israel escaped from the hand of King Pharaoh by having a road made for them through the Red Sea, while the waters returned upon the Egyptians and drowned all their host, they went on for several days to the south, and came by and by into that part of the desert which was near to Sinai. When God showed himself to Moses in the bush, and told him to go down to Egypt and lead the people out, he gave him a promise and a sign by saying, that when brought out, they would serve him on the mountain where he then appeared. No doubt Moses remembered this, as they journeyed toward Horeb. He was leading a very different flock now from that of his father-in-law's sheep, much more difficult to feed and manage; but God was with him, and though the duty was high and hard to do, he led them safely. Before they quite reached Horeb two wonderful things happened, where the rod of God was stretched out in power.

The first occurred in this way. The people had come to a plain called Rephidim, where they could find no water to drink. There were no streams, and no wells to be found in all the place. The cattle were weary, the children were crying, the men were searching everywhere in vain for water. Now that was a sad state of things with so many thousands of people, old and young, in a hot country, and with no prospect of relief. You hardly wonder that the

patience of the multitude gave way, and that they began to murmur. Yet they should have recollected how quite lately, only indeed a few days ago, God had come to their help on the shore of the Red Sea, and wrought a great wonder to save them. They should have trusted him now, and waited to see what he would do for them. Instead of that, however, they complained to Moses, clamouring for water, and saying Why did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us with thirst in this frightful place? So loud and vehement grew their cries at last, that Moses thought they would have set on him to stone him to death. That would have been very unjust and wicked and cowardly, but their burning thirst and the strong heat were almost making them mad. So Moses, as before, had to pray to God, and tell him in what evil case they were, and ask him what to do. Then God said to him to take his staff with him, and call out the chiefs of the host to go along with him, and take his stand, in the sight of the whole people, before a rock which stood at the bottom of one of the mountains. Then he was to lift the rod and strike the face of the rock with it, and there would burst out from it a stream of water, so that all the people should have a plentiful supply. Moses did exactly as God told him to do, and everything happened as he promised it would. The smitten rock sent out from its side quite a rush of water, which flowed throughout the camp; and all the people and all the cattle quenched their thirst,

and were satisfied. Besides, it is generally thought, that as long as the people needed it this river flowed along with them, winding about just as they journeyed, and gave them drink.

Don't you think it must have been a great sight to see how Moses, knowing how the power of God is able to do everything, went up to the rock, and brought with a stroke of his staff a sweet fresh stream from the flints? How must the elders standing by have wondered! What joy there must have been in the camp, when the glittering waters leaped forth, and began to flow on amidst the tents. How would the poor thirsty people run to catch the cool draught, dipping their vessels in the stream, or stooping down to lap it up with their hands, or plunging their very lips into the sweet wave. How would the children be delighted! Surely there would be songs again of praise again in the camp of Israel, and let us hope there were not a few persons who confessed to God and to Moses how impatient they had been, and how little they had trusted their great Deliverer. Alas! If they did confess their sin, it was afterwards forgotten; for a number of years later, the people fell into the same fault when they had been brought again into a dry place without water, and they made Moses so angry with them, that he fell into sin, and was not allowed to go into the promised land.

But there was another wonder wrought by the staff in the same place, and that in a way very nice to think of. There was a nation of the name of Amalek that had possessions in that quarter, and did not like to see a large host of people coming near their borders. So they sent out an army to watch them, and try and molest them. This army had been hanging about the rear of the multitudes of the people of Israel, and killing stragglers, and weak and weary persons when they fell behind the rest. At last, when they saw them go into a plain where no water was to be had, they thought it would be a good time to attack them, and so came in great force to fight with them. When Moses found this he made his trusty servant Joshua put the armed men of the camp into good order, and lead them out to battle. He said, he himself would go up to the top of the hill, and stand there with the rod of God in his hand. He meant by that to be making prayer to God, and encouraging the soldiers as they fought below. For the lifting up of that rod was like saying to God, Lord thou art strong and mighty; arise and help us, and smite Amalek, as thou smotest Pharaoh: and it was like saying to the people, Remember what great things have been done by this rod of God, and trust his might, and fight bravely and without fear.

The battle began in the morning, and Moses, taking Aaron and Hur with him, went up, as he said he would do, to the top of the hill, and stretched out his staff upwards to

the sky. Now, I do not suppose the rod was very heavy; but if any of you have tried to hold out at arm's length even a light wand, and to keep it up for a considerable time, you will know how by and by the hand gets weary. So after Moses had kept the rod stretched high up for a good while, he felt getting very tired, and was obliged to let his arm fall. Then a strange thing happened. All the time the rod was seen high in the air, the soldiers under Joshua were beating back the foe; but the moment Moses let it down, Amalek began to get the better of Israel. Again Moses lifted the rod, and again Joshua was winning; but once more getting weary, and letting the staff sink, he saw Amalek pushing the people under Joshua back again. This happened several times. When Aaron and Hur saw it, and found that Moses, from heaviness of hand, and perhaps from wavering faith too, thinking that Israel who had not been trained to war must be beaten, was not able to hold his arm up, they found a large stone and asked him to sit down upon it. Then they stood beside him, one on his right and the other on his left, and took hold of his arm and propped it up with their hands, and so made it steady and strong. The result was that all the day through the rod was held up, and Joshua and his soldiers won the battle and slew a great many, and quite scattered all the host of Amalek. You see how good men help each other. Moses, Aaron, and Hur, stretching forth the rod of God were in fact holding a prayer meeting on the

mountain, appealing by a “threefold cord” of supplication that was not broken

After the battle Moses, who knew that the help of Israel had been from God, built an altar, and named it, the Lord my Banner. And there was such joy in the camp that night. But God was very angry with the Amalekites for attacking the people “when they were weary and faint in the wilderness,” and said that he would remember to punish them more in after years. So he did; for he sent on of the kings of Israel to destroy them utterly. No doubt they had continued wicked, and foes of God’s people, and deserved to be cut off. For when men repent, God turns from his anger, and spares, although he may have threatened destruction. Amalek had not repented, and judgment came upon them, so that they were swept completely away.

There was a rod which, for a wonderful thing that happened in connection with it, was laid up beside the ark in the Holiest of all in the tabernacle and temple. Was it the rod of Moses, or another?

QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you find a passage where Moses is said to have led Israel like a flock of sheep?

2. Can you find a text where the waters which came from the rock are called a river?
3. Can you produce a verse, the words of which seem to imply that the waters from the rock followed the people of Israel in their wanderings?
4. Where do we read of Moses bringing water from the rock a second time?
5. Who was it that, ready to die for thirst, got drink from a hollow place cleft by God?
6. Where are we told that Amalek cut off the feeble stragglers of the host of Israel?
7. Do you remember a prayer-meeting where the people, before they left, had their prayer wonderfully answered?

ANSWERS to the foregoing will be found by consulting the following chapters -- Ps xxxvii.; Ps. cv.; 1 Cor. x.; Num. xx.; Judges xv.; Deut. xxv.; Acts xii.

Prayer.

O GOD, we thank Thee for rains and streams, which give us water to drink. We adore the wisdom and goodness of Thy plan for watering the earth when it is dried. We rejoice that for thirst of the soul thou provides living water.

May we get this also from the hand of Jesus. May we have it in us a springing well! Hasten, O Lord, the day when the thirsty nations may drink of it. Let the blessed waters of salvation flow forth into all lands, north, south, east, and west. Let men, freely invited, come in crowds and drink. Lord the fountain of life is with Thee. Give us to drink here on earth of the river of Thy pleasures, and in heaven to dwell beside the crystal flood which proceedeth from Thy throne, and the throne of the Lamb. *Amen.*

EVENING WORSHIP.

LORD GOD ALMIGHTY! with whom is no variableness, nor shadow of turning, and from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, we believe that Thou art with us now. Make us all conscious that Thou art here, and implant in our hearts such a love of Thy name, as that Thy presence may always be a source of delight to us, and the thought of Thee work in us a growing likeness and conformity to Thine image, as manifested to us in the character of Thy dear Son. We ask this for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm cv.* 1-5.

COMMAND thy blessing from above,
O God, on all assembled here;
Behold us with a Father's love,
While we look up with filial fear.

Command thy blessing, Jesus, Lord;
May we thy true disciples be;
Speak to each heart the mighty word;
Say to the weakest, "Follow Me."

Command thy blessing in this hour,
Spirit of Truth, and fill this place
With wounding and with healing power,
With quickening and confirming grace.

With Thee and thine for ever found,
May all the souls who here unite,

With harps and songs thy throne surround
Rest in thy love, and reign in light.

PSALM LXXVIII. 40-57.

HOW oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert! 41. Yea, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. 42. They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy: 43. How he had wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan. 44. And had turned their rivers into blood; and their floods, that they could not drink. 45. He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and frogs, which destroyed them. 46. He gave also their increase unto the caterpillar, and their labour unto the locust. 47. He destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycamore-trees with frost. 48. He gave up their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to hot thunder-bolts. 49. He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them. 50. He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to

the pestilence; 51. And smote all the first born of Egypt; the chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham:

52. But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. 53. And he led them on safely, so that they feared not; but the sea overwhelmed their enemies. 54. And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary, even to this mountain, which his right hand had purchased. 55. He cast out the heathen also before them, and divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents. 56. Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies; 57. But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow.

HEBREWS III. 7-19.

WHEREFORE (as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day, if ye will hear his voice, 8. Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9. When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. 10. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and thy have not known my ways. 11. So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) 12. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in

departing from the loving God. 13. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; lest any one of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14. For we are made partakers of Chris, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.

PRAYER.

OUR Father who art in heaven, behold us with tender compassion and loving-kindness as we now address Thee. We would call upon our souls, and all that is within us, to bless and praise Thy holy name. If we would declare and speak of all Thy benefits, they are more than can be numbered. Every hour comes to us winged with new mercies, bearing to us some new message of love and faithfulness from our Creator and Preserver. For the bounties of Thy providence, O God, we praise Thee. For our reason, our senses, and for every faculty of mind and body, we thank Thee. For food, clothing, the comforts of our home, and for all the enjoyments of daily life, we bless Thee.

But above all, we magnify Thee for the provision which Thou hast made for our salvation and immortal life. This day of rest is the memorial of Thine unspeakable love in the

redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ. We adore Thee for Thy kindness in making known to us the gospel of Thy grace; in giving to us Thy word in our own language, with full liberty to read it and to speak of it to others. For all the blessings, temporal and spiritual, which have been conferred upon our country through the possession of the Scriptures, we give Thee humble and hearty thanks.

We would now ask of Thee, O God, to look in compassion upon other nations of the world which are destitute of the privileges bestowed upon us. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee. Darkness still covers many parts of the earth, and gross darkness Thy people. We mourn to think of the dark places of the earth which are full of the habitations of cruelty. Great Sun of Righteousness arise, and shine upon all mankind with healing in thy beams. Let the gods that are no gods perish from off this earth, and from under these heavens. Break the chains of spiritual despotism, we beseech Thee, wherever the souls of men are held in bondage. Destroy the power of priestcraft and superstition, and make all men free with the glorious liberty of the children of God. May the Prince of Peace put an end to war, slavery, oppression, violence, and wrong in all the earth. Hallowed be Thy name, O God our Father, in all the world; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done in earth, even as it is in heaven.

We pray for all Thy servants who, on this day, are labouring for the good of others, by preaching or teaching in the name of Jesus. Enlighten and strengthen them, we beseech Thee, by the power of Thy Spirit, so that they may commend the truth to every man's conscience as in the sight of God. May many youthful hearts among those who receive instruction from pious parents or from Sunday school teachers, be on this day led to Christ. May many who have grown up in sin, now be brought to repentance and on with Thee, through faith in the Lamb of God. Smile, O Lord, in mercy upon the efforts of those who visit from house to house -- circulating the Scriptures, or distributing religious tracts, or directing the sick and the dying to the divine Redeemer of the world. Grant to all these Thy servants, we beseech Thee, faith and patience, courage and hope, to toil in Thy vineyard; and cheer every heart among them, if it please Thee, with some tokens of success.

Many of Thy children are laid aside from active exertion in promoting the kingdom of Christ, by various afflictions. We pray for them, that Thou wilt graciously support and comfort them. Help them to honour Thee by patient endurance of trial and suffering; may they abound in prayer through the power of the Holy Ghost; and by means of their intercessions in the name of Christ, may rich blessings descend from heaven upon the church and the world.

And now, O our Father, God of light and love, breathe into our souls the breath of heavenly life, and fill us with the Spirit of Thy Son. May the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. On this Sabbath evening may we, by faith, enter into Thy rest. Set us free, we beseech Thee, from worldly cares, distracting thoughts, and the temptations of Satan. Deliver us from everything which would hinder us in Thy worship, and prevent our profitable meditation on Thy Word. “Our souls cleave unto the dust: quicken us according to Thy word.” The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mercy: teach us Thy statutes.” “Thy Spirit is good: lead us into the land of uprightness.” Help each one of us, O God, in the duties of daily life to honour Thee, to follow the example of our Lord and Saviour, to show forth Thy praise by our conduct and conversation. As members of one household, may we love each other with a pure heart fervently, and constantly seek to promote each other’s welfare and happiness. In all our ways may we acknowledge Thee, and do Thou direct our paths. Whenever we are called to pass through trial and distress, give us grace, we beseech thee, to bear affliction patiently, to believe in Thine infinite love, and to give thanks for Thy chastening mercy. Teach us to set our affections on things above. Help us to live as strangers and pilgrims on the earth -- as sojourners with Thee, and as citizens of the new Jerusalem, having our treasure and our

heart in heaven. Lord of the Sabbath, on the evening of Thine own day, we ask of Thee to give us some foretaste of the heavenly rest. May we now feel that our life is hid with Christ in God, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And when our days on earth are ended, may we then, O heavenly Father, fall asleep in Jesus, awake in the eternal world with Thy likeness, behold Thy face in righteousness, and so may we be for ever with the Lord. All that we ask is in the name of Jesus, to whom, with Thee, O Father and the eternal Spirit, be all honour and glory, world without end.
Amen.

MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

MONDAY.

Morning.

Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.

He also shall be my salvation.

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed with me.

My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

Job xiii. 15, 16. Job xix. 25, 26, 27. Ps. lxxiii. 26.

Evening.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! For then would I fly away, and be at rest.

Lo, then would I wander far off and remain in the wilderness. Selah.

I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.

I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

Ps. xxiii. 4.

Ps. lv. 6,7,8.

Ps. xci. 2.

TUESDAY.

Morning.

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.

For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.

As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth;

For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children.

For the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.

Ps. ciii. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. Isa. xxx. 18.

Evening.

Thou shalt weep no more; he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it he will answer thee.

And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers;

And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left.

Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

Isa. xxx. 19, 20, 21. Jer. xxxiii. 3.

WEDNESDAY.

Morning.

Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine.

For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?

Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen.

Exod. xix. 4, 5. Deut. iv. 7, 9.

Evening.

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

Rom. x. 12, 13.

Ps. xxv. 8, 9, 10.

THURSDAY.

Morning.

Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates:

At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.

Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour, but shalt fear thy God.

Deut. xxiv. 14, 15.

Lev. xx. 43.

Evening.

Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.

Art thou called being a servant? Care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.

For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's free man: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.

Ye are bought with a price: be not ye the servants of men.

Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.

1 Cor. vii. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

FRIDAY.

Morning.

Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow: for what is our life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

Prov. xxvii. 1 James iv. 14, 15, 16, 17.

Evening.

**Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty:
neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things
too high for me.**

Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child
that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned
child.

Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he
that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of
a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

Ps. cxxxi. 1, 2. Matt. xxiii. 12. Isa. lxvi. 2.

SATURDAY.

Morning.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious
seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his
sheaves with him.

In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening
withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall
prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be
alike good.

Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears.

And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. Eccl. xi. 6. Acts xx. 19. John iv. 36.

Evening.

I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant.

Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

Now therefore, our God, we thank thee and praise thy glorious name.

But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we give thee.

For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.

Gen. xxxii. 9. 1 Chron. xxix. 12, 13, 14, 15.