

and would not read it. I secured that copy and read it through, and was so taken up with it that I just had to talk about it to nearly everyone, and lent it to my father-in-law, who is a great Bible reader. He read it two or three times, but can hardly "fall in" with "future probation," although he admits it to be the most reasonable and sensible theory he has ever read.

Next I brought up the subject to a brother member of the M. E. church. When I was trying to explain the chart in the front of the book, he remembered that he also had purchased a book like it, but had only read a little of it as he could not understand it—and it was an Advent book anyway. I could not see how he could start to read it and not go on. However, he is not a very devout member of the church.

As for myself I was always in the Sunday School, but for 10 or 12 years I have been a railway mail clerk, and must confess I have hardly kept the dust off my Bible covers in all that time. Since reading the "Divine Plan" I have had the Bible in hand at every brief opportunity. I find a difference between reading the Bible and searching the Scriptures. I have read Vols. I, III, am reading Vol. IV and am sending for Vol. II.

Oh, it seems such a revelation to me, and it seems also very plain. I would like to see you and grasp your hand. There are lots of questions I would like to ask you, but I don't feel that I should impose upon your time.

Tonight I am in M—. I have attended the preaching service in Wesley M. E. church this evening. The preacher read the book of Jude and in commenting on the 9th verse said that what was meant by it was a mystery. It never had and never would be explained by man. His principal theme was in verse 23, applying it to the church's duty to snatch sinners out of the fire of hell. It all seemed so weak and childish to me.

My Vol. I is now in the hands of a fellow-clerk on the road. He is a Universalist and I am waiting patiently for his verdict. I assure you that I will keep my books in the hands of some who will read them and that no time will be lost. The messages which you wrote ten or fifteen years ago are being most remarkably emphasized in the last two years.

Wishing you the fulness of the joy of his elect, I am,
CHARLES J. DAVIS.—N. Y.

* * *

My Dear Brother Russell:—Your very kind letter expressing Christian love and greetings was received. Thanks for all your kind remembrance of me, not only in this letter but during the more than four years of Pilgrim service

in which the Father permitted me to engage and for which I shall ever be grateful to him. While these years have been full of toil and travel, and sometimes the flesh has grown weary, and while the enemy has sometimes greatly vexed the soul, yet as I look back over more than three score years of life, these four years are the best, brightest, sweetest, happiest years of them all, and it is with regret that I must for a time—I do not know how long—drop out of the regular work to look after some other duties that present themselves. While I would have greatly preferred to continue in the work, yet I bow obediently to what seems to be the Father's will, knowing that he knows best and that he always gives to his children what is best for them. I wish to say to you, dear brother, that while I may not be in the regular work, I will endeavor at all times to do what I can in a local service for the spread of the truth. It is not my purpose that there shall be any break in the service; having closed my last Pilgrim service last Sunday evening, I am engaged to speak for the Boston church again next Sunday p. m. I expect to spend the next Sunday with friends in B—, and other places have spoken for services, so that I see no cause for me to be found idle.

With Christian love, very sincerely yours in the faith,
JOHN HARRISON.

* * *

Dear Brother:—I have noticed in several cases recently, when consecrated brethren have died, not one of them has seemingly expressed a wish as to burial according to our service, with enough force to have it used; (this, of course, applies to places where there is no class and elders to serve). I therefore decided to copy my service [see Vol. VI., p. 328] and file it away, as my last request, and I feel sure it will be recognized by my family. In copying it I see how remarkably clear it is, and feel as though our dear people miss a great opportunity for service in accomplishing our mission as the feet members of the body of Christ if they neglect it, for, as you remark, "hearts are then tender," and the fact that the hands lying cold before them copied the service while still in the earthly tabernacle would add force to the message.

Your servant in the Lord,

I. D. B.—Ark.

PILGRIM VISITS OF BRO. B. H. BARTON

Leicester, Eng., July 27; Nottingham, Eng., July 28, 29; Atherstone, Eng., July 30; Birmingham, Eng., July 31; Oxford, Eng., Aug. 1, 2; Reading, Eng., Aug. 3; Bristol, Eng., Aug. 4-6; Tewkesbury, Eng., Aug. 8; Cardiff, Eng., Aug. 7; Bournemouth, Eng., Aug. 9; London, Eng., Aug. 11, 12.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE WAIL OF RUSSIAN PEASANT WOMEN

Czar Nicholas received recently the following remarkable document. It is a petition from the peasant women of the village of Nikolskaje, in the government of Warquesch. It reads:—

"For generations the women of the peasant class have lived without having any rights whatever. From birth to death they have been and are subject to the will of fathers, grandfathers, husbands and sons. We are not even considered human beings, but simply beasts of burden.

"We demand to be taught to read and write; we demand that our daughters be given the same facilities for learning as our sons.

"We will no longer be forced into marriage; we demand to be given land to cultivate that we may become independent and able to earn our own living.

"We know that we are ignorant, but we are not to blame. We demand to be told what is happening in the world around us, and we demand the right to be represented in the Douma."—*Cincinnati Enquirer*.

* * *

While the worldly spirit of selfishness is goading on the whole world to battle for "rights," the Word of God directs the children of God to be not strife-breeders but peacemakers. It says: "Be patient, brethren; the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." His kingdom will soon give to all absolute justice and right every wrong. Do all you can kindly, peaceably, lovingly to "follow peace with all," but expect to suffer and to bear considerable for righteousness' sake. "Think it not strange." "Rejoice in tribulation,"

trusting your affairs to him who has promised to make all your experiences work out for your everlasting advantage. He who takes to the sword will perish by the sword. He who trusts in the Lord will have peace now and hereafter.

DRIFTING TO SOCIALISM

"The revolutionary movement in Russia has been going on for nearly a year, and as conservative authority as the London *Spectator* predicts that it may last five years longer, and it further suggests that some young Russian lieutenant of artillery may today be studying the career of Napoleon Bonaparte and be qualified to act at the end of that time. The French revolutionists talked of constitutions and the rights of man. The Russian revolutionists are talking of these things, too, but they go further; they are talking of division of land, of equalizing the distribution of wealth, of other crude and half-formed ideas of economic change—in a word, Socialism. Tolstoi says that Russia is in better condition than any country in the world to attempt common ownership of land.

"Should Russia in course of time and after a glut of horrors become a Socialist or semi-Socialist state, the revolutionary wave would spread, for good or ill, to other nations.

"Already we read of Austrians and Hungarians insisting upon universal suffrage, and a delegation of no less than 200,000 workmen filling the Vienna ringstrasse to impress parliament with their earnestness in making the demand.

"In Germany the Socialists, inspired by events in Russia,

have begun an agitation for the reform of the election laws which will give them the representation in the reichstag, possibly a majority of that body, to which they are entitled."—*Scranton Times*.

ANGER, HATRED, STRIFE, MURDER

Lodz, Russian Poland.—Thirty-four girls working in Kindler's mills at Pabianice, near here, on refusing to join a strike, were poisoned by a powder that was strewn upon the floor of the mill. One of the girls died and the remainder are seriously ill, ten of them not being expected to recover.

* * *

Russia is one of the newest countries to come under the influence of "strikes," but the above shows that no other nation could teach it much along the line of the "works of the flesh and the devil." What may we not expect, the world over, very shortly in the great "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." The veneer of civilization, miscalled Christianization, is quite thin, even in churchianity. Then the works of the flesh and of the devil will show in marked contrast to the fruits of the Spirit of Christ—joy, peace, brotherly kindness, love. Let us not measure ourselves with the poor world, but with the perfect Lord, whose Spirit we have received and in

whom we are seeking to be perfected in the Chief Resurrection.

SACRED RELICS RECOVERED

According to recent accounts, the golden candlestick and other articles used in the Temple service by the Israelites have been recovered from the River Tiber, where they were thrown by the ancient Romans when the sacking of Rome by the Goths seemed imminent.

"In the box were discovered many vessels and trumpets which exactly answer the descriptions in the Old Testament. Should the identification be accepted, this candlestick would become one of the most valuable treasures in the world.

"The value of the gold alone is more than \$30,000, and, in addition, the rich working enhances its value, being of the finest. It stands nearly three feet high."

* * *

It is claimed that the ancient Romans more or less worshipped the River Tiber and frequently cast valuables thereinto as sacrifices. A systematic effort is being made to recover those valuables, and the foregoing is the first important recovery we have learned of. It is hoped that the Golden Ark of the Covenant from the Temple may yet be recovered also.

BEREAN BIBLE STUDY ON LOVE

We are hearing good reports of blessings from the use of these Berean Studies in the Scriptures. We urge that each little group have one special session for these lessons and that one leader be selected for at least three months;—a leader who will enter into the spirit of the studies and who knows how to draw the answers from the class and then can briefly summarize at the close of each question. Following this course the Allegheny Church has adopted these studies for every Sunday evening, and the interest is shown by the fact that the attendance has about doubled during the past eight months.

If good readers are numerous in the class, assign one reference to each; if few, several references to each. (The reading must be clear and distinct or the profit of the lesson will be sacrificed.) The Scripture references come first, then the DAWN references: the six volumes of DAWN being indicated by the first six letters of the alphabet, A, B, C, D, E, F. Similarly, T represents "Tabernacle Shadows," and S "Spiritism." The letter Z represents the WATCH TOWER, '02-152 signifying page 152 of the year 1902. The columns and paragraphs are indicated thus: col. 2, ¶ 3.

JULY 1

1. What is love? Z. '03-55 (2nd col. last ¶); Z. '03-58 (1st col. ¶ 2).
2. How does the Apostle describe love?
 - 1 Cor. 13:1, Z. '03-56 (1st col. ¶ 1).
 - 1 Cor. 13:2, Z. '03-56 (1st col. ¶ 2).
 - 1 Cor. 13:3, Z. '03-56 (1st col. ¶ 3; 2nd col. ¶ 1).
 - 1 Cor. 13:4, Z. '03-56 (2nd col. ¶ 2, 3); Z. '03-57 (1st col. ¶ 1, 2); Z. '97-247 (1st col. ¶ 1-4).
 - 1 Cor. 13:5 Z. '03-57 (1st col. ¶ 3 to 2nd col. ¶ 3); Z. '97-247 (1st col. ¶ 5 and 2nd col.).
 - 1 Cor. 13:6, Z. '03-57 (2nd col. ¶ 4); Z. '97-248 (1st col. 1 to 3).
 - 1 Cor. 13:7, Z. '03-58 (1st col. ¶ 1); Z. '97-248 (2nd col. ¶ 1 to 3).
 - 1 Cor. 13:8, Z. '03-58 (1st col. ¶ 3); Z. '97-248 (2nd col. ¶ 4).
 - 1 Cor. 13:9-12, Z. '03-58 (2nd col. ¶ 1, 2); Z. '97-249 (1st col. ¶ 1 to 3).
 - 1 Cor. 13:13, Z. '97-249 (2nd col. ¶ 1).

JULY 8

3. How does the illustration of the spectrum assist us to comprehend love? Z. '97-245 (2nd col. ¶ 2, 3); 246 (1st col. ¶ 1).
4. What is the distinction between *natural*, or human love, and *spiritual*, or divine love? Z. '00-182 (1st col. ¶ 5); Z. '03-333 (2nd col. ¶ 1 to 3).

ONE DAY CONVENTION REPORTS

The failure to give reports of the one-day conventions recently held should not be understood to signify that they were unworthy of reporting; other matters claimed our attention and the WATCH TOWER space. We here very briefly record that in the various places, namely, Washington, D. C.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Indianapolis, Ind.; Huntingdon, Pa.; New York City, N. Y.; Cleveland, O.; Springfield, Ill., the dear friends of the cause put forth strenuous efforts,—and

5. What is the difference between duty-love (*phileo*) and disinterested or divine love (*agapee*)? Z. '01-149, 150.

JULY 15

6. What is the three-fold manifestation of the spirit of love? Z. '96-212 (1st col. ¶ 3); *Manna*, June 27.
7. How may we distinguish between true and false love? Z. '95-210 (1st col.).
8. What is the importance of this grace? Z. '97-244 (1st col. ¶ 1 to 3; 2nd col. ¶ 2).

JULY 22

9. How is love attained? Z. '97-246 (2nd col. ¶ 1, 2); Z. '00-183 (1st col. ¶ 1); Z. '98-8 (2nd col. ¶ 2).
10. Why is an "aggressive warfare" necessary to attain unto love? Z. '95-03 (2nd col.); *Manna*, Apr. 9.
11. What is the relative importance of the early "gifts" of the Spirit, and the spirit of love? F. 238, ¶ 2; Z. '97-289 (2nd col. ¶ 2).

JULY 29

12. Why should love be the mainspring of all our actions? Z. '03-91 (1st col. ¶ 2).
13. What is the relation between love and purity of heart, and how may we purify our hearts? Titus 1:15, 16; Z. '99-214 (2nd col. ¶ 1); 215 (2nd col. ¶ 1) to 217; Z. '05-216 (1st col. ¶ 3, 4).
14. How is love the seal or evidence of our begetting as New Creatures? E. 286 ¶ 2; 267-270; Z. '97-289 (1st col. ¶ 1 to 2nd col. ¶ 1).

Each one appointed for reader should have his BIBLE or DAWN or TOWER on hand, previously read, and should be prepared to respond at the leader's call without stopping to hunt his place. All, of course, have BIBLES and DAWNS, and some one in each company is likely to have old TOWERS and will be glad to loan them for the benefit of the class.

Opportunity for discussing each question should be given after the references have been read and before the leader makes a brief closing summary of the answer and proceeds to read the next question. It is urged that the questions as printed be strictly adhered to until they have all been discussed. It will generally be found that *all questions* are included on the subject. The reason for care on this point is that if the questions are intruded that come later the subsequent lessons are considerably spoiled thereby. The leader should be expected to kindly, gently, but firmly *hold* the class to the *question under discussion*, and in this he should have the cooperation of all who recognize the value of order in the study of the Divine Plan of the Ages.

under the Lord's blessing numbers of new hearers were reached with the Gospel message, and a few of these, we trust, were brought from darkness to greater light and started in the good way toward the kingdom. Others, we may hope, were relieved of some measure of previous blindness and hindered from stumbling into infidelity and led to a more reasonable and appreciative view of the divine character and that blessed book, the Bible.

As usual, there was one public service at each place aside from the meeting specially for the interested. The latter were attended not only by the friends of the local churches, but also by representatives and delegations from surrounding territory within a radius of sometimes 200 miles or more. The impression is a growing one with these that these one-day conventions are blessed of the Lord and being used to the pulling down of the strongholds of error and misunderstanding of the truth and to the upbuilding of those who are already of the Lord's consecrated flock and in the enjoyment of light upon his Word.

You will all be interested in knowing that by dint of wisely directed and diversified forms of advertising and at considerable expense, large attendance was secured in all of the public meetings at these conventions. The estimated numbers in attendance at these public services were as follows:

Washington, 2,500; Philadelphia, 1,600; Indianapolis, about 2,500; Huntingdon, about 450—a very large attendance for a wet day and a small place; New York City, 2,000; Cleveland, O., 2,500.

THE GOD-LIKENESS OF FORGIVING

Matt. 18:21-35.—JULY 8.

“Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”—Matt. 6:12.

Our last lesson forewarned us that offenses, snares and stumblings would come to the Lord's people, and cautioned us against being in any sense or degree the causes of these offenses—against any conduct which would prove a stumbling-block or in any way be injurious to others. Today's lesson takes up the matter from the opposite standpoint, instructing the Lord's followers how they should deal with the injurious persons when they are of the household of faith, “brethren.” Feeling the great importance of this subject, we have heretofore repeatedly made it prominent in these columns and associated publications, and especially in DAWN, Vol. VI. This seemed the more necessary because the matter has been apparently so generally neglected by others. Now, having seen some good remarks on the subject by Dr. Peloubet, we take pleasure in quoting the same in preference to repeating our own arguments, which to some might become wearisome. Dr. Peloubet says:—

“Every one receives criticisms and wrongs which try his temper to the utmost. Especially is this true of the ambitious spirits who seek to be first, as described in our last lesson. As Professor Bruce says, ‘An ambitious man is sure to be the receiver of many offences, real or imaginary. He is quick to take offence and slow to forgive or forget wrong.’ But the danger assails all classes.

“Go to him privately and alone. If our object is to gain our brother and help him to do right, we will not make known the wrong to others, make it a matter of notoriety, for that makes the settlement far more difficult. The offender's pride, or even self-respect, will tend to keep him from acknowledging his fault. This is a most important principle. The wise head of a great asylum told me that in dealing with the insane it was of the utmost importance to keep away the audience, and that almost every one was influenced by the presence of others. The wisest teacher of my acquaintance deals in the same way with his boys. Deal with them alone whenever it is possible. Thus thy brother will be more likely to hear thee, and thou hast gained thy brother, gained him for righteousness, for salvation, for a Christian life, and probably as a friend.

“If this fails then the next step is to get help from one or two others; and if this fails, from the larger community. If this fails, he is to be to you as a heathen and a publican, outside of your religious and social company, but not outside of your love and care and desire to help (See Rom. 12:19, 20.) In all cases the object is not revenge, but to save and help the offender. Henry Ward Beecher used to say that he looked upon those who maligned him and said bitter things against him as sick people whom he must try to cure of their moral disease.”

“SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN”

After explaining to his followers how best to avoid taking offence from the brethren and how best to help brethren out of the wrong position of being offenders and being injurious, the matter is brought up afresh by Peter's question regarding the number of times that we should be willing to receive injuries from another and take them patiently, and, exercising a forgiving spirit, should try to have the injuries discontinued. It will be noticed that the Lord is not laying down any rule by which we may deal with the world, but merely the rules which should govern amongst his followers. As respects the world we are to expect opposition, misrepresentation, slander, opposition of every kind. “Marvel not if the world hate you; ye know that it hated me before it hated you.”—“Whosoever will live godly in this present life shall suffer persecution.”—John 15:18; 2 Tim. 3:12.

Such opposition from the world we are to take as a matter of course, and not be surprised at the fiery trials that will try us, but to consider that the Lord is wise in per-

mitting such experiences and able to make them all work out for our good. It is within the household of faith that the special trials sometimes come, from the very quarter whence we least expect them, but these also must be taken patiently; we must not render evil for evil nor railing for railing toward the Lord's members nor toward the world; we must, as the Apostle says, be patient toward all.

Notice that Peter's query is, If my brother trespass against me how often shall I forgive him? Seven times? Peter no doubt had in mind the thought that seven was the symbol of perfection, and that this might mark the reasonable limit of mercy and forgiveness. He did not, of course, consider that if that were a divine law it would mean that he himself might be forgiven of the Lord not more than seven times for imperfections, shortcomings, etc. Our Lord's answer is broad and sweeping—“I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven.” Some are disposed to translate this until seventy and seven times, but evidently the Lord's intention was to imply that forgiveness should be granted as often as it is sought with any manifestation whatever of sincerity.

This is not merely advice from the Master to his followers—it is a command. It is not optional with us how we shall do toward our brothers, for the great Teacher has assured us that if we have not the forgiving spirit we cannot be his disciples. His words are, “If ye do not from the heart forgive men their trespasses neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses.” All, then, who realize their need of divine mercy and forgiveness and who receive the great Teacher's instruction on this point will be careful to cultivate in their hearts in every sense a forgiving spirit, a loving, generous disposition. And by this all men may know the disciples of the Lord of mercy. We quote Dr. Peloubet again:—

“Our hearts are like reservoirs, and outward occasions draw out whatever is within and only that. If they are full of love and forgiveness, kindness and desire to help, then no matter how often—seventy times or seventy times seven—some act of others call forth the feelings of the heart, it will be met by love and forgiveness and help. As all need to be forgiven, so all need to forgive. There are enemies who injure us by word and deed. There are others who say evil things about us carelessly and attribute wrong motives, pervert what we do and say. ‘They speak daggers.’ Insults are offered, even friends sometimes do the most annoying and trying things, that are apt to remain in the memory and fester like a thorn in the flesh.”

“The kindest and the happiest pair
Will find occasion to forbear;
And something every day they live
To pity—and perhaps forgive.”

Dr. Hale refers to people who “have given a new turn to an old text. In their own private ‘R. V.’ of the New Testament they read: ‘Whosoever speaketh a word or committeth a wrong against God, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh a word or committeth a wrong against me, it shall not be forgiven him.’”

“The forgiving spirit seeks to do all the good possible to the one who has wronged us. It yearns to help him and to save him from his sin. It proves this feeling of forgiveness and love by doing good, as God sends the rain and sunshine on the evil and on the good.”

“Always and under all circumstances we must have a forgiving heart, whatever the offence against us or the attitude of the offender. We must never have the spirit of hatred or revenge or retaliation. We must never brood over wrongs, but must make all possible allowances and excuses.

'If thou canst not make thyself such an one as thou wouldst, how canst thou expect to have another in all things to thy liking?'"

"Heir of the same inheritance,
Child of the selfsame God,
He has but stumbled in the path
We have in weakness trod."

"An old Spanish writer says, 'To return evil for good is devilish; to return good for good is human; but to return good for evil is Godlike.'"—Archbishop Whately.

"I have known a man to nurse the tiny cocatrice egg of unforgiveness till it has burst into the fiery serpent of crime."—Farrar.

THE DEBT OF A KING'S OFFICER

By way of impressing this lesson our Lord gave a parable to his disciples. This parable represented a great king, who, making an accounting with his officers charged with the collection of taxes, found one of them short in his accounts in a very large sum, ten thousand talents, estimated to represent nine million dollars. Justice laid hold upon the debtor and was about to execute its penalty when he appealed for mercy and extension of time in which to make good the deficiency. The king was compassionate, forbore the collection of the debt and let the servant go free.

This is our Lord's illustration of the proper exercise of mercy. The one thus dealt with does not represent the world of sinners; Adam and his race, for whose deliverance from the penalty a ransom price is demanded from justice. This parable is often thus used improperly against the Bible argument of the teaching of the ransom, that the death penalty against Adam and his race could not be lifted or set aside except by the payment of the ransom price, the corresponding price, our Lord's death. That this is not the teaching is clearly shown by the statement, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king which would make a reckoning with his servants," etc. This declaration respecting the kingdom of heaven lifts the parable entirely out of connection with the world in general, which is not either in embryo or otherwise the kingdom of heaven: it definitely locates the parable in the church, and these servants of the king as amongst those who have already been justified through faith in Christ and who have already made consecration of themselves to the Lord and become thus his servants entrusted with his goods. The signification of this feature of the parable, then, is that if any of the Lord's people, his disciples, come short they have a throne of grace and mercy to which they may approach that they may "obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."—Heb. 4:16.

THE DEBT OF A FELLOW-SERVANT

As representing the wrong course, the reprehensible course of some, the Lord in the parable before us pictures the forgiven officer as going forth from his king's presence with the latter's kind words still ringing in his ears and in the exercise of his unmerited freedom, and, finding a fellow-servant who owed him an hundred pence—a small bet probably representing not more than a hundred dollars proportionately in our money and time. Instead of a proper and generous feeling toward his fellow-servant, instead of sympathy and love for him corresponding to that which had been bestowed by the king upon himself, this servant caught the lesser debtor by the throat, saying, "Pay me that thou owest." The fellow-servant used toward him the very same words that he had used to the king, saying, "Have mercy upon me and I will pay thee all." But he did not, but cast him into a prison. He was hardhearted, not at all after the likeness of his generous master, the king. Even his fellow-servants recognized this; they felt a pity for the unfortunate one and told it unto their lord. They knew well enough the king's generous disposition to be sure that he would not favor such an intemperate exercise of justice.

The king sent for his officer and upbraided him for the matter, saying, I remitted thy debt because thou besoughtest me; I showed mercy to you. Should you not also have shown mercy to your fellow-servant? The question was left without an answer.—the answer was clearly enough implied. He who had received so great mercy should have been moved with compassion toward a fellow-servant in a small affair. The king was wroth, was angry with that servant, justly so. He had proven himself unworthy of the mercy bestowed upon him. Nor was it too late yet to punish him for the matter, for his debt had merely been remitted or set aside and not blotted out. Thus it is with all of the Lord's people; we are dealt with on the basis of faith; God is in earnest if we are in earnest. Our blemishes and shortcomings

will not be permitted to stand between us and the glorious things to which we have been called if we are faithful to the extent of our ability, and if as a part of that faithfulness we have the Spirit of Christ, for if we have not the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, the spirit of forgiveness, gentleness, etc., we are none of his.

It is in line with this that the Apostle writes that sins shall be blotted out at the second coming of Christ. (Acts 3:19.) They will be blotted out when in the resurrection we come forth as new creatures sown in weakness, raised in power; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown natural or human bodies, raised spiritual bodies, glorious. Then that which is perfect having come, all the imperfections and blemishes will be fully blotted out, never to be revived either by the Lord or others. But meantime, while we have our standing of faith, our blemishes are merely covered while we are permitted to give a demonstration of the loyalty and sincerity of our consecration and earnestness of desire to walk in the footsteps of the Lord.

WHAT THE UNMERCIFUL MAY EXPECT

Our Lord, after concluding the parable, makes a direct application of it to his disciples, not to the world, although in a certain sense or degree there is a general principle expressed which is applicable to the world in proportion as each comes under enlightenment and instruction. Our Lord says, "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you if you from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." How solemn these words, how clear cut, how unmistakable their import. In no uncertain terms they assure us that whatever our faith, whatever our works, they all amount to nothing if we do not attain to that spirit of love which is merciful, generous, long suffering, patient toward those who do injury to us, whether they be brethren of whom we might expect the more, or whether they be enemies of the world from whom we must expect less, consideration. Mercy is an element of love, and love is the fulfilling of the whole law of God.

The propriety of the Lord in thus dealing with us is evident. He is seeking a special class for the kingdom—to be associates with our Lord Jesus in the great work of ruling and blessing the world. Only those who possess the divine character of patience, forbearance, sympathy, compassion, mercy, love, could possibly be suited to the divine purpose in respect to the great work of blessing all the families of the earth. We are accepted in Christ because of our profession that we love these qualities in him and desire to be copies of God's dear Son. If we fail to improve the various lessons and opportunities afforded by the Lord, to cultivate this character, then in the same proportion we fail to make our calling and election sure.

The king delivered the unmerciful servant to the tormentors. Such was the custom of oriental countries at that time and to some extent still. We are not to understand that our Lord had sympathy with those barbarous customs, but that he was speaking to the people from the standpoint of custom which they would understand. Elsewhere the Scriptures assure us that any who are the true servants of the Lord, and who fail to come into accord with his Spirit willingly, will be turned over to Satan to tribulations, to hard experience, that by these they may be profited and learn to appreciate things from the Lord's standpoint. (1 Cor. 5:4, 6.) For instance, Revelation 7 first speaks of the little flock, the bride class, as composed of 144,000—the nucleus of which were natural Israelites, in whom was no guile, and who became the nucleus of spiritual Israel, and to whose numbers since throughout the Gospel age the Lord is gathering those from amongst the Gentiles who enter into covenant relationship with himself and manifest his Spirit. Aside from these so selected, the same symbolical picture shows us a great company whose number is known to no man—whose number was not predestinated—these are out of every nation, people, kindred and tongue. These, unlike the 144,000, do not sit with Christ in the throne, but are pictured as being before the throne. These have not, like the others, kept their garments unspotted from the world, have not had the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them richly, so that his merit constituted the robe of forgiveness for them without blemish, that by a wrong spirit and a wrong course they have be-draggled their robes, and therefore, we are told, they must wash them and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, and this washing is represented as being done in "great tribulation." These tribulations correspond to the torments of the parable upon the servant who did not exercise toward his fellows the spirit of mercy. As again it is stated, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."—Matt. 5:7.

"FORGIVE US AS WE FORGIVE OTHERS"

It will be remembered that in our Lord's prayer he sets forth this principle for our instruction and guidance, that we must not expect of the heavenly Father mercy for our shortcomings and blemishes and continuance in his favor and ultimately joint-heirship in his kingdom, unless we cultivate in ourselves the same spirit. How beautifully and how simply the Lord states this matter in the prayer, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." (Matt. 6:12.) How emphatically the Lord states it again, saying, "If ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if ye forgive not men their trespasses neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matt. 6:14, 15.) These trespasses, he it noted again, do not refer to the one original sin on account of which condemnation of death passed upon the whole human family and on account of which Christ died and on account of which the curse is ultimately to be rolled from every member of the race so that there shall be no more curse. (Rev. 22:3.) These trespasses are our own individual shortcomings and

blemishes which we have inherited and which the Lord is very willing to overlook and excuse for those who will comply with the conditions of their covenant and be followers of the Lord Jesus, filled with his Spirit and striving to walk in his steps.

Archbishop Hare has represented the attitude of the unforgiving many as implying their prayer to the Lord thus,—

"O Lord, I have sinned against thee many times; I have been often forgetful of thy goodness; I have broken thy law; I have committed many secret sins. Deal with me, I beseech thee, O Lord, even as I deal with my neighbor. He hath not offended me one hundredth part as much as I have offended thee, but I cannot forgive him. He has been very ungrateful to me, but not one hundredth part as ungrateful as I have been to thee, yet I cannot overlook such base ingratitude. Deal with me, O Lord, I beseech thee, as I deal with him. I remember and treasure up every little trifle which shows how ill he has behaved to me. Deal with me, I beseech thee, O Lord, as I deal with him."

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

Luke 10:25-37.—JULY 15.

Golden Text—"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."—Matt. 5:7.

Jesus was a teacher and expounder of the law to the common people, but he did not class himself with the Scribes and Doctors of the law amongst the Jews. He had a different view of the law from theirs and taught in a different manner. The common people heard him gladly, whereas the Jewish Doctors of the law did not appeal to the common people at all or attempt to teach them, but merely discussed the great problems of divine law amongst themselves and with the more ascetic of the people—the Pharisees.

The common people, although they heard the Lord gladly, did not clearly comprehend his teachings, for he spoke to them in parables and dark sayings to the intent that the mass might not understand, but that the specially zealous Israelites indeed might be attracted to closer study and inquiry. To these he explained the parables, saying, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but to all those without [outsiders, not specially interested followers] these things are spoken in parables." (Mark 4:11). Nevertheless, there was something very attractive in the Master's style, so that even those who did not fully comprehend his teachings said, "Never man spake like this man"; and again we read, "They wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth," "For he taught them as one having authority [as one who understood his subject thoroughly] and not as the Scribes [not doubtfully]."—John 7:46; Luke 4:22; Matt. 7:29.

For this reason jealousy of Jesus sprang up amongst the Doctors of the law. To them he was a rival teacher, and accordingly they sought to entrap him, with a view to exposing him to ridicule before his followers, whom they recognized as "unlearned men." But in no case did they succeed; in every instance recorded the Lord's wisdom was too great for them—he entrapped them in their own arguments. The present lesson is an illustration of this. One of the Doctors of the law, evidently thinking that our Lord's teachings along the lines of love and mercy were contrary to the rigid lines of justice as laid down in the law, thought to entrap our Lord by a question. He would ask him upon what terms he could have eternal life. He expected Jesus to answer, "Eternal life will be given to all who manifest a God-like, loving, generous character," or that he would say, "You can have eternal life by becoming my disciple and practising my teachings." Thereupon this Doctor of the Law would at once call attention to the fact that the teachings of Jesus abrogated the law, made it null and void—that he ignored the law.

"WISE AS A SERPENT, HARMLESS AS A DOVE"

Our Lord answered this Scribe thoroughly out of his own mouth: he said to him, "You are a teacher of the law; give us your statement of what the law says respecting how eternal life may be obtained?" This was a pointed reply, and the lawyer was fully prepared to answer it, for, What saith the law? was a common question amongst the Jews who quoted from the law. (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18). This was the very definition which our Lord a short time before quoted to the rich young ruler who came to him on one occasion. The lawyer evidently repeated a well-known formula of the law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself." Jesus replied, "Thou hast answered right: this do and thou shalt live"—have eternal life.

THE LAW VERSUS THE GOSPEL

Why did Jesus thus refer to the law? Why did he not avail himself of this opportunity for preaching the Gospel? Why did he not say to the lawyer—"The only way to obtain eternal life is through faith in me, followed by a full consecration to walk in my footsteps as my disciple"? Why did he not tell the lawyer, "There is no other name given under heaven whereby men must be saved but the name of Jesus"? Why did he not tell him, "He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son shall not see life"?—Acts 4:12; 1 John 5:12.

We answer that this would have been too strong meat for the lawyer in his condition of mind. It was necessary that first he should realize his own inability to keep the full letter of the divine law, so that he might be prepared to look for divine mercy through Jesus. The difficulty with the Pharisees and Scribes was that they were pretending to keep the law, pretending that they were justified by it, pretending to gain eternal life by it, although they very well knew that they all died like other men, and knew also, when they would reflect upon the subject, that the divine law was so high, so grand, so complete, that in their weak and fallen condition they were unable to meet all of its requirements perfectly.

There are some people of the same kind today, who are ready to acknowledge that God has a perfect standard and that none can expect eternal life except as they harmonize with that standard; and many today, as well as formerly amongst the Jews, believe that they are sufficiently near the divine standard to have eternal life, and are therefore not looking for any Savior—not looking for a Redeemer to pay a ransom price for them and to grant them immunity and forgiveness of sin and reconciliation through him to the Father—the covering of their blemishes. It is necessary for all such to learn first the lesson that divine justice has but one standard and that is a very high one. When they find how high God's standard is and how imperfect are their best endeavors to measure up to their requirements, then and not until then do they begin to look for help from the Lord in the attainment of life eternal. The Lord wished the lawyer to learn this lesson, and therefore exacted from him a statement of what the law required.

The lawyer did not stop to haggle over what would be included in loving God with his entire heart, soul, strength and mind. Some one might claim to be loving and serving God and others might doubt the truthfulness of the claim, though unable to prove anything, since only the Lord and the man's own heart could judge perfectly in this matter. The lawyer passed over that great question as though it were nothing, as though it were settled, but had he sought to critically examine what such a complete consecration to the Lord would signify he would doubtless have found himself far short of its standard.

Let us not pass the question too quickly or too lightly—let us know that to love the Lord with all our heart would mean that the sum of all our affections would center upon the Lord, so that our love for him would far excel all of our love for the dear ones of the home and the family and of the whole world. To love the Lord with all our soul would signify with all our being—to manifest our love not only by our words and looks, by our praises, but by our services and all of our conduct in life, everything testifying that God is first in our affections and in all of life's interests. Thirdly, to love him with all our strength would signify that time and talent and influ-

ence would all be at the service of our God, that in everything we would be ready to be used, spent, in glorifying his name, in serving his cause as we might understand it to be his will. Fourth, to love our Lord with all our mind would seem to imply that we are to intellectually attempt to appreciate the Lord, to understand his divine laws and to enter into heart sympathy with them, so that our service and worship would be the more intelligent, after the kind described by our Lord when he said, "They that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth"—intelligently.

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF

The Scribe, passing over the obligations to the Lord, seemed to realize that his daily conduct would condemn him as a violator of the latter part of his own definition of the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." He apparently recognized this as his most vulnerable point, and that the Lord had entrapped him in his own answer. He knew how in his daily life he was not loving his neighbor as himself—that he was making a wide discrimination between those of his own class and the common people, the publicans and the sinners; and that even in his present endeavor to entrap Jesus he was not loving him as himself, as his neighbor, but treating him as an opponent. He felt that, like others of his class, he had a haughty, disdainful attitude toward the lower classes of his own race. He was skilled in the law, however, and this was not a new point for him to evade. He had the same explanation of the matter that was common to others of the Scribes and Pharisees, namely, that their neighbors whom they were, according to the law, to love as themselves, were those who belonged to their class, to their set, to their station in life. Apparently, therefore, with considerable confidence he replied to Jesus, "But who is my neighbor?" as though he would say, "That is a point, I presume, upon which we might possibly differ. I think that I keep the law when I love and respect and fellowship those of my own class, and treat others with more or less disdain. How could you apply the law of Moses differently? I feel sure that you will agree that the law meant that each person was to consider those of his own class as his neighbors, and to love them and co-operate with them and not with others of the outside world."

With marvellous wisdom the Lord framed a parable, such as the Scribe of the law well knew might take place any day. He pictured the road between Jerusalem and Jericho, a bridle-path, in some places quite steep, passing through a gorge in the mountain—a vicinity infested with robbers, who lived in the numerous caves, and who not infrequently attacked passers. Even today it is the custom for travelers to have an armed escort of Arabs on this journey to Jericho. Our Lord pictured a traveler on this road beset by the robbers, beaten into helplessness, stripped of his clothing. He pictured a priest passing by, seeing the man and hastening on, lest he also might be beset by the robbers; similarly a Levite passes by, unwilling to spend the time necessary to render assistance. Then a man of Samaria comes along, and, moved with sympathy, assists the injured one, binding up his wounds; and finally, taking him on his own beast to the nearest inn, he cared for him over night and made some provision for his further care.

The force of our Lord's illustration is only seen when it is remembered that the Levites were specially set apart for holy service to the Lord as instructors of the people, to guide them by word and by example in the ways of the Lord, and when it is further remembered that the priests, also belonging to this tribe, were a special family chosen of the Lord for the very highest service toward himself and toward the people of Israel. The picture is still further heightened when we recall that the Samaritans were a mixed people, whom the Jews despised and with whom they would have no dealings.—John 4:9.

With these things in mind mark the Master's question, "Which of these three was neighbor of the man who fell amongst thieves?" There was only one answer for the lawyer to make. He himself belonged to the Levite class condemned by the parable. The reply was, "He that showed mercy on him." Our Lord approved of that answer and responded, "Go thou and do likewise"—go and show mercy, go and understand that any man in the world, friend or foe, is your neighbor and is to be loved and served by you as you may have opportunity. As you would have him do for you do even so for him; love him and serve him as yourself, as you would have him love and serve you under reversed conditions.

THE GOLDEN RULE

We have found some of the Lord's people disposed to evade the force of this requirement of the law and its illustration by the Lord's parable by saying, "Yes, the Samaritan who showed mercy to the wounded man was indeed his neighbor, while the priest and the Levite who did not show mercy to him

he should not consider to be his neighbor; hence the wounded upon recovery, should he ever have any dealings with that Samaritan who assisted him, should love him as himself, should be willing to lay down his life in his service. Whereas the other two who did not do neighborly acts ought not to be considered as his neighbors, and he should not try to love them as himself.

We answer that this is a distortion of our Lord's language. Indeed, he was seeking to counteract this very thought, which was common to the Jews, for it was a proverb amongst them that they should be loyal to neighbors but bitter to enemies. The word neighbors signifies those who are near, and the Scribes and Pharisees were in the habit of applying this to those who were near in sympathy, in sentiment, in faith, in sectarian relationship. Thus a Pharisee would gladly serve another Pharisee, and a Scribe would gladly serve another Scribe, from a clannish, selfish spirit, regarding each other as neighbors in the sense of the law, and that others of a different class were more or less opponents, either to go unloved or, if they oppose themselves, to be hated.

As Christians we must take a much higher view of the matter than this. We remember our Lord's words in opposition to this very thought. He said, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:43-45). Any who will not come to this standard of love, not only for friends but also for enemies, cannot long be recognized by God as his children.

Our Lord originated the Golden Rule as a full statement of the divine will, which must govern all who would be his disciples. That Golden Rule does not say that we shall love as brethren those who have done kindness for us. Our Lord condemned that selfish kind of love when he said, "If ye love them that love you what thank have you? Do not even the publicans and sinners the same?" Such an interpretation, therefore, as would make this parable to teach that we should love as our neighbors those who have hazarded their lives for us would be far beneath the teachings of our Master, and, he says, would be on a parity with the usual sentiments of sinners.

As followers of the Redeemer we are to have the much higher standard; we are to recognize every one who is in adversity and needing our help as our neighbor, whom we should love sympathetically to the extent of being ready to do for him or her whatever service we might be able to render, to the extent that we should wish that person to do for us if we were in his difficulty. To whatever extent we can get this high standard of love, sympathy, co-operation, generosity, kindly feeling in control of our hearts and to be the rule of our conduct, in that proportion surely we will be the more God-like, the more Christlike, for, as our dear Redeemer remarked, God is kind even to the unthankful.

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

Our Lord's requirements of us as his disciples go beyond merely the loving of a neighbor. We must have at least a sympathetic love for our enemies, so that we would not only not endeavor to injure them by word or deed, but that we would be ready and glad to assist them as might be in our power. No one, however, is to suppose that the Lord means that we are to love our enemies as we love the Lord himself, nor even as we love our brethren. Our love for the Lord and for the brethren is love of the very highest type—love which appreciates the principles represented in our heavenly Father's character, which all who are truly his are seeking to copy.

Our love for our enemies and for many of our neighbors must necessarily be along lines of their characters: their hopes and their plans are very different from those which we have adopted. As is our Lord's, so our love for them must be of the sympathetic kind, even as is the love of God—"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish." God does not love the world with a love of fellowship, nor are we to do so. Like him we are to have the love of sympathy for the world. Realizing its fallen and depraved condition we are to be glad to do all in our power for its rescue, for its comfort along lines of justice and mercy.

There seems to be a limitation to the love commanded by the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"—not better than thyself. Hence if it came to the place where a neighbor's life was in jeopardy, and we could assist him only by the sacrifice of our own life, it would not be a requirement of the divine law of love that we should sacrifice our life for his—that would be loving him better than ourselves, and there-

fore more than the divine requirement. Neither should we expect a neighbor to love us better than himself, so that he would sacrifice his life for us. Should he attempt to do so it would be our proper attitude of mind to hinder it, not to allow him to work a permanent disadvantage to himself, more than we would have been willing and glad to have done for him. It is in this particular that our Lord's course in the sacrifice of his life on our behalf transcends anything that was required of the law—in giving his life a ransom for many, he did more than was required by the law. It is for this reason that it is denominated a sacrifice. To do the whole law was his duty, but when he went beyond this, and gave his life a ransom price for mankind, that was a sacrifice, and as a sacrifice it was appreciated by the Father and specially rewarded with more than everlasting life. And the same rule applies to us, for as he was so are we in this world—we are to walk in his footsteps.—1 John 4:17.

The demands of the law are still to do to our neighbor as we would have him do to us. We are to do nothing less than this to anybody; but as followers of the Lord, imbued with his spirit of sacrifice, we are joyfully to lay down our lives for the brethren—in harmony with the divine program which is now selecting the little flock, the household of faith, as sacrificers with Jesus, to be by and by joint-heirs with him in his kingdom and in its great work of blessing and rejuvenating the world. It is very necessary that we have clear views respecting this subject of the demands of the law, the demands of justice upon us toward any creature, and also as respects what would properly come in as a part of our sacrifice.

"THE LAW IS FULFILLED IN US"

We noticed in the beginning of this lesson that our Lord gave the Scribe instruction in the law instead of preaching to him the gospel of grace. Now let us note that the Lord applies to his followers both the law and the Gospel. God has but one standard, but one law, and never will abolish it. The Law Covenant indeed, after serving its purpose, ceased; but the law of God, upon which that covenant was based, will never fail. We as well as the Jews are commanded to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves. This is the standard before us as well as before the Jews. The Jew could not keep it—he found himself deficient not only in respect to his treatment of his neighbor, but

deficient also in the fulness of his love for his Creator, which must overbalance all other loves and manifest itself in all the conduct of life.

Only our Lord Jesus could or did keep that love in the absolute perfection of its very letter and spirit. However much a Jew living before our Lord's time might have had the right disposition of heart as respects the law, because unable to come up to its requirements he could not have eternal life. Our position is different. Our Lord Jesus, having kept the law, gave his life a sacrifice for Adam and for all of his race; and we who now come to a knowledge of this fact, and by faith accept it, have a standing with God in Christ, so that our best endeavors to keep the law are supplemented by the merits of Christ and thus made acceptable to God. In other words, if we do our best in the matter of loving God supremely with our hearts, with our whole being, with our strength, with our minds, and our neighbors to the extent of our ability as ourselves, God will accept that good endeavor as though it were perfection making up for its defects through the merit of Christ's sacrifice. Thus the Apostle tells us, "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who are walking not after the flesh [not seeking to please ourselves and our fallen dispositions and attributes] but after the Spirit [to the best of our ability seeking to be in accord with the very spirit of the divine law]."

THE GOLDEN TEXT

Our Golden Text reminds us of the Apostle's statement, "He who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John 4:20). In other words, the measure of the love which fills our hearts will find expression toward our fellow-creatures who have need of our sympathy and attention, and if we show ourselves deficient here it will imply a deficiency of our love for our Creator. If, on the contrary, we are merciful to others, generous, kind, taking pleasure in doing what we can for the relief of our fellow-creatures, especially to the household of faith, this will be an indication of the spirit which our Lord will appreciate and own if it be accompanied by a trust in the precious blood of Christ. Such merciful ones of the Lord's followers shall obtain mercy at the Lord's hands. He will deal gently with them, forgiving their blemishes and weaknesses in proportion as they have this spirit of generosity, forgiveness, toward those who trespass against them.

"LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY"

Luke 11:1-13.—JULY 22.

Many are the unscriptural views respecting prayer. It is well that we notice that our Lord never taught the multitudes to pray, nor intimated that they should pray—even though the multitudes with whom he was in contact were nominally people of God. Even with his consecrated disciples the Lord waited until they asked him for instruction on the subject. Our Lord's declaration to the woman of Samaria was, "God is a spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Any other worship, any other prayer, is a mockery which God not only does not invite but especially reprimands, saying to those who are not desirous of doing his will, "What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee." (Psa. 50:16, 17). And again, "Forasmuch as this people draw nigh me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me . . . Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people even a marvellous work and a wonder."—Isa. 29:13, 14.

From this standpoint the privilege of prayer is a very wonderful one: it implies that the suppliant is on terms of intimate acquaintance with the great Creator of the universe, so that he is welcomed into the divine presence and heart. In accord with this the symbolical representation is that the prayers of the saints of God ascend before him as a sweet incense—the heavenly Father is pleased to receive the humblest worship and reverent petitions of his child adopted into his family through Jesus Christ.

OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

Only those who have become God's children by forsaking sin and laying hold upon Christ as their Savior are accorded the privilege of approaching the throne of grace that "they may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. 4:16). In the world, therefore, only those who are accepted in the Beloved are privileged to call Jehovah God by the endearing name, "Our Father who art in heaven." The attempt to thus approach God implies (1) a faith in the divine being; (2) a realization of dependence upon him; (3) a faith

that a way of reconciliation with the Father has been effected through the Redeemer; (4) a realization that the great Creator no longer condemns the suppliant, but accepts him as his son. More than this, it implies that the suppliant recognizes the fact that there are other sons of God who, like himself, have fled from sin and been adopted into God's family—the petition is not "My Father," but "Our Father in heaven." Therefore, whoever thus prays intelligently must have interest in and concern for all the interests of the family of God. Whatever of selfishness he might have had formerly he must divest himself of when he comes to the Father, and must realize himself as merely one of the favored class of sons thus privileged. It is in harmony with this thought that all of the Lord's truly consecrated people have special pleasure when permitted to approach the throne of grace together, whether but two or three or in larger numbers.

In proportion as the Lord's people grow in knowledge and in love, they will grow in appreciation of the great privilege of prayer. Not that prayer will take the place of the study of the divine Word, but that realizing more and more from the Word something of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of divine mercy and provision, the true children of God have comfort of heart and joy in going to the throne of grace to give thanks unto the Lord for all his mercies, to commune with him respecting their trials and difficulties, and to assure him of their loving confidence in the gracious promises of his Word, in the exceeding riches of his grace, and in his wisdom, love and power to fulfil toward them and in them all his gracious promises.

The more the Lord's people advance in knowledge of him the more they will appreciate the fact that the divine arrangement is broader and deeper and higher than anything they could suggest, so that such are granted liberty to ask what they will with the assurance that it will be done. The Lord well knows that this class will ask that his will be done; hence the promise is made only to those who abide in Christ and who have his Word of promise abiding richly in them. All such learn, before attaining this station and liberty, that as the heavens

are higher than the earth so are the Lord's ways and provisions higher than our conceptions and every way to be preferred. Hence, while praying to the best of their ability in harmony with the promises of the Word, these would always include the sentiment expressed by our Redeemer, "Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done."

"PRAY WITHOUT CEASING"

"Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks." (1 Thess. 5:17, 18). The advanced Christian is to be so fully in accord with the Father and the Son and the divine program, the plan of the ages, that his entire life will be a prayer and a song in respect to every affair of life. He will have in his mind primarily, What is the will of God in this matter? "whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do let us do all to the glory of God." The heart that is thus continually in all of life's affairs looking for divine direction is thus continuously in a prayer attitude, and no other condition is proper to the Christian—"In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths;" "Delight thyself also in the Lord and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."—Prov. 3:6; Psa. 37:4.

But while thus in the prayer attitude continuously we must not neglect the privilege of a more formal approach to the throne of grace—on bended knee, privately and alone. Whoever does not embrace this privilege misses a portion of the great blessing which the Lord has arranged for his benefit and assistance in walking in the narrow way. Our Master spent seasons in prayer alone, and surely all of his disciples may well follow his example in this as well as in other matters to advantage. As our Lord sometimes prayed in the presence of his disciples, as is evidenced by their recording his words, so all of his followers are to realize that they have a special privilege of fellowship in prayer, praying to one another, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and in petitions to the throne of grace.—Eph. 5:19; 1 Cor. 14:14-17.

While family prayer is not specifically taught in the Scriptures we cannot doubt its appropriateness under some conditions. True, the natural family is separate and distinct from the family of the Lord, but where the natural family has been reared in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord" it is scarcely supposable that the minor children would be so lacking of reverence as not to have pleasure in bowing with their parents for the worship of the Creator. Where the children are grown so that they have discretion for themselves, if they be not pleased to join in the worship, in our opinion the Lord will be all the better pleased that they be not coerced, for he seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth. Where the husband or wife is not a child of God, unbegotten of the Spirit, it would be inappropriate that he or she should lead in the worship, addressing the throne of grace. The more we recognize the divine limitations on this subject the more will we and those with whom we are in contact appreciate prayer as a great privilege, which is accorded only to those who can with sincere hearts address Jehovah as our Father, and these can be only such as have accepted the Lord Jesus as their Savior, for "No man cometh unto the Father but by me."—John 14:6.

As in the type none but the priests offered incense before the Lord, the teaching would seem to be that only the royal priesthood, the members of the body of Christ, have this privilege in the present time. Nevertheless, we might reasonably suppose that the children of believers, who have not yet reached the deciding point of loyalty or disloyalty to the Lord, would properly enough be privileged to approach the throne of grace through the relationship of their consecrated parents. We might even suppose that justified believers, who have not reached the point of making a consecration of themselves to the Lord, would have the right, the privilege, of addressing the Redeemer in prayer: and yet we know of no Scripture that positively says or indirectly implies that an unconsecrated believer has any acceptance at the throne of grace, or any standing whatever before the Father as amongst those who may address him in the petition, "Our Father which art in heaven."

"HALLOWED BE THY NAME"

The more it is recognized that the privilege of prayer is an exclusive one the more those enjoying the privilege will be inclined to use it in a most reverent manner. The kings of earth make resolutions respecting times, seasons, dress, etc., regulating those ushered into their presence; and all who have a proper appreciation of the majesty of the King Eternal, invisible, the only true God, will approach in a worshipful, reverent spirit, implied in the expression, "Hallowed be thy name." Holy and to be rever-

enced is our God; his name stands for everything that is just and wise and loving.

"THY KINGDOM COME"

"Thy will be done, as in heaven so in earth." These words, not found in the older MS. in Luke, are found in the Matthew MS., and are, therefore, properly to be considered a part of the petition. Be it noted, however, that while this petition as it stands is appropriate enough as a prayer, it was evidently not the Lord's intention that it should be continually used as the only petition at the throne of grace, but rather he gave it as a sample. The various items of the Lord's prayer should therefore be to the Lord's people a suggestion of the general character of their petitions, and not be understood as binding their terms, their expressions, their words.

The thoughts of the true disciples are directed to the fact that the present condition of sin and death is not to be everlasting, that God has provided for and promised a glorious kingdom through his Son, and the church his bride, under which evil will be conquered and brought under complete subjection to righteousness. Those who are in proper relationship of heart to the Lord must recognize this fact, and be so separated from the spirit of this world that they will long for the installation of the reign of righteousness, even though they will know that this will imply the overthrow of present institutions. Their hearts are so in accord with the Lord that they are out of accord with every form and institution and vine not of the Father's right-hand planting. (Isa. 60:21.) Longing for the kingdom that will bless the world, they also long for the promised privilege of being joint-heirs with their Redeemer as members of that kingdom class which shall bless the world and uplift it out of sin-and-death conditions.

GIVE US OUR DAILY BREAD

"Give us day by day our daily bread," or "our needful bread" [Am. Rev.]. There is no attempt here to supplicate delicacies, but merely an expression of trust in the Lord and confidence that he will provide, in harmony with his promises that our bread and water shall be sure. Indeed when we remember our Master's words, that the heathen have in mind what they shall eat, what they shall drink and wherewithal they shall be clothed, but the heavenly Father knoweth what things we have need of, we perceive that to the Spirit-begotten and advanced Christian these words respecting daily bread imply more particularly the spiritual than the earthly food. Provision for all our necessities, both temporal and spiritual, according to divine wisdom, is briefly summed up in this expression.

To suppose that the Lord here is merely referring to the natural food would imply that the petitioners were merely natural men, whereas we have seen that the prayer was taught only to those who were reckoned new creatures in Christ by a covenant to walk in his steps in the narrow way. It must be understood, therefore, that it is the new creature that is offering the petition, and this will imply that it is the nourishment of the new creature that is chiefly under consideration—with whatever provision for temporal necessities the heavenly Father may see best. This is distinctly brought to our attention in the last verse of this lesson, wherein the heavenly Father is represented as dispensing the holy Spirit—the spiritual blessings and experiences which develop in his children his own holy Spirit, the Spirit of the truth, the Spirit of the Lord.

GOD'S MERCY PROPORTIONATE TO OURS

"Forgive us our sins; for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us." The sins here referred to, or as in Matthew, "debts," are in no way related to original sin, which we are not to pray to have forgiven, but which the Father has already made provisions to forgive unconditionally to those who accept Christ. Original sin is not forgivable, but God in his mercy provided a Redeemer, and we read, "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." He is a propitiation for our sins, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God. This prayer relates not, therefore, to that sin whose forgiveness permits us to approach God, and by covenant through Jesus to call him our Father. The sins mentioned in this prayer, or the "debts," are those which are ours after we have become new creatures in Christ, children of the Highest. Because of our imperfections we cannot do the things which we would, the things which we know to be the perfect will of our Father in heaven.

In a certain sense these are our debts or obligations to the Father from the time we start to walk in newness of life—not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Walking after the flesh we find that we cannot come up to the Spirit, hence the "debts." It is for the forgiveness of these that

we are privileged to petition—matters of omission and commission not wilfully done, not intentionally omitted. In the divine arrangement the merit of Christ not only covered the sins that are past, but made provision for our weaknesses and blemishes en route for the kingdom. God could indeed apply the merit of Christ to these debts and excuse us from them, and not require us to mention them at all, but for our advantage he has arranged it otherwise, that we must make application for the covering of these debts, for exoneration in the name of Jesus, and so doing we learn three lessons: (1) We learn to keep track of our blemishes, and are the better assisted, therefore, in the future in warring a good fight against them; (2) We are thus continually reminded of our dependence upon the merit of our Savior, the merit of the precious blood. (3) We are thereby assisted in being merciful, compassionate and generous toward others who may be our debtors in matters great or small.

How just and how wise is the divine arrangement which requires of us, in applying for mercy, to pledge ourselves to the Lord that we also are merciful, forgiving to others, not attempting to exact justice from those with whom we have contact and who are under some obligation to us. This is a wise provision, in that it will assist us in the right direction, assist us in the development of character which the Lord can approve, and which would be meet for those who would be inheritors of the kingdom. It will assist us in our endeavors to be copies of God's dear Son, and like unto our Father in heaven in the sentiments of our hearts at least. It is just, because it is not God's arrangement to simply show us favors above the remainder of mankind, except as we shall receive his mercies with proper appreciation, and with a desire to attain the condition which would be pleasing to him and which he would be pleased to reward with the everlasting life and the kingdom glories.

"DELIVER US FROM EVIL"

These words are not in the original in Luke's account of the prayer, but they are found in Matthew's account, and hence are properly a part of the prayer. "Bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." (R. V., Matt. 6:13.) This statement is a little confusing, for we have the assurance that "God tempteth no man." (Jas. 1:13.) The thought then seems to be that there is an evil one ever ready to attack the Lord's people to the extent that the Lord will grant the privilege, the opportunity, as in the case of Job.

We remember, too, that trials, testings and temptations are necessary for our development as new creatures, and since these are necessary and of divine arrangement or permission, it would not be appropriate for us to pray that the Lord would spare us from all trials and temptations, for, says the Apostle, "If ye be without chastisements then are ye not sons." (Heb. 12:8.) We must, therefore, paraphrase this statement in our thoughts and suppose it to mean, "Bring us not into temptation that would be too severe for us, or abandon us not in temptation; but deliver us from the evil one." This thought is in full accord with the entire testimony of the Word of God. The promise is, "He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation provide a way of escape." (1 Cor. 10:13.) The evil one would indeed utterly destroy the Lord's consecrated ones, but he will not be permitted so to do. Thus far he may go but no farther. If God be thus for us, who or what power can prevail against us—nothing shall by any means separate us from the love of God in Christ.

"ASK AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN YOU"

Although our Lord did not teach his disciples to pray until they requested instruction, this was evidently not because he was unwilling to assist them, but because he wished them to realize and desire further teaching. It may be argued by some that no one needs instruction in how to pray, but that thought is not borne out by this lesson. Evidently there are proper and improper prayers. We might as well say that no one needs instruction in singing or in playing music. We do sometimes say that singers and players are born with the talent, nevertheless the most talented musicians by instruction reach their proficiency.

And so with prayer. We have already seen that great mistakes have been made as to who may pray and as to what may be properly prayed for, and we have already considered the Lord's outline respecting a proper form of prayer, beginning with ascriptions of praise and thanks and proceeding to expressions of confidence in God and the promises of his kingdom, continuing with acknowledgments

of our dependence upon his provisions day by day, and ending with expressions of confidence in his power and goodness to protect us and ultimately to deliver us. This is the general form which our Lord commends to us as proper in approaching the throne of grace. On the other hand, however, it is interesting for us to note that the Lord does not wait until we have become proficient in the use of language and in the form of expressing our petitions to him, but that so gracious and broad are his arrangements that we may come in imperfection and with stammering tongues to tell him of our devotion, our appreciation, our confidence, etc., in any manner that we please. The suggestion is, however, that in proportion as we appreciate the privilege of prayer, we will desire to use the privilege in the manner most acceptable to the great One whom we thus approach.

Why should the Lord wish us to ask before he would give his blessing? For a wise purpose, we may be sure! He would have us feel our need, he would have us appreciate the privilege, he would have us look for the response, and in all these experiences he would develop us as his sons of the new creation. Therefore we are to ask and seek and knock if we would find the riches of God's grace, and have opened to us more and more the wonderful privileges and mercies and blessings which he is so willing to give to us as we develop in character and in preparation for his mercies.

It was to illustrate this that the Lord gave the parable of this lesson respecting the householder who was short of food for the entertainment of his visitors. He was represented as importunately urging upon his neighbor the necessities of the case, and ultimately thus succeeding. Our Lord instructs us that we should be so earnest in our desires for the kingdom, for the honor of the Father's name, for the daily portion of the bread of life, for deliverance from the evil one, and for God's keeping power in every trouble, and in all of life's affairs his supervision, that we continually go to him day by day, hourly and momentarily, watching and praying without ceasing, and in everything giving thanks, accepting by faith the promises of his Word that all things shall work together for our good. To such the blessings are on the way, sometimes coming in one form and sometimes in another, but generally in ways not anticipated and generally larger by far than anything we had asked.

"YE BEING EVIL KNOW HOW"

Choosing an illustration from life, our Lord reminded the disciples that few if any earthly parents, if their children cried to them for blessings, would give them injurious things instead. What kind of a father if asked for bread would give his child a stone, if asked for fish would give him a serpent, if asked for an egg would give him a scorpion? Certainly such parents would be few, if any. The force of our Lord's language is seen if we remember that the bread of oriental countries very much resembles a stone, being about the size of a large hand and baked in an oven provided with stones and whitened with the ashes. Some kinds of serpents resemble certain kinds of fish, too. And there is a small white scorpion which rolls itself up in the shape of an egg. Basing his argument upon these illustrations, which would commend themselves to his hearers, our Lord proceeds to institute a comparison as between the dealings of earthly parents with their children and the dealings of God with his children. His words are, If ye being evil, being imperfect through the fall, more or less selfish in all of your thoughts and words and dealings, still would be disposed to give good gifts to your children, how much more would your heavenly Father give the good gift of all gifts, the holy Spirit, to them that ask him for it.

The clear intimation is that this should be the essence of our petitions to our heavenly Father, for more of his holy Spirit, and that we should look to the experiences of life, its trials, disappointments, discouragements, oppositions, not as being really injurious to us, not as being stones, scorpions and serpents, but as being blessings in disguise, if we receive them in the proper spirit. The Lord is able to make all things abound in the interest of his children, the new creatures in Christ Jesus. These know from experience that some of their severest trials and disappointments of an earthly kind have worked out for them development of character, elements of the holy Spirit, which they probably could not have so well received in any other manner. Hence, when we pray to the Lord for his blessings, we are with patience to wait for them, and to seek them and to find them in the various circumstances of life which his providences will permit. Remembering that the