

HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

TWENTY-NINTH WEEK.

MORNING WORSHIP.

O LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, teach us as we live in Thee, to live unto Thy glory, and finally to come to thy heavenly kingdom through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm xxiii.*

IF Christ is mine, then all is mine,  
And more than angels know;  
Both present things and things to come,  
And grace and glory too.

If He is mine, let friends forsake,  
And earthly comforts flee;  
He, the Dispenser of all good,  
Is more than these to me.

If He is mine, I'll fearless pass  
Through death's dark dreary vale;  
He'll be my comfort and my stay  
When heart and flesh shall fail.

Let Christ assure me He is mine,  
I nothing want beside;  
My soul shall at the fountain live,  
When all the streams are dried.

#### DEUTERONOMY VI. 1-9.

**N**OW these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it; 2. That thou mightest fear the Lord thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. 3. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel; the Lord our

God is one Lord: 5. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. 6. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; 7. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. 9. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

PSALM CXIX. 33-39.

Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end. 34. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. 35. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight. 36. Incline my heart unto thy testimonies and not to covetousness. 37. Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way. 38. Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear. 39. Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments are good.

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## *Prayer.*

O LORD, we draw near unto Thy throne of mercy, and adore thee as the one living and true God. The gods of the nations are dumb idols, the work of men's hands; but our God made the heavens. Teach us, Lord, to praise Thee as we ought for the banishment of idolatry by Thy glorious gospel from our shores; and may it be a joy to us to think that as the morning sun ascends the sky, his beams fall not on a single pagan temple or graven image within our beloved land. Blessed God, we thank Thee for this victory of Thy kingdom! O Lord Jesus Christ, who art the light of the world, we glorify Thee in that Thou hast thus scattered the thick darkness in which our fathers once sat, even under the shadow of death. But, Lord, thou knowest how far we are still from being a Christian people. Thou knowest how far we are from exalting, and giving Thee the glory due unto Thy name. Thou knowest how little in our hearts we have obeyed that first and great commandment of the law, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." How prone are we to make other idols than those of wood and stone! How prone are we, while we profess to know God, in works to deny Him; and to worship and serve the creature more than the Creator! Which of us is free from the love of the present evil world? Which of us has learned, as we ought,

the solemn lesson that we cannot serve God and mammon? Which of us has fully cast out of our hearts that covetousness which is idolatry? Lord, we abase ourselves in the dust before Thine infinite majesty; and dark as the sins of the heathen are, we cannot rank them with our own, committed against the clearness of gospel light, and amidst the fulness of gospel privilege! O let our coldness and deadness of heart towards the one great and glorious Jehovah whom we profess to worship be forgiven; and may the blood of Christ cleanse us from this sin!

Grant unto us, O Father, a spirit of earnest opposition to everything in this fallen world which obstructs Thy will or obscures Thy glory. Seeing that we love the Lord, may we hate evil. Since we are redeemed by such a price, may we, through Thy grave, walk at liberty from sin, and seek to free others from its galling bondage. May we be ever found on the side of truth, and in the ranks of holiness. May we contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and may we support the doctrine, which is after godliness, by a consistent example. May it be our aim as a family and as individuals to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them. Teach us to carry the spirit of simplicity and of godly sincerity into every domestic arrangement, and into every personal habit; and may all take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus. Let no act of ours break down the

barrier that divides the holy church of Jesus Christ from the world lying in wickedness; and if we are ever reproached let it only be for righteousness' sake, and because our life condemns the world's sin. Strengthen us to follow the Lord fully, and to press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Him. This day may we do something, however little, to fulfil his word, "Ye are the salt of the earth; ye are the light of the world." Hear our prayers for all that are ignorant and out of the way at home, and for the blinded nations that are without God and without hope in distant lands; and as we pray may we live, and be a people formed for Thyself, Lord, to show forth Thy praise! Hear us, O merciful God, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; and bring us in the end to thy heavenly kingdom, where our warfare with sin and evil shall be accomplished, and our labours crowned with everlasting rest. *Amen.*

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## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD, the God of the dead and of the living, strengthen our faith in that unseen world over which Christ died to have the dominion, and gather us with all thy saints in the day of His appearing, who liveth and reigneth with thee, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxvi. 1-8.

AWAKE, my soul, in joyful lays,  
To sing thy great Redeemer's praise!  
He justly claims a song from me;  
His loving-kindness, O how free!

He saw me ruin'd in the Fall,  
Yet lov'd me, notwithstanding all;  
He sav'd me from my lost estate;  
His loving-kindness, O how great!

Through num'rous hosts of mighty foes,  
Though earth and hell my way oppose,  
He safely leads my soul along;  
His loving-kindness, O how strong!

When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,  
Has gather'd thick, and thunder'd loud,  
He near my soul has always stood;  
His loving-kindness, O how good!

Soon shall I pass the gloomy vale;  
Soon all my mortal powers must fail;  
O may my last expiring breath  
His loving-kindness sing in death!

Then let me mount and soar away,  
To the bright world of endless day;  
And sing with rapture and surprise  
His loving-kindness in the skies.

JOHN XI. 1-15, 38-45.

NOW a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. 2. (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) 3. Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. 4. When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. 5. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. 6. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was. 7. Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judea again. 8. His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? 9. Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. 10. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him. 11. These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. 12. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. 13. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. 14.



Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. 15. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless, let us go unto him. 38. Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. 39. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. 40. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, that thou shouldest see the glory of God? 41. Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. 42. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. 43. And when he thus had spoken he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. 44. And he that was dead came forth, &c.

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## SERMON XXIX.

“THEN SAID JESUS UNTO THEM PLAINLY, LAZARUS IS DEAD. AND I AM GLAD FOR YOUR SAKES THAT I WAS NOT THERE, TO THE INTENT YE MAY BELIEVE; NEVERTHELESS, LET US GO UNTO HIM.” -- John xi. 14, 15.

THIS wonderful narrative contains inexhaustible material of consolation to the people of God amidst the deepest sorrows of bereavement, and is fitted to lead the minds of those who are not yet Christians, by a pleasing attraction, to him who is the Resurrection and the Life, the only guide of dying man through the dark valley that is before us all, so that brighter world where sin shall be unknown, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. No one can read over these beautiful words, from first to last, without feeling that there is them a depth and fulness, of which all the sorrowing hearts on earth, even in their deepest grief, cannot reach the bottom. The subject of death needs constantly to be kept in view, as there is nothing better fitted to moderate the joys and disarm the temptations of this present life; and as the subject has at the same time its sadness, our minds ought to be directed to these words of our Lord, uttered to the disciples on occasion of the decease of his friend Lazarus, which may well be applied to the

circumstances of all true Christians, when death either enters their households or lays it hand upon their own persons: -- “Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.”

In this text are three topics to which, in succession, our minds need to be turned: I., the Saviour’s *absence* from his people’s death; II. the Saviour’s *gladness at that absence*; and III., the Saviour’s *return*.

I. Let us consider the Saviour’s absence from his people’s death: and here it may be remarked, first, that his absence is *not accidental*; and secondly, that it is not *total*.

1. First then, Christ’s absence from his people’s death is *not accidental*. Just as he withdrew purposely from the neighbourhood of Bethany, and refused to revisit it so long as the disease of Lazarus was running its course; so does he withdraw, so far as the manifestation of his omnipotence or miraculous help is concerned, from every human deathbed, even from that of those whose souls are most precious in his sight. He could interpose, if he pleased, in answer to prayer. He could arrest the burning fever. He could check the rapid consumption. He could restore light to the sunken eye, and strength to the nerveless frame, and could prolong all those joys of brotherhood and sisterhood, of parental, filial, and conjugal love, which death so rudely and cruelly interrupts on earth for ever. But he will not thus interfere.

He will not reverse, even in the case of his own people, the great law, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return!" He waits patiently the progress of distempers and maladies till they have reached a fatal issue, unmoved by the prayers of relatives and the sighs and tears of the sufferers themselves, till there be occasion to utter the sad words "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," or to remove all veil of obscurity and declare plainly, "Lazarus is dead." Thus has it been with others; thus shall it be also with ourselves. From many a disease we may have been raised up, from many a death delivered; but at length the summons shall be given -- Arise and depart! At length the hopes of those who watch over us, like those of the sisters of Lazarus, shall sink in despair, and that great and solemn fact shall take place in our history which is expressed in these few and simple but impressive and awful words, "he is dead." There are many other considerations which are fitted to support and nerve us most consolatory: that Christ in apparently deserting us knows what he is doing; that it is not forgetfulness or coldness, but well-considered and premeditated love; and that if he be not present to rescue, it is because he has provided some better thing to be unfolded in the future.

2. But, secondly, Christ's absence is *not total*. Though absent from Lazarus in body, he was present in spirit. He knew all the turns of his sickness, and the exact moment of his death. He doubtless was present to the eye of Lazarus'

faith in his last moments, and when the sisters of the dying man were lamenting that he was so far away, the dying man himself enjoyed a nearer sense of his fellowship and love than he had ever done before. Thus it is still in the experience of Christ's people. Though Christ is not present to rescue from the grave, he is present to watch the languor and sufferings of the body, and the disquietudes and troubles of the mind. He is present to administer strong consolation and good hope through grace. He is present to repel the temptations and machinations of the great adversary. He is present to sustain the last trembling steps in the deepest darkness of the valley, and to catch up the falling spirit into his own everlasting arms. Christ's absence then, though in one sense very important and material, is yet a limited and a mitigated absence. He is absent like the sun when it still leaves a twilight, or shines by the reflection of the moon; and though his absence suffers flesh and heart to fail, his presence is still the strength of the heart, and the soul's portion for ever!

II. Having thus spoken of the Saviour's absence from his people in death, we now proceed, in the second place, to explain his *gladness at his own absence*. At first hearing the words look strange and paradoxical -- "I am glad for your sakes that I was not there;" and yet the further comment explains them, "to the intent ye may believe." In other words, Christ was glad that Lazarus died, inasmuch as the

sequel of that death strengthened the disciples' faith, when they saw him raised from the dead. Christ was glad even at the decay and extinction of the animal life of his friend Lazarus, since that was to be the occasion of the quickening of spiritual life in his other friends and disciples; and we thus lay hold of a general principle which will explain why Christ permits his people not less than others to descend into death; the principle, viz., that in this way the faith of other disciples is invigorated and strengthened. Of course, it cannot be by the resurrection of the saints at the last day that faith is produced, for the season of faith is then past and gone. But there are circumstances connected with the death of Christ's people, circumstances which happen in the present life, which as much tend to produce or strengthen faith as the resurrection of Lazarus in this life did; and to these circumstances we may only apply the Saviour's words, "I am glad that I was not there," as furnishing an explanation and justification of equal gladness on his part at the present day. Some of these circumstances I shall now mention.

1. And first I observe, that Christ is glad *because of dying testimony born to the truth of the gospel*. All testimony depends for its worth on the character of the person uttering it, or on the circumstances in which it is uttered. Now in both respects the dying testimony of Christians is exceedingly honourable to Christ. Those who

thus testify to the Saviour are persons whose word would be taken, on other subjects, by all impartial hearers. It may be safely affirmed that no class of men are more credible than Christians, in regard to all things of which they have experience. And now in the article of death they are put, as it were, in the most impressive of all situations, and deliver their testimony from a lofty elevation above the world.

What motive can a dying man have to deceive? The world is fading and expiring. He is about to appear in the presence of his judge. He cannot wish to meet him with a lie in his right hand; and, therefore, when a dying man bears witness to the grace of the Saviour, to the preciousness of his name, to the truth and efficacy of his gospel, there is in all this a power in the highest degree fitted to make men believe, so that one deathbed may become the seed of many conversions. But if Christ did not leave his people to die, all this testimony would be lost, all this precious influence would be unemployed, so that in this respect Christ may well be glad to let death take its course. Many books have been written to prove the truth and divinity of the Christian religion, and to reply to unbelievers and sceptics; but we are persuaded that the testimonies of dying Christians have done more to recommend the gospel than this whole body of literature; and that if the question were whether we shall keep the books and lose the deathbeds, or lose the books and keep the deathbeds, there

is no intelligent Christian who would not at once decide that the deathbeds should be retained -- the books of evidences surrendered. Yea, we will go further, and say that if the enemies of Christ had their choice, they would decide the question on the same principle. They would say, "we can answer books, we can rebut arguments, we can put our own construction on the other facts that seem to support the gospel as the truth of God; but these deathbed testimonies ring in our ears and disturb our consciences; let us have no more of them, and let Christians die in silence."

2. Secondly, Christ is glad *because of dying illustrations of the power of the gospel*. On a Christian deathbed no word may be spoken, and yet a most powerful illustration may be furnished of the spirit of the gospel of Christ. Many are timid and diffident; their tongue is not loosed to speak loudly for Christ; but all their other members and organs speak for him. There is a meek submission, an unflinching patience, a victorious cheerfulness, under lengthened and depressing suffering; there is an inward peace, a quiet hope, a touching tenderness of conscience towards God and humbling of the soul under his hand; there is a fondness for the Bible, a love of serious conversation addressed by ministers or relatives, a pleasure in prayer and supplication, which evidently tell how the heart is exercised; and when this continues and even increases, through lengthened seasons of illness and in the



face of approaching death, is there any one who will say that all this is not a most powerful illustration of the gospel of Christ, and one which recommends it alike to the unbelieving and to believers in the most effectual manner? There is nothing under the sun that more speaks the reality of Christ's gospel! Is it possible that men and women, and even children, in their dying moments, can be clinging to a delusion? Is it possible that the fruit of lies should be such calmness, holiness, love, devotion, heavenly hope? Is it possible that any natural workings of the mind could thus rise above nature, and exhibit in death the very stamp and seal of immortality? If any can believe this, we do not envy them their reason or their sensibilities; and indeed this is not believed by those who see the spectacle. They confess the hand of God, give glory to the God of heaven, and involuntarily exclaim, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like theirs!" Over all this, then, Christ rejoices, as covering his gospel with such honour.

3. Thirdly, Christ is glad *because of dying opportunities to make impressions in his favour*. We do not refer at all in this to the testimony borne by the dying, or the manifestation of the power of the gospel in the victory over death. We refer to the state of mind into which sickness and death throws relatives, connections, and survivors. The graces of the one party are exalted, and at

the same time the susceptibilities of the other for receiving good impressions from them are deepened. Affliction, trouble, and death soften the hard heart of the unconverted, and melt again the freezing heart of the backslider; and thus much good may be done that at any other season would be impossible. Appeal may be made to the experience of Christians, if they have not felt all their spiritual sensibilities stirred up and subjected to a wholesome process of excitement at such times -- a process which resulted in the strengthening and increase of their faith. O, how little does the world seem when we are called to stand beside the sickbed or deathbed of a beloved relative! The very things that interested us most -- that perhaps absorbed our anxieties in connection with this present life -- vanish into nothingness. We are ashamed of our own engrossment with them, and made to feel that in comparison of heaven and eternity, and in so far as they do not bear on heaven and eternity, they are lighter than vanity! What salutary impressions have not been made on multitudes by such scenes and such lessons! Have they been made on us? We live among sickbeds and deathbeds; and our course must be different from most if we have not stood by the sickbeds and deathbeds of the people of God. Did we not feel then that one thing was needful; that Christ was all and in all; and that the utmost we could live and labour for was, at last to lay our head in peace upon a dying pillow, and say, "I know

whom I have believed?” And shall Christ lose this opportunity of moral and spiritual impression, and not rather suffer sickness and death to have their way, as if he were not by, to the intent that men may believe?

III. We now proceed, in the third place, briefly to speak of Christ's *return*. “Nevertheless,” says the Saviour, “let us go unto him.” The Saviour did not leave Lazarus to lie in the grave. He returned to comfort his weeping sisters, to make good his love to his friend, and to manifest forth his own glory by raising him from the dead. Then those that sowed in tears reaped in joy; and the crowning miracle of love and goodness rounded off this sublime history. And so there is in store for all Christ's people a return of their Lord from his long absence -- a return to undo the work of death and to spoil the spoiler. He shall not come alone, as he did not come alone to the tomb of Lazarus. The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. The spirits of the blessed shall be mingled with the angels of light in that august company. Never did earth witness so vast and stupendous a work. He will stand upon the dust of a world that has rolled for ages, and has become thickly blended with the ashes of innumerable generations of his people. Not the earth only, but the sea, shall deliver up its dead. The monuments of marble shall hear his voice, the rude mounds of clay, the mausoleums of princes, the resting-places of the

poor, the graves a span long, the commingled dust of fathers and children in the peaceful churchyard, of friends and foes in the trenches of the battlefield -- all the hidden and gloomy chambers of this vast sepulchre of a world: and wheresoever a Christian has been laid, there shall Christ's eye seek him out, there shall Christ's hand draw forth his buried dust, which is precious in his sight; and amid the blasts of the trumpet and acclamations of angels, this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality! Happy the man that can anticipate these scenes for himself and his departed ones without fear! Happy the man that now lies low in the dust of penitence, that he may be prepared to rise hereafter out of the dust of death, and to whom Christ's return shall be the signal of the resurrection of life!

In drawing to a close, there are one or two practical inferences which may be drawn from this subject: -- *How different are the views taken by sense and by faith!* The disciples judged by sense of our Lord's behaviour in regard to Lazarus. So did his sisters, Mary and Martha. They saw in disease and death pure unmingled evils, with nothing to rejoice over, either in them or in Christ's connection with them. Christ, on the other hand, saw the whole subject in light of faith, and he discovered joy where they only saw weeping, and lamentation, and woe. Thus it always is -- things are not what they seem. If we judge according to the

appearance, we shall never judge righteous judgment. We shall grieve when we should rejoice, and rejoice when we should grieve; and God's great plan, so soothing and comfortable, will always be in clouds and darkness unto us! O, then, for the faith which sees with Christ's eyes and feels with Christ's sensibilities! Then death shall already be overcome, and songs of gladness shall rise through all its dark dominion!

Again, *All Christ's dealings tend to produce and strengthen faith.* This is the golden result of all God's dispensations, of all Christ's revelations, of all the Spirit's operations -- "To the intent ye may believe." Whether we are smitten or caressed, whether we are lifted up or cast down, whether disease stand afar off at God's bidding or invade our hearths and homes, this is the final cause -- "To the intent ye may believe." What is the design of the whole of Providence? "That the trial of your faith might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory." What is the substance of all prayer? "Lord, increase our faith." Here, then, learn to prize affliction and bereavement, which teach us to walk by faith, and not by sight; and if our faith only grow, give God thanks, and count these all joy!

*Lastly, Christ returns in peace only to his friends. The resurrection is universal, but the ultimate gladness is not.* For those who die unreconciled to Christ the doom of rising again is unutterably dreadful. The risen body may then say

to the re-appearing spirit, “Hast thou found me, O mine enemy!” and as they have been partners in sin, they shall be in punishment. It is not yet too late to escape this curse, which, fall on whom it may, will make it good for that man that he had never been born. Christ offers us his friendship, and offers it cordially and earnestly. We may yet be as happy as Lazarus; as honoured as Mary and Martha, and the disciples. The grave may yet close over us in hope; and the day of Christ’s return may be to us the birth-day of immortality and the harbinger of paradise.

-- JOHN CAIRNS, D.D.

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## THE CHILDREN’S SERVICE.

OF THE KING OF JUDAH WHOSE NAME WAS FORETOLD LONG  
BEFORE HIS BIRTH.

THE prophet that went to Bethel, and prophesied against the altar there, said that a son would be born in the house of David, whose name would be Josiah, and that he would come and destroy it quite. It was a long time before this word of God came to pass. But God’s words are not forgotten by himself, though men may think them so. They are sure to be made good in the right time; because there is

no counsel, nor might, nor understanding against the Lord. So at last the child Josiah was born, and he lived to do all that the prophet said he would do. The story of his life is very interesting.

He was the great-grandson of good Hezekiah. He came to the throne when he was a mere child. He was just eight years old when he was made king. The scripture says of him (and it is a great thing to have said) that he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. He strove to act in a way to please God, like his great forefather David. When he was only fifteen or sixteen years of age he showed to the whole nation that he was resolved to serve the Lord God of Israel -- I suppose by some public acts of profession and service, something like what young people who love Jesus perform now when they go to the Lord's table, and do what he has bid us do in remembrance of him. Four years later, when he was a mere youth of twenty, he began to be a zealous reformer. He found images of idols all through Jerusalem and the country of Judah, and bad practices prevailing in connection with their worship; and he set himself to put an end to them. He did his work in a very determined way. There were altars to Baal, and he threw them down, as men pull down an old house; there were images on the top of the altars, which he cut in pieces; there were groves, and he cleared them all away; then he took the idols, both carved and molten, and beat them to dust, and

carried the dust to places where those that served the idols had been buried, and strewed it on top of their graves. I suppose he said, Let dead gods go to dead men that trusted them. He took the bones of the priests of the idol-gods, and burned them on the altars, before he threw them down. He would say, Let their names perish with their bad works. It was a stern, rough duty he had to do, like all great reformers, like Luther, like John Knox, but he did it with a strong will. The strangest thing was this, that though he was only king of Judah, he went all through the land of the other tribes, throwing down altars everywhere, and stamping idols to powder. No one withstood him. So is it with determined men, with right on their side. So is it with those whom God raises and helps. One wonders how the people that did not own him as king allowed him. But by this time they had no king of their own; the last person who reigned over the ten tribes had been carried captive into Assyria, and a mixed race were staying in the lots of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and Simeon, and Naphtali. Many, however, of the people of Israel were among them, and when they saw the zeal of the Jewish king, they thought of the days of Hezekiah, who had done like things, and perhaps of the times when David and Solomon reigned over the whole land, and made it glorious in the eyes of all the nations round about.



It was during his journeys through the land of the ten tribes that Josiah came to Bethel, and cast down the altar that Jeroboam had built. When he had done so, and stamped the idols to powder, he turned round and looked at the graves that were near, and took the bones out of them, and burnt them on the ruins he had made. But there was one grave he would not disturb. It was the sepulchre of the prophet that had foretold this very thing that Josiah was doing. There was a title on it, telling who he was. So Josiah said, let him alone, let no man move his bones; and they let them alone. Even in this the memory of the just man was blessed.

After this a very touching and beautiful thing happened. In those days there was not a Bible in every house, or in every one's hand, as there may be now. There was no printing press to make copies without number, so that every body for a very little sum indeed might have one. You can have a New Testament now for twopence, and a whole Bible for sixpence. I should not wonder to see ere long penny Bibles. Would it not be fine to sow them over the earth, as a sower sows his seed in the field? But in the days of old they had to make copies of the Scriptures by writing them slowly out with the hand; and when people did not care for serving God, nobody took the trouble of copying the book which told how to serve him. So it happened that in Josiah's early days there was not a Bible known to be in

the land. What he had done was from the remembrance of old people, or the teachings of prophets. But after casting down the altars of the idols that had cursed the land, Josiah gave orders to repair the temple, and the people everywhere gave money very readily for the work. So, setting about the task, and removing rubbish, and looking into every corner, they found an old roll, which the high priests of that day bade them take to the king. The king asked some one to read it, and it turned out to be a copy of the law of Moses, as God gave it to him; and when the king heard, he was deeply distressed. He saw that for long, long years, the people of Judah had been leaving quite undone what God had commanded. In those times, when persons were exceedingly sorry about anything, they were in the habit of tearing their upper robe, and the king in his grief rent his clothes, and cried. He then sent for the high priest and others, and said, God must be very angry with us all, for we have not kept his laws at all. Go and ask the prophetess what we should now do. The priests and others went as the king commanded and when they came to the prophetess -- her name was Huldah -- she gave them an answer which was both sad and pleasing. It was sad, for it said that God was so angry that he would not allow the people to be much longer unpunished, but would send them away into another land for their sins, and they would be taken from their homes and the graves of their fathers. It was at the same

time pleasing, for it said that as for Josiah, because his heart had been tender, and he had wept before God when he heard the words of the law, there would no evil come upon Jerusalem in his day. A grand day followed. The king got a great assembly together and he made the law be read to them, and he stood in his place and spoke to them, and persuaded them to agree to make a promise to keep the law of the Lord, as they had heard it, and to stand to it. So far did his kingly influence and his pious example prevail with them, that while he lived they did stand to it; but he died while he was yet quite a young man, and then the people went back again into sin, because, having no root in themselves, their religious principles had been unsettled, and the wrath of God came upon them.

After the book of the law of God was found, the king resolved to keep the passover in the way which God had ordered it to be kept. Great preparations were made, and everything was done to make the service such as might be pleasing to God and useful to the people. The priests did their duty. The singers were in their places. The passover lambs were killed and roasted according to the law. A great many other sacrifices were offered. The feast was kept for seven days. It is said that there had not been a passover like it, so regular, so hearty, so grand, from the days of Samuel the prophet. Josiah was not more than twenty-six years old when this passover was kept.

It is sad to think that one so earnest and so good died at last because he was bent on doing something he had no call to do. But God was angry with his people, and he meant to take away their good king, that he might prepare the way for sending them into captivity. So he left him to himself in the matter in which he did foolishly. It was this: the king of Egypt had a quarrel with the king of Assyria, and went up with an army to fight against him in his own land. This made it necessary for him to go through Palestine or near it, and Josiah thought he must go out and stop him. The king of Egypt did not want to fight with Josiah, and sent him word to say that he had no quarrel with him, and did not wish to hurt him. But Josiah would fight, and in the battle, when the archers were shooting their arrows, one of them pierced him, and the wound was fatal. He lived to be brought back to Jerusalem, but died soon after. It was a sorrowful day for Judah when King Josiah died. There was great lamentation made over him. Well might Jerusalem and Judah be grieved. He was their last good king. Jeremiah the prophet grieved sore for him, for he knew that now he would have no friend in high places, and that soon the people would be carried away captive. The place where the battle that caused Josiah's death was fought was the valley of Megiddo, and so great was the defeat and the sorrow caused by the king's death, that after that, any great mourning among the Jews was

spoken of as being like the mourning in Megiddo. Happy Josiah, however, taken away, as the Bible says of the righteous, from the evil to come!

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## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you find a text where the reason is given why God sometimes seems slow to keep his word?
2. Can you find two texts, on predicting, another recording, the most wondrous of births, far asunder?
3. What were the names of Josiah's father and grandfather?
4. Who, before Josiah's day, was very zealous against Baal, and slew many of his priests?
5. What name is given to the Bible in the Bible itself, showing that it was only then in a written form?
6. When was money cast into a chest for repairing and cleaning the temple, and faithfully spent for that purpose?
7. Whose great liberality does the apostle Paul commend?
8. Who was it that rent his clothes in grief for the loss of property and children in one day?
9. What was the name of a prophetess that saw Jesus in the temple?

10. Can you find a place where it is said that the law was publicly read to a congregation in the open air with little children among them?

11. What was the most remarkable passover ever kept?

12. Do you know a passage comparing sorrow for crucifying Christ to the grief in Megiddo?

ANSWERS to the preceding questions may be found by consulting the following chapters: 2 Pet. iii.; Isa. ix. and Luke ii.; 2 Chron. xxxiii; 1 Kings xii.; 2 Cor. viii.; Job i.; Luke ii.; Neh. viii.; Luke xxii.; Zech. xii.

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*Prayer.*

O LORD God, grant that while we are yet children, we may give proof that we are seeking Thee in Jesus Christ. Prepare us for the work thou shalt give us to do. If we are called to suffer rather than to work, prepare us for that. Keep us from self-will, and going against warnings. Raise up reformers and zealous men in our times. Make the young princes of our queen's grandchildren godly children, like Josiah, and bless this land with a continuance of good sovereigns, for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

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## EVENING WORSHIP.

O LORD of Hosts, Quickener of the dead and Saviour of the living, visit us in this mortal life below with Thy heavenly grace, that we may seek for glory, honour, and immortality, and in the day when the Bridegroom cometh, may go forth with all his ransomed ones to meet the Lord in the air, and so be for ever with the Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm lxxiii.* 23-26.

SAY, why should friendship grieve for those  
Who safe arrive on Canaan's shore?  
Releas'd from all their hurtful foes,  
They are not lost, but gone before.

How many painful days on earth,  
Their fainting spirits number'd o'er!  
Now they enjoy a heav'nly birth;  
They are not lost, but gone before.

Dear is the spot where Christians sleep,  
And sweet the strains their spirits pour;  
O, why should we in anguish weep?  
They are not lost, but gone before.

Secure from ev'ry mortal care,  
By sin and sorrow vex'd no more;  
Eternal happiness they share,  
Who are not lost, but gone before.

To Zion's peaceful courts above,  
In faith triumphant may we soar,  
Embracing in the arms of love  
The friends not lost, but gone before.

To Jordan's bank, when'er we come,  
And hear the swelling waters roar,  
Jesus! Convey us safely home,  
To friends not lost, but gone before.



## JOHN XV. 1-10.

I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5. I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. 6. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. 9. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 10. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

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## *PRAYER.*

AGAIN, O thou God of our life, and author of our salvation, we kneel at thy footstool. Through the trials and temptations of another day Thou has carried us, and though we dare not say that we have been pure from sin, we bless Thee if Thy grace has restrained us from open transgression, and hindered our example from being a stumbling-block to any of thy people. Alas, O Lord, how sorely does iniquity prevail against us, and what reason have we to confess with Thine apostle, “When I would do good, evil is present with me!” Enter not, O Lord, into judgment with us. Though we desire to come out and be separate from evil, we lament that it stains and defiles our best hours and days; and our only hope is, that “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.”

We mourn, O Lord, the resistance which we see all around us to the purifying and sanctifying influence of the gospel of Christ. We would not judge or condemn our fellow-men, as if we could read their hearts, or pronounce upon their state towards Thee. We would ever remember that he that judgeth is the Lord; and our own falls and inconsistencies would enforce this lesson of Christian charity. But, Lord, we grieve over the coldness of heart in thy professing people, which we so sadly share; and we

think with deep sorrow of the many who walk as the enemies of the cross of Christ. O how little is Thy fear before the eyes of the children of men, and how little has the grace of God which bringeth salvation taught them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously and godly in this present world! How many halt between two opinions! How many sow to the flesh, and of the flesh reap corruption! Arise, O Lord, and plead thine own cause. Sweep over our land with a blessed revival of pure and undefiled religion. Slay the enmity of men's hearts by the cross of Christ. Bring sinners under the power of the world to come. Cleanse the guilty conscience with the blood of sprinkling, and let multitudes be washed and sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Let the gospel be preached with all fidelity and earnestness, and let it prove a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Let it rouse up them that are at ease in Zion. and may they flee to the stronghold as prisoners of hope! Bless every home mission enterprize, and may the neglected myriads of our population, for whose souls no man has cared, be at last rejoiced over as dead, but now alive again, as lost, but now found. "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live!" We would also, O merciful Father, plead for the millions of the heathen in distant lands, for the disciples of the False Prophet, and for Thine ancient people sunk in the

unbelief and degeneracy of ages. O Thou God of salvation, regard them all with the yearnings of divine compassion, and send forth Thy quickening Spirit, that they may live. Raise up missionaries to warn and teach every tribe and tongue, and to bring all to the obedience of the faith. Destroy the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. Let the feet of them that publish peace be beautiful upon all the mountains of a degraded and darkened world. O, Almighty Saviour, claim thine own inheritance, and redeem Thy blood-bought possession from the hand of the spoiler! Hasten Thy blessed work, and cut it short in righteousness; and let the millennial glory at length gladden our longing eyes. Let it be our heaven upon earth to prepare for Thy kingdom; and may the souls of others, far and near, be given us for our everlasting joy and crown when the Saviour comes in his final glory. Then may it be seen that we have not run or laboured in vain; and when we rest from our labours, may our works follow us! *Amen.*

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.**

Abstain from all appearance of evil.

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

For this is the will of God, even our sanctification.

And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me;

Exod. xxxi. 13.    1 Thess. v. 22, 23, 24.    1 Thess. iv. 3.    Jer. xxxiii. 8.

#### *Evening.*

**Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.**

As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me, through their word;

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one is us that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

John xvii 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.**

And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,

That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

Rom. xv. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

*Evening.*

**For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.**

But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ.

But even unto this day, when Moss is read, the vail is upon their heart.

Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

2 Cor. iii. 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:**

Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the

beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth:

Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

Jude 1, 2. 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. 2 Thess. iii. 4.

*Evening.*

**For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,**

Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren?

And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

Heb. ii, 11, 12, 13. Mark iii. 33, 34, 35.



## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

Who are kept by the power of God.

1 Pet. i. 2, 3, 4, 5.

*Evening.*

**Have mercy upon me, O God, according to the loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.**

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Ps. li. 1, 2, 3, 7, 10.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,**

And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

Amen.

For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.

In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

Rev. i. 5, 6. Heb. x. 4, 5, 6.

*Evening.*

**Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;**

Learn to do well; seek judgment; relieve the oppressed; judge the fatherless; plead for the widow.

God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.

Isa. i. 16, 17. James iv. 6, 7, 8.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries.**

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.

Ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

I will also save you from all your uncleannesses.

Eze. xxxvi. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29.

*Evening.*

**Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**

Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

2 Cor. vii. 1.    1 Cor. v. 7.    2 Tim. ii. 20, 21.