

HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

TWENTY-SEVENTH WEEK.

MORNING WORSHIP.

O GOD, the strength of all them that put their trust in Thee, mercifully accept our prayers; and because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of Thy grace, that we, steadfastly believing in Thy Son Jesus Christ, and loving one another as He hath given us commandment, may please Thee both in will and deed, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxxxix. 1-10.

LORD, thou hast search'd and seen me thro';
Thine eye commands, with piercing view,
My rising and my resting hours,
My heart and flesh with all their powers!

My thoughts, before they are mine own,
Are to my God distinctly known
He knows the words I mean to speak,
Ere from mine opening lips they break!

Within thy circling power I stand:
On every side I find thy hand;
Awake, asleep, at home, and abroad,
I am surrounded still with God!

Amazing knowledge! -- O the height!
'Tis far above my highest flight;
My soul, with all the powers I boast,
Is in the boundless prospect lost!

O may these thoughts possess my breast,
Where'er I rove, where'er I rest!
Nor let my weaker passions dare
Consent to sin, for God is there!

JOB XXVIII.

SURELY there is a vein for the silver, and for gold where they fine it. 2. Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass is molten out of the stone. 3. He setteth an end to darkness,

and searcheth out all perfection; the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death. 4. The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant; even the waters forgotten of the foot: they are dried up, they are gone away from men. 5. As for the earth, out of it cometh bread; and under it is turned up as it were fire. 6. The stones of it are the place of sapphires; and it hath dust of gold. 7. There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: 8. The lion's whelps have not trodden it; nor the fierce lion passed by it. 9. He putteth forth his hand upon the rock; he overturneth the mountains by the roots. 10. He cutteth out rivers among the rocks; and his eye seeth every precious thing. 11. He bindeth the floods from overflowing; and the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light. 12. But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? 13. Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living 14. The depth saith, It is not in me; and the sea saith, It is not with me. 15. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. 17. The gold and crystal cannot equal it; and the exchange of it shall not be made for jewels of fine gold. 18. No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies. 19. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold. 20. Whence then cometh wisdom ? and where is the place of understanding? 21. Seeing it is hid

from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air. 22. Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears. 23. God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof. 24. For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven; 25. To make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure. 26. When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightening of the thunder; 27. Then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out. 28. And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

PSALM LXXVII. 12-20.

I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings. 13. Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary; who is so great a God as our God? 14. Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people. 15. Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. 16. The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled. 17. The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. 18. The voice

of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. 19. Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. 20. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Prayer.

LORD, teach us how to pray; and forasmuch as we know not what to pray for as we ought, pour down upon us, we beseech thee at this time, the spirit of grace and of supplication. Our voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning of this thine own day do we direct our prayer unto Thee, and look up.

We adore Thee, O Lord; for thine is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty. Thou deckest Thyself with the light as with a garment; and the hosts of heaven worship Thee. To Thee all angels cry aloud, the heavens and all the powers therein. To Thee cherubim and seraphim continually cry, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of sabaoth. We too, O thou glorious Jehovah, would approach Thy throne of grace in the name of Jesus;

and by Him would offer our sacrifice of praise, giving thanks to Thy name.

We praise and bless Thee, O Father, for thy preserving care over us during the past night. We laid us down and slept, and have risen again, for Thou, Lord, hast made us to dwell in safety. We bless Thee for the renewal of all our faculties of body and mind; our sight and hearing; our speech and reason. We thank Thee for the peace and quietness of the sabbath day--blessed emblem and foretaste of that eternal rest which remaineth for the people of God. And O, above all, we adore and magnify Thee for the blessings of redeeming grace, and for the gift of Christ, the Son of Thy love, to take on Him our nature, to bear our sins in His own body on the tree, to die the just for the unjust, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness, that we might be accepted in Him. O Lord, make us exceedingly thankful; and give us, we beseech Thee, that due sense of all Thy mercies that we may show forth our heartfelt gratitude, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to Thy service, and by walking before Thee in holiness and righteousness all our days.

But we confess, O heavenly Father, that we have not rendered to Thee according as Thou hast dealt with us. We are poor and miserable sinners, both by nature

and practice. We have done what we ought not have done, and we have left undone what we ought to have done. By thought, word, and deed have we sinned against Thee, O Lord. Every day we add to the number of our transgressions; they have mounted up to heaven, and, as a heavy burden, they have gone over our heads. If thou wert extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who could abide it? Enter not into judgment with Thy servants, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified. We plead the promises of Thy word. We rely on the infinite merits of Christ. In Him hast Thou provided a way of escape. He is the ever-open door, the ever-living way; and Him hast Thou set forth a propitiation, through faith in His blood, and hast declared Thyself ready and willing to receive all who come to Thee in His name. We lay our hands, by faith, on His sacred head; we ring the burden of our guilt to the foot of His cross; we lay our sins on Jesus. Wash us, we pray Thee, in the blood of that immaculate Lamb, which was slain to take away the sins of the world. Grant us joy and peace in believing; sprinkle our hearts and consciences afresh with the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. Clothe us with the spotless robe of His perfect righteousness, and accept us in the Beloved.

We need also, O Lord, the renewing and sanctifying influence of Thy Spirit. Quicken us, we beseech Thee, in Thy way. Grant us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ. Open the eyes of our understanding, and fill us with the knowledge of Thy will. May Christ dwell in our hearts by faith; and may we be filled with all the fulness of God. Bless us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places; increase our faith, enliven our hope, and pour into our hearts more of that love which passeth knowledge. Thus may we go from strength to strength in our heavenly course, ever looking unto Jesus, and out of His fulness receiving grace for grace.

We ask Thy blessing also, gracious God, on all Thy people in every place. Wherever two or three are gathered together in Thy name this day, on mountain side or lowly plain, in crowded town or lonely cot, in distant isles or on the broad sea, be Thou in the midst of them, to hear and bless. Regard with Thy favour all the members of this family, and may they belong to the household of God. Command Thy special blessings upon all Thy ministering servants at home or abroad, and crown their labours with abundant success. Gather, out of all lands, a people to praise Thee; yea, hasten the time when all the kingdoms of the world shall become Thine by willing consecration, and all

nations shall come and worship before Thee. Take to Thee Thy power and reign, O blessed Jesus; pour out Thy Spirit upon all flesh, and let living waters go forth from Jerusalem. O let the wilderness and the solitary place be glad for them; let the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose.

And now, we commend ourselves to Thy care and blessing this day. May we feel Thy presence near us. Anoint us with fresh oil from the upper sanctuary; and in Thy good time receive us into those mansions of eternal bliss which Thou hast prepared for all who love Thee; through the merits of Jesus Christ, our only Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O God, whose infinite mercies in our blessed Saviour encourage us to call upon Thee, we beseech Thee graciously to hear us, and grant that we may both perceive and know what is Thy good, and acceptable, and perfect will revealed to us, and also have grace and power so faithfully to fulfil the same, that we may

present ourselves a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto Thee, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* l. 9-15.

LORD, I confess thy rightful claim,
And yield to thy command;
To own thy dear, thy powerful name,
I here rejoicing stand.

To thee, my Saviour and my Lord,
I my whole self resign;
By thee to life and hope restored,
I will be ever thine.

Thy merit shall my refuge be
From God's avenging hand;
Thy Spirit shall my spirit free
From sin's impure command.

Here to his influence and sway
I offer up my mind;
Thence let him cleanse the filth away,
Nor leave a spot behind!

Let him each dull affection move,
And melt my frozen heart,
Through all my soul diffuse thy love,
And life divine impart!

Then with unwearied zeal shall I
The best design pursue,
Shall stand resolved for heaven and thee,
And every foe subdue.
DEUTERONOMY XXVI. 12-19.

WHEN thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled; 13. Then thou shalt say before the Lord thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them. 14. I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I taken away ought thereof for any unclean use, nor given ought thereof for the dead: but I have hearkened to the voice of the Lord my God, and have done according to all that thou hast commanded me. 15. Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us, as thou swarest

unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey. 16. This day the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. 17. Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgements, and to hearken unto his voice: 18. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments; 19. And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as he hath spoken.

MALACHI III. 1-11.

BEHOLD, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold he shall come, saith the Lord hosts. 2. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when

he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap; 3. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord, an offering in righteousness. 4. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

5. And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hirelings in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts. 6. For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. 7. Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? 8. Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. 9. Ye are cursed with curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. 10. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I

will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. 11. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before her time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts.

ROMANS XII. 1, 2, 9-12.

I BESEECH you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. 9. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. 10. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; 11. Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; 12. Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer.

SERMON XXVII.

“THE LORD HATH NEED OF THEM.” --Matt. xxi. 3.

WE have here one of those pregnant sentences of Christ, so full and suggestive in their varied application, which are so richly scattered through the Gospels. Called forth by some trivial circumstance, and apparently intended only with special reference to the time and occasion, they are not sooner uttered than they appear to have been intended for all time. The more they are studied and pondered over, the more profound and weighty they are seen to be. We can turn them on all sides, and view them in varied lights; and as we gaze, their relations widen out until at length they seem to comprehend almost everything in their vast embrace; like some of nature's laws, so simple as it were in their first elements, but on investigation found to pervade all the phenomena with which we are conversant, until at length the most widely differing results are all found to be but different manifestations of the one grand principle. These words form, as we know part of the directions given

by Christ to his two disciples, when he sent them for the ass and the colt on which he was about to enter Jerusalem in triumph. Anticipating, however, an objection on the part of the owner, he said, "If any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, the Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them."

Without dwelling on the striking proofs which this passage incidentally affords of the essential Deity of Christ, in thus not only manifesting the prescience which is God's alone, and the magic power over human hearts which the Creator only can exercise, we pass on to the words themselves -- "the Lord hath need of them."

There is *no waste* in the economy of nature. We may not always be able to trace out the uses of this or that particular object; but we are confident of the truth of the principle. There withered branch, the shrivelled leaf, the broken shell on the pebbly beach, the ashes of the embers that have been burnt, the smoke of the living coal, are not going to waste. They are entering into the new combinations, going to form new products for the welfare and beauty of the whole, of which they form but a part.

"Gather up the fragments which remain, that nothing be lost, "were the words of Him who had just exhibited his power to multiply the five loaves into a sufficiency to satisfy the cravings of five thousand men, besides women and children. We are too apt to think but lightly of the value of

what we call trifles; the odd seconds of time, remnants of opportunities, parings and savings, how recklessly are they thrown away or neglected! And yet we know that the coral reef is built up by the tiny labours of microscopic creatures, in a manner almost imperceptible, until at length, emerging from the bosom of the deep, it forms a beauteous island for the habitation of man, and to be adorned with a luxuriant vegetation. The heaviest snow storm that ever buried the cottage of the peasant beneath it, came down in single flakes, each one so softly that it could scarcely be felt. The mightiest avalanche, which ever carried death and destruction in its wake, was composed of single particles separately harmless; the colossal pyramids of Egypt, the palaces and temples of Rome, were built up stone by stone; and the longest life of man, even that of Methuselah, was made up of seconds of time. Oh how little do we realize the value of the *littles*! how seldom do we remember, as we let days and opportunities and precious talents pass by without improvement, that “God requireth that which is past.” It may be thousands of years after, but it is required sooner or later. We ourselves often require to-day what has been laid aside in some forgotten drawer for years; but it comes forth again to the light, and is applied to its use. The same analogy pervades all nature. A seed, a stone, a stick, may lie for many years apparently useless; but the appointed time comes on when it is required, and some apparently

accidental circumstance calls it into notice, and it is at once applied to the end for which it was all along designed. What an importance, yea, almost a sacredness, is thus impressed on all and everything we see. No one thing stands absolutely alone. Things the most insignificant imaginable are every day found to be necessary conditions to something else of the very utmost importance; and we cannot divest ourselves of our personal and individual responsibility in reference to them, whether we would or not. They are around and about us, and we are in the midst of them. They touch us on every side. It is in our power by an act, a word, or a look, to set in operation a train of circumstances which may have eternal consequences; or we may neglect to stretch forth our hand at the proper time, and then the opportunity is lost beyond recall for ever.

But let us look a little more closely into the pregnant principle which the text contains -- "The Lord hath need of them."

The principle embodied in these words is this -- That the Lord is pleased to require the services of his creatures, even the very meanest.

In one sense indeed he needs nothing. He has made of one blood all the children of men. Neither is he worshipped with men's hands as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all, life and breath, and all things. All the beasts of the forest are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.

The silver and the gold are God's for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the heavens above, the earth beneath, and the waters under the earth, all are his, for he made them. Cherubim and seraphim, angels and archangels, depend on him for creation and preservation: his smile is their joy, their happiness. How then can it be said with truth that the infinitely blessed God needs the services of his creatures? Before the worlds were made, he dwelt alone in the fulness of beatific bliss; Father, Son, and Spirit rejoicing as triune Jehovah in their own self-sufficiency. "Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." These are the words of the eternal Son, proving that the Fountain of being stood in no need of created existence to minister to his happiness.

But, on the other hand, there is still a sense in which the words of the text have a blessed reality. God was pleased to call creation into being. That creation is one harmonious whole, consisting of an infinite variety of individual existences, animate and inanimate, organized and unorganized, intelligent and non-intelligent; rocks, seas, mountains, and rivers; animals, plants, and insects; man,

angels, and celestial hosts. All this wonderful variety and countless diversity God has impressed with a no less wonderful unity, wherein part answers to part; and each individual, no matter how small or insignificant, fulfils and important function with respect to some other and the whole. According to the constitution and course of nature, therefore, which God has been pleased to set up -- according to the actual economy of his providential kingdom -- God is pleased to require the services of all his creatures for the purposes for which he has created them.

In this point of view, there is a use for every star in the blue sky, every shell in the depths of ocean, every grain of sand on the the sea-shore. Not a leaf in the forest, nor a blade of grass in the meadow, but God requires them all. All are to set forth his glory, all bear the impress of his infinite wisdom, power and beauty. The heavens declare his glory, the firmament showeth his handiwork. If this be so of the inanimate world, how much more so of man and all the intelligent creation? The Lord has need of them, we may say, not indeed to minister to him, but to minister to each other, and glorify their Creator by the prompt and willing discharge of the special function and office for which he created them.

To apply this principle more immediately to man, having made us, the Lord has need of us; that is, requires us to live to his glory. "This people have I formed for myself,

they shall show forth my praise.” These words were spoken of Israel after the flesh; they are still more applicable to the Israel of God, and not untruly set forth the original design of man’s creation. When God formed man out of the dust of the earth, he created him in his own image, after his own likeness. He impressed on him the stamp of his divine original, and set him over the inferior creatures, to be lord and ruler of this lower world -- God’s vice-regent, for their good and the Creator’s glory. The fall has not impaired the original rights of Jehovah. Yea, now more especially, regard being had to the actual state of the moral world, we may say, the Lord has need of our services.

I. *He requires our hearts.*

The Lord has need of them, to love him and serve him with all the power and affection of which they are capable. “My son, give me thine heart.” God will not have less. Vain is mere lip-service and the homage of the outer man. We indeed judge after the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. The state of the heart is everything. There may be the most elaborate ceremonial and the most gorgeous ritual in public worship: there may be the most scrupulous attention to countless minute particulars in private devotion -- the closed eye, the subdued voice, the accurately repeated form of words; but all will not make up for the absence of the heart. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature. Unless a man be converted and

born again he cannot even see, much less enter, the kingdom of God. This then is the first grand need, without which all other things are valueless -- the homage and surrender of the heart. This is more valuable than offerings of gold and silver; more fragrant than the odour of flowers and the perfume of incense. Have we given our hearts to God? Have we given our affections to him? Do we love him? Alas! how many are there who bear the Christian name, and yet who love him not. And yet St. Paul said, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be Anathema Maran-atha." Why was this dreadful sentence pronounced? Because if we love not Christ, we love not God; and if we love not God, where God is we cannot come. We would not be happy there if we could. Love to God and Christ, then, are an infallible mark of the children of God. Constrained by a sense of his love, they adore his grace and mercy. They were lost by nature, without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world; but God so loved us as to send his Son to bleed and die in our stead. By his glorious sacrifice on the cross of Calvary he has made a perfect propitiation, oblation, and satisfaction for our sins; he made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. And now the believer in Christ feels that he is not his own; he is bought with a price, redeemed not with

corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He no longer lives to himself, but to him who loved him and gave himself for him. He seeks to glorify God in his body and in his spirit, which are God's.

Such is the wondrous and sublime, yet simple process, by which man is now led to love God and render to him the homage of the heart. He needs not to pretend to repeat or continue that one sacrifice once offered, once for all, finished for all time on the cross, by the one only priest; he needs not bring to that cross any fancied merits of his own, as a make weight either to the merits of Christ or the sufficiency of faith. He has but to hold out the hand of his thankful acceptance of the unspeakable gift, and receive of Christ's fulness grace for grace. "Faith," saith Hooker, "is the only hand which putteth on Christ to justification, and Christ is the only garment which, being so put on, covereth the shame of our defiled nature and maketh us acceptable to God."

In Christ, then, God descends to man, and in Christ man ascends to God. The Son is the expression, exhibition, and manifestation of his Father's love; the Son is the object of the believer's regard. "Whom having not seen," saith Peter, "ye love." For he is chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Touched then by the mighty magic of his

love, let us yield ourselves to God. For we love him because he first loved us.

II. *The Lord hath need of our intellects, our reasoning powers.*

The service of the gospel is a reasonable service. We are ready always to give an answer to every one that asked us a reason of the hope that is in us. At the present time the truth of the gospel is fiercely assailed in the name of a science falsely so-called, and by a superficial philosophy. Now God approves not of a blind, superstitious devotion, but rather calls for the exercise of all our intellectual faculties. The works of the Lord are great, sought out; that is, inquired into, investigated by, all them that have pleasure therein. How constantly and how beautifully did David, the inspired psalmist, call on all his members to praise God. What intense delight did he take in contemplating the wondrous works of God. How does he invite all inanimate nature even to bow down before the majesty of Jehovah: woods, hills, and vales; dragons and all deeps; wind and storm, snow and hail, sun and stars--all are called on to join in one universal anthem of praise.

The intelligent study of the works of God and the word of God should be the constant employment of the redeemed soul. We need not seek to be wise above what is written, and we may not be content to fall short. The books of creation and revelation are given us by our Father to study,

that therein we may trace his footsteps and the imprint of his love. Now more than ever, when ungodly men are calling into question the truth of revelation, the Lord has need of able defenders of his cause. We have to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and by sound doctrine we must be able both to exhort and convince the gainsayers. St. Paul was set for the defence and confirmation of the gospel. In our respective spheres we must do the same in this ungodly age, when the enemy is coming in like a flood. Let us then consecrate our intellects to God -- our memories to be stored up with his precious truths; our reason to understand, contemplate, and defend his cause; our imagination fondly to dwell upon the bright prospects of the better land, and the many mansions in our Father's house.

III. *The Lord has need of our bodies in his service.*

Fearfully and wonderfully are we made, curiously wrought, as it were, in the lower parts of the earth. True religion is not merely spiritual, nor only intellectual. It is not a series of mere spiritual intuitions, nor a chain of intellectual demonstration. It is an active service. There is work for all the powers of the body, as well as all the faculties of the soul and all the affections and emotions of the spirit. The Lord has need of them all for his service. "I beseech you therefore," says St. Paul, "that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice to God, which is your reasonable

service.” It is but reasonable that the wondrous organism of the human frame should be dedicated to God. It is his temple. The ivory palace of the brain; the bright glance of the eye, reaching to the remotest bounds of space; the curious convolutions of the ear quick to catch the faintest sound of melody; the tongue of eloquence to speak for God; the hand of skill to work for him; the foot of speed to run willingly in the race set before us -- the Lord has need of them all. See how all were employed by Paul in his Master’s cause. His was the foot which never wearied; his the hand which never slacked: the tongue of eloquence, the pen of power, the eye of intelligence, the ear and heart of Christian sympathy -- all were his, and in constant play for the glory of his Saviour and the welfare of his fellow-creatures.

Ever let us remember that the body is redeemed, as well as the soul. It is the member of Christ, and must therefore be kept pure. It is to share in the future glory, for we wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body; this corruptible must put on incorruptibility, this mortal must put on immortality. We look for the Saviour from heaven, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious boy. The whole man then is redeemed, the whole man in his wondrous complexity, body, soul, and spirit; and the Lord is pleased, in the gospel of his grace, to have need of them all.

IV. He needs our gold and silver.

Under the Old Testament the Lord directed a tabernacle, and afterwards a temple, to be made. The workmanship of both was of costly materials, gold and silver, and purple and scarlet, and precious stones, onyx stones and glistering stones of various colours, and marble stones in abundance. Under the new dispensation he requires our means, though not exactly for the same purposes. Souls are to be converted and brought to Christ. The millions of the heathen are perishing for lack of knowledge; thousands of street Arabs are growing up without education, no one to care for their souls; the streets and alleys, the cellars and garrets of our town populations stand in need of the utmost efforts of Christian philanthropy, to bind up the broken heart, smooth the sick pillow, cool the fevered brain, pour light into the hearts and homes of the destitute, and to bring the weary, world-despised wanderer into the blessed precincts of the fold of Christ. For all this we need the silver and the gold of Christian men and Christian women. The heralds of the cross are ready to go forth; the ministering angels of charity and peace are on their blessed mission. We want but means to be multiplied a thousand fold in order, under the blessing of God, to turn the wilderness into a paradise, the desert into the garden of the Lord, to plant the myrtle, the oil tree, and the box tree together, yea, to open rivers in high places

and fountains in the midst of the valleys. The silver and the gold are mine, saith God. Let us prove him now herewith, and see if the Lord will not open the windows of heaven and pour us out a blessing which there shall not be room to receive. Alas! Christian people have yet to learn that it is *more* blessed to give than to receive.

V. *The Lord has need of our influence.*

Oh, influence is a wonderful thing. We cannot see it, nor feel it with hands, nor hear it; yet it is in constant operation all over the world. It is like the attraction of gravitation, or some of the imponderable fluids or mysterious agents of nature. It is always at work -- silently, insensibly, but so powerfully! There are none so poor, or so feeble, who are not the source of this secret power to a greater or lesser degree. The unconscious babe, the outcast pauper, the invalid, the dumb, the blind, all exert influence. From them emanate streams of mysterious agency, the nature and operation of which surpass our powers fully to understand. We can but recognize the fact. All the world over, in every rank of society, hearts, and wills, and characters are being moulded and framed and fashioned by the influence which unconsciously flows forth from every living creature. Like the circumambient atmosphere by which we are surrounded, or the light of heaven with which we are bathed, and which pervades and

acts upon all within the sphere of its operation, so the wondrous play of influence acts and reacts on all the individuals of society.

The Lord has need of it for His service. Let none underrate the transcendent importance of this talent. We each influence a sphere, of which we are the respective centre. The higher our station the greater our influence, and consequently our responsibility. Even when we are absent it is in operation. Many a man has had an influence, by way of example or warning, on hundreds whom he has never seen in the flesh, nor ever will until he meets them at the bar of God. In this way we are directly responsible for the formation of character in respect to thousands of whom we have never heard; for influence is transmitted through the medium of others. All the gifts and talents we possess are the source of influence, the full value of which in results we can but faintly estimate. For good or for evil these influences are in ceaseless operation, whether we like it or not. We cannot arrest for one single moment the wondrous current. It is for us to determine, by God's help, in what way it shall be best directed; but, Oh, let us never forget the Lord has need of it. It may be employed for his glory and the good of others, or it may be the cause of untold misery. Which shall it be?

Let us then seriously examine ourselves in the light of the great and all-important principle which these words of Christ contain.

The Lord has need of us. Have we acknowledged this claim? We are his by creation; we are his by daily preservation; by we are his by redemption. Have we acted on this truth? His service is perfect freedom. Do we believe this? No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself; we are the Lord's by right of purchase. Has this truth been matter of personal conviction to each?

Selfishness is the law of the natural heart. Our lips are our own; who is Lord over us? We will not have this man to reign over us. These expressions but too plainly set forth the proud, defiant, attitude of the human heart. The gospel of Christ lays the axe at the root of this tree. Like Dagon, it falls before the ark of God.

Three reflections may suitably close these remarks: --

1. Let us pray earnestly to God for his Holy Spirit to produce in us the deep, heartfelt, conviction of this all-comprehensive truth -- the Lord has need of us for his service; he is pleased to be willing to employ us in his work. Man is slow to recognize this truth. Nothing but divine teaching can enable him to embrace it; we need the regenerating and converting influence of God's Spirit. By nature dead in trespasses and sins, we require the quickening grace of God to awaken us to a sense of a higher

world and the realities of eternity. Hence all through the scripture we are everywhere taught, that a real supernatural influence from on high is needed. "They shall be all taught of God," saith the prophet. "Every man that hath learned and heard of the Father," saith Christ, "cometh unto me." Let us then be very earnest in prayer for the unction from the Holy One, which teacheth and which abideth. We have the precious encouragement of the Redeemer: "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

2. Let us, under the influence of that Spirit, betake ourselves to the cross of Christ, there in humble faith, to wash our sins away in all-cleansing blood. Faith in that blood is the divinely appointed means for obtaining pardon and peace. The blood of Christ purges our conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. The doctrine of justification by faith only must ever be held fast with holy tenacity. We have nothing to pay, but merely to trust in, depend upon, God's freely offered mercy through Christ. This is the work of God, the one great work--itself inclusive also as the seminal principle of all works -- to believe on him whom he hath sent. It is an affair of the heart as well as, yea perhaps more than, of the head; it is the affectionate, cordial, thankful, acceptance of salvation as a free gift from

God, coming to us through the atoning sacrifice of his dear Son.

3. Let us daily surrender ourselves to God's service. When we rise in the morning, let us feel that the Lord still spares us because he has work for us in his vineyard. There will be need of all our fidelity and temper, our industry and patience, our Christian graces and natural powers, to glorify God, and to go about, like Jesus, doing good amongst our fellow-creatures; and whatsoever our hand findeth to do let us do it with all our might, working while it is called to-day, for the night cometh when no man can work.

And lastly, let us learn to feel the ennobling character of true Christian work. It is the Lord's work. We must be about our Father's business. The work which he hath given us to do, let us do it. And ere long we shall be summoned up higher to wear the victor's crown, and wave the triumphant palm, and join the hosannas of the redeemed in the heavenly Jerusalem, whilst to golden harps we sing the endless song of salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

-- W. F. Taylor, LL.D., M.A.

THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

HOW A GREAT KING CAME WITH THOUSANDS, AND WENT BACK ALONE.

IN the later days of the kingdom of Judah there was a good king of the name of Hezekiah, to whom some strange things happened. I will now tell you of them: one was a very wonderful deliverance that God wrought for him, when he and his people were in great danger; another was a very singular deliverance from death. Before Hezekiah's day the kingdom of Judah had fallen very low. His father Ahaz was a very bad man. He did a great many wicked things in the service of idols; he made images of Baal; he offered sacrifices on the hills and in the groves, as if there were no temple in Jerusalem and no living God there; he burnt his children in the fire to the grim god Moloch in the valley of Tophet. When God punished him for his sins, by letting the Syrians and Edomites beat him in war, he only grew worse. The Philistines invaded Judah, and took a number of towns, and Ahaz in his straits sent to the king of Assyria to come and help him; but though he came he gave him no help, but added to his misery. Then he grew worse than ever. He said he would now serve the gods of Syria; he got a great altar made, like one he had seen in Damascus; he shut up the doors of the house of the Lord, and became quite mad in idolatry and sin. So, at the time of his death, Judah was very low, and the people were oppressed by the Assyrians

very heavily. They were reaping the bitter fruits of forsaking God.

When Hezekiah came to the throne, he soon showed that he was going to be a very different king from his father. His first care was to throw open the doors of that had been taken away, bring back the priests, and the passover with great care, and a wonderful throng of people came from all the land to observe it. After that he made a great many wise arrangements for continuing the service of God; and the people did as he bade them, with much zeal. The whole land became quite different from what it had been, and everything the king took in hand prospered.

When he had done these things, he thought himself strong enough to break with the king of Assyria, and not to bear his yoke any more. This made the great king, as he was fond of calling himself, very angry, and he sent an army into Judah, and threatened to lay the country waste, and carry the people away into the east. He had a captain called Rab-shakeh, and him he sent forward to Jerusalem with a proud insulting message, speaking bold and blasphemous things against the God of Israel. Hezekiah had been very much troubled at first, and had tried to make peace by acknowledging a fault, and saying that he would pay as much money as might be asked of him; but that did not in the end satisfy the Assyrian king. So he sent, as I have said, to Jerusalem, and said he wanted to take the

people captive. It was a great thing for Hezekiah, that at this time there was a holy prophet in Jerusalem. His name was Isaiah, and he was one by whom God sent a great many messages to the people. So Hezekiah sent to him, to tell him what bold, bad, words Rab-shekeh had spoken, and to ask him to pray to God to help the people. Isaiah sent back cheering words, and assured the king that God would deliver him. Rab-shakeh then went back to his master, and he, hearing that another great king was coming to fight him, had to pause for a little; but he sent a letter which was even bolder and more blasphemous than the former message. It said to Hezekiah, You are trusting, I suppose, in your God; but the gods of other nations could not save them from my power, and who is Jehovah that he should be able to deliver you? Hezekiah was shocked when he got this letter, and he went in with it to the house of the Lord, and spread it out before God, and prayed to him to save his people out of the hand of this fierce and proud man, who made no difference between dead stocks and the living God. He then received another cheering message by the hand of the prophet Isaiah, and was able to wait in peace for what the Lord would do to save him. The people of Jerusalem soon saw how easily God can deliver from the greatest dangers.

“The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold.”
That is the way in which one of our poets describes with the

arrival of Sennacherib (such was the king's name) with a great army, before Jerusalem. There were as many soldiers as would fill a hundred and eighty-five halls or churches, holding a thousand each. What a show they must have made, as they marched on! And what a large camp, all round about Jerusalem, they must have needed to hold them! I suppose that the people, looking out from the city, must have seen the hills that close it round all covered with the tents of their proud foes. Perhaps they could not help being frightened and anxious although Isaiah had said that the Lord would defend them. But there was no need for fear. God had said that he would save them, that the Assyrian king would not be able to come into the city, but would soon go back to his own land by the way he came by. As God said by his prophet, it came to pass. For very soon, if not the very first night, after the great host had pitched their camp round Jerusalem, God sent a destroying angel among them, and the whole multitude in the morning were dead men. How the angel killed them I cannot tell, but the dreadful thing was that a hundred and eighty-five thousand persons that went to sleep at night never woke again. The king himself was spared, with, perhaps, some few others, but what must have been his terror and astonishment when he found all his army slain! No wonder that we are told he went away back, I should think as fast as he could, into his own land, where some time after his own sons put him to

death. Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem, having seen what God could do for them, had nothing to do but to bury their slain enemies, and take their spoil. It was a wonderful deliverance.

After this another very strange thing happened to Hezekiah. He was taken ill, and was very sick, and was like to die. Indeed, the prophet Isaiah said to him that his disease was mortal, and that he should set his house in order, and be ready to leave this world, On hearing this Hezekiah was very distressed; he could not think of dying so soon; and he turned his face to the wall, and prayed to the Lord to spare him. As he prayed he wept very much. Now God is able to heal all diseases, and hearing Hezekiah pray so earnestly, he was pleased to hearken to him, and sent Isaiah with another message. God said to the king, I have heard thy cry, I have seen thy tears; I will make thy life fifteen years longer. Then he gave him a sign that this would be the case. The shadow on the face of the sun dial that was in the court, which Ahaz had made, was to go back ten degrees. So the shadow did return, as you may have seen the hand of a clock put back a number of hours. Then Isaiah told the attendants what to do to make the king better; they were to put a plaster of figs on his boil, and he would recover. He did recover, and lived fifteen years more. There is an account of his feelings when he was sick, and after he was recovered.

But though the good king was thus spared for a number of years, they were not all quite so happy as some before. For he fell into a proud state of mind, and when some ambassadors came from Babylon to him, he showed them all the grandeur of his palace, like one that was vain of his wealth. God sent Isaiah to reprove him, and told him that all the treasures he had shown these strangers would be carried, by and by, to the very city from which they had come, and that his descendants would be captives there. That was very painful to hear; Hezekiah, however, received the message humbly, and said, The word of the Lord is good; I thank him that he gives me peace in my day.

Such were the things that happened to the good Hezekiah. When he died all the land lamented him, and did him honour.

QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. In whose reign did the kingdom of Judah, as distinguished from that of Israel, begin?
2. What other king, later than Hezekiah, was famous for repairing the temple, and holding a great passover?
3. When was the passover first appointed?

4. What principle was it that led Moses and the people of Israel to keep it in Egypt?
5. Whom did the passover lamb foreshow?
6. In how many kings' reigns did Isaiah prophesy?
7. Can you find a psalm probably alluding to the destruction of Sennacherib's army?
8. Where have we an account of the sudden overthrow, without a battle, of another great king's army?
9. What king was it, whose disease was not deadly, who yet never left his sickbed?
10. What sign was Isaiah told to give to King Ahaz in proof of the truth of one of his prophecies?
11. In whose reign did the captivity of Judah take place?
12. What psalm contains the lamentations of the Jewish captives?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found by consulting the following chapters -- 1 Kings xii.; 2 Chron. xxxiv.; Exod. xii.; Heb. xi.; 1 Cor. v.; Isa. i.; Ps. lxxvi.; Exod. xiv. and xv.; 2 Kings viii.; Isa. vii.; 2 Chron. xxxvi; Ps. cxxxvii.

Prayer.

O LORD, Thou art governor among the nations. Thou art stronger than the mightiest kings, and all their hosts are nothing before Thy power. We pray Thee to bless and preserve our beloved queen, and to prosper her royal house. May there be given to her many years of life still, and of happy rule over her subjects. We thank Thee, O Lord, that it is long since besieging hosts have been seen round any of the towns in our country. May the feet of invading soldiers be always kept from our shores. May all wars soon cease. May Christ's kingdom come in all the earth. We rejoice in his rule, whose name is the Prince of peace. We ascribe to Him, with thee, O Father, all honour and glory for ever.

Amen.

EVENING WORSHIP.

O GOD the Holy Ghost, who givest the light and life of God the Son unto the hearts of men, visit us, Thy servants, with Thy grace and blessing, and so preserve us under the shadow of Thy wings, that we may never be overcome by the world, the flesh, or the devil; never quench Thy light, refuse Thy holiness, lightly esteem Thy comforts; but may

ever cherish Thy good motions, comply with Thy suggestions, and rejoice in the consolation wherewith Thou ever comfortest them who walk humbly with Thee. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xviii. 43-49.

HAIL, thou once despised Jesus!
Hail, derided, injured King!
Thou didst suffer to release us;
Thou didst free salvation bring.

Hail, thou agonizing Saviour,
Bearer of our sin and shame!
By thy merits we find favour,
Life is given us through thy name.

Paschal Lamb, by God appointed,
All our sins on thee were laid:
For the glorious work anointed,
Thou hast full atonement made.

All thy people are forgiven,
Through the virtue of thy blood:
Open'd is the gate of heaven;

Peace is made 'twixt man and God.

Jesus, hail, enthroned in glory,
There for ever to abide!
All the heavenly hosts adore thee,
Seated at thy Father's side.

There for sinners thou art pleading,
There thou dost our place prepare;
Ever for us interceding,
Till in glory we appear.

ACTS XVII. 22-34.

THEN Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. 23. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To the Unknown God. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. 24. God, that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; 25. Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing as he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; 26. And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; 27. That they should seek the Lord, if haply

they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us; 28. For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. 29. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. 30. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: 31. Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man who he hath ordained; hereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. 32. And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. 33. So Paul departed from among them. 34. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

PSALM CXLVII. 1-12.

PRAISE ye the Lord for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely. 2. The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts

of Israel. 3. He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. 4. He telleth the numbers of the stars; he calleth them all by their names. 5. Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite. 6. The Lord lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground. 7. Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God: 8. Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. 9. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. 10. He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. 11. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy. 12. Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion.

Prayer.

ONCE again, heavenly Father, at the close of this holy day, do we approach Thy throne of grace to offer up our praises and thanksgivings. Let our prayer be set forth before Thee as the incense, and the lifting up of our hands as the evening sacrifice. We bless Thee for all the privileges and mercies of the Lord's day. We have been permitted to read

and hear Thy holy word, and to join together in pouring out our hearts before Thee. The way of salvation, through the blood of the cross, has been set before us, and we have meditated together on the inexhaustible treasures of a Saviour's love.

And now, O Lord, we ask Thee to bless us ere we retire to rest. Pour out Thy Spirit's most blessed influence on all the services of this day. Write on our hearts the lessons of Thy grace. Help us to treasure them up in our memories and to feed upon the living truth of Thy word. O grant that as new-born babes we may desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby. Sanctify us through Thy truth: Thy word is truth. May it be ever dearer to us than thousands of gold and silver; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. May Thy word be hid in our hearts, that we sin not against Thee. And in the hour of trial and temptation, when the enemy cometh in like a flood, may that sword of the Spirit be our sure defence.

Fill us, O Lord, day by day, with the knowledge of Thy will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. Give us grace to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and to run with patience the race set before us. Keep us ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. This one thing may we do; may we forget the things which are behind, and reach forth unto those things which are before; and press toward the mark

for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Revive Thy work, O Lord, within us, and deepen our experience in the divine life. Make us to be more conformed to the image of Thy Son. May we be crucified with Him; and the life we live evermore in the flesh, may it be a life of constant faith in the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us.

Bless us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, during the week on which we have entered. May the sweet savour of the sabbath shed its sacred perfume over all our employments. May we remember that we are not our own, but Thine, and that thou art pleased to require and accept our feeble services. Help us to consecrate ourselves -- our bodies, souls, and spirits -- to Thee. May our time, our talents, and our opportunities, all be dedicated to Thy glory. Make us to be living epistles of Christ, known and read by all men. Make Thy strength perfect in our weakness, and let Thy grace be sufficient for us. In passing through this thorny wilderness let our shoes be iron and brass and as our days, our strength. May we live in the daily contemplation of Thy love in Christ, and thus, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, may we be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

We implore Thy abundant blessing on all the ministrations of Thy word this day. O let not Thy word return to Thee void, but may it be as the rain that

descendeth, and the snow from heaven, watering the earth and causing it to bring forth and bud. May Thy gospel have free course and be glorified. Break down every barrier which obstructs its onward progress. Cast down every high thing that exalts against the knowledge of God. May ignorance and superstition, false doctrine and heresy, ungodliness, cruelty, and sin, flee before the preaching of Thy gospel, and be dispersed as mist and darkness before the rising sun. O let light break forth in every land, and the kingdom of Messiah reign in every heart. Have mercy on Thine ancient people Israel; remove the veil of unbelief, and cause them to recognize Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. Our hearts' desire and prayer to Thee for Israel, is that they may be saved. Lord, hear that prayer, and fulfil Thy purposes of mercy towards them,. And on heathen lands, too, our out Thy blessing and be Thou a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel.

We commend to thy tender compassion this night all who are in distress of mind, body or estate. Sanctify their trials; draw near to them in their sorrows; assure them of Thy love; support them by Thy grace. May they recognize Thy hand in their distress, and feel that Thou dost not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men. Comfort and relieve them according to their several necessities , giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions.

We ask Thy blessing, O Lord, on our land. Regard with Thy gracious favour our Sovereign, and all who are in authority. Endue them with Thy Holy Spirit; enrich them with Thy heavenly grace; prosper them with all happiness; and bring them to Thine everlasting kingdom.

We now commit ourselves, and all who are near and dear to us, to Thy most gracious protection this night, Wash us from all our sins in the precious blood of Emmanuel; accept us in the Beloved; and may Thine everlasting arms of love be round about us, defending us from all evil. And finally , when our earthly sabbaths are ended, may we enter into that glorious rest which remaineth for the people of God, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, our most blessed Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

MONDAY.

Morning.

Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord; he that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.

Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

Ps. xv. 1, 2, 3, 4. Ps. ciii. 1.

Evening.

Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.

They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips, and with a double heart, do they speak.

The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things;

Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?

For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.

Ps. xii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

TUESDAY.

Morning.

Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.

My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart.

God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.

Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.

His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.

If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

Ps. vii. 9, 10, 11, 14, 16. 1 Peter. iv. 18.

Evening.

If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

1 Peter iv. 14, 15, 16, 19.

WEDNESDAY.

Morning.

The Lord is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandment: hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow:

I called for my lovers, but they deceived me; my priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the city, while they sought their meat to relieve their souls.

Behold, O Lord, for I am in distress; my bowels are troubled; mine heart is turned within me; for I have grievously rebelled.

They have heard that I sigh; there is none to comfort me: all mine enemies have heard of my trouble; they are glad that thou hast done it:

My sighs are many, and my heart is faint.

Lam. i. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

Evening.

Is any among you afflicted? let him pray.

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

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

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

For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but will bring down high looks.

For thou wilt light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.

As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the Lord is tried; he is a buckler to all those that trust in him.

James v. 13 Ps. xxxvii. 4, 5, 6. Ps. xvii. 27, 28, 29.

THURSDAY.

Morning.

My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

I will say unto God, Do not condemn me: shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress? That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands?

Hast thou eyes of flesh? Or seest thou as man seeth?

Are thy days as the days of man? Are thy years as man's days,

That thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?

Job x. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Evening.

O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.

Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb: yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget them.

Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.

Isa. liv. 11. Isa. xlix. 13, 14, 15. 16.

FRIDAY.

Morning.

Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness:

I bring near my righteousness, it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory.

Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.

Oh that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:

Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me.

Isa. xlvi. 12, 13. Isa. xlviii. 17, 18, 19.

Evening.

Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.

O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee.

O the Hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?

Why shouldest thou be as a man astonied, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not.

He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Isa. xlv. 15. Jer. xiv. 7, 8, 9. Heb. xii. 5.

SATURDAY.

Morning.

Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken.

Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness.

But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord's flock is carried away captive.

Woe unto thee, Jerusalem! wilt thou not be made clean? when shall it once be?

Jer. xiii. 15, 16, 17, 27.

Evening.

There is no saviour beside me.

I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought.

According to their pasture, so were they filled: they have filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me.

O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.

I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.

Hos. xiii. 4, 5, 6, 9, 14.