

HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

FORTY-FOURTH WEEK.

MORNING WORSHIP.

BLESSED Lord, whose only Son our Saviour Jesus Christ hath once suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to Thee our God; we beseech Thee, that as we are baptized into His death, so by continually mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with Him, at at last, through the grave and gate of death, pass to our joyful resurrection, for His merits, who died and was buried, and rose again, Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxix. 33-40.

LORD, of mercy and of might,
Of mankind the life and light,
Maker, Teacher, Infinite;
Jesus, hear and save!

Strong Creator, Saviour mild,
Humbled to a mortal child,

Captive, beaten, bound, reviled;
Jesus hear and save!

Throned above celestial things,
Borne aloft on angels' wings,
Lord of lords, and King of kings;
Jesus, hear and save!

Soon to come to earth again,
Judge of angels and of men;
Hear us now, and hear us then,
Jesus, hear and save!

2. CHRONICLES XVII. 3-13.

AND the Lord was with Jeshoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim; 4. But sought to the Lord God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel. 5. Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents; and he had riches and honour in abundance. 6. And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord: moreover, he took away the high places and groves out of Judah. 7. Also in the third year of his reign he sent to his princes, even to Ben-hail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to

Nethaneel, and to Michaiiah, to teach in the cities of Judah. 8. And with them he sent Levites, even Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, priests. 9. And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people. 10. And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat. 11. Also some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute-silver; and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he-goats. 12. And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah castles, and cities of store. 13. And he had much business in the cities of Judah: and the men of war, mighty men of valour, were in Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles XVIII.

NOW Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab. 2. And after certain years he went down to Ahab to Samaria: and Ahab killed sheep and

oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that he had with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramoth-gilead, &c.

Prayer.

HOLY, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, the triune Jehovah, we worship Thee, O Father, through the only mediator Jesus Christ, and in humble dependence upon the Holy Spirit the Comforter. We thank Thee, O God, for the unspeakable gift of Thine only begotten Son to be our Saviour, and would also bless Thee with fullness of gratitude for sending the Holy Spirit of promise to be our Sanctifier. Establish, we beseech Thee, our hearts in the belief of the personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost, and of the necessity of His gracious influence to dispose and enable us to accept the offers of a free salvation, through faith in Christ. May He impart to us a spiritual understanding, that by His unction we may know all things pertaining to everlasting life. Convince us of sin, and reveal to us its exceeding sinfulness, that we may be tremblingly solicitous for both pardon and holiness. Wash us from the pollution of our fallen and corrupt nature in the laver of

regeneration, and carry on the good work in us. May the Spirit of holiness so govern and purify every power and faculty of soul and body, that they may be reduced to the beautiful order which in our creation Thou didst intend, and by our redemption Thou dost restore. Make our bodies His temple, and may we consider ourselves sacred to God by His indwelling presence; and grant that we may be so filled by His benign power, as to be habitually led by Him in all the ways of righteousness and truth. Help us to acquire that familiar acquaintance with His operations, which shall enable us, at all times of His gracious visitation, to yield ourselves up to His impulses and to follow implicitly His guidance. May He aid us as a Spirit of power in difficult and self-denying duties, as a Spirit of consolation in seasons of affliction, and as a Spirit of love to the whole family of God, and to all the dwellers upon the earth. Suffer us not, O God, if we are Thy children to walk in doubt and darkness, but may we have the witness of the Spirit bearing testimony to our adoption. In Thy great mercy suffer us not to quench the spirit by opposing or neglecting His motions, nor grieve Him by the indulgence of unchristian tempers or unholy affections. Through His omnipotent grace may we overcome temptation, go on conquering and to conquer, adding action to feeling, habit to action, and all maintained till they be consummated in a blessed and holy

perseverance, and a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light.

And while we thus pray for ourselves, we beseech Thee, O God of all power and grace, to pour out Thy Spirit upon the holy catholic church, to purify it from all corruption in doctrine and practice, to remove whatever obstructs its union or disturbs its harmony, and to unite it more closely in the bonds of holy love.

In Thy great mercy to our apostate world, still lying in wickedness, we beseech thee to let Thy Spirit, which moved upon the face of the waters in the beginning, brood over the moral chaos; and by the conversion of all nations to Christ, bring forth to the glory of God our Saviour, the order, the beauty, and the happiness of the new creation.

Grant, O most merciful God, that thus our belief in the Holy Ghost may be followed by all the appropriate fruits of a true faith, to thy glory, through our Lord Jesus Christ: to whom, with Thyself and the ever-blessed Spirit, three persons in one Godhead, be ascribed, through all worlds, glory and honour everlasting. *Amen.*

CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O MERCIFUL God, who hast made all men, and willest not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live, have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics; make known Thy blessed gospel unto them; take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of Thy word; work lively faith in them; and so bring them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

HYMN.

IN one harmonious, cheerful song,
Ye happy saints, combine;
Loud let it sound from every tongue,
The Saviour is divine.

The least, the feeblest of the sheep,
To him the Father gave;
Kind is his heart the charge to keep,
And strong his arm to save.

In Christ th' Almighty Father dwells,
And Christ and He are one;
The rebel power which Christ assails,
Attacks th' eternal throne.

The hand which heaven and earth sustains,
And bars the gates of hell,
And rivets Satan down in chains,
Shall guard his chosen well.

Now let th' infernal lion roar,
How vain his threats appear!
When he can match Jehovah's power,
Then I'll begin to fear.

PSALM XXIII.

THE Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. 2. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5. Thou preparest a table before me in the

presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

EZEKIAL XXXIV. 11-16.

FOR thus saith the LORD GOD, Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. 12. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the dark and cloudy day. 13. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. 15. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the LORD GOD. 16. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was

sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.

JOHN X. 7-30.

THEN said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. 9. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. 10. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. 11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. 12. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. 13. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. 14. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. 15. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. 17.

Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father. 19. There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. 20. And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? 21. Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil: can a devil open the eyes of the blind? 22. And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. 23. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. 24. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. 25. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me: 26. But ye believe not; because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. 27. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. 29. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. 30. I and my Father are one.

SERMON XLIV.

“ HE SHALL FEED HIS FLOCK LIKE A SHEPHERD.”

-- Isaiah xl. 11.

OUR Lord Jesus is very frequently described as the shepherd of his people. The figure is inexhaustible; but it has been so often handled that I suppose it would be difficult to say anything fresh upon it. We all know, and are very glad and comforted in the knowledge, that the Lord Jesus Christ, as our shepherd, exercises towards us all the kind and necessary offices which a shepherd performs towards his sheep. With gentle sway he *rules* us for our own good: “Let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our maker; for he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.” He *guides* us: “And when he putteth forth his own sheep he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.” He *provides* for us: “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.” He *protects* us from all forms of evil; therefore, “though we walk

through the valley of the shadow of death, we will fear no evil, for he is with us: his rod and his staff, they comfort us.” If we wander, he *seeks* us out and brings us back. “He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.” If we be broken, he binds us up; if we be wounded, he heals us according to his own word, “I will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick.” The sheep is an animal of many diseases and of many wants, and so the Christian is an individual of many sins and many infirmities; but as the shepherd endeavours to meet all the wants of his flock, so our Lord Jesus succours all the blood bought company in all their needs.

We propose to illustrate the great doctrine of the text in a scriptural, and therefore, we hope, in an interesting manner. First, we shall consider in connection with the text, Old Testament illustrations; in the second place, New Testament descriptions; and, in the third place, Impressive applications.

1. We commence with *Old Testament illustrations* of the manner in which the Lord Jesus discharges the office of feeding his flock like a shepherd.

Out of five great types we begin with Abel, the *shepherd slain*. The second man who was born into the world was a shepherd, and was in many respects typical of our good shepherd. Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain

was a tiller of the ground.: Abel was a type of the Saviour in that, being a shepherd, *he sanctified his work to the glory of God, and he offered sacrifice of blood upon the altar of the Lord*, and the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering. This early type of our Lord is not very full and comprehensive, but it is exceedingly clear and distinct. Like the first streak of light which tinges the east at the sunrise, it does not reveal everything, but it clearly manifests the great fact that the sun is coming, Abel is nothing like so complete, and perfect a portrait of our own Lord Jesus, as other shepherds of whom we have to speak; but as we see him standing a shepherd and yet a sacrificing priest, offering upon the altar a sacrifice of sweet smell unto God, we discern there at once the picture of our Lord, who brings before his Father a sacrifice of sweet smell unto God, we discern there at once the picture of our Lord, who brings before his Father a sacrifice of precious blood, to which Jehovah ever hath respect. Abel, the sacrificing shepherd, was hated by his brother -- hated without a cause; and even so was the Saviour: the spirit of this world, the natural and carnal man, hated the better man, the accepted man in whom the Spirit of grace was found, and rested not until his blood had been shed. Abel fell, and sprinkled his own altar and his sacrifice with his own blood; and he must be blind indeed who cannot behold the Lord Jesus slain by the enmity of man while serving as a priest before the Lord.

Abel is the type of Jesus the slain shepherd; let us attentively consider him. We read in the 10th chapter of John that the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep -- let us weep over him as we view him stretched upon the ground by the hatred of mankind at the foot of his own altar of sacrifice, pouring out his blood. We read of *Abel's blood*, in the New Testament, that it *speaketh*. "He being dead yet speaketh." "The Lord said unto Cain, The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. Herein we have a blessed type of the Lord: his blood had a mighty tongue, and the import of its prevailing cry is not vengeance but mercy: --

"The rich blood of Jesus slain
Speaks peace as loud from every vein."

It is precious beyond all preciousness to stand at Jesus Christ's altar, and to see him himself offered there as a whole burnt-offering acceptable unto God; to see him lying bleeding there as the slaughtered priest, and then to hear the voice of his blood speaking peace in our consciences, peace in the church of God, peace between Jew and Gentile, peace between man and his offended Maker -- speaking peace all down the ages of eternity for blood-washed man. Abel is first in order of time, and Jesus first in order of excellence. The earth opened her mouth to receive Abel's blood, and Jesus' sacrifice has blessed this poor, sin-ruined

world. Abel received divine witness to his righteousness, and Jesus obtained the same in the day of his resurrection; but fulness of other matter forbids us to linger.

Further down the page of sacred history we find another shepherd. He is a more instructive type of the Saviour, perhaps, than the first but in Abel we discover a truth which is absent in all others. Abel is the only one of the typical shepherds who dies at the foot of the altar, he is the only sacrificing shepherd; and herein you see Jesus Christ in the very earliest ages set forth to mankind as the slaughtered victim; that whatever else the early saints might not see, yet they might know that the seed of the woman would shed his precious blood. This most vital truth is withheld even for a little season.

Now we turn to *Jacob, the toiling shepherd*. He is a type of the good Shepherd, not as dying, but as keeping sheep with a view to get unto himself a spouse and a flock. Jacob left his father's house. He departed from all the joy and comfort of the house in which he was the recognized heir, both by his own purchase and his father's promise. Our Lord Jesus Christ, out of the love which he bore us, left his Father's house above, and came down to tabernacle among men. Jacob repaired to his mother's brethren; and even so our Lord, on the mother's side, counts men his brethren. "He came unto his own." That vision which Jacob saw the first night after he had left his father's house,

seems to me to be a representation of the great object which our Lord had set before him as the intent of his mission here below. Jacob slept, and dreamed that he saw a ladder the foot whereof stood upon the earth, while the top reached to the heaven of heavens, whence a covenant God spoke to his chosen servant; and so, before the Saviour's eye, as the great reward of all his life's travail, he saw a ladder set up by which earth should be connected with heaven. He saw fallen man at the foot of it, but he beheld a covenant God at the top, while the angels of God ascended and descended upon his own person, as upon the divine road of communication by which prayer mounts and mercy descends. As soon as Jacob arrived at the house of his mother's brethren he began to work, out of the love he bore to Rachel; and Jesus Christ no sooner descended upon this lower earth, than he began at once to labour to win his spouse. Now, there were in the house of manhood two daughters, to both of whom Jesus must be affianced. There was first of all the Jewish church, which as in his eyes his Rachel, his dearly beloved, and he toiled for her; but in the days of his flesh his own received him not. Though while he was here below, he declared that he was not sent to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel, yet Israel was not gathered; yet Jesus lost not his reward, for the Gentile church, the tender-eyed Leah, was his reward. "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of

the Lord, and my God shall be my strength. And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.” Leah, the Gentile, is far more fruitful unto Christ in spiritual children than the Rachel for whom he served in the days of his flesh; but the day cometh when Rachel shall be more fully increased, when the fulness of the Gentiles having been gathered in, the Jew shall recognize Messiah, and the Jewish people shall own their King. We understand from Jacob’s own description of his toil, that his labour in order to get to himself his spouse was of the most arduous character; and it will be well for the intelligent Christian to see Jesus Christ in just such toil, seeking to redeem unto himself his own beloved, that they might for ever be one with himself in his own glory. In the 31st chapter of Genesis, at the 38th verse, Jacob, while expostulating with Laban, thus describes his own toil: “this twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she-goats and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee: I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night. Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes. Thus

have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle; and thou hast changed my wages ten times.” Even more toilsome than this was the life of our Saviour here below. He watched over all his sheep till he could give in as his last account, “Of all those whom thou hast given me I have lost none, but the son of perdition, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.” His hair was wet with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night. Sleep departed from his eyes, for all night he was in prayer wrestling with God. One night it is Peter who must be pleaded for; another time, another claims his tearful intercession. No shepherd sitting beneath the cold skies, looking up to the stars, could ever utter such complaints because of the hardness of his toil as Jesus Christ might have brought if he had chosen to do so, because of the sternness of his service in order to gather unto himself his people: --

“Cold mountains and the midnight air
Witnessed the fervour of his prayer;
The desert his temptation knew,
His conflict and his victory too.”

It is sweet to dwell upon the spiritual parallel of Laban having required all the sheep at Jacob’s hand. If they were torn of beasts he must make it good; if any of them died, he must stand as surety for the whole. And did not the

Saviour stand just so while he was here below? Was not his toil for his church just the toil of one who felt that he was under suretyship obligations to bring every one of them safe to the hand of him who had committed them to his charge! Look upon toiling Jacob and you see a representation of him of whom the text says, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd." One other point of resemblance there is here, namely, that when Jacob had thus purchased to himself his spouse, and had received a reward for all his toil out of the flock which he himself tended, he then conducted both his family and his flock away from Laban. This is a point never to be forgotten. Shouldering his cross, Jesus went without the camp, and in so doing he speaks to each of us. "Let us therefore go forth without the camp, bearing his reproach." He went to his mother's brethren that he might fetch out his chosen from among men, and his voice to his spouse is, "Hearken, O daughter and consider: forget also thine own people, and thy father's house. So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him." Jacob coming back from Laban to the promised land, is a true picture of Jesus Christ coming up from the world, followed by his church, to enter upon the better Canaan which has been given to us by a covenant of salt for ever. The toiling shepherd has never ceased his work till he has bidden farewell to Laban once for all, and has come to dwell in tents where Abraham and Isaac had

dwelt before him; and Christ's work is not accomplished in us till he made us like himself, holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. Although these types are very full, I choose rather to give them to you as suggestions to think out for yourselves, than to enlarge upon them myself.

Joseph is a type of Jesus, *reigning in the Egypt of this world for the good of his own people, while they are here below.* Remember Joseph's history. We find that he kept his father's flock with his brethren. So did our Saviour when he began to teach and to preach. In the midst of the envious Scribes and Pharisees he kept his Father's flock. They could not, however, brook him in whom they discerned a royalty not in themselves. As Joseph wore a coat of many colours, indicative of princely rank and of his father's love, even so Jesus Christ in the perfections of his nature, being something more than ordinary man, was soon spied out by envious shepherds as anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows. Then began they to find fault with his words. Joseph had seen a dream, in which the sun, and the moon, and the eleven stars made obeisance unto him. And as the envious Scribes and Pharisees listened to the word of the Saviour, and heard him claim that he was the Son of God, and that he came down from heaven, they thought that he dreamed; they charged him with blasphemy, and straightway their hearts were set against him, and they were determined upon his destruction. They sold him for

thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave. So our Joseph was sold into Egypt to the powers of evil. There he was falsely accused, though in him was no sin. Our Joseph, our blessed Shepherd, was cast into the prison of the grave, and there he abode for a while, but by and by he came out of prison, and Joseph, -- Jesus -- it matters not which word I use, Joseph was made ruler over all the land of Egypt. That same shepherd of ours who was sold by his envious brethren, and who went down into the prison-tomb, is now exalted high above all principalities and powers, and every name that is named; and even here, in this Egypt, where his people now dwell, Jesus Christ is king. Not a dog dare move his tongue in all the land of Egypt without the permission of Joseph, and surely no enemy can forge a weapon against Christ's church here on earth: --

“He overrules all mortal things,
And manages our mean affairs.”

The Father hath committed all power unto his Son. Jesus Christ is king over Egypt's realm. Now observe the likeness between Joseph and Jesus in this respect. Joseph was of very singular advantage to the Egyptians. They must have starved in the years of famine, if his prescient eye had not foreseen the famine, and stored up the plenty of the seven previous years. And Jesus Christ is of great

service even to this wicked world. It is by him that it is preserved. The barren fig tree was spared because the husbandman pleaded for it, and the intercession of Jesus Christ spares the lives of the unregenerate; and though they will be swept away with the besom of destruction when their iniquity is fully ripe, yet meanwhile they are spared because of the mediatorial sovereignty of the great shepherd. Jesus Christ, like Joseph, rules over the land of Egypt; but Joseph ruled for a special purpose. God had sent Joseph to Egypt, but not mainly for the sake of the Egyptians. "God hath sent me hither to save your souls alive;" this was Joseph's own testimony. Jesus Christ now hath power over all flesh. Why? "That he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." The universal reign of Christ, in which respect his redemption comes to all the sons of men, has for its object that special redemption, in which respect it comes only to his own people, who are his sheep. Perhaps some of you may wonder how I venture to call Joseph a shepherd. You grant me that in his early days he kept his father's flock, but was he a shepherd while he was in Egypt? You will believe the dying words of his father Jacob, will you not? His father Jacob, when speaking of him said, "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall; the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and

the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob;” -- then there comes a sentence between brackets -- “from thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel.” Joseph is here called the Shepherd and the Stone. I could not make out in meditation why he should be both a shepherd and a stone, but you remember that Jesus Christ was at once the shepherd and the stone which the builders refused, which afterwards became the headstone of the corner; and so Joseph in being a shepherd of his people, and in having been the corner stone of the Israelitish race while they were in Egypt, was both the Shepherd and the Stone of Israel. Beloved, it seems to me to be such a delightful thought to think that Jesus Christ is King to-day in the world. The Lord reigneth: let the earth rejoice. Jesus Christ wears the crown this day of universal monarchy. “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand until thine enemies are made they footstool;” so that nothing happens now but that which Jesus permits, ordains, and overrules. Let empires go to wreck, it is Christ who breaks them with a rod of iron, and shivers them like potters’ vessels: let conflagrations burn down cities, and let diseases devastate nations, let war succeed to war, and pestilence to famine, yet still our Joseph rules all things well, and we know that all things work together for good according to them that love God, that are the called according to his purpose. The saints are in the world, but

Christ reigns over the world for his church, that it may be kept and preserved in the midst of an evil generation. You remember that remarkable saying, “Now every shepherd is an abomination to the world, and yet it is in this world that at the present time we dwell in so much temporal comfort, under such excellent government, with so little disturbance. To what can we attribute it but to this, that Jesus sits upon the throne and rules Egypt for the good of Israel, and the world is made subservient to the blessedness of the church of God. I must not tarry any longer, though it is a very tempting theme, but I want to take you on to the next shepherd.

Jesus Christ will be represented to you in quite a different character under the next illustration. Moses was not a ruler in Egypt, but quite a distinct character. Moses, when he kept sheep, kept them in the wilderness, far away from all other flocks; and when he became a shepherd over God’s people Israel, his business was not to preserve them in Egypt, but to conduct them out of it. Here, then, is a representation of Jesus Christ as *the shepherd of a separated people*, called from among men, and made to be a distinguished nation, not numbered among the people. Jesus, like Moses, might have been a king. The devil said to him, “All these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me.” The people would have taken him, we read, and made him a king, for he was naturally of royal

race; but he refused. As Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, so Jesus Christ said, "Get thee behind me, Satan," to all the pomp and glory of this present world, and preferred to take part with his poor, despised people, who were crushed down by the reigning powers in the Egypt of his days. Now, Moses began his mission, you remember, by going to Pharaoh and saying, "Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me." Jesus Christ begins as the shepherd of the separate ones by demanding that they should be let go from the bondage of their natural estate. With a high hand and with an outstretched arm, he fetches out his people from among men: plagues and marvels does he work, but he brings them all out. "Not a hoof shall be left behind;" not one child of God, not one sheep of his pasture, left in the Egypt of sin and death. They shall all be made to go without the camp -- leaving even Goshen to go into a wilderness because they must be alone with God, and they cannot worship him in a land full of idols. I might dwell for a long time on all the transactions of Moses in Egypt, and especially upon the paschal supper, all of which was doubtless typical of him of whom the text says, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd." Our main point is the great exodus of Moses, who at the head of all the tribes goes forth to Succoth. There they pitch their tents. By and by they advance to Pi-hahiroth with the Red Sea before them. With Moses'

staff to lead the van they pass through the sea dry-shod, and come absolutely into the wilderness of separation, as every heir of heaven is brought right out of Egypt, led through the Red Sea of Jesus Christ's blood, baptized into Jesus, and brought out into the separated position in the wilderness. Now, it is easy to see how Moses was a shepherd to the people while in the wilderness. He led them in all their wanderings. He was king in Jeshurun over the people whom God had given to him. When they wanted food his prayer brought down the manna or the quails; when they needed drink it was his voice that made the rock burst forth with floods, or his rod that smote, and lo, the flinty rock gushed with torrents. If there were Amalekites to fight, the uplifted arm of Moses did more than the sharp sword of Joshua. They sometimes received chastisement from him. He ground the golden calf to pieces, and strewed the powder on water and made them drink. They were equally dependent upon him for comfort too; his speech distilled as the dew and dropped as the rain, the small rain, upon the tender herb. Moses, like a shepherd, had to carry all the people in his bosom, as God's appointed messenger, and often did he find it a very weary load, so that he said, "I cannot bear the burden of this great people alone." You have here a suggestive type of Jesus Christ, the leader of the separated church. Brethren, I think we may all of us not only catch the idea, but live it out; the church is in the

desert now. We have left the world, we have left its maxims, its customs, its religion. We hate the world's religion, as much as we do its irreligion. We have forsaken it for good, never to go back again; and though the flesh sometimes falls a lusting and would fain go back to the old bondage, yet, under the guidance of our greater Shepherd, who leads his people far away from Mizraim's polluted shore, we march onward by devious ways to the promised rest.

The last type I mean to give you is *David*. This shepherd represents Jesus Christ, not at all as the others, but *as king in the midst of his church*. David, like Jesus Christ, begins his life with trials. He is anointed and straightway he begins to suffer. The world's king recognizes him, fixes his eyes upon him, hurls the javelin at him, hunts him like a partridge on the mountains, and rests not till he himself is slain. Poor David is the apt picture of Jesus Christ in the days of his flesh, hunted by the world's king, who would fain put him down and crush out his spark. David at length mounts to his throne, quietly and in peace he sits in Jerusalem as king over Israel and Judah; and even at this day, though the kings of the earth set themselves against him, and their rulers take counsel together, this is the decree concerning our Lord, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." That same shepherd who of old snatched the lamb out of the jaw of the lion and delivered

his sheep from the paw of the bear; that same shepherd who, in pangs of death, took the lion of hell by the beard and slew him; that same shepherd sits as King in the Jerusalem above, and all his saints delight to do him homage. All hail thou Son of David! Reign thou forever! Hosanna unto thee! Thine enemies cannot dispossess thee; thou hast smitten them terribly, and they shall yet feel the terror of thine arm. The shepherd reigns; Jesus Christ is king of God's church, and one of these days the reign of David will blossom into the reign of Solomon. We shall see Jesus Christ under a yet more glorious type, for he shall reign from the river even unto the ends of the earth. There shall be no war with the Ammonites, no war anywhere; all enemies shall have been put beneath his feet, and the kings of the nations shall bow before him, and they that dwell in the wilderness shall lick the dust. May that millennial splendour soon dawn, when the Son of David shall be king for ever and ever as the great shepherd, reigning over all lands. Think these five illustrations over, and there will be much instruction here concerning him who feeds his flock like a shepherd.

2. Now follow me in three *New Testament descriptions*.

Jesus Christ the Shepherd is described in the New Testament, as I dare say you all remember, in three ways. He is first of all spoken of as the *good* shepherd, next, as the

great shepherd, and thirdly, as the *chief* shepherd. I do not know that any other adjective is appended to his name of Shepherd. First, in the 10th chapter of John, you find him described as the *good* shepherd. “The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.” Goodness is the special excellence which seems to gleam in the character of our Lord in his earthly life and in his passion for the sons of men. As I look upon my Lord and Master here, despised and rejected of men, I know he is the great shepherd, but his greatness does not strike me; his flock is so few. We read in the Acts that “the number of the names together were about one hundred and twenty.” “Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but I, the Son of Man, have not where to lay my head.” Herein is goodness, but the greatness is concealed. When he saw the multitude, he had compassion upon them, for they were as sheep having no shepherd. Here is the good shepherd: he healed their sicknesses and wept over their sins -- here is goodness indeed. When it was time for him to die, he crossed the brook Kedron, and suffered till he sweat great drops in the garden; he went to trial and condemnation, and then to the mount of doom, to suffer, bleed, and die. Here is the good shepherd -- the good shepherd bleeding for the sheep. Can you tell me *how* good a shepherd Jesus was? Can you measure the height and depth of the extraordinary goodness that dwelt in him? -- so good that he saved others, himself he could not save -- so

good that when he rendered in his account he could say, “I have lost none.” He had kept them all safely, though he himself had bowed his head and given up the ghost.

You will find in Hebrews 13th chapter and 20th verse, he is called the *great* shepherd. Does that refer to his life on earth, and to his death? Not at all. Observe the connection. “Now the God of peace which brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will.” Do you perceive? He is not the great shepherd when he dies: he is the good shepherd, but he is the great shepherd when he is brought again from the dead. In resurrection you perceive his greatness. He lies in the grave slumbering; he is the good shepherd then, having laid down his life for the sheep. Life appears again in him, the stone is rolled away, the watchmen are seized with terror, and he stands out the risen One, no more the dying -- now he is the great shepherd. He manifests himself for forty days among his own disciples, and then at last, taking them to the hill of Galilee, a cloud receives him out of their sight, and up he mounts as the great shepherd. When he has told them to go to Jerusalem, they sit waiting till the time of the fulness is come, and suddenly there is heard the sound of a rushing mighty wind, and fiery tongues sit upon all of them. Who has given this boon to each? Who is it? This is the great

shepherd. He has ascended on high, and has received gifts for men; the shepherd still you see, but now he is the great shepherd, the shepherd riding in triumphal state through the midst of New Jerusalem, amidst the acclamations of angels, and sending to his sheep down below the precious gift of apostles and ministers of various orders, according to his own will. He was the good shepherd before, he is the good shepherd now; but he is also pre-eminently the great shepherd. Let us delight to think of this greatness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us extol and bless him. Observe, carefully, that while the good shepherd lays down his life, that you may have life, and have it more abundantly, he is the great shepherd for another purpose. What does it say? "Make you perfect in every good work to do his will." Yes, he dies to wash away your sin, but he rises for our justification and your complete sanctification, that as he left his graveclothes behind him, you may leave your sins behind you; and as he left the tomb behind him, never to enter it, you may leave the old dead world in which you once lived, and live in newness of life.

We have a third text remaining -- the first Epistle of Peter, 5th chapter and 4th verse. Here you have the Saviour called the *chief* shepherd. When is this? In Peter he is not the good shepherd -- he is not the great shepherd; he is all that, but he is a great deal more -- he is the chief shepherd. When will he wear this title? Do you notice,

beloved, this one thing; let me have your hearts here. While he is the good shepherd he is all alone, no other mentioned; while he is the great shepherd he is still alone, and only a bare hint of others; but when he is the chief shepherd, it is implied that there are others among whom he is chief. Notice, then, that in the atonement Jesus is alone -- there is not one with the good shepherd: in resurrection for our justification he is alone -- no one aids the great shepherd: but at the second advent he will be with his people chief among many. Read the verse: "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." So you see Christ is the *chief* shepherd at the second advent; then shall the world be astonished to find that although alone in atonement, and alone in justification, he is not alone in service or in glory. Then every minister who has fed his sheep, every teacher who has fed his lambs -- all of you who have in any way whatsoever contributed under him towards the guidance, and the government, and the feeding, and the protection of his dear, blood-bought flock -- you shall appear. He has no crown, you perceive, as the good shepherd; we do not read of a crown for him as the great shepherd; but when he comes with crown wherewith his mother crowned him, then shall ye also appear with him in glory, having the crown of life that fadeth not away. I do not know whether this peculiar circumstance interests you, but it did me when I

observed it: *Good* in his dying, *great* in his rising, *chief* in his coming. It seems to me to gather such force -- *good* to me as a sinner, *great* to me as a saint, *chief* to me as one with him in his glorious reign. I pass, as it were, through three stages -- a sinner, then I look to the good shepherd laying down his life for the sheep; I reach higher ground, and I am a saint, I look to the great shepherd to make me perfect in every good work to do his will; I mount higher still, I die, I rise again, I walk in resurrection life, and now I look to the chief shepherd, and hope to receive at his hands the crown of life which he shall give to me, and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing, the good, great, chief shepherd. May God give us grace, meditating upon these things, to know them and enter into them.

3. In conclusion I promised one or two *Impressive applications*.

The first application is one of *comfort and satisfaction* to you who are poor, needy, weary, troubled lambs or sheep of the flock. Our own text runs thus: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd." What next? "He shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." The lambs have not the value of mature sheep, yet they are the most thought of under the great shepherd. They might fetch the least price in the market, but they have the greatest portion of his heart. You needy, troubled ones, I want you to look here

and note down in our memories that though there are promises for all the saints, there are special promises for you. Jesus Christ will take care that the lambs and those who are with young shall be especially housed. Notice this in Jacob, whom I introduced to you as the toiling shepherd; when he met with Esau, Esau wanted him to accept a guard to go with him, but he said, “My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die.” Jesus, the good shepherd, will not travel at such a rate as to overdrive the lambs. He has tender consideration for the poor and needy. Kings usually look to the interests of the great and the rich, but in the kingdom of our great shepherd he cares most for the poor. “He shall judge the poor of the people.” The weaklings and the sickly of the flock are the special objects of the Saviour’s care. A proof of this you will find at the 34th chapter of Ezekiel, 16th verse: “I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and I will strengthen that which was sick.” Inexpressibly comforting words to the broken, sick, needy Christian! Thou thinkest that thou art forgotten, because of thy nothingness and weakness and poverty. This is the very reason why thou art remembered. Jesus Christ, our loving shepherd, if he should forget those of us who are strong and in sound health, will be sure to recollect the sickly ones. He shall feed his flock like a

shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arms in his bosom. He shall gently lead those that are with young.

A second application containing *comfort* and *warning* too. Sinner, to you our Lord Jesus Christ now represents himself as being a shepherd who is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Here are his own words: “What man of you having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing; and calleth together his friends and his neighbours, saying Rejoice with me, for I have found the sheep which was lost.” Such is Jesus now, looking after stray sheep. Where are you, where are you now? The great shepherd comes after you; and Oh, what joy will be in his heart, what joy there will be in heaven, when the great shepherd shall throw you on his shoulders and bring you home.

But hark you. Did you ever notice that the same shepherd who saves the lost, will curse the finally impenitent? He shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, “Depart, ye cursed.” What lips are those which pronounce these dreadful words? The shepherd’s lips; the lips of that same shepherd who flies over the mountains to the lost sheep, of

whom I trust it will yet be said, “We were as sheep going astray, but we have now returned unto the Shepherd and the Bishop of our souls.” That same seeker of the lost and gatherer together of them that are scattered, will say, Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Oh, sinner, may you know the Shepherd as binding up your broken bones and healing your wounds, and rejoicing over your saved soul: for if you do not, you will have to know him in another and more terrible character, when he shall curse you, separating you from his own sheep as the shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats.

So we shall conclude with these words, which may be for both *saint and sinner*. Let it never be forgotten, that in all we have said about Jesus Christ, still, as a shepherd, he is pre-eminently to be preached as the suffering One. I began with Abel, and I must conclude with Abel. Zechariah has recorded these remarkable words of Jehovah, “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord. Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.” O sinner, you have most of all to do today with the Abel-shepherd -- with the Shepherd dead at the altar; with the Shepherd with his blood crying up to heaven, with the sword of Jehovah in his bowels. You shall know about the toiling shepherd by and by; the Shepherd reigning in Egypt, the Joseph, you shall know soon; the

Shepherd of the separated flock, you shall follow ere long; the Shepherd reigning in Jerusalem, the David, you shall rejoice to serve; but now you have to do with the Shepherd bleeding and dying. Hark to these words, and I have done: "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one of his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Herein is Jesus to be seen suffering, bleeding, dying, on yonder accursed tree. He is there, the Shepherd, to whom if we look we shall live, and live for ever. God enable you to turn those poor eyes of yours, and see in Jesus Christ your iniquity put away, Jehovah reconciled, and your souls eternally saved. *Amen.*

-- CHARLES H. SPURGEON.

THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE. THE STORY OF RUTH--(Continued).

RUTH was now at home with her mother-in-law at Beth-lehem, but it was soon a question with the two widows how they were to live there. There was, indeed, no fear, now that plenty had come back to the land, that they would be allowed to want: for God, in his laws given by Moses, had taken great care of the poor. In a number of ways he had commanded that they should be helped and relieved. So when Jesus came into the world, he was the friend of the poor. Nay, he showed how much he felt for them by choosing to be himself a poor man, and by preaching the gospel to them, when proud rich men did not think it was a good or needful thing to teach them. Then Naomi knew that her late husband had some land that would belong to any person who would be his heirs; but having no son to claim it, she could not get it back as yet. So the two widows had to think of what was best to be done to get a living. Now, one of the kind laws made by God to help the poor was, that they should be allowed in the time of harvest to glean after the reapers in the field, and keep all they could gather as their own. Any farmer who should have sent away poor people come to pick up the dropped stalks of corn in his harvest-fields, would have been regarded as disobeying God. Even if he had been very careful to get his

reapers to cut down the stalks on the edges and odd corners of his grounds, it would have been a breach of God's law. This kind care taken by God of the poor in Israel helped Naomi and her daughter now.

It happened that they had come from the country of Moab just about the beginning of barley-harvest, and the farmers all round Bethlehem were busy getting the grain cut down. Among them was a very rich man, whose name was Boaz. He was not married, and he was a relative of the husband of Naomi. He had a number of reapers hard at work from day to day. Now, one morning Ruth said to her mother-in-law, Pray, let me go to-day, and glean in the fields wherever I may happen to find people kind to me. Her mother-in-law said, Yes, my dear, go; and she went. She had no choice as to where she would glean; but it chanced, or rather it was ordered by God, that she came to where the reapers of Boaz were at work. So she began to glean. Not long after, the master himself came out of the town to see how his workers were getting on. In those days the farmers lived in the villages or towns all together, and went out and in to their fields day by day. So Boaz came out from his house at Bethlehem, to look at the way his reapers were cutting down the barley. He came among them like a good man, as he was. For as he got near to them, he did not simply say, Good morning, though that would have been nice enough from a master to his servants,

and, I suppose, is, after all, a kind of prayer; he wished them well in the name of the God of Israel. He said, "The Lord be with you." The workers must have been good people, too, for they answered him with a wish of the same kind, saying, "The Lord bless thee." I hope, at least, that they had not, in those simple times, got into a habit of saying, as many now do, "God bless you," with no thought. And I am sure the wish of Boaz was more serious than our kindly goodbye, which we use so often without thinking that it means, God be with ye. There was a foreman over the reapers in the field; and after a little while Boaz, having noticed a very nice person gleaning after the workers stepped to him and said, Who is that, the young woman gleaning there? The foreman said, That is the Moabitess that for love of her mother-in-law, Naomi, has come to live in this country. She came to me this morning, and asked leave to glean among the sheaves. I allowed her to do so, and she has been busy at her task ever since we began work, except that a little while ago she went away to rest for a short time. Boaz felt very much pleased when he heard that, and went straight to where Ruth was, and said to her, My daughter, hear what I say! Don't go to any other field than mine to glean, all the time of harvest. See my young women there; always notice where they go to work, and follow them. Not one of the reapers will say a rude word to you; and I will take care of that. And don't

take trouble to go home for anything to eat or drink, nor work on without refreshment; go whenever you are thirsty to the reapers' cans, and take freely of the water drawn for their use. At meal-time, too, come and share what the workers are eating. When Ruth heard the rich man, the master of the field, speaking in that way to her, she fell down on the ground at his feet and said, How can you take such notice of me, a stranger, and speak to me so kindly? He said, I have heard about you. I have heard how kind you have been to your mother-in-law, and now, rather than part with her, you have left your own father and mother in Moab, and are come to-day among a people you did not know before. May the true God, in whose land you have come to live, bless you, and reward you for choosing to cast in your lot with the people over whom he spreads his wings of protecting care. Ruth thanked Boaz very much for his kindness, and said that his words had comforted her; for he had spoken to her, though she was a stranger, as if she had been one of his own countrywomen. That day when the workers sat down to dinner, Boaz was with them, and Ruth was called to take her place with the rest, and the master sent her some food from his own hand. His kindness did not stop there. When dinner was over and the men went to work again, and Ruth began to glean anew, Boaz said to the reapers, Let her glean among the sheaves, and say nothing to her about it, by way of finding fault. Let fall, besides,

every now and then, quite carelessly, though it be of set purpose, some handfuls of the grain, and leave them for her to glean. When the workers saw their master take such notice of Ruth, you may be sure they did as he told them. So that first day she gathered a great parcel of gleanings, and when she had them thrashed, she had quite a large measure full of barley. The measure was one holding more than three pecks. This she took home with her to her mother-in-law, who was surprised at the quantity; and thinking that after so hard a day's work she must be hungry, she gave her some food that she had set past for her after her own dinner during the day. Then the two had a pleasant talk together about what had happened, and Naomi was very glad indeed to learn from Ruth that Boaz had been so kind to her. Then she told Ruth that he was a near relation of theirs, and thanked God heartily that he had led her daughter's steps to his field. She agreed that it would be quite the best thing to go always there till the harvest should be over, just as Boaz had asked her to do. So till first the barley and then the wheat reaping was ended, Ruth continued to glean after the work -people of Boaz, and all were kind to her.

Naomi was not content, however, with all this. She felt that she was herself getting old, and she wished that she could see her dear Ruth settled in a home of her own. Now, there was a law at that time in Israel, that when a

married man died without leaving any children, his brother, or nearest kinsman, was to marry the widow, and their children were to be counted as being the first husband's, that the farm or estate might not go out of the dead man's family. Naomi knew Boaz to be a near relation of Elimelech's, and of Ruth's husband Chilion; and she thought if she could remind Boaz of this law, that he would marry Ruth. So she made up a plan for bringing this thought of hers under his notice, and he was quite pleased with it, and said that he would carry it out at once, but for there being a still nearer kinsman than himself, and he must ask him first. Next morning, therefore, when the people were passing out through the gate of the town, he called him, and publicly asked him if he would buy the land that had been their cousin Elimelech's. He said he would buy it. But said Boaz, if you do that, you must marry Ruth as well. The man said there was a reason why he could not do that, and he gave full liberty to Boaz to buy the land; and to clinch the bargain and make it sure, he took off his shoe, as was then the custom in bargaining, and handed it to Boaz. After that Boaz married Ruth, and the whole town were pleased with the wedding, and quite loaded the married pair with blessings and good wishes.

In this way Ruth came to be one of the ancestors of the royal house of Judah. She was great-grandmother to David.

QUESTIONS FROM THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you find a text where Christ himself gives it as a proof of his being the Messiah, that the gospel was preached by him to the poor?

2. Can you find a passage in the law of Moses containing three very beautiful laws about leaving something, in field and orchard and vineyard, for strangers, widows, and orphans?

3. Where is the text against reaping the corners of the field?

4. Who was it that was found wandering in the fields by a stranger, and directed where to go to find what he was seeking?

5. Can you find a law allowing people going into a corn field or vineyard to eat of the grain or fruit by simply taking into their hands, without cutting the corn down, or taking any of the grapes away in a vessel?

6. What persons were they that acted on this law, and yet were found fault with by some who saw them?

7. Can you find a psalm which appears to teach that it was common for persons passing by reapers in a field to ask God's blessing to rest on them?

8. Do you recollect a great wonder which attracted the notice of reapers in a field, in the time of wheat-harvest?

9. Who was it that was in fatal danger when he was taking rest at noon-day, but escaped, from the generous conduct of one whose life he was seeking?

10. Who was it that was murdered when he was taking noon-tide rest on his bed?

11. Who was it that blamed his family for not asking a stranger that had been kind to them, to come home to their house?

12. Where is a kingdom promised to those who will kindly entertain an illustrious stranger?

13. What were the names of David's father and grandfather?

14. Where is Ruth honourably mentioned in a list of those from whose line Jesus sprung?

15. Where is there an exhortation to be kind to strangers?

ANSWERS to these questions are to be found in the following chapters:
Matt. xi.; Deut. xxiv.; Lev. xix.; Gen. xxxvii.; Deut. xxiii.; Luke vi.; Ps. cxxix.; 1 Sam. vi.; 1 Sam. xxiv.; 2 Sam. iv.; Ex. ii.; Matt. xxv.; Ruth iv. or Matt. i.; Heb. xiii.

Prayer.

O LORD God, we remember that Jesus once spoke of Himself as a stranger among men, and said that He would bless those who should receive Him. We wish to open our hearts to Himself, and to be kind to Him in His poor saints. Help us to show right kindness to all that love Christ, and who may need our aid; and if we meet with strangers, let us sympathize with them, far from their own homes. Teach us always to bear in mind that we ourselves are strangers here, having no continuing city on this side of the grave. May we therefore learn to feel while on earth as strangers and travelers do, looking up to heaven as our home. Lord, make us all ready to be taken there at last, to dwell for ever with Thee, for Jesus sake. *Amen.*

EVENING WORSHIP.

HOLY, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty! Thou art worthy to receive glory, and honour, and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created. Blessed be Thy Divine Majesty, who hast given us Thy servants grace, by the confession of a true faith to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and to worship one God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. We beseech Thee that Thou, who hast the hearts of all men in Thy hand, and canst turn them whithersoever Thou wilt, wouldst keep us steadfast in this faith, and in holiness of life, and give us grace to walk worthy of Thee unto all pleasing, who livest and reignest world without end. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm li.* 15-19.

WHEN I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the cross of Christ my God:
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down:
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

His dying crimson, like a robe,
Spreads o'er his body on the tree;
Then am I dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.

Where the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all!

JOHN XVII.

THESE words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. 2. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. 3. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. 4. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. 5. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. 6. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. 7. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. 8. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. 9. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. 11. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom

thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. 12. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. 20. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21. That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. 24. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where

I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. 25. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. 26. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

Prayer.

HOLY and Almighty God, Maker of our frames, Father of our spirits, sole Disposer of birth, and life, and death, Help us to approach Thy throne with trembling contrition! We are children of a sinful stock, and have ourselves by word and deed borne a willing share in the general transgression. No one of our race ever failed to offer Thee provocation and offence. Yet we dare to draw nigh to the seat of thy glory and power; for though it is high and lifted up, and we are of unclean heart and life and lips, -- though angels fall before it, crying, Holy, Holy, Holy! And we, in such a presence, are worthy to be abhorred -- yet are we invited thither, and looking up we hope, and wonder, and adore. High above all

principality, and power, and every name that is named, we behold, O Father, with thee in Thy throne One who wears the tokens that He bore our sins in His own body on the tree; for death is the wages of sin, and on Thy throne He is as a Lamb slain.

Open our eyes, O Lord! to see the great majesty and holiness of Thy Godhead. Fill us with deep awe! Bow down our proud hearts, till they feel that we justly merit death eternal by our vileness and our guilt; then deliver us from this guilt and all its punishment, and cause our hearts within us to wonder much, and love and worship, while we hear the Voice from Thine own glory, saying, I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore! Father, He “was dead,” not for His own sins, but for ours. Because He liveth, let us live also. May all fear of death temporal, all foreboding of death eternal, depart from us. While now we fall at His feet, may He say unto us, Fear not, I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

We know, O Lord! that He, seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, is expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. First of all His enemies, we would bow our necks under His feet. Help us, O help us, to make a full submission! All our sins and passions, all our pleasures and desires which are not conformable to Christ, do Thou

destroy. Bring every thought of ours into captivity to Him. Reign in us, O Lord! even in our mortal bodies, that sin may not reign any longer therein. Let Thy mind be in us, our members be instruments of righteousness to Thee, and our life so changed that we shall not live, but Thou in us.

And O strengthen us to challenge and to combat the enemies of our risen Lord! Make us good soldiers of Christ. Preserve in us the courage, vigilance, and ardour of a good warfare. Grant unto us, O our Redeemer! in great condescension grant unto us, the blessedness of being Thine instruments in turning some from sin to Thee. Do not refuse to use us because of deep unworthiness. Curse us not with the curse of barrenness!

Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men; yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell amongst them. Pour them down on all Thy church! Pour them richly, and with special glory, on the heads of all Thy servants who bear Thy gospel among the heathen! Pour them upon all pastors and teachers, upon all labourers in Thy work, upon all who love the Lord Jesus Christ! Renew in Thy people now on earth the zeal and efficiency of Thy first disciples. In this our age, and before our unworthy eyes, glorify Thine own self, by wonderful displays of saving power! Subdue all things to Thyself! Let thoughts, and men, and systems all feel and show the power of a hand

stronger than they -- Thine eternal hand of all might! Let the face of nations be renewed! Reign over universal thought! Turn to Thy service the hearts of kings, the counsels of governments, the pens of writers, the influence of all who sway the course, or lead the mind, of communities! Daily show an increase of Thy kingdom and of peace!

And O we meekly implore Thee in Thine exaltation to draw our hearts ever upwards after Thee! By nature and by sinful habit they are earthly, slow to rise, and ever prone to seek new enticements below. Open our interior eye -- the eye of faith -- to see Thee in Thy glory, to see Thy exceeding beauty and fairness, Head of our race, and sole divine adornment of our nature! Though now we see Thee not, make our faith to be the evidence of things not seen: and thus may we have such views of Thee, as will cause us to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory -- joy in being Thine! joy in contemplating Thy all prevalent intercession for us! joy in feeling that Thine eye of love is never off us! joy in looking to the hour when we too shall be raised up from the dead, and our vile body being fashioned like unto Thy glorious body, we shall sit down with Thee in Thy throne, even as Thou overcamest and art set down with the Father in His throne! So lead our affections to thine above!

And O, Eternal Father, grant that when the hour of our departure comes, we may be, like Thy servant Stephen, enabled to look up steadfastly into heaven, and to see the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God! And may we fall asleep, saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit! And to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, our one God, be honour, and glory, and dominion, and power, for ever and ever! *Amen.*

MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

MONDAY.

Morning.

Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty.

The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low.

And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

Isa. ii. 10, 11, 12, 17.

Evening.

Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.

Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.

Deut. viii. 5. Hos. xii. 6. 2 Tim. i.7. Col. i. 11.

TUESDAY.

Morning.

And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation:

To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto to us the word of reconciliation.

1 John iii. 5. 2 Cor. v. 17, 18, 19.

Evening.

Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me.

Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.

And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for I am thy servant.

Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is:

For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of draught, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

Ps. cxliii. 9, 11, 12. Jer. xvii. 7, 8.

WEDNESDAY.

Morning.

Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? for since I speak against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him: I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.

Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, as yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah, and in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity, the Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness.

And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and in all the cities thereof together, husbandmen, and they that go forth with flocks.

For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul.

Jer. xxxi. 20, 23, 24, 25.

Evening.

Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.

Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few.

For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by a multitude of words.

When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay which thou hast vowed.

Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.

Eccl. v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

THURSDAY.

Morning.

The Lord seeth not as man seeth: for man looketh on the outward but the Lord looketh on the heart.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

The Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken.

Oh that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always.

1 Sam. xvi. 7. Jer. xvii. 9. Deut. v. 28, 29.

Evening.

God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.

I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off?

Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord: do I not fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.

Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord: and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

2 Chron. xxxii. 31. Jer. xvii. 10. Jer. xxiii. 23, 24, 29.

FRIDAY.

Morning.

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind;

Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

But ye have not so learned Christ;

If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus.

Eph. ii. 19. Eph. iv. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

Evening.

I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live;

That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto

him; (for he is thy life, and the length of thy days;) that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

And the Lord, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.

Deut. xxx. 19, 20. Deut. xxxi. 8.

SATURDAY.

Morning.

But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

For he is your peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby;

And came and preached peace to you, which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

Eph ii. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

Evening.

By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

Heb. xi. 24, 25, 26, 27. Ps. lxix. 9.