









1568/1145.

SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS



# SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

For Every Day in the Year

*WITH MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS*

BY THE

REVS. THOMAS AND DAVID G. GOYDER

VOL. III.—SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER.

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SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

**September**

**A**





## September First.

THE FOUNTAIN OPENED FOR SIN AND FOR UNCLEANNESS.

*"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness."—ZECH. xiii. 1.*

WHILE we view the prophecies of the Old Testament in their literal sense, as applying to the Jewish church and people, and while we consider their application to the wants of the church in the days of the Lord's first advent, let us not be unmindful of their individual application to us in this, the day of His second appearing. Every reader of the Holy Word may, with certainty, believe that the truths therein contained have a personal and individual reference, and that he can read no general truth which has not a distinct and definite allusion to himself. If this were reflected on, how anxious would he be to institute an interior examination of his life and conduct, that he might heed the solemn warnings, and rejoice in the cheering promises, which meet him, like angelic messengers, to conduct, support, and guard him, on the way to his Father's kingdom.

Here is a cheering passage for him in the last days—the days in which we live: a fountain is opened for sin and for uncleanness; and the members of his spiritual house, or affections, and the inhabitants of

his spiritual city, or doctrinal tenets, may, by this fountain, be effectually cleansed from their pollutions. The sacred poet breaks forth into singing, as he utters the words, "There is a stream whose gentle flow makes glad the city of our God!" That stream is living; those waters are purifying: they are truths with which the ocean of holiness teems; and that ocean is the sacred repository of God's most holy Word.

David is typical of the Lord, who waits to make the heart of every man His house; who stands at the door and pleads for admission: but He cannot enter a defiled habitation; and man, of himself, is incapable of purifying it. Immersed in evil, his whole head is sick, and his whole heart faint. What can he do? He can desire to become pure; he can pray to the Lord to assist him, that he may put away the evil of his doings; he can plead with the Lord, while he acknowledges his inability; and mercy of mercies! "in that day," in that state of his humble and repentant mind, a fountain is opened for sin: his heart undergoes a purifying process, by the waters or truths of this fountain; they not only discover his pollutions, but commence the removal of them: where evil and the love of self dwelt, the love of the Lord is substituted; good takes up its abode, and a new heart is given. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem also come under the renovating process; the doctrines which the man held, and which, while the heart was evil, harmonized with its deceitful depravity, and by their sophistry even confirmed the pollutions that had their seat within, become, in their turn, the subjects of the scrutiny of truth. Their sophistries are unmasked; their true hideousness is disclosed; their deformity is laid bare,



and the inhabitants of Jerusalem desire the purifying waters; and in that day, in that state, their desire is granted. Their prayer is, "Create within us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us;" and their prayer is heard, and the prophecy is fulfilled within them, to the everlasting joy of their souls.

### September Second.

THE DIFFERENT SOILS ON WHICH THE SEED OF TRUTH FALLS.

*"And these are they which are sown among thorns."—MARK iv. 18.*

THERE are many grievous lusts in which the soul indulges, of which small account is taken; and it appears, that there is a class of persons who hear the Word, and who cannot, therefore, plead ignorance of its contents,—who yet suffer the lusts of other things so to engross their affections, as to render the Word they hear unproductive, if not injurious: "The cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things, choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful." To be deeply impressed with divine truth, and see the necessity of obedience to it, requires, on the part of man, a spirit of constant watchfulness and prayer; and such a spirit can only be acquired by waiting constantly on the Lord, and humbly listening to what he shall instruct us in, through the medium of his most Holy Word. The various classes on whom the seed of truth falls, are so differently affected by it, that very few seem to bring forth fruit to perfection. Some are all zeal and energy for a time, who, when they have heard the Word, immediately receive it with

gladness, and think every one that has preceded them lax and unprofitable, because so little seems to have been accomplished ; but they soon disclose the stony nature of the soil on which the seeds of truth have fallen, and become offended with the slightest difficulty, or with the slightest opposition which they meet. For a time they are all intemperate zeal, but speedily giving way, often become enemies instead of friends. When they first receive the truth, they may not conceive it possible to fall away. The evil into which they decline is a species of intemperance, and comes upon them step by step, as one that goeth a journey. The monster evil is seen at so great a distance, that it is thought it never can be reached ; sluggishness in the performance of spiritual duties in one, and zeal without knowledge in another, with no standard of spiritual sobriety by which to regulate the affections and thoughts, give so much power to the idol within, that the most fatal inroads are made into the soul, and evil continues to lure him onward, until the man becomes spiritually insane ; and excess in everything, and moderation or temperance in nothing, discloses but too truly that the "cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches," and the lust of other things, entering in, "choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful."

Temperance is, indeed, one of the chief virtues, but not in the sense of the word usually assigned to it. It is not temperance, when we discover ourselves to be in one extreme, immediately to rush into another. The unrestrained indulgence in any lust, or the immoderate devotion of the mind to any object, leads insensibly into evil ; and hence even piety itself has been warned not to expect that prayer will be granted, be-

cause it is couched in many words. Let us learn to keep our duties within the bounds of wise moderation, for this is the true meaning of the word temperance. Be temperate in meat, in drink, in sleep, in pleasure, in apparel, in amusement; and in all things shew your allegiance to the great Giver of all good, by a life of love, of truth, and soberness; so shall the seed of truth find its way into good ground, and bring forth fruit to perfection.

### September Third.

#### THE LAW PUT IN THE INWARD PARTS.

*"I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people."—JER. xxxi. 33.*

IT is a truth that the law of the Lord is perfect; and all who place themselves under its guidance, become perfect, as their Father in heaven is perfect; that is, they become relatively or finitely perfect, as their Father in heaven is infinitely so.

The ark, which always preceded the Israelites, and of which it is written, previous to their commencing their march, "Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered," contained the two tables of the law written by the finger of God; and hence, was indicative of the divine presence. Now, if we consider that the Lord is ever present in His Holy Word, then we have ever present with us that guide which can never mislead us. The chief thing to be attended to, is that we follow, and presume not to lead. Here lies all the danger. If the divine Word of Truth, which is our Ark, is placed behind instead of before; if, instead of follow-

ing its directions, and seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, we make it subservient to ourselves, and only use its precepts when they accord with our own humour or our own selfishness, then we may feel certain, that, instead of our enemies fleeing before us, they will rather surround us, harass us in our progress, find out all our vulnerable parts, and finally effect our destruction. So great is the difference between following and leading ; so true will be found the words, "unless ye forsake all that ye have, ye cannot be my disciples." Whoever would be the Lord's disciple, "MUST TAKE UP HIS CROSS, AND FOLLOW HIM." He who follows the divine truth, or ark, is sure to be freed from danger. The divine truth discovers all the lurking places of evil, discriminates between genuine and spurious good ; penetrates into the secret repositories of error ; removes all the specious coverings that obscure the light of truth in the understanding, and as the sword of the Spirit, contends against and removes them ; it then assumes the highest place in the thoughts and affections, and brings the whole powers of the soul under its righteous government. Dwelling thus in the inmost of the will and understanding, the soul of man becomes the high and holy place, and is as a consecrated ark, in which the divine presence dwells. Then it is that the Lord puts His law in the inward parts, writes it on the heart, becomes truly the God of all the affections and thoughts which therefore become His people, and render willing and grateful obedience to all His just and wise commands. In this state, there is no apprehension of danger, no fear of evil, no dread either of open or concealed enemies ; but, as soldiers under the command

of a wise general, or rather, as children dependent upon the wisdom and experience of a good father, they confidently go forward, trusting in the all-wise dispensations of a merciful God; and with humble and willing minds, follow whithersoever that providence leads, and feel an assurance that the Lord's mercy shall compass them about for ever.

### September Fourth.

#### THE POINT OF THE DIAMOND.

*"The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond."*  
—JER. xvii. 1.

THE sin of Judah, and of all those of whom Judah is a type, is still written with the point of a diamond; and men may read the writing by studying the Word of God, and learning therein what sin is. The diamond is so far an analogy of the Word of God, that it reflects objects in the dark; and the Word of God is a shining light, which discovers the darkness of evil, and which enlightens every one who takes it for his guide; it is "a lamp to the feet, and a light to the path," which cannot fail to conduct to heaven. The diamond is considered the most precious of gems; but there are others that have a higher or more interior signification. But the grand design of the divine wisdom, in introducing into the sacred narrative the precious gems, was to lead man to the still more precious jewels contained within the letter; and by considering the qualities and properties of the diamond, we may see this in a striking and beautiful manner. There are men who question the superiority of the

sacred writings—men who presume to affirm they can find much more wisdom, and much more morality in other books not accounted divine. But as the purity and value of the diamond is greatest when the stone itself is invisible in the brilliancy of its rays, and is thence termed a *gem of the first water*, so is the Word of God in its spiritual sense. Its shines by its own pure lustre. In the midst of the darkness of evil and error—and although the darkness comprehendeth it not, its brilliance makes plain all the dark spots of sin; while, in its own purity, it is invisible to those who detest the light, because their deeds are evil. The truths of the spiritual sense are simple, clear, and pure; but the heedless observer, or the man more careful for external show than internal purity, passes unperceived the priceless gem, or views it as a common pebble. He who would discover the diamond, must lose the estimation of his own wisdom and prudence; for the real gem is hidden from the wise and prudent, but to the simple is plainly visible. Diamonds are found in Golconda. They are sometimes discovered in the crevices of the rocks, and sometimes found amongst the sand; they are also washed down from the mountains by the streams thence descending. So, true wisdom dwelleth on high, and has its habitation in the high and holy place. And the man who suffers wisdom to direct his course, spiritually has his dwelling on high; he walketh righteously, he speaketh uprightly; his defence is the munition of rocks. (Isa. xxxiii. 15, 16.) The power of resistance possessed by the diamond is among the most valuable of its properties; and in this it illustrates the firmness of wisdom: he that trusteth in the Lord shall never be



moved ; and the capability which, as pure carbon, it possesses of burning, agrees with the fire of heavenly love, which is the real substance of heavenly wisdom. And is not the Word of God like fire? how many warming and comforting passages are there? O may we strive to attain the perfection of beauty! that we may return to Eden, the garden of God! that every precious stone may be our covering; the ruby, the topaz, and the diamond.

### September Fifth.

#### ZION, THE PERFECTION OF BEAUTY.

*"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."*—PSALM 1. 2.

THE character of the Supreme may be all summed up in the single word, perfection. He is, in truth, the only perfect being; and He has created man in His own image, after His likeness, and impressed upon him this injunction, "*Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*"

Man is the most perfectly organized of created beings, and is "fearfully and wonderfully made." But his wonderfully formed body has its existence and its beauty from the soul; and there can be no question to the believer in revelation, that as the soul recovers the purity which sin alone caused it to lose, the body will become a transcript of it, and shadow forth its perfection and beauty.

*Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shineth forth,* instructs us that pure divine love has its abode in the highest and holiest principles of goodness exist-

ing in the church. For Zion is a symbol of the church; and the perfection of beauty is the perfection of goodness existing in God; from the fervour of which goodness goes forth the glory and brilliance of divine truth, in which God always shines. Now it should be the aim of man constantly to aspire after excellence—not so much to aspire to excel, as to aspire to possess excellence within his own soul. Not to dazzle, not to blind others by the display of great learning and great abilities, but in his own life, by the meekness of wisdom, endeavour to approve himself before HIM who seeth in secret, and who rewards in what is manifest. True excellence makes no attempt at display; for it remembers the source of all perfection; and in the performance of its manifold duties, never loses sight of Him to whom alone all honour is due; and whatever, by his assistance, it is enabled to accomplish, it is careful to be obedient to the divine injunction, “*See thou tell no man?*” The understanding that aspires after true wisdom, and, consequently, after excellence, becomes more and more penetrating; but, at the same time, more and more softened and refined, until at length the constant exercise of truth causes errors to pass from it, and the eye of the understanding becoming single, the whole body is full of light. Then may be said to exist the purity of wisdom finitely embodied; and from such wisdom there is exhibited the loveliness of virtue—the more lovely, because of its lowliness. No parade; no assumption; no “Stand by, I am holier than thou;” no seeking after vulgar admiration; no assumed superiority, that it may have glory of men;—but a constant looking unto Him in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge—a

constant ascription unto Him of all goodness, truth, and excellence. O may we reflect that the Wisdom which came from above, and dwelt among us, has left in His gospel such stores as the ages of eternity can never exhaust!

## September Sixth.

### HIRAM'S DISPLEASURE WITH SOLOMON.

*"And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him; and they pleased him not. And he said, What cities are these which thou hast given me, my brother? and he called them the land of Cabul unto this day."—1 KINGS ix. 12, 13.*

HOW very differently the Scriptures are viewed and studied, may be inferred from the fact, that each man wishes to find in them such subjects as may best please himself, and feels them to be uninteresting because he is disappointed. One would be more diligent in the study of the Scriptures than he is, if he could find in them more instruction to enable him to gratify his selfhood; another would study them more diligently, if they possessed more scientific information. These persons, however, may read the Scriptures with an appearance of respect; but it can scarcely be doubted, that they hold them in very low esteem. The man who really desires wisdom, avails himself of every opportunity to acquire it, and is careful to look through the medium by which it is offered, to Him in whom all wisdom has its origin. He will avail himself of every opportunity to acquire knowledge, and he will apply the knowledge he acquires to improve and beautify his own mind.

Suppose we compare the mind, in its uninformed state, to a house unfinished and unfurnished; and suppose we further imagine that the more beautifully we can finish and furnish it, the more certainly shall we achieve eminence, and have to reside with us the most exalted of kings. Suppose, further, that this exalted king requires such a retinue of servants to be in each house with which he honours his presence, that no one need expect him, unless such attendants are ever in waiting, and the house itself so completely furnished as a palace, as to include all that a mighty sovereign would require. If we desired the presence of this sovereign, should we not labour indefatigably to render our house worthy of his presence? Undoubtedly we should. Now, the sovereign we allude to, is the King of kings and Lord of lords, even Jesus Christ our Saviour; and the house we allude to, is the mind or soul of man. To prepare our souls for the residence of our Saviour, we must neglect no kind of knowledge. We are so wonderfully endowed by the great King of kings, that we may make the wonders of the wide creation tributary unto us, and constitute them our servants. Do we mingle with scientific men, like Solomon of old?—we avail ourselves of their scientific treasures to strengthen, to adorn and beautify, our house or temple. We go to Hiram, king of Tyre, whose kingdom was on the sea border of Canaan, and we avail ourselves of his cedar trees, his fir trees, and his gold. And while in his own land they are but as natural good and truth, combined with the materials which form our house or temple, they represent natural, spiritual, and celestial good and truth. They may not so appear to the natural man; he may view his

own principles as indefinitely superior to all others. As Hiram viewed the cities of Galilee, which Solomon had given him, with disgust, and called them the land of Cabul, that is, dirty and displeasing, so does the natural man view the doctrines of spirituality. But the spiritual man, like Solomon, brings all under his subjection, and renders all tributary and subjective to the King of kings.

### September Seventh.

#### THE WATERS OF JERICHO HEALED.

*"The water is naught, and the ground barren. And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein."—2 KINGS ii. 19, 20.*

THE land of Canaan is by Christians viewed as a figure of that heavenly land "where everlasting spring abides;" and to this land they press onward as to the most desirable of possessions. It is also viewed as a figure of the true church on earth; and Jericho, just within the borders of Canaan, denotes the external boundaries or elementary principles which introduce the soul to a knowledge of true doctrine, and which prepare it for the heavenly enjoyments to be found in the interior. Before man can know what interior truth is, he must be instructed in the knowledge of that which is exterior. In the same way, before we can reach the interior of the heavenly land, we must pass the barriers. Jericho may, therefore, be described as representative of the state of those who are receiving instruction in the elementary principles of wisdom, which elementary principles are the literal truths of the Word of God. But it is seldom that man

perceives, at the beginning of his religious life, that these truths have a direct reference to himself. He sees them through the medium of the scenes described and applies the instruction, not to himself, but to the persons which the narrative introduces to his contemplation. He looks rather out of himself than within ; he sees that the city is pleasant, but to him the water is naught, and the ground barren.

How many are there at the present day who thus view the literal truths of divine revelation ! For, imagine these waters of Jericho to represent the literal truths of the Word, and how many, even among professing Christians, are there who misapply, or misapprehend, or who sometimes wrest them to their own destruction. To many, indeed, the waters are naught, and the ground barren. But the Lord, in His mercy, leaves us not without guide or instructor. The prophet is a representative character, and places before us the power by which divine wisdom is ever ready to instruct us in what we have to do. The command of the prophet is to bring a new cruse, and put salt therein. Before we can benefit by any new truth of divine revelation, that which we already know must be reduced to practice. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," is a truth which all can understand. But if it be not reduced to practice, and is suffered to remain in the memory alone, the water, or truth, is of no use ; and the land, or the affections, remain barren and unproductive. But if we permit this truth to accomplish the object for which it was designed, and so use it as to advance our souls in goodness, the mind becomes new ; capacity is given for the perception of interior truth, represented by the purifying quality of

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salt ; this salt enters into and impregnates with its healing virtues all the other doctrines and knowledges existing in our minds, and there is no more death or barrenness in us. How expressive, when rightly understood, are the Lord's words, " Have salt in yourselves, and have love one to another.

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### September Eighth.

JESUS CHRIST, THE FIRST AND THE LAST.

*"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end."*—REV. xxi. 6.

OUR great Redeemer makes Himself known to us in every conceivable way, as the true God. He does so that He may reach the minds of all His creatures, who being variously constituted, require to behold Him through the medium best suited to their apprehension, and best adapted to promote, advance, and secure their happiness. But to all He must be the First and the Last, the Almighty ; and all must seek Him *first*, both in the order of time and in the order of importance, if they would secure His aid and His guidance through life. They must see Him in every act of charity, in every principle of faith, in every truth of doctrine ; He must be viewed above all, through all, and in all. He is the very essential good. It is His first principle ; it is, so to speak, the very esse of His being. *God is Love!* And where has love been so marvellously displayed, as in the dealings of our gracious Redeemer and Saviour, towards the creatures who, but for His love and His pity, would have been irretrievably lost ?

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“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” We cannot fathom this love; it is deeper than all depths. There is nothing on earth with which we can compare it; its faintest image is that love which the mother has for her child. The love of an earthly parent for her child is often intense; and so pure, so comparatively unselfish, is the love of a mother for her child, that it has been used as a simile of the divine love. Yet the love of a mother may intermit; “she may forget;” but the love of the Lord never forgets us. Our holiest and purest affections are, therefore, first due to the Lord our Saviour, whom to love, we must love with all the heart, the soul, the strength, from the first moment of our reasonable existence to its final issue in this world; and then, freed from the cumbrous load of humanity, in a spiritual body we shall rise to a higher sphere, and love with a purer and more fervid affection.

And to whom better can we devote our affections than to our God and Father, who is also our Saviour and Friend. Infinitely wise! in Him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Wonderful in His creative power! the perfection and symmetry of Divine beauty is stamped upon every object that meets our reflective gaze. The only Counsellor whose instructions are infallible; the only guide who never misleads; the only Truth in which no error can be detected; and the source alone of that life by which we all live, and move, and are. He must be our first and last in all things.

Are we ready to worship in the beauty of holiness? It must be to Jesus, our Lord and our God, that we reverently kneel. Do we, with gratitude, acknowledge



the mercy that saved and redeemed us? It was God in Christ that reconciled us to Himself, imputing not our trespasses unto us. And are we at the end of our course in this world, and do the portals of heaven expand before us? It must be unto the Lord Jesus that we commend our spirits. To Him, then, to Jesus Christ, the First and the Last, be all honour and glory. He only is Almighty. Amen and Amen.

## September Ninth.

STRIVING TO ENTER THE STRAIT GATE.

*"Strive to enter in at the strait gate."*—LUKE xiii. 24.

IF there were no other passage in the Holy Word beside this, which taught that faith without works is dead, this of itself would be sufficient to convince us, that we must do as well as believe. Were we to see a venomous snake in our path, would our believing it to be a snake be sufficient to escape the deadly bite it might inflict? No;—we must strive to effect our escape, or destroy the life of the reptile. We know that evil exists within us. Everything conspires to convince us of this; but if we would be freed from its venom—for evil is what we would compare with the venomous reptile—we must strive to cast it out and destroy it: seeing it, and believing it to be a snake, will not render the deadliness of its venom of none effect. But evil may exist within us, and may coil itself up as if harmless, or so as to have no appearance of its mischievous qualities; nevertheless, its soul-destroying power is within; and we must be

constantly on the watch—constantly striving to extract its poisonous fangs—or it will ultimately destroy us.

But the means by which we strive may be mistakenly, or only partially, exercised, unless we constantly act under the conviction that our sufficiency is of the Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ; and our striving must not be by the exercise of one religious virtue, but by all. The removal of evil from our wills is not to be effected by the exercise of piety alone, faith alone, charity alone, or holiness alone; but by the combined force of all. The grace of prayer is considered by some, as an all-sufficient act of striving; and to excel in prayer, particular meetings are often held, where, one after another, a long effusion of words is poured forth, and many think they shall be heard for their much speaking, and this is often called striving, or wrestling, with God in prayer; and so powerful is such wrestling supposed to be, that not unfrequently it is believed sufficient to remove the deepest guilt, and avert the greatest calamities.

Faith is another Christian grace, and has long been considered as having peculiar power with God, because it implies an absence of self-dependence and self-righteousness; but it is not sufficiently reflected upon, that the power of faith with God only exists where it is a faith which worketh by love. Yet how many among us consider that, by believing in the Lord, or having faith in His name, we possess sufficient title to enter the strait gate, forgetting that this is seeking, not striving. Again: many of us think that charity, and that, too, of an external kind, is all-sufficient—bestowing goods to feed the poor; building schools to instruct the ignorant; erecting hospitals to receive and

cure the sick, and houses of refuge and industry to reclaim the vicious. Some even think that the charity of money is sufficient to send souls to heaven even after they have passed from the natural to the spiritual world. And so of holiness. Attention to the external duties of the Sabbath, a solemn countenance, a sober garment, and a careful supervision of speech, is considered striving to enter in at the strait gate.

These are the principal modes of striving, which too many of us adopt. The grand error in all seems to lie in this:—that it is a STRIVING WITH GOD. But the strife which the Lord inculcates in the gospel, is striving with SELF—striving against our evils—against our corruptions, our pride, our cunning, our covetousness, our vanity, our indolence, our inconstancy, our obstinacy—in one word, our SELFISHNESS. We must strive, fight against all these: we must pray for, and have faith and confidence in, the divine aid; and live the life of charity and holiness. In the practice of every grace and virtue; keeping the straight line of duty; swerving neither to the right hand nor to the left; always watchful, always setting the Lord before us, and looking to Him for help, we must have strife continually with self-love and the love of the world; and this will bring us safely through the strait gate into the heavens of our Father.

## September Tenth.

### THE EYE.

*"He that formed the eye, shall he not see."*—PSALM xciv. 9.

BY the eye of the Lord, is signified His divine Omniscience; and this divine attribute will be best represented to our limited capacities, by the glorious orb of day. It is as the eye of the Almighty, from its rays penetrating and pervading the universe of created things; and thus being not unlike its Creator in Omniscience and Omnipresence. The central sun, therefore, for which astronomers may search the natural heavens in vain, is the Lord Jesus Christ, "The Lord our God is a Sun."

If we trace up natural light to its proper centre and origin, we come to a globe of fire—for the sun itself is not light, but fire; and the light is nothing else but the manifestation of that fire. In like manner, if we trace up spiritual light to its proper centre and origin, we again come to a globe of fire, differing only from the former in its being spiritual and not natural; thus, as being the fire of divine love, not the fire of mere natural activity. This globe is the spiritual sun, in the centre of which is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, in Himself, is the purest love; and from whom perpetually proceeds the light of truth, which is the manifestation of that love. In all truth, then, we behold an image, more or less remote, of that great God and Saviour, proving to us both His existence and His qualities; with an evidence of demonstration equal, at least, to

that by which the sun's light proves to us both the existence and qualities of the sun. And He has so formed our eye, that while the light of the sun reveals to us the glories of the natural world, it may, by correspondence, image the eye of the spirit, and reveal to us the more divine glories of the eternal world.

Without the eye, nature would be a universal blank to us. The earth, so glorious and so rich in all its Maker's productions, so beautiful in its lawns, and groves, and fields; so majestic in its forests and its glades; so noble in the race who people it, akin to angels, images though defaced of God; all this would be nothing but a universal blank. Darkness—a darkness that, when known, "must be felt"—would cover the whole. To these pleasures the eye introduces us: it ensures our safety, by shewing the obstacles and dangers in our path; it gives us pleasure, by exhibiting the beauty around us. The form, the colour, the reality of every object, if known at all, is known through the medium of the eye. What, then, are the characteristics of the eye of the mind—the spiritual organ of sight? "Let me see thy glory," said Moses: and what did he see? "The Lord Jehovah, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and long-suffering." The eye of His soul was open to perceive the truth, the mercy, and the love of the Creator. The intellect, the mental eye, with what beauties does it not furnish us? The glories of truth, the pleasures of religion, the imaginations of poetry? Without this faculty of the soul, all would be "dark and unfurnished," as the world "ere the spirit of God breathed on its waters." It is this mental eye that exhibits to us the beauties of truth, the consolations of religion, the glories of

heaven. Yet, let it be remembered, even as the bodily eye is only an instrument, so is the mental eye but an instrument. Without light, the material organ of sense would be useless. It perceives the effects of light, and communicates them to the mind, but it has no light in itself. It is the same with the spiritual organ; it too perceives the effects of light, that "light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" but in itself it has no light. It is but an instrument to receive truth. Dark itself, and only formed to receive sight from its great luminary, from Him who formed the eye, it is to the spirit what the eye is to the body, the medium through which every object made visible by the "Sun of righteousness," is revealed, and therefore made visible to the mind. This is forced upon us every day—every lesson taught by the scenes around us, is an impression upon the mental eye, of those truths which are to be learned even from natural things. There is not a shrub, there is not a tree, there is not a flower, not a wave that ripples, not a breeze that blows, but communicates some idea to the mind, which idea forms an image in the spirit; as the natural light reflected from a material object, forms an image by means of the natural organ through the sense of the body. O give glory to Him who formed the eye!

## September Eleventh.

## THE EAR.

*"He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?"—PSALM xciv. 9.*

THE Lord who formed the ear is constantly in the act of speaking unto us—"Day unto day uttereth speech;" for His speech is His Holy Word, and this is constantly exhorting us to holiness, admonishing us when we go astray, instructing us in righteousness, or encouraging us to go forward in the regeneration, and promising to be ever with us. Man is not supported "by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The two bodily senses of seeing and hearing, are the appointed means of keeping open a circulation of good things from one world to another, especially from the great Creator to His creature, man; under the conviction that they all proceed from Him who planted the ear, and Who will continue to supply all its wants, if we wait upon Him. The internal ear should be open only to hear the voice of the eternal mercy and truth of Jesus Christ, according as it is written, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak."

It is a discovery in modern philosophy, that sound is propagated better in the night than in the day. This is also true concerning spiritual sound, or the effect which the Word of God produces on the spiritual ears. For spiritual sound, which is the voice of God, or the Word of God, makes more impression in the night, both of spiritual ignorance and of spiritual trial, than in the day of spiritual illumination and consolation.

The ear is one of the most useful members of the body. What an abundance of edifying information and instruction is communicated every day, from one mind to another, through its means! Knowledge is thus brought into general circulation, and, like every other gift of the Divine Providence, becomes common property. Nor is it knowledge alone which is conveyed from one mind to another by this wonderful channel. It must be obvious to every person of reflection and observation, that, by discourse, the affections are wrought upon, the will is moved, and the whole man, in many cases, becomes changed as to his purposes, his inclinations, and the general temper and spirit of his life. As therefore the eye is instrumental in the introduction of material images, necessary for the formation of intellectual ideas, and thus in giving birth and growth to the intellectual mind, in like manner, the ear is instrumental in admitting sounds, by means of which, not only the intellectual, but also the voluntary principle of man is operated upon and cherished, whether that principle be grounded in good or evil. The two organs of sight and of hearing, therefore, unite in this use,—that each is subservient to the purposes of mental growth and perfection,—the former being adapted principally to the service of the intellectual mind, whilst the latter is adapted to the service both of the intellectual and voluntary mind, but especially of the voluntary. It is the office of the eye to supply the rich materials or rudiments of thought and intelligence: but of the ear to furnish the more valuable materials or rudiments of those numberless affections which enter into the composition of the human will. Glory be to Him who planted the ear!



## September Twelfth.

## CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE.

*"Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life."—LUKE XXI. 34.*

THE word Temperance—derived from the Latin *tempus*, time—properly signifies to time, to regulate, or to confine anything within due limits: and when applied to our passions, our conduct, or our amusements, it means the confinement of these within the limits which revelation commands, and reason shows to be necessary. Among Christian duties and virtues, this should be considered one requiring our attentive observance: for without its regulating influence acts, which would otherwise be blameless, become injurious. Without temperance, eating degenerates into gluttony; drinking into intoxication; amusement into folly and dissipation; charity into profusion and prodigality; and even religion itself becomes beclouded with superstition. Hence, then, temperance may be classed in the catalogue of virtues. And when we consider the nature of man, and the dangers to which we are all exposed, but more particularly the young: when we know how often evil assumes the garb of virtue, how often Satan appears as an angel of light, it becomes doubly necessary that we should be all temperate, and that the young in particular should be exhorted to be sober-minded.

The government of our passions is certainly a hard but not an impossible task; for it must be remembered

that, corrupt as man now is, there was a time when he was by the Creator called very good; hence there is no passion or feeling in the human heart but was originally good. "We put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us;" and by wise and prudent management, they do obey us. Now our passions require the same restraint; and if we look to the Lord for assistance, and bring our passions under the regulating influence of the Holy Word, they will be kept to their proper duty, and minister to our real happiness. To regulate our passions, to restrain them within proper bounds, to use them so that they may conduct us in the path of virtue, is the office and duty of Christian Temperance.

We turn now to the guidance and proper control of our actions. The apostle declares that none of us liveth to himself; and hence the duty of man is to provide for the well-being, and health of his own body, that he curtail not, by excess, the uses he was designed by the Lord to perform. Here temperance in eating at once claims our attention. It is well known that the partaking of certain meats inflames the passion of anger; and he who eats to excess, sins against his own body; and, what is worse, injures his own mind. The mind becomes inflamed, stolid, or excited, as the passions are improperly exercised; and when man subsists upon simple food, and satisfies his appetite without excess, his mind is preserved from inflammatory action. Hence the apostle declares: "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live:" and hence also he says in another place "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate

in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection." The indulgence of appetite till the taste becomes vitiated and accustomed to luxury, is wrong in every sense. It enervates the mind, and renders it unfit to meet the changes to which mankind are subject. Hence it is that we so often hear of suicide, under circumstances which cause us to wonder. But if we reflect, we might easily perceive, that where the appetite has been pampered, the body has become enervated, the faculties of the mind weakened, and when any accustomed gratifications of sense have been withdrawn, the soul seems to have nothing to fall back upon, and a terrible relief is sought in suicide. How little must such persons think of another world, and that they are rushing thither, uncalled and unprepared! We may urge that our means allow us to use these luxuries; but our means are only lent for a time, and lent, not to injure ourselves, but to do good to others. When the Lord gave us the means, He commanded us to occupy till he called us. He bestowed upon us the means for a certain purpose: in this case, to strengthen the body, and enable it to act more vigorously and efficiently as the instrument of the soul, and not to serve as a dead weight upon its usefulness. How unreasonable then, must it be to endanger the eternal happiness of the soul, and to risk the health of the body, by indulging the appetite of sensuality. An old writer has observed, that he never sat at a rich man's table, without imagining that he beheld diseases and death lurking in ambush among the dishes: and strong though the figure is, it is not quite void of

truth. Pain and disease, anxiety and tremor, premature age and death, are the sure followers of this species of intemperance. "Sound sleep," says the wise man, "cometh of moderate eating; but the pains of watching and choler are with an insatiate man." And again: "The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep." Connected with intemperance in eating, is intemperance in drinking—a vice equally, if not more, horrible in its effects, which are at least more prominent. The difference between intemperance in eating, and intemperance in drinking, is nominal only. The end of both is—we use the word advisedly—the end of both is—Death. But there is this difference in the natural effects. Intemperance in eating classes a man for the time he indulges in it, with the beasts that perish; and intemperance in drinking does the same, by quenching the light of reason, rendering the will in many instances powerless, and transforming the creature into an evil spirit. And here we may remark to those who know the analogy existing between natural and spiritual things, that intemperance in eating deadens the appetite for spiritual good. Thus the former opens the door for the admission of evils, which are devils; and the latter for the admission of falses, which are Satans; and when these influences unite, if the man die unrepentant, like the man in the parable, "In hell he lifts up his eyes, being in torment."

Thus both lead to the same end, though by different paths, and at a different pace. Gluttony creeps onward to death, falls half asleep, apoplexy ensues, and the body expires. Drunkenness drives madly forward

—a raging fever burns in every vein—onward, onward, it rushes, until vitality is spent, and the body lies a blackened corpse, terrible even in death.

Yet temperance can be prescribed by no definite rule. The constitutions of men vary; and it is the duty of a man to study his own constitution. Whatever hurts the body, whatever inflames or disorders the mind, whether in meat, or drink, or apparel, is a breach of temperance, and ought to be avoided, as we value peace here and happiness hereafter.

## September Thirteenth.

### CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE.

*"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life."—LUKE xxi. 34.*

THE love of our neighbour is a positive command; and this command is the existence, if we may use the expression, of that perfect charity of which our Lord Jesus Christ is the essence.

But charity indiscriminately exercised is intemperance. Temperate and well-regulated charity is from heaven. A word of kindness! a look of love! how good it is! How beautifully has the wise man illustrated it! Words of kindness are like apples of gold, set in frames of silver! But how much more beautiful is the living love—"God in Christ, reconciling the world to himself!" Do not lose sight of this divine charity; and remember the charity which assists in rescuing souls from destruction; the charity which withdraws souls from darkness to light; the charity which rescues souls from the doctrines of error, and

enables them to rest in peace under the true vine, none making them afraid ; the charity which sacrifices the conveniences of self, and provides for the spiritual welfare of another—is a divine charity, because it flows direct from Him who “came to seek and to save that which was lost, to lay down his life for the sheep.” And this charity is true temperance ; it is that self-denial which eschews its own will, its own gratifications, and desires above all things, the happiness of others. We sometimes think, when we see our table spread, and the feast of fat things abundantly before us, that we are spiritual epicures ; looking calmly on the famine that everywhere meets our eyes—not a famine of bread and water, but of hearing the words of the Lord—and taking no pains ; providing no means to ameliorate it. We are satisfied with things as they are, if everything goes smoothly on with ourselves. We eat bread till we are full, and drink wine till we are satisfied, and care little for the wants of others ; and though Providence has blessed us with the means, we are too idle to use them. Whether this be not a breach of charity, an infringement of the laws of spiritual temperance, let each one judge.

True temperance keeps every passion within its boundaries. For acts of use, it is our duty carefully to watch over and preserve our health and lives ; but unless this duty is regulated by temperance, our watchfulness will become fear. It is our duty to trust in the Lord, to hope in all cases ; but intemperate hope is presumption. That God will save us from our sins, if we trust in Him, and repent of our evils, is a well-founded hope ; but it is the greatest presumption to imagine that He will save us, if we continue in our

evils. In all our feelings even the best, in all our desires even the most lawful, there is danger unless we add to them temperance ; to temperance, patience ; to patience, experience ; to experience, hope : giving to temperance the pre-eminence, as the most prudent to conduct.

There is yet another reflection which we may offer ; temperance as applied to amusements. We require relaxation as well of body as of mind. Like a bow, neither the body nor the mind must be always bent. Those who declaim against innocent amusements are among the number of the intemperate. Such persons convert religion into a gloomy fanaticism, as far from what the Lord intends, as heaven is removed from earth. But man is too apt, instead of innocent relaxation, to seek after inordinate pleasure. We must beware, therefore, that we do not make relaxation a plea for frivolity. Although the most seriously religious man may lawfully use amusement for unbending his mind, yet he must beware not to exceed Christian liberty. Never let us purpose any other end to ourselves, than relaxing our energies that we may the more profitably return to our labour. The surest test to which we can subject any amusement is, to ask ourselves seriously : " After this indulgence, can I kneel down and address my Maker, with as much humble confidence as before ? Shall I be able and willing to return to my religious duties as before ? Shall I feel as spiritually-minded as before ? " If we can reply to these questions satisfactorily, the amusement is innocent. But if we find our religious feelings blunted, our spirits injured, and our love to the Lord less ardent, the amusement has been either wrong in itself, or in-

ordinatedly indulged. When we speak of temperance at the present day, many persons understand us to allude to abstinence from intoxicating drinks; but temperance extends much further than this. It should guide the whole of our conduct, regulate our passions, set bounds to our feelings, and direct our amusements. The intemperate man is not one who merely indulges in intoxicating drinks: he is the eater of inordinate meats; the votary of inordinate passions; and the seeker of inordinate amusements. The covetous, the frivolously fashionable, the pleasure-seeker, are all intemperate. Let us, therefore, while we seek all the Christian virtues, take care that Temperance goes before and guides the whole.

### September Fourteenth.

#### THE POWER OF THE SOUL OVER THE BODY.

*"It is the Spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing."*—JOHN vi. 63.

I WILL relate to you a circumstance, which will furnish you with matter for reflection. Our brother Sennadius, well known to us all as an eminent physician, and whom we especially love, whose piety and active benevolence you are well acquainted with, could yet, nevertheless, as he has lately narrated to us, by no means bring himself to believe in a life after death. Now (God, doubtless, not willing that his soul should perish), there appeared to him one night in a dream, a radiant youth of noble aspect, who bade him follow him; and as Sennadius obeyed, they came to a city, where, on the right side, he heard a chorus of the most



heavenly voices. As he desired to know whence this divine harmony proceeded, the youth told him that what he heard were the songs of the blessed ; whereupon he awoke, and thought no more of his dream than people usually do. On another night, however, behold, the youth appears to him again, and asks if he knows him ? and Sennadius relates to him all the particulars of his former dream, which he well remembered. "Then," said the youth, "was it whilst sleeping or waking that you saw these things?" "I was sleeping," answered Sennadius. "You are right," returned the youth ; "it was in your sleep that you saw these things ; and know, O Sennadius, that what you see now is also in your sleep. But if this be so, tell me, then, where is your body?" "In my bed-chamber," answered Sennadius. "But know you not," continued the youth, "that your eyes, which form a part of your body, are closed and inactive?" "I know it," answered he. "Then," said the youth, "with what eyes see you these things?" And Sennadius could not answer him ; and, as he hesitated, the youth spoke again, and explained to him the motive of his questions. "As the eyes of your body," said he, "which lies now on your bed and sleeps, are inactive and useless, and yet you have eyes wherewith you see me, and those things I have shewn unto you ; so after death, when these bodily organs fail you, you will have a vital power whereby you will live ; and a sensitive faculty whereby you will perceive. Doubt, therefore, no longer that there is a life after death." And "thus," said this excellent man, "was I convinced, and all doubts removed."

We commend this narrative to the serious reflection

of our readers, and beg them also to weigh well the power of the soul over the body, as shown in the following extract from Dr. Moore, than which, in the course of our reading, we have found nothing truer and more beautiful.

How exquisitely the spirit becomes visible in every attitude and every feature of happy children! We read their thoughts and feelings as perfectly as if their souls were our own. And were our own minds and bodies attuned by love, we should find ourselves impelled by sympathy to join their sports. Like musical instruments of marvellous construction, we are so strung, that the air which causes vibration, seems to breathe but in the music, and one string is no sooner struck, than all awake in harmony. And we are attuned to each other so perfectly, that under similar circumstances of health, being free from the dull pressure of care, all humanity would perhaps respond to one heart.

But the science and execution of music affords us still better illustration. How nice a structure must be called into play, when a skilful pianist, by aid of an additional instrument fitted to his convenience, executes an intricate piece of music, not only in a wonderfully rapid succession of mechanical movements, but also in a manner fully to express the very feelings of his soul. But how much more forcibly is the same power manifested in the human voice. By it the spirit speaks, not only an infinite variety of articulated sounds, but more marvellously still, by the modulated language of tones, so as to excite into ecstasy or agony every sympathy within us.

What is it that so skilfully touches this instrument?

What is it that enjoys as well as actuates, receives as well as communicates, through this inscrutable organization? It is the soul or spirit, without which this body were more unmeaning than a statue, and only fit, as it would tend, to decay. It is the soul which animates the features, and causes them to present a living picture of each passion; so that the inmost agitations of the heart become visible in a moment, and the wish that would seek concealment, betrays its presence and its power in the vivid eye, while the blood kindles into crimson with a thought that burns along the brow. It is this which diffuses a sweet serenity and rest upon the visage when our feelings are tranquillized, and our thoughts abide with heaven, like ocean in a calm, reflecting the peaceful glories of the cloudless skies. This indwelling spirit of power blends our features into unison and harmony, and awakes "the music breathing from the face" when in association with those we love; and heart answering to heart, we live in sympathy, while memory and hope repose alike in smiles upon the bosom of enjoyment. It is a flame from heaven purer than Promethean fire; that vivifies and energizes the breathing form. It is an immaterial essence, a being that quickeneth matter and imparts life, sensation, and motion to the intricate frame-work of our bodies, which wills when we act, attends when we perceive, looks into the past when we reflect, and, not content with the present, shoots with all its aims and all its hopes into the futurity that is for ever dawning upon it.

## September Fifteenth.

## THE LORD OF HOSTS OUR REDEEMER.

*"As for our Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts is His name."—ISAIAH xlvi. 4.*

THE word translated Atonement, in the original Greek signifies the reconciliation, or bringing together, of parties once separated; and understood in this sense, the doctrine is a fundamental tenet of Christianity. The atonement is the reconciliation, not of God to man, but of man to God; not of the Creator to His creatures, but of depraved creatures to their Creator. There is not, there cannot be, in the Divine mind, any feelings analogous to anger or wrath, as these exist in the breast of man.—"God is love;" He is not merely loving, but love itself, in its very essence. With love there is neither wrath nor fury, nor in the God of Love can these passions have any existence.

How, then, do the Scriptures speak of the wrath of God? In the same sense in which they speak of His grieving and repenting,—as appearances arising from states of the human mind, and not as real passions existing in the Deity. We may illustrate this. The sun of our system always shines with equal light and splendour; yet we speak of his rising and going down, while yet the change is in the position of the earth, not of the sun. So when the mind turns from God, He appears to withdraw; and when it turns towards Him, He appears to arise upon it. When, again, iniquity interposes between the soul and its Maker, God appears as a consuming fire, as the sun

assumes a fiery appearance to one who views it through a mist. The change is not in God, but in the mind itself.

Hence, God never was angry with the world. On the contrary, it was, to use a plain expression, the world that was angry with God : and the great object was not to propitiate God, or make Him merciful, but to persuade the world to be reconciled, and to open a way by which this reconciliation could be effected. In order to place man in a state of salvation, it was necessary that he should be joined in spirit to his Maker, that there should be a real conjunction of heaven with earth. But man had himself departed from God and brought himself under the dominion of the powers of hell. He was their slave and their captive, "led by them at their will." Neither had he the power to release himself ; for having yielded himself a servant of sin, he lay bound in every power and fettered in every work, "bound hand and foot" by the chains of evil and falsehood. In this state he could not come to God ; he had no inclination to approach him ; and, even had he possessed the desire, there is that eternal opposition between good and evil, that would effectually have debarred his approach. Where good reigns, evil cannot dwell ; but man was evil, therefore where God was, he could not come. If ever, therefore, the salvation of man be effected, it must be by God himself approaching to man. Yet, in his unveiled glory, in the brightness of His Godhead, the Deity could not do this ; infinite good would have consumed the workers of evil ; for the Lord our God is a consuming fire. There was only one way to effect it, and that was by an assumption of the human form ; and, as man, redeeming man.

In the work of Atonement, two things were necessary, The entire subjugation of the enemies of man ; and, the establishment of a medium of communication between God and His creatures.

The first was performed when the Lord, as man, admitted and repelled the utmost temptations of the infernal hosts, and especially when, in the last contest on the cross, He “spoiled principalities and powers,” leading “captivity captive, and receiving gifts from men;” and, secondly, by the glorification of His humanity, and its union with His essential Godhead, “a new and living way” was opened, the humanity of the Saviour becoming the “Mediator,” or medium of access, to the infinite God.

In this great work two beings only were engaged—God and man. The first wrought out and accomplished the work of Atonement; the other receives that atonement when approaching the hidden by means of the manifested God, the Divinity by the glorified humanity; he receives unto himself that love and that wisdom, which, by making him an image of God, joins him to his Maker. “God is one;” that God is the Lord of Hosts, the Redeemer, and Saviour; that Saviour comes to reconcile the world unto himself; and man receives the atonement when, coming to the Saviour, “he ceases to do evil and learns to do well,” loves God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself. Thus he drinks the blood of Christ, receives into his understanding the eternal truth; and eats His flesh, receives into his will and affections the love of God; thus by the same eternal truth is he “washed,” and by the same love sustained, till his journey on earth terminates in the rest of heaven, and then “we

joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the Atonement."

## September Sixteenth.

### THE DIVINE TRINITY.

*"No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."—MATT. xi. 27.*

THE Trinity in the Divine Being may be most properly and fitly illustrated by the nature of man: for as man is in the image of God, we are justified in forming our ideas of the original from the nature of the image. In a man, there are two distinct faculties, which, united together, put forth an operating power. The inner, and more important of these, is the will: and hence, Love, whether it be the love of good, or the love of evil, is the very essence of derived existence. If we take away love, or the will, which is the faculty of love, we must at the same time destroy thought, for thought is the offspring of love. The faculty where thought operates is the understanding; and this faculty depends upon the will, for before the mind can act upon any subject, that subject must have entered into the will, and become an object either of love or aversion—either of desire or of indifference; but when the mind has fixed its affections on any object, that object becomes instantly a subject of thought; and then, only, is that love manifested in outward action.

The will cannot act without the understanding, love which exists only in the will is powerless. Before it can be brought forth into act, it must enter into

the understanding, and there acquire a definite form. Or, to vary the illustration, good in the will can only act by means of wisdom in the understanding: for before it is thus manifested, it is hidden, not being the subject of thought. The understanding is, therefore, the manifestation of the will; and if any one in the body can behold the thought of another, he can behold his will, which is the spirit of that thought.

No one can approach the will of another, but through his understanding. Before any impression can be made upon the will from without, the understanding must be interested: as no one can approach the spirit of man, but through his outward senses, which are the visible forms of his spiritual faculties. These two powers—the will, and the understanding which depends upon it, and is filled with it—are distinct, yet they form but one; and from the will, through the understanding, proceeds the power of operation.

Now let us, with humility, apply this to the Great Being, of whom man is the image. In Him there is a threefold distinction, as in man. The Father, “whose nature and whose name is love:”—the Son, who is the manifested form of the Father, and who, in holy Scripture, is known by the name of the Word, the Truth, the Wisdom: and the Spirit, who proceeds from the Father, through the Son, and whose title is the power of God. Here, then, as in man, is LOVE producing WISDOM; and, through wisdom, putting forth POWER.

Let us now see how the situations in which the Father and the Son, in the Deity, stand respectively to each other, answer to the operations of the two powers in man. We have already seen that the Son is said to depend upon the Father, as the understand-



ing depends upon the will. We have seen that as wisdom is the effect of the understanding, so the Son of God is called WISDOM; and as love exists in the will, so the Father is called LOVE. We proceed, therefore, to notice the other points of resemblance. And, first, every work of the Father is said to be performed by the Word: "Without Him was not anything made that was made." Yet, of Himself, the Son can do nothing; it is the "Father that dwelleth within Him that doeth the work." Exactly similar is the situation of the will and the understanding in man. Every work of the will is performed only by the understanding, and without it not a single affection can operate with effect. Yet alone, the understanding can do nothing; it is the affection within that animates and renders it active. Again: "No one knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any one the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him." Here it is declared, that by the Son alone can the Father be revealed; just as by the thought alone the will can be made manifest. In the same manner, the Son is described as the only means of approach to the Father; and the only medium by which the influence of God can be received: even as the understanding is the only means of approach to the will, and the only medium by which the affections can operate. Yet the Father and the Son, like the two faculties of man, are one—one in person—one truly, "without confusion of parts, or division of substance." From the Father, through the Son, proceeds the Spirit: as from the will, by the understanding, proceeds outward operation. This outward operation is power in man. This operation of the Spirit is power in God.

Thus the Saviour identifies the Spirit with Himself: "I will send you another Comforter who shall abide with you for ever." "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you. I will be with you even to the consummation of the age."

That the Spirit is the power of God, or God manifested in His operation, is equally evident from the words of the angel to Mary: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the POWER of the Highest shall overshadow thee." The more we compare Scripture with Scripture, the more clear will our views be on sacred subjects. We shall truly see in it the light of God; and instead of being perplexed with mysteries, shall perceive the path of heavenly truth before us, and, walking in it, shall view it shining more and more unto the perfect day.

## September Seventeenth.

### THE WONDERFUL FRAME OF MAN.

*"I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."*—PSALM CXXXIX. 14.

MAN is, as to his body, a little world, all the wonders of the world of nature being in his body repositied. If the æther and its modifications be contemplated, this will be found repositied in the ears. Whatsoever invisible things flow and act in the air, these are in the organ of smell. Whatsoever invisible thing flows in water or other fluid bodies, this is in the organ of taste. The very changes of state are in the sense of touch throughout. If the life of man were regulated according to the laws of divine order, still

more hidden things would be perceived by the interior organs. Man is born in the ultimate or lowest degree of the natural world ; he is then elevated by sciences to the second degree ; as he perfects himself in scientific knowledge, his understanding becomes expanded, and by becoming rational, or by reflecting upon the science he has acquired, he is elevated to the third degree. These three degrees belong to the natural man. Thus man is, first, natural ; secondly, rational ; and, thirdly, spiritual ; when, in the natural degree, he may be said to be in Egypt ; when he becomes rational, he is in Assyria ; and when he becomes spiritual, he enters the land of Canaan—that is, he becomes a member of the Lord's church. In this state, the last, or spiritual, becomes first ; and the first, or natural, becomes last.

Man's affections and thoughts correspond with all things of the animal kingdom ; his will and understanding with all things of the vegetable kingdom ; and his ultimate life with all things of the mineral kingdom. If we examine the actions of men, this truth will be obvious at once ; for with respect to the animal kingdom, so long as men remain in merely natural good and truth, they correspond to oxen and asses. When the understanding is cultivated more than the will, they bear analogy to the horse—and “a horse is a vain thing for safety, neither can he deliver any one by his great strength.” When he enters on the first stage of the regeneration, he is correspondent with cattle ; when truth leads him to goodness, he becomes one of the flock of the Good Shepherd ; but when he cherishes evils and falses, and continues in a state of impenitence, his will becomes a den

of savage beasts, and his understanding a cage of unclean and hateful birds. All the natural affections of men are useful, inasmuch as, if legitimately exercised, they are but the manifestations of the spiritual affections. If we were to suppose the world deprived of all the inferior creatures, as sheep, cows, horses, dogs, and the rest, the comforts of human life would be materially abridged: so if the mind of man were to be deprived of the principles represented by those creatures, he would experience a similar diminution of his happiness.

Man may not improperly be called an animal tree; as a tree, on the other hand, may not improperly be called a vegetable man. The resemblance between a man and a tree is, in Scripture, very frequently alluded to. "A good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit! every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." How necessary, then, to know the quality of our spiritual trees. If we attentively consider the vegetable kingdom, we see those shrubs, or plants, or trees which are the least valuable, come to perfection the soonest. The fig is much earlier than the vine, and the vine than the olive. Those fruits, also, that are the most valuable, require a longer time, and greater heat, to bring to a state of maturity. It is the same with the plants, trees, and fruits of the mind of man. The natural man, like the fig-tree, is early covered with an abundance of leaves, typical of external religious profession. The vine itself exhibits abundant foliage, but the cluster of grapes requires the heat of the sun. So man receives readily the first

impressions of spiritual truth, and makes a fair display of the knowledges thereof ; but it requires the heat of spiritual love, ere he can press the rich grapes in the wine-press of spiritual discrimination, and be able to separate the pure from the impure. But the olive yields the rich oil of heavenly goodness, when the fervid heats of the Sun of righteousness have converted the fruit into one luxurious degree of mellowness, illustrative of celestial love, heavenly gratitude, and confiding obedience. Lastly, the qualities and characters of different men may be referred to those of different minerals. One man may be denominated a man of gold, another of silver, another of brass, another of lead, another of iron, another of tin, and so on :—Thus one is a man of celestial goodness or gold, another of spiritual truth or silver ; one man combines the union of natural goodness with truth, and is a man of brass, another possesses the truth only in great force and potency, and is a man of iron. Many men attempt the process of gilding and polishing, presenting an aspect outwardly very different from that which they present inwardly. Some men shine with the resplendent lustre of borrowed silver and gold, whose inward parts are mere tin or brass. Thus it is that man has two distinct faces : by one he looks at the Lord, and is viewed by the Lord—by the other, he looks at man, and is viewed by man. The first is his real, the second his apparent face ; for every one is such as he is in the sight of God, and every one appears such as he is in the sight of men. The perfect human mind possesses all the qualities of the metals alluded to above, but gold should, at all times, be the presiding one. Then, again, we should consider what is the

quality of the gold itself ; for much depends upon this knowledge, and this knowledge is acquired by being acquainted with the country which produces it. The Scriptures speak of gold from Uphaz, of gold from Ophir, of gold from Sheba, of gold from Havilah, and of gold from Tarshish. The gold of Uphaz, signifies celestial good ; of Ophir, spiritual good ; of Sheba and Havilah, the good of knowledge ; and of Tarshish, scientific good. Silver from the same countries will symbolize the various degrees of truth.

### September Eighteenth.

#### THE ERECT FORM OF MAN.

*"I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."*—PSALM CXXXIX. 14.

THE form of man is upright ; in this he is singular upon the earth. For though the bear has a broad foot, and stands erect when he fights ; though the ape and the pigmy sometimes walk or run in an erect posture ; still, to the human species alone is the position natural and constant. The foot of man is more firm and broad, he has a long great toe, while the ape has but a thumb ; his heel too, is on a level with the sole of his foot. All the muscles acting in this position are adapted to it. The calf of the leg is enlarged, the pelvis is drawn backward, the hips are spread outwards from each other, the spine is less curved, the breast is widened, the shoulders have clavicles, the hands have fingers endued with the sense of feeling ; to crown the structure, the receding head is exalted on the muscles of the neck. Man is a creature looking far above and around him.

When our Creator had finished, or rather fulfilled his labours, and all the forms the beautiful earth presents had issued from his creative hands, He surveyed the wide creation, and, behold, every object in its kind was "very good." But there was still wanting one who should be to the inferior animals a sovereign—a lord, having all things on earth subjected to his authority and dominion. The Creator, therefore, took counsel with himself, and "Let us make man" issued from the divine mouth. Man was created. With paternal affection, God stretched forth his hand to the last, the most perfect creature he had formed, and said, "Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creature that moveth on the earth: and it was so."

With grateful eyes, then, let us contemplate our erect position. Let us strive to recover the likeness in which we were originally created, and imitate in all things that tenderness and forbearance to the creatures put under our authority, which distinguishes our heavenly Father towards us. Let us strive to be erect in love and wisdom, as well as in bodily conformation. Then we shall rise to a spiritual altitude, and the plumb-line of truth will be set in the midst of our wills and affections. (Amos vii. 7, 8.)

"The wisdom of the Creator," says a distinguished author, "is in nothing seen more gloriously than in the heart." An anatomist, who understood its structure, might say before-hand that it would play; but, from the complexity of its mechanism, and the delicacy of many of its parts, he must be apprehensive that it would always be liable to derangement, and that it

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would soon work itself out. Yet does this wonderful machine go on, night and day, for eighty years together, at the rate of a hundred thousand strokes every twenty-four hours, having, at every stroke, a great resistance to overcome; and it continues this action for this length of time without disorder and without weariness. That it should continue this action for this length of time without disorder, is wonderful; that it should be capable of continuing it without weariness, is still more astonishing. Never, for a single moment, night or day, does it intermit its labour, neither through our waking nor our sleeping hours. On it goes, without intermission, at the rate of a hundred thousand strokes every twenty-four hours; yet it never feels fatigued, it never feels exhausted. Rest would have been incompatible with its function. While it slept, the whole machinery must have stopped, and the animal inevitably perish. It was necessary that it should be made capable of working for ever, without the cessation of a moment, without the least degree of weariness. It is so made; and the power of the Creator, in so constructing it, can in nothing be exceeded but by his wisdom." Truly are we fearfully and wonderfully made!—How beautifully does the incessant motion of the heart image the constant love of the Lord!

Were the heart to suspend its pulsations, the natural man would die; so, were the divine love to cease its communication with the soul of man, his soul would die also. Man may marvel at the construction of the heart, and wonder that the delicacy of its own parts wears it not out; but what is this wonder to the wonder-working power of the divine love, a feeble



image indeed, but sufficient to convey to man the force of the words, "I have loved you; I have loved you, saith the Lord." Never does the heart intermit its labour. Night and day—onward it goes, and has a considerable resistance to overcome. Never does the divine love diminish in affection towards us; it has loved and will continue to love us. In states of elevation and depression, in states of illumination and obscurity, night and day, it never intermits—it never sleeps; and how much perverse resistance has it to overcome! how many opposing influences on the part of man himself, and of man's spiritual enemies. Yet were the love of God to cease, the man, the real man, would perish: so were the heart to cease, the body would perish.

While thy heart beats, think of the love of thy God, and let gratitude distinguish thee in all thy actions. Ever should we remember, that there is a spiritual pulsation, as well as a natural one; and we should therefore be often feeling the pulse of our spirits, to discover the state of our health. Whatever causes the pulse of the spirit to beat highest, will determine at all times the true state of our affections.

Look up to heaven, then, O man! and tremblingly rejoice at the vast superiority, which the Creator of the world has connected with such a simple principle as thy upright form. Didst thou walk prone like a brute; were thy head gluttonously formed for thy mouth and nose, and the structure of thy limbs answerable?—where would be the higher powers of thy mind? to what would not the image of the Deity in thee be degraded? The wretch who ranks himself

with the beasts that perish, has lost it, and the grosser senses drag the creature down to the earth. But the fashioning thy limbs to an erect posture, has given thy head its beautiful outline and proportion ; whence the brain, that delicate ethereal germ, has full room to extend itself, and send out its branches. The forehead swells rich in thought ; the animal organs recede ; it is the form of a man.

## September Nineteenth.

THE BODILY ORGANS THE INSTRUMENTS OF THE SOUL.

*"I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."*—PSALM CXXXIX. 14.

THE members and organs of the human body are but the outward forms and material instruments of mental organs, and of spiritual functions. And if the organs of the body correspond to certain organs of the spirit, then the operation of those bodily organs, and their effects, must correspond to the operations of the spiritual organs, and their effects. If the hand of the body corresponds to the hand of the spirit—if the bodily eye is but an outward form of the mental organ—then the actions and effects of the hand and the eye must correspond to that spiritual force and feeling, and to that spiritual sight, which are effects of the mind.

Let us reflect for a moment upon a lifeless corpse, and then ask in what it differs from the living and sentient man? Beautiful, even in ruins, is that out-

ward form—symmetrical, though fallen, that still and silent shape. There it lies—

“ Ere the first day of death is fled,  
Ere yet corruption's pointed fingers  
Have chas'd the hues where beauty lingers ;”

calm, motionless, unfeeling—a form of man, yet a mass of insensible clay? Whence all this difference? Why, or how, have a few hours wrought so great a change? It has eyes, perfect; yet it sees not. It has organs of hearing, perfectly formed; but it hears not. It has a tongue, and organs of speech, equally perfect as when, a few hours ago, it spake and listened; yet that tongue is for ever silent. Its limbs, lately capable of motion, are now fixed in everlasting stillness; and that body, lately living, breathing, seeing, hearing, speaking—is now insensible, and bereft of all. How, why is this? The spirit is gone. What, then, is that spirit?—for in its going, sight, speech, action, every sense and every feeling, has gone with it? At all events, it is clear, that whatever the spirit may be in itself, it is that something which hears, sees, feels, and moves; and without which, every bodily organ and bodily form is inert and motionless.

There is the eye, lately so bright, so radiant with every feeling, so expressive of every emotion,—glazed and rayless. The spirit is gone; and, with the spirit, the sight too is gone! Shrink not, reader, from the image of death; it teaches, though silent, an instructive lesson. There is the ear, but the spirit is gone, and with it, too, the faculty of hearing. There are the limbs; but again the spirit is gone, and with it the power of motion. What does this teach? The lesson is plain, it is simple, and easily understood. It is this;

it is not the body which sees, feels, moves, or speaks. The body itself is but an outward form, an insensible covering ; and it is the spirit alone which feels, hears, moves, and speaks. In short the spirit is the man himself, and the mortal body is but a garment which clothes it while in this material world.

And what is the inevitable result ? It is—that if the spirit alone hears, sees, moves, and speaks, then that spirit must possess organs, as means by which it can exercise those faculties.

So far nature, the handmaid of religion, leads us, Thus might a heathen have argued, from an inspection of the work of death. Here, however, we quit her guidance, and take up another teacher. Revelation comes now to unfold what nature might infer, but could never establish. It tells us that man lives beyond the grave, establishing at once the fact, that the spirit, and not the body, is the man himself. It tells us, too, that man, though removed from earth and earthly objects, is not a mere shadow, a breath, an

“Aërial substance and an empty shade,”

but a sentient and living being, with feelings and desires which make his happiness or misery, and placed in a situation, not of solitary existence, but with living beings like himself, endued with like affections, desires, and feelings. It tells us, that every sense which the body here seems to possess, is really possessed by the spirit, and to a degree of perfection of which man, in his mortal state, can form no idea. In fine, its descriptions render that plain and clear which was only problematical before ; and afford a direct proof that the bodily senses are but instruments by which the

spiritual senses of the soul are exercised ; and that every bodily sense thus corresponds to its spiritual faculty.

The bodily eye corresponds to the eye of the mind ; we therefore conclude, both from reason and revelation, that the benefits which are here derived from bodily sight, correspond to those benefits which the mind derives from mental sight.

Thus, then, in everything, even those which are apparently most unimportant, there is a communication between earth and heaven ; that

“ Earth is but the shadow of heaven, and things therein,  
Each to each other like, more than on earth is thought ; ”

that we cannot exercise a single bodily function, a single outward act, which proceeds not from some inward motive—from some affection of the will disguised, it may be even from the man himself—and which acts not as indications of the internal disposition, like the hands of a clock serving not only to mark the movement of the works within, but the passage of eternal justice or wisdom without ; that, in fact, a man in every affection and act of his life, judges himself. As his affections and his will rise, he himself rises in the scale of being ; as they fall, so does he fall. And as every man, after death, goes to the place for which his affections fit him, so every outward act being the indication of the inward will, is the index also which points either to eternal happiness or eternal woe.

It is because the soul is from God, and designed for eternal happiness, that the body is so beautiful—beautiful still, even though it has been defaced by sin : but if we look to the Lord for aid, and shun evil as

sin against him, the soul will recover the beauty it has lost ; and on leaving this natural world, where it has been perfected by suffering, it will live in a world of increasing beauty and loveliness, itself increasing in beauty to all eternity.

## September Twentieth.

### LOVE OF GOD AND OUR NEIGHBOUR.

*"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself."*—LUKE x. 27.

THE human mind is distinguished into three regions, from the highest of which a man regards his God ; from the second, or middle, the world ; and from the third, or lowest, himself: and in consequence of this being its nature and constitution, the mind is capable of being raised, and of raising itself upwards, towards God and heaven ; it is capable of being diffused, and of diffusing itself laterally in every direction, because it can look around into the world, and its nature ; and lastly, it is capable of being sunk, and of sinking itself downwards, because it can look towards earth and towards hell. Hence, to guide the mind judiciously should be our principal endeavour. To enable us to do this, the Almighty has given us a revelation of His will, in which our duty is plainly placed before us ; and while we are encouraged in the legitimate exercise of all our powers, we are solemnly admonished not to abuse them. Our first duty is towards God. Hence we must venerate Him in His attributes, His qualities, His perfections ; we must believe in Him, hope in Him, love Him with all our

hearts, and imitate His uprightness and integrity in all our actions. To enable us to do this, He has given us clear perceptions of the principles of faith, of hope, of charity or benevolence, of veneration, of conscientiousness ; and by these we are enabled to raise our thoughts and affections upward, and regard and love our God above all things ; by our ideas of beauty we can conceive of Him, as of all that is lovely and transcendant, the "fairest among ten thousand." In the contemplation of His glorious works, His own glorious beauty is indexed, and man, His own image and likeness, presents in his person a faint idea of the divine original.

Our second duty is towards our neighbour ; to enable us to perform which, we are gifted with various powers of intellect, and brought into constant and close contact with our fellow-creatures, ministering to their necessities, as they on their parts minister to ours, and thus proving the truth of an apostolic precept, "that none of us liveth to himself." There is not a duty we perform, if we perform it faithfully and with a single eye, that is not a work of charity. Whether we construct implements of mechanical use, by which labour is diminished, and life rendered more agreeable ; whether we engage in works of art, as drawing, painting, sculpture ; whether we touch the chords of harmony, and, by the variety of sweet sounds, praise and magnify our Creator, while, at the same time, we smooth the rugged asperity to which man is prone ; whether we engage in the tuition of others or ourselves ; whether we guide the helm of the ship or the locomotive carriage, or direct the course of the noble and bounding steed ; whether we toil in the fields, or on the seas

at home or abroad ; are engaged in agricultural or mechanical labour ; work with our heads, or our hands, or both—we are engaged in acts of charity and usefulness ; and, hence, our minds become enlarged, and our faculties diffused laterally in every direction, we look around into the world, and perform respectively our duties in the sphere in which Providence has appointed us to move ; and thus the faculties in the middle region of our minds operate.

And lastly, we must look to ourselves, and to those who are dependent upon us ; and so long as we do this without injury to others, and in subserviency to the divine precept, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,” we fulfil the end of our natural existence, and prepare ourselves for a higher state of being. To enable us to fulfil our duty to ourselves, our heavenly Father has planted within us affections and desires, which are constantly urging for gratification. The strongest of these affections is natural love, and is the feeling which ministers to the formation of the conjugal principle. “Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord,” is a precept which awakens within us a strong feeling of regard for these dear pledges of affection. Our toil is sweetened by the recollection of their innocent smiles ; and when labour is ended, and the social circle assembled in the peaceful home, how happy do those parents feel who hear many gentle voices call them “Father !” or “Mother !” How watchful is the good parent to protect his children from danger ! how eager to defend them against being smitten by the fist of wickedness ! how prudent in securing their temporal interests, and laying a solid foundation for future spiritual blessings ! how economical in His expenses,



that their food and raiment may be regularly and abundantly supplied ! how ingenious in devising means for their instruction, their amusement, their happiness ! All these feelings belong to man, and peculiarly fit him for performing the duties necessary for his own comfort, and the comfort of those who are dependent upon him. Thus is he created capable of loving and serving God, which is his highest duty ; capable of loving and being useful to the neighbour, which is his second duty ; and capable of supporting and defending himself and his connections, which is his third duty. None of these duties can be neglected without injury to his present peace, and future happiness.

That he can abuse the noblest powers of his mind, is a melancholy truth confirmed by every-day experience. The divine cautions, as set forth in the Holy Word, incontestibly prove this. Our highest duty is to love and serve our Maker ; but we must love Him with ALL our hearts, and we must learn to know Him with all our understandings. No other object must divide with Him our affections. Neither things in heaven, nor things on earth, must be loved, or served, or worshipped ; we must either give Him our whole hearts, or none, for a divided heart He will not accept. In the exercise of our intellectual faculties, we must ever remember to keep them subservient to the spiritual principle ; we must not exalt reason above revelation, nor science above reason, but exercise all our powers for the good of our fellow-creatures, with the devout acknowledgment that every talent and faculty is given to us by the Lord, for use. Lastly, we must be exceedingly watchful that we abuse not our natural affections. Teachers, young men and women,

be continent, flee fornication, and preserve chastity in thought, word, and deed. Remember the divine command, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Watch over your feelings. Love, but do not spoil, the children committed to your charge. Be lovers of home, and roam not from place to place, for rambling frequently leads to idleness. Still, let not active duties be neglected by too close attention to home. Love one another—cherish the divine principle of friendship, but "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Govern the tongue, keep a bridle upon the lips; for the tongue has slain more than the sword. Avoid brawling. Shun disorderly, quarrelsome, and litigious companions. Strive after the temper and spirit of Christ, Who, when reviled, reviled not again. Suppress malevolent feelings, avoid cruelty, harbour not revenge or hatred in your heart, and remember that "he who hateth his brother is a murderer." Beware of dissimulation; never prevaricate, and avoid the circumvention which is the companion of the false witness. Shun avarice—it leads to injustice, and is a principal cause in the violation of the divine precept, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." At all times be watchful of your reputation, and preserve proper feelings of self-respect; but avoid vanity, and be not proud, vain-glorious, or egotistical. It is good to be cautious, circumspect and reflective: but avoid procrastination; aim at decision of character, and be painstaking and persevering. If we attend to these instructions, all our duties will be faithfully performed, and each region of the mind will be in the legitimate exercise of its respective powers.

## September Twenty-first.

## CORRESPONDENCE OF THE HORSE.

*"He delighteth not in the strength of the horse."*—PSALM cxlvii. 10.

THE horse, when mentioned in Holy Scripture, is symbolic of intelligence and the understanding of truth : of the intellectual trust and confidence in self, where the subject treated of is evil ; and of the intellect purified and elevated by truth, where the subject treated of is good. From its docility, when properly trained and guided, from its swiftness and activity, and from its extensive usefulness, no outward form can be more appropriate. In almost every age of the world, the horse has been used for progression ; and its own will, where treated with kindness, has been lost in the will of the rider. In warfare it acts, and has always acted, a prominent part. Whether yoked to the scythe-armed chariots of ancient times, or trained, guided, and ridden by armed men in our own day, it seems to delight in the noise and tumult of war, "smelling the battle afar off," where larger and more powerful beasts are terror-stricken. For its activity, its swiftness, its strength, its warlike propensities, no symbol can be more appropriate of the strong, the active, the warlike intellect of man. That power by which man advances in his search after truth ; by which he fights against and overcomes error ; by which he toils and labours to acquire intelligence, which is ever active and restless ; which, like the horse, smelleth the discussion or battle afar off ; which mocketh at fear, and engages in the defence of

truth—that power is the understanding. As the horse is a nobler, more courageous, active, and fiery animal than others of the brute creation, possessing a greater degree of warmth and fervour, sleeping but little, and ever distinguished by the superiority of his instinct, so is he a fitting symbol of the noble understanding with which man is gifted, and bears this meaning in every passage throughout the Holy Word. The sublime and beautifully descriptive passage in Job (xxxix. 19), “Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? the glory of his nostrils is terrible. He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword. The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet. He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha! and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A celebrated German commentator of the last century, thinks that none but a military man can understand this description of the war horse, or thoroughly appreciate it. “I have myself,” he says: “perhaps rode more horses than many who have become authors and illustrators of the Bible: but one part of the description, namely, the behaviour of the horse on the approach of a hostile army, I only understood rightly from what old officers have related unto me; and as to the meaning of the two lines, ‘hast thou clothed his neck with ire’ [thunder], ‘and the grandeur of his neighing is terror’ [glory of his nostrils], it had escaped me; indeed, the latter I had not understood, until a person, who had had an opportunity of seeing several stallions together, informed me, and then I recollected that, in my eighteenth year, I had seen their bristled-up necks, and heard their fierce cries, when rushing to attack each other.”—*Kitto's Notes on Job.*

This passage spiritually alludes to the strength and vigour of the human intellect, when guided by just principles, as the passage at the head of this meditation does when influenced by evil, darkened by error, without any acknowledgment that truth is from God alone. The progress of true religion is pointed out by the Lord walking through the sea with his horses; and the restoration of the church, and destruction of evil and error, is imaged by the Lord riding on a white horse, followed by the armies of heaven, also riding on white horses.

How instructive, then, is the correspondence of the horse. Powerful as are our understandings, it is the Lord also who has so endowed us; and as all our sufficiency is of God, without whom we can do nothing, all our intellectual faculties must be exercised under His guidance, and for the furtherance of the truth, and with the acknowledgment that all our talents are from Him. Then will they, indeed, be a glory and a rejoicing unto us. Without these acknowledgments, "a horse, that is, the understanding, is a vain thing for safety, neither will it deliver any one by its great strength."

### September Twenty-second.

CORRESPONDENCE OF THE ASS.

*"Issachar is a strong ass."*—GEN. xlix. 14.

THE ass represents that quality of knowledge which is derived from the senses alone, and which, though of the same nature as intellectual truth, is of a lower kind, and differs from it in many respects.

It is satisfied only with the evidence of the senses, and till properly instructed will move only at the instance of the senses, and though it may be guided, yet should any sensual gratification be offered, it will step out of its way to secure it. If we suppose a man, from want of instruction and consequent deficiency of internal perception, who will receive nothing but what his senses can cognise, we shall have an illustration of a wild-ass man. With him nothing is true, but what his sensual perception can grasp—"Shew it me, let me feel it, and I will believe," are his constant rejoinders. His sensual principle, like the ass, is stubborn in the extreme. He is often of a contentious and disputative disposition: his hand is against every man; if he be a strictly professing, though external religionist, he will fight for his religion, and even die for his religion; but it is difficult indeed to convince him that he is wrong; he is like the sceptics of our own day, who question everything that comes not within the boundary of their own narrow vision;—they are all wild-ass men.

Yet the ass resembles the horse in many points. It possesses, for its size, equal, perhaps greater, strength; its powers of endurance are great, and when treated with kindness, and judiciously instructed, is docile and obedient. And the mere sensual man has, in like manner, many points of resemblance with the intellectual and spiritual man. The structure of the mind is the same, it possesses the same capability of attaining intellectual and spiritual eminence, but it is more difficult to be wrought upon, is more stubborn and unmanageable. The intellectual man passes rapidly from truth to truth; the sensual man suffers every

obstacle to impede his progress, often standing still in the most perverse obstinacy, and injuring those who attempt to accelerate his progress. The obstinate ass is a true portrait of the man who will admit nothing to be true but what his senses can grasp. The intellectual man will investigate truth by the process of reasoning, hearing willingly the opinions of others. The sensual man will receive nothing but what he can see and feel. Is the soul of man dicussed? in nothing will the sensual man display greater perversity—"Who has seen the soul? can any one shew me what it is?" Is heaven, or eternal life, alluded to, he asks—"Who can tell anything about it? who has returned from heaven to describe it, so as to make it familiar to our senses?" The intellectual man will reason upon the matter thus:—"Can matter of itself think and reason? It cannot. There must then be a soul." Or, "Can I altogether die? and if not, where, and in what manner, shall I live; There is a distinction between vice and virtue in this world; why should it not be perpetuated? and if it be, will not the virtuous reside in some place of happiness, and the vicious be there incapable of troubling them? None of my friends have, it is true, returned to give me information of this; yet reason tells me there must be some place of residence for the good; and if there be a God, as there must be, that God delights to see His creatures happy." There is, it is true, in these sentiments none of the certainty enjoyed by the spiritual man, but there is progression towards them. The difference analogically is the same between the horse and the ass. The one goes forward acquiring truth after truth; the other stumbles, or even stands still, at every obstacle.

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Divine truth must be the guide of both, if real happiness is to be secured. Our Lord rode upon an ass when he entered Jerusalem, to instruct us that if he, the Essential Truth, lead and guide the sensual man, he will be eventually conducted to the Jerusalem which is above. The Word of God is our ever-present Jesus. Truth does not destroy sensual knowledge, but sanctifies and renders it subservient to His own wise and benevolent purposes; operates upon it, guides it, and directs it eventually to His holy temple. To neglect sensual or scientific knowledge, is not safe. The Lord has endowed us with power to acquire sensual as well as intellectual and spiritual knowledge; but the Lord Himself, as Essential Truth, must guide and direct all; and if we permit Him to direct us, He will conduct us safely to heaven.

### September Twenty-third.

THE TONGUE COMPARED WITH AN ARROW SHOT OUT.

*"Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit."*—JER. ix. 8.

**I**T is good for every man to hold frequent communion with himself, and when he reads of vice or wickedness, to ask his own conscience, "Am I such as is here described?" Were we to do this, we should be much more tender of the reputation of our brethren, and much more watchful against our own evils, than we are at present. Let us begin this course at once; and let us bring, to assist us in such an important labour, the present truth to bear upon our own conduct. The tongue itself is the organ of taste: it



is as the guardian of the natural life of man, examining food as it is admitted into the mouth, and rejecting that which would be injurious to health or life. In a spiritual sense, and used in accordance with the laws of divine order, it corresponds to the affection of truth ; and he who is progressing in the path of regeneration, has tasted, as well as seen, that the Lord is good. The tongue, also, as an organ of speech, has correspondence with doctrine, and is significative of doctrine ; and in this sense the Psalmist declares, "My tongue shall speak of thy Word, for all thy commandments are righteousness." (cxix. 172.) But when the tongue is deceitful, it has a signification opposite to that in the passage just cited : then, instead of tasting the goodness of the Lord, instead of delighting in truth and appropriating it as the aliment of the soul, it admits it but to pervert and falsify it.

The tongue of the deceitful is compared to an arrow shot out. An arrow is a weapon of warfare, and is intended, when shot out, to wound, injure, and destroy life ; and when the deceitful tongue is compared to an arrow shot out, how plainly does it symbolize those poisonous and destructive words with which the wicked are ever attempting to destroy the good. The deceiver or hypocrite is not actuated by one motive, or confined to one class of wicked men. The covetous, the ambitious, the envious, the vain, and the ill-natured are all tainted with the vice of deception, and, to a greater or less extent, all clothed in the garments of hypocrisy. Go into what company or society you may there are to be found men who vend malicious tales, and fasten odious imputations upon the character of others. Do we not even behold some having a form of

godliness?—(alas! that the form should be all they do possess)—who backbite their brethren, bear false witness, insinuate false accusations, and seem to weary themselves to devise mischief, exercising the tongue but to speak falsehood. Can men who thus shoot out arrows from the tongue be really religious? Let the apostle James answer: “If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, this man’s religion is vain.” (i. 26.) But there is also covert slander, a kind of insinuation which the hypocrite uses, which does not absolutely charge evil, but which imputes it, so as to induce the hearer to believe that charity alone prevents more open and explicit charges. In this manner, how many generous and hospitable men have been charged with prodigality! How many prudent and frugal men have been styled parsimonious! How many cheerful men, and men free and candid in conversation, have been called loose, vain, and frivolous! How many staid, serious, and reflective men, have been described as morose and sullen! Or, again, is a man modest and unassuming?—he is a sneak! Is he open and candid?—he is destitute of prudence! Is he exemplary in his devotional duties, and strict in his moral conduct?—he is superstitious! or does he, in all his duties, act from a principle of conscience?—it originates in selfishness! O let us be careful that we fall not into any of these degrees of slander! Let us beware how we suffer our tongues to shoot out such poisonous arrows as these. Let us set a watch upon ourselves, and let us love our neighbour, not in word or in tongue only, but also in deed and in truth. Love thinketh no evil. Love never slandereth. Love is the fulfilling of the law.

But let us be very strict over ourselves. The love of self and the world, though they may be weakened, are not subdued, and their influence is often discovered, by habitual observation, in a thousand subtle forms. Nothing leads to self-examination so directly, as the frequent and devout contemplation of the Deity in His wonderful works, and in the display of His infinite goodness. This, like letting in the sun's rays, will discover to us our dark spots, and while it increases our humility, will lead us to a kind and merciful consideration of the faults and imperfections of our neighbours.

### September Twenty-fourth.

#### THE FOLLY AND WICKEDNESS OF DECEPTION.

*"For the mountains will I take up a weeping and wailing, and for the habitations of the wilderness a lamentation, because they are burned up, so that none can pass through them; neither can men hear the voice of the cattle; both the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled; they are gone."—JER. ix. 10.*

THESE words describe a most awful condition of the Church, as well individual as general; every principle of moral and spiritual goodness being in a state of desolation. Mountains are referred to in the Holy Word, to describe the supreme or highest state of goodness existing in the church, or in the soul of man; or else to depict the opposite condition, according to the subject treated of. The future glorious church is to be established on the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and all nations are to flow unto it: that is, the church in the last days will be erected upon the supreme principle of goodness and holiness. Its inmost or loftiest virtue will be supreme

love to Jesus Christ, the King and Lord of all. The whole heart, soul, and strength will be devoted to Him ; and this affection will be exemplified in deeds of charity to all mankind.

A wilderness in its fertile state, means properly a tract of grazing land fit for the pasture of cattle. In this sense the Psalmist speaks of it : “ The habitations of the *wilderness* distil, and the hills are girded with joy : the pastures are clothed with flocks : the valleys are covered with corn ; they shout, they sing.” (lxv. 12, 13.) As that which supplies the cattle with food, it denotes a state of natural goodness ; the habitations of the wilderness being those tents and temporary erections which serve for shelter to the shepherds and herdmen, during the period that their flocks and herds are on the grazing land. Part of the year the wilderness may be described as a desert, in which scarce a blade of grass appears ; but the remaining part, the wilderness and solitary places become glad, and the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose. By cattle are denoted the affections of man’s will ; and by fowls of the heaven, the thoughts of his understanding ; and when mountains, wildernesses, cattle, and fowls, are mentioned in a good sense, they denote the church and its members in a state of harmony and order, according to the several degrees of goodness and truth, whether natural, spiritual, or celestial, in which they are principled, all united in praising and glorifying the Lord.

This state is also described by the Psalmist : “ Praise the Lord, ye mountains, and all hills, ye trees bearing fruit and all cedars, ye beasts and all cattle, ye creeping things and winged birds.” (Psalm cxlviii.)

But in the words selected, all this is reversed. Instead of the wilderness being fruitful, it is burned up; instead of the pastures being clothed with cattle, they are gone; instead of the melody of birds, they are all fled; there is complete desolation, the result of that hypocrisy and deception which the tongue, as an arrow, has shot out. The effects of evil are indeed here depicted most faithfully. The supreme affections of the soul are in a state of inversion, wherever hypocrisy and slander take up their abode. And truly has the wise man affirmed that "he who uttereth slander is a fool" (Prov. x. 18); for all men reverence truth, candour, and sincerity as honourable; and that man is no Christian who can find it in his heart, in any case or under any pretence, to slander or calumniate another; and the hypocrite must prostitute his conscience, sacrifice his honesty, and peril his soul, by such folly. Let us pause, and reflect seriously upon the folly and wickedness of slander and deception! When the supreme affection of the soul is devoted to the gratification of self and the world, how can the love of God dwell in such a mind? When the cupidity of gain has acquired the supreme place in the will, and every species of misrepresentation is resorted to, to undermine another, for the purpose of building up self; where there is no love of the neighbour whom we have seen, how shall the love of God dwell within us? How can there be obedience to the commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," when all the powers of the mind seem concentrated to bring ruin upon him by falsehood and misrepresentation? Melancholy, indeed, must be the state of him who speaks deceit, whose tongue is as an arrow shot out;

—so melancholy, that God Himself is said to mourn over it.

## September Twenty-fifth.

### SPIRITUAL PLENTY.

*"And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied."—JOBEL ii. 26.*

**I**N the true spiritual church, it is prophesied that all shall be taught of God: that is, all instruction shall be drawn from the Word of God. The Lord Jesus Christ, as the Divine Truth, shall be our sole Leader and Guide: ALL, from the least even to the greatest, shall be brought to acknowledge Him, and all unite in praising Him as the Lord our God. All will eat in plenty, and be satisfied. To every faithful follower of the Saviour these words will be fulfilled; they are the result of obedience to the divine commandments.

To the wicked, the direct contrary is applied. They eat, and have not enough. They sow much, and bring in little. They drink, but are not filled with drink. (Hosea iv. 10; Hag. i. 6.) These two passages offer a true but lamentable picture of the state of the wicked. In all they believe, there seems a fallacy. In all they do, there is a lack of real goodness; and as a consequence, their highest enjoyments fail to impart satisfaction. The wealth of the world, after which they incessantly toil, is not enough to satisfy them; though food for the body be abundant, though barns and storehouses are full to overflowing, still there is leanness and emptiness of soul; and however largely they may

accumulate this world's goods, they still feel they have not enough.

Nothing of earthly wealth—nothing great, or what the world calls magnificent—can satisfy, to the full extent, the desires of any human being; because the Creator has imbued man with a desire for immortality, and has endowed him with a soul that is immortal.

Man, in the unrenewed state, may accumulate gold that his children to the fourth generation may not expend; but, living, he would still labour for more. House unto house, and field unto field may be added, but the man has not enough. But the virtuous enjoy a kind of immortality even in this world; for when they depart out of it, their name is held in remembrance; while that of the wicked shall rot. It is not the worldly wealth which may have been acquired that immortalizes the virtuous, but the good they have done. What makes righteous poverty stand firm and unmoved in the midst of surrounding perils? Who, "although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olive shall fail, the fields yield no meat, the flocks be cut off from the fold, and no herd in the stall;" yet "rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of their salvation?" It is because the principle of immortality asserts the righteousness of God, and trusts in the wisdom of his providence to effect ultimate deliverance from every kind and degree of suffering. The bodily suffering is comparatively momentary, but the immortal principle within, from that very suffering, exults in the prospect of a more speedy deliverance.

On the other hand, what makes wealth, unrighteously acquired, tremble at the most trifling pain? It is

because there is a "still small voice" within, which shews the uncertain tenure by which its possessions are held, and the fear lest the flitting pain may snap the cord of natural life, and compel the man to leave his wealth to others, he himself having failed to secure that treasure in heaven which can alone satisfy the immortal soul.

One class eats, and is satisfied; and though, in a physical sense, he may have barely enough, yet he has bread to eat, which alone is satisfying and soul-sustaining. The other "snatches on the right hand, and still is hungry—eats on the left hand, and still is unsatisfied:" and though, in a physical sense, he has bread enough and to spare, he lacks the necessary portion of true bread, and spiritually has nothing but famine and desolation before him.

Let us then labour, not so much for the bread that perisheth, as for that which endureth unto everlasting life. The humble Christian is the truly wise man. He eats, or appropriates into his best affections, that bread which cometh down from heaven. His prayer is, "Lord, evermore give us this bread." His meat is to do the will of his Father which is in heaven; and he eats in plenty, and is satisfied.

## September Twenty-sixth.

### THE APPLE OF THE EYE.

*"He kept him as the apple of his eye."*—DEUT. xxxii. 10.

• **I**N every stage of regeneration, while man is contending against and rejecting what is evil and



false, the Lord is with him, and leads him to see the consequences to which evil tends, if not renounced. Those evils which are external, are first discovered, and means provided for their expulsion. On the removal of these, evils of a more interior kind are made manifest, and means provided for their subjugation : and lastly, evils deeply concealed are discovered ; and these, too, have their appropriate remedies provided : and thus is man led, instructed, and preserved by the Divine Providence in every trial and every state during his progress in the regenerate life. The Lord never leaves him ; He watches over, protects, and preserves him as the apple of his eye.

To see the force and beauty of this comparison, it is necessary, for a moment, to note the provisions which the Divine Being has appointed for the preservation of the organ of sight. Of these, none combines so many uses within itself as the EYE-LID. It assists the iris and the eye-brows in moderating the excess of light ; it covers the eye during sleep ; it defends it by its sudden closure from injurious particles, such as dust, which are constantly floating in the air ; it keeps the eye moist by the motion of nictation, and diffuses over the ball of the eye that fluid which is secreted for the purpose, and which is, in the lachrymal gland, the fountain of tears. And in order to prevent any grains of dust, or other particles, which might, notwithstanding the above precautions, fall into the eye, from getting behind the ball, and there generating disease, it is arranged that the conjunctive membrane, which covers the fore part of the eye, shall also, by turning back, form the inner lining of the eyelid. It is a most acutely sensitive membrane, a cir-

cumstance which prevents our feeling any ease, until all foreign and injurious particles are removed. Such are the provisions of Infinite Wisdom made to secure the apple of the eye. Now the Lord preserves His people in the same manner. The sphere of His Divine eye, the Divine Omniscience, constantly surrounds them. If the eye of the soul is meekly raised to Him no weapon formed against it can prosper. If we submit to His guidance, and follow Him, though we walk through the midst of the valley of the shadow of death, we need fear no evil, for the Divine Omniscience is still upon us, to guard us as the apple of his eye.

Do we suffer from the wickedness of others? Let us remember that the Lord will even overrule this for good. Do our enemies appear to prosper, while we are in comparative trouble all the day long? We must still remember that the purposes, as well as the dispositions, of all men are known to the Lord, and are controlled by Him, who, as His footsteps pass before us, infinite in wisdom, goodness, and power, leads us through ways, unknown it may be to us, but known to Him as essentially the best. Only let us trust in His guiding providence; He will lead us safely by a way we know not, through all our trials, and will compensate all our sufferings, by an eternity of rest and blessedness.

## September Twenty-seventh.

## WATCHFULNESS.

*" Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh."—MATT. xxv. 13.*

**A**MONG the many fine and beautiful figures and modes of reasoning that the universe in which we dwell, has afforded for the illustration of the bright hope that is within us of a life renewed beyond the grave, there is none more beautiful or more exquisite than that which is derived from the changes of the seasons. From the second life, that bursts forth in spring from objects apparently dead, and from the shadowing forth, in the renovation of everything around us, of that future state which divine revelation calls upon our faith to believe shall yet be ours. The trees that have faded and remained dark and grey through the long dreary winter, are clothed again in green in the spring sunshine, and every leaf and every hue speaks again of life; the birds that were mute, sing again as tunefully as ever; the flowers that were trampled down and faded, burst forth once more in freshness and beauty; the streams break from the icy chains that held them; and the glorious sun itself appears to come wandering back from his far journey, giving warmth, and fertility, and magnificence to everything around. All that we see breathes of the same hope; everything we behold rekindles into life.

But, on the other hand, there are things within us that awake no more; there are feelings in our hearts that, passed away, return not; there are thoughts that

can never be fresh again; and hopes once put out which are extinguished for ever. These are the things that speak to us of the death of the body! these are the things that would darken our hopes of immortality, were we not to draw from them inferences of a higher state of being, where love, and truth, and happiness, are not delusions; where the plant of enjoyment has not its root in the earth, and the flowers of life are ever fresh and fair. There are certainly changes in our very nature which would fill our bosoms with many dark and awful doubts, did we not find that, in the mind regulated by divine truth, the bright and intoxicating dreams of early youth—the love that has been crushed or thwarted, the confidence that has been a thousand times betrayed—may give place to firmer and more solid things—feelings more deep and powerful; thoughts, not so naturally brilliant, perhaps, but more just and spiritually true. Did we not find that, with proper cultivation, the flowers made way for the fruit? Did we not find that every stage of existence would have, but for our own faults, its proper class of enjoyments; and that every stage but leads us on towards an appreciation of that last, noblest state of being for which all the rest are but a state of preparation? As we feel that we are immortal, we should not regret to find that earth's flowers fade. As we are immortal, is it not well that we should find earth's hopes deceive us? As we are immortal, is it not well that we should learn not to regret the passing away of bright capabilities in our own nature, which are sure to be renewed, extended, and multiplied in heaven? But as the day and the hour of our removal is uncertain, it surely behoves us to profit by the changing

scenes around us, which are all faithful warnings to us to prepare, that the summons, come when it may, may find us ready. The day and the hour in Scripture represent state; and watchfulness is enjoined, that each trial to which we may be subjected, and which is permitted to purify us from evil, may cause us to elevate our thoughts to the Divine Light, so that we may be safely guided through it. The Lord alone beholds the state of all men; he knows what is best for us, and arranges His Divine dispensations, that we may be preparing for our removal, until the time for our final change comes. Our duty is to prepare; and for this purpose the rule to read and meditate frequently on the Word of God, is deserving our most devout attention. The coming of the Son of Man, whether considered in relation to the church in general, or to any individual member, is totally unknown to every one unenlightened by divine truth. The Holy Word is our only safe guide, Jesus being the light thereof." "Let us, therefore, stand upon our watch, and set ourselves upon our tower; and watch to see what the Lord will say unto us, and what we shall answer when we are reproved."

## September Twenty-eighth.

### THE UNITY OF THE BRETHREN.

*"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."*

—PSALM CXXXIII. 1.

ANGELS "are surrounded by forms and colours, beautiful according to their state; and their speech, being in correspondence with their affections,

is not only like music to the ear, but is very delightful to the interiors of the heart." An eminent author who was in the habit of comparing the love of the good with the hardness of heart and miseries of the wicked, has affirmed, that he once heard a good man speaking to a hard-hearted and wicked man, and the latter was so affected by the tones, that he wept. He said he had never wept before, but he could not help it then, because it was pure loving speaking. The voices of evil men, on the contrary, are harsh and discordant, in proportion to the degree of their evil.

The brethren who desire to dwell together in unity, should keep these two classes of men in remembrance ; and exercise strict watch over their passions and feelings, regulating them by that spirit of gentleness which originates in love. They should wash each other's feet ; that is, assist each other in the purification of their external life and conduct ; and every member of a Christian house, or of a Christian church, should be so careful over his own conduct, that neither his own family, nor the church with which he is connected, may be scandalized by him. The necessity of washing each other's feet seems evident from this ; we are all more or less blind to our own imperfections, while we are often very acute in observing the faults of others. Our own evils we keep too frequently in the shade ; those of our brethren are as often placed in a strong light. It therefore requires the aid of some friendly brother to shew us what we really are, and to call us to repentance ; and if this is done in a gentle and loving manner, we will be doing as the Lord has commanded :—" If I, your Lord and Master, have

washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet."

The brethren who dwell together in unity, are all anxious for the eternal life and felicity of each other; and as their love is mutual, they employ themselves in the promotion of each other's regeneration, knowing that into the kingdom unto which they are all hastening, nothing that is unclean or defiled can possibly enter. A spirit of love animates every heart, and an affectionate girdle as of gold binds them together, and they feel how good and pleasant it is to dwell together in unity. It must needs be, that such a family or such a church, is happy. Its inward and spiritual progress nothing can impede, and its advancement to heaven cannot be stayed. Such a family, or such a church, extends the sphere of its influence all around, and is a means, in the order of Providence, for preparing the way for the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. The advantages and benefits which belong to the brethren who dwell together in unity, are fully realized as we become connected with the only source of peace, the Lord our Saviour, the Prince of Peace. If our affections and thoughts are duly turned to, and kept open for the reception of, the sacred influences of love and wisdom from Him, we shall gradually assume His likeness, and every thing opposite thereto will be removed; and having, in our natural state, performed the uses devolving upon us, and being thus ready for the uses of a more glorious kingdom, we shall at length be brought into it, and there behold the perfection of happiness, the goodness and pleasantness of angelic unity.

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## September Twenty-ninth.

## THE UNITY OF THE BRETHREN.

*"It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments."—PSA. cxxxiii. 2.*

THE descent of the sacred ointment from the head to the beard of Aaron, and thence down to the skirts of his garments, is beautifully descriptive of the descent of the divine influence until it is properly prepared for, and adapted to, the state and condition of every man. There is only one source of life, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ; as it is written, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Man is created to become a receptacle of this life. It flows from the Lord into his will and thence into his affections, and into his understanding and thence into his thoughts; and by this he becomes a living soul. The divine influence, in its regular descent and orderly going forth, from the supreme or inmost part of the soul, to that which is external, is described by the descent of the holy ointment, or oil, from the head of Aaron to the extreme border of his garments. Aaron, the high priest of the Jews, while exercising the sacred functions of his office, represented the Lord himself,—Jesus being prophesied of as our *King, Priest, and Prophet*. Aaron was to the Jews what the written Word is to us; and a deep reverence of the Sacred Word is enjoined upon us, because, in its inmost sense, it is the infinite wisdom of the Lord, and consequently the Lord Himself; as it is again written, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was—God." The consecra-



tion of Aaron is the simile used in the divine psalm upon which we are now meditating. The oil used for the consecration of Aaron, and for the holy furniture of the temple, was the oil of olives: and the olive tree is used in Scripture to denote the celestial church, as well as the celestial man. The distinguishing characteristic of the celestial man is LOVE! and this love is flowing constantly from HIM whose very essence is love itself—"GOD IS LOVE." To symbolize this LOVE, Aaron, as the representative of the Lord, was consecrated with olive oil to his office; and in the spiritual sense of the word, wheresoever this oil descends, the blessing of Divine Love communicates itself. It is the heavenly principle of love, or goodness, which conjoins the several degrees of truth in which the Christian may be principled, into one, and gives unto him its vitality and energy. And when the various truths we have imbibed, proceed from an affection for what is good and heavenly, then they may truly be described as brethren: they are united by the relationship of heavenly good, and dwell together in unity. The oil is poured on the head of Aaron. The head may be justly termed the seat of intelligence and wisdom, and the oil being poured on it, denotes the union of love with wisdom. The oil makes its way to the beard, which surrounds the mouth, and the mouth symbolizes doctrine. The beard will therefore imply the ultimate principle of truth, the truth of doctrine; and the doctrines of truth are heavenly when they bear testimony to the necessity of a life of goodness. The celestial good unites with the truth; it descends and unites with the doctrine of life, and in each case the good gives life and power to truth. The holy oil

pursues its course from the beard to the garments, and thence to their skirts. What garments are to the body, divine truths are to the soul. And when the church returns to her first love, her garments will be as spotless and beautiful without, as the soul is pure and humble within. The virtue of the consecrated oil, or goodness, is not stationary, but goes forth; consecrates every affection to God; enters every thought and principle of the understanding; descends to the very lowest principles of man; and unites all into one bond of brotherhood. The same heavenly oil that unites together the innumerable affections and principles of the human soul, unites also the several individuals which constitute a church. An inward principle of love to the Lord is the ground of all their actions. Each strives to discover the particular kind of good which he possesses, that he may exercise it with more effect for the general good. Envy is not known in such a society, but all experience the goodness and pleasantness of dwelling together in unity.

## September Thirtieth.

### THE UNITY OF THE BRETHREN.

*"As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."—PSA. cxxiii. 3.*

**D**EW "has correspondence with the truth of goodness derived from a state of innocence and peace; and the dew of Hermon denotes truth of a celestial origin." Now nothing is better adapted to produce peace and tranquillity in man, in a family, or

in a church, than a devoted affection to the Lord. Dew is, however, especially adapted to the CELESTIAL MAN. The moisture necessary for the fructification of the spiritual mind is rain, and this corresponds to spiritual truth. The spiritual mind takes delight in the doctrines of the Word of God. The celestial man feels and hears tacitly the speech of the Lord: "his speech distils as the dew." The spiritual man perceives the heavenly doctrine of truth from the Lord, "dropping as the rain, and as the showers upon the grass." The dew of Hermon descends upon the mountains of Zion. It is thus that the true ever seeks a union with the good, and these are the two whom God joins together. The celestial truth, or dew, descends upon the mountains of Zion, or celestial good, and these conjoined give life for evermore. Zion is a figure of the church, and the church is both general and particular; and man, in whom the church is formed, whether it be Zion or Jerusalem, the celestial state, or the spiritual state, has certain principles which, in Scripture, are compared to mountains, hills, and valleys. The mountain is representative of his most exalted love—love to the Lord; hill, of a love subordinate to this—love to his neighbour; and valley, of a still lower love—that of self; for it is perfectly allowable for a man to love himself, provided it is kept in subordination to the other two. The unity of the brethren is as the dew descending upon the mountains of Zion, commanding the blessing, life for evermore. Life for evermore! who shall describe it, so as to do justice to it! The life enjoyed by the angels of heaven must, in the strictest sense of the word, be termed a blessing. First, the Lord alone is life. The Lord

alone is love ; and he is ever before the angels, as the sun of their heavenly world : which way soever they turn, they behold the beaming glories of the divine countenance ; and their affections and thoughts being constantly open to receive the blessed influences of his love and light, they bask in a fulness of perfect happiness. Their happiness is not selfish or individual ; for, as they have freely received from the great source of all happiness, so they freely communicate to each other. Every single individual forms, as it were, a centre of the delight and felicity of all ; and all form the centre of the delight and happiness of each ; and this happiness continues to increase, and will increase to all eternity. “ Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.”

This blessing—the blessing of life for evermore—is within the reach of all. If we have hitherto neglected a life of love, of charity, of usefulness, now is the time to commence in earnest. Let us vow before the Lord, and pray for constant aid to keep our vow, that, from this time forth, we will avoid strife and contention, and live together as brethren ought. Let us remember, that the present moment is all that man can call his own ; and if we would vow to commence the life of love, the best time is now, the best place is here. We cannot with certainty say, We shall be in this world to-morrow, and if we could, the morrow will bring with it its own duties. To secure the blessing of life for evermore, we must have continual strife with evil, and reduce our affections and thoughts to order by the aid of the divine truth. When the brethren within are united, the brethren without are sure to dwell in the same holy bond · their union is

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good and pleasant, and peace and happiness mark their way. The bond of brotherhood is complete, from the highest to the lowest, from the most intelligent to the most simple ; from the head to the beard, from the garments to the skirts of them, the holy oil descends ; and while it harmonizes the thoughts and affections of man individually, it unites the brethren as a church, brings the church into conjunction with the Lord, and secures the blessing of LIFE FOR EVER-MORE.

# MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS

FOR EVERY DAY IN THE WEEK.

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## Sunday Morning.

**O** MOST MERCIFUL LORD, our Saviour, Who knowest what we need, even before we ask it, and has graciously promised that whatsoever we ask in Thy name, believing, we shall receive ; we now present ourselves before Thee on this, the returning day of rest ; we magnify Thy holy name, that Thou hast preserved us hitherto, and that this day again brings with it a renewal of Thy goodness.

The return of the Day of rest reminds us of the services of the sanctuary. It calls to our remembrance that glorious period, when death and the grave were subdued ; and we, with the early Christians, can now unite in the shout of triumph, "O death, I will be thy plague ! O grave I will be thy destruction ! Thanks be to God, even to our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath accomplished our deliverance, and given to us the victory."

We desire, O Lord, to commence this day by pre-

senting our humble duty unto Thee. Thou art the Lord of life ! Thou art the King of Glory ! and yet Thou stoopest from Thy high and holy place to dwell among the humble ; to bless with Thy presence the contrite in heart, to cheer them with Thy goodness ; to satisfy their hungry and thirsty souls with the bread and water of life.

May a due sense of the holiness of Thy presence keep us in a state of devout reverence. Where Thou art, may no profane thoughts enter ; but upon our hearts and understandings may there be inscribed holiness to the Lord ; and grant that the words of our mouth, and the meditations of our hearts, may this day find acceptance in Thy sight, O Lord, our strength and our Redeemer.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Sunday Evening.

AT the close of the day of rest, O Lord, we desire to approach Thy mercy seat. We thank Thee for the gracious gift of Thy Holy Word. Give us understanding, we beseech Thee, that its glorious truths may be comprehended and loved. While its natural imagery is presented before us, may we look through its analogies, and come to a true knowledge of its spirit and life. Thus may we not merely be instructed in the regulation of our natural propensities and appetites ; but may our inner man be brought under the regulating influence of Thy divine and spiritual precepts. O how great is the value of this inestimable gift ! Thy word is everything to the soul of man !

All that he can desire in time ; all that will minister to his improvement and happiness to all eternity.

Are we hungry and thirsty after righteousness? Thy Word satisfies us. Are we beset by spiritual enemies? Thy Word is a panoply of strength, and contains a complete armoury of spiritual weapons. Are we oppressed by sickness and disease? Thy Word is our great physician, and the leaves of the tree of life are offered unto us for the healing of all our diseases. And if we be in poverty, the mine of wealth which the treasury of Thy truth contains is inexhaustible. O may we love Thy Word ; may it be dearer to us than thousands of gold and silver! As we this day have experienced its blessedness, may we feel grateful that new strength has been added unto us, and as we now retire to rest, may we rise again with increased energy, to walk in the way of Thy commandments, and to observe and do all which Thou hast commanded.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Monday Morning.

**O** THOU who art the Creator of the universe, we would draw near to Thee in humble love, and commence the duties of another week of labour, by imploring Thy Divine blessing upon it.

Thy Word reveals Thee as the fountain of life, health, and joy to the inhabitants of all the worlds that revolve in the immensity of space. Thou openest Thine hand, and they are filled with good ; Thy bounty is universal, vast, and free ; and when we



think upon the myriads of human beings that daily wait upon Thee, when we reflect upon the infinity of wisdom necessary to guide so multitudinous a body, and not one of these escape Thy notice, or is disregarded by Thine Omniscient eye, well may we be filled with astonishment, while in the words of Thy truth we ask, "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?" Great and marvellous are Thy works of creation, O Lord, and great and glorious to us is the work of redemption. Our feeble aids of science enable us to explore imperfectly the wonders of the firmament; but who is capable of penetrating that wisdom which preserves by its providence as it creates by its power? "Such knowledge is too wonderful for us; it is high, we cannot attain to it." But, O Lord, we desire to glorify Thy holy name, for that which Thou hast revealed unto us; and we wait with patience all the days of our appointed time, till our change come, when new wonders will be unfolded before us.

Lord, we beseech Thee to bless the commencement of this week of labour to our own health and to the good of our fellow-creatures. In newness of spirit we desire to serve Thee, and we commit our way to Thy Divine guidance.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Monday Evening.

**M**OST merciful Saviour and Redeemer, we humbly approach Thee this evening, sensible of Thy Divine providence, and satisfied that it is of Thy mercy alone that we have safely been brought to the conclusion of this day. Continue unto us Thy loving-

kindness, and let Thy faithfulness be with us every night.

As time whirls on in its ceaseless course, we are enabled more and more interiorly to behold the necessity for purification; but we acknowledge with shame how little we have hitherto reduced our knowledge to practice. But for the interposition of Thy Divine providence, we confess we should have still further neglected our duty. We thank Thee, therefore, O heavenly Father, that we have been permitted to become the subjects of Thy righteous dispensations; and we further implore Thy Divine aid, that we may resist the evil which is continually infesting us.

The day is again spent, and the shades of evening close around us. We have engaged in our duties as the light endured. May this bring to our remembrance the necessity of preparing for that night which shall usher in the morning of our existence in the eternal world. Endow us with a spirit of watchfulness. Teach us to strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to perish; and aid us to acquire that temper and spirit which shall fit us for the important change from this world to one of eternal rest and peace.

We commend our spirits, O Lord, our merciful Father, to Thy gracious keeping.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Tuesday Morning.

**A**LMIGHTY GOD, our heavenly Father, with the dawn of another day we rise and bless Thy holy name for the night's repose and refreshment: Thy mercies are ever new towards us, and we bless

Thee for Thy Fatherly care. Thou makest the outgoing of the morning and of the evening to rejoice. Thou hast raised us from comparative death to newness of life; therefore among the living will we praise Thee, and magnify Thy mercy as long as we have any being.

Enable us, O Lord, to turn our thoughts and affections unto Thee, as the Giver of every good and perfect gift; enable us to learn of Thee as Thou hast desired, so shall we find rest unto our souls.

We confess, O Lord, that hitherto we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own evil hearts; we have done those things which we ought not to have done, and left undone those things which we ought to have done; like the troubled waters which cast up mire and dirt, our evils send forth corruption and pollution. O help us to reform the evils of our life! Assist us to enter on the path of regeneration. May Thy example be ever before us; and as Thou, through temptation, when on earth, didst overcome our direst enemies, so may we, looking to Thee for help, be endowed with strength to contend against our corruptions, and finally rise triumphant over them; until, perfected by suffering, we are prepared for a higher state, and purer existence, in Thy heavenly kingdom.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Tuesday Evening.

**O**MNIPOTENT and Eternal Jehovah-Jesus! Thou art infinite in goodness, wisdom, and power! Thou art our Creator, Redeemer, and Re-

generator! the Governor and Preserver of the universe. May Thy name be hallowed, magnified, and adored, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same! Who is like unto Thee, O Lord? displaying constantly the treasures of Thy grace, the wonders of Thy love, and pardoning continually our iniquities, transgressions, and sins. Thy mercy is indeed from everlasting to everlasting. O may we walk in Thy love and fear, and be constantly striving to become conformed to Thy likeness.

Thou hast made us partakers of exceeding great and precious privileges. Thou hast permitted us to behold the dawn of a new era upon the world. Old things are passing away, and all is becoming new. A dispensation in which righteousness and peace shall dwell together, is opening upon us. Grant, therefore, O most merciful Father, that we may put off the old man, fashioned after the world, and put on the new man, fashioned in righteousness and true holiness after the model of Thee, our great and glorified Redeemer. May old things pass from us, and new affections, new desires, new thoughts, derived from the purity of Thy Word, be so established within us, that we may have inscribed upon our hearts a new name, a new quality, preparing us for a place in the new heavens above.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Wednesday Morning.

**A**LMIGHTY and most merciful Saviour, with humble and grateful spirits we desire to approach Thee, to bless and praise Thy holy name,

after another night's repose, and to supplicate Thy blessing on the duties of another day. Enable us to become more constant and faithful in Thy service; more zealous in the performance of every good work; more solicitous to obey and serve Thee; and more watchful over all our thoughts, words, and deeds; so that we may not prevent the operation and influence of Thy Holy Spirit from entering into and entirely possessing us. May wisdom and sincere piety, justice and mercy, temperance and patience, humility and meekness, adorn the whole of our conduct; and grant that whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely and of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, we may so think of these things, as to make them the constant objects of our faith and practice.

Lord, be near unto us this day, we beseech Thee; and guard us against the snares and infestations of evil spirits, and against the enemies of our own house, those lusts and impurities, which we too frequently cleave unto, and which draw our souls downwards.

Be Thou at all times our safeguard; strengthen our hands that we may be strong to labour; confirm our feeble knees that we falter not in our course; and unto Thee will we render continual praise, O Lord God of our salvation.

*Our Father, &c.*

## Wednesday Evening.

**O** LORD of all the families of the earth, another day has drawn to a close, and brings us again to Thy footstool to offer unto Thee our humble tribute of praise, the sacrifice of broken and contrite hearts. Have mercy upon us, O Lord, we beseech Thee ! we acknowledge that we have done wickedly ; we have all sinned against Thee ; we have sold ourselves for nought, and are brought low by reason of our iniquities. O help us to arise from this degrading condition, and to return unto Thee. Turn us again, O Lord God of our salvation ! cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.

Amidst all the temptations to evil which beset us, still let Thy presence be before us ; still help us to resist the tendency to sin, and by the cultivation of Thy precepts, may we be led to hate every false way. Thou hast entered into a covenant of grace and mercy with us ; may we be found willing and obedient to keep it. Help us to acquire uprightness, and impart strength unto us to persevere in the way of holiness. We acknowledge, O Lord, how guilty we have been, therefore do we pray for Thy grace, that earthly allurements may be resisted, and sensual delights no longer indulged in. Help us to acquire an approving conscience before Thee and our fellow-men ; and, while we are engaged in those pursuits, to provide things honest in the sight of all men, may we commit our way unto Thee, not anxious respecting the world and its delights, but in patience possessing our souls, casting our cares upon Thee, for Thou carest for us.

*Our Father, &c.*

## Thursday Morning.

**O** LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, protected and preserved by Thy providence, and refreshed by the sleep of the past night, we offer our thanksgivings unto Thee, our King and our God. Put Thy fear in our hearts, we beseech Thee, and let it be constantly before our eyes, that we may turn aside from beholding vanity, and be quickened in every good and virtuous work. As we know not the dangers to which we may be exposed this day, teach us to walk humbly and circumspectly before Thee, having confidence in the superintendence of Thy providence, and putting away anxiety and gloomy forebodings, committing our way unto Thee, satisfied that Thou canst overrule all things for our ultimate happiness.

Imbue us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, with forbearance towards all who may have injured us, and in everything may we strive to overcome evil with good. Fill our hearts with new desires for goodness, and help us to love one another as Thou hast loved us. Assist us to be upright and sincere in all our actions. If we are under the authority of others, may we do our duty willingly, and with a single eye; or if Thou place us in authority over others, may we be just and equitable, patient under the provocations to which we may be subjected, and act constantly upon Thy Divine advice, "Overcome evil with good."

Help us to discharge all our duties with faithfulness; and unto Thee will we ascribe all the glory, for ever.

*Our Father, &c.*

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## Thursday Evening.

**O** LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Saviour and Regenerator, we praise Thee for the blessings we have enjoyed this day. Thy mercies fail not; Thy acts of goodness towards us are never intermitted. Our comfortable habitation, our food and raiment, and all the blessings of bodily existence, enable us to exclaim, "Surely our lines have fallen in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage." Teach us to exercise the Divine virtue of charity with wisdom and discrimination, so that we may perform the greatest possible good, according to the means with which Thou hast endowed us, to the greatest possible number who need our aid. Impress upon us the conviction, that if we do our duty uprightly and faithfully, this is also a work of charity, and will by Thee be received as such.

Give us understanding, O Lord, that we may comprehend Thy Word of truth. May its precepts be our guide, and its holy men of old our models of imitation. Through it may we mark the perfect, and behold the upright; and may we, like them, find rest and peace.

Lord, we commit ourselves to Thy gracious keeping. Visit our relations and friends with Thy love; lift up the light of Thy countenance upon them, and shew them Thy salvation; and let Thy mercy be seen and felt by all mankind; and in Thy name may all the families of the earth be blessed.

*Our Father, &c.*



## Friday Morning.

**O** LORD our Saviour, Thou art the true and only God, there is none else beside Thee. Unto Thee we look, unto Thee prefer our petitions : hear us, we beseech Thee, and answer us from Thy high and holy place. As a family, protected by Thy power, enriched by Thy love, and preserved by Thy providence, we offer unto Thee our humble tribute of praise and thanksgiving. The returning light bears witness unto us of Thy never-failing goodness. There is nothing that we can do in return for all Thy mercies ; all Thou requirest of us is, "to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly" with Thee ; and Thou leavest us not to our own strength, even in this, but art near at all times to help and strengthen us. As the day we are now entering upon brings with it its own trials and temptations, O assist us to be watchful against the snares our spiritual enemies may set. Help us to keep a bridle upon our tongue, that we sin not with our lips ; and aid us to watch against the impure risings of our affections, that we may keep our hearts with all diligence. When mingling with the world and engaging in its duties, preserve us, we beseech Thee, from the snares of unrighteous gain ; let not sin have dominion over us, but in all things may we be just ; and keep in remembrance that Thou, Lord, seest us, and wilt reward us according to the cleanness of our hands.

*Our Father, &c.*

## Friday Evening.

**O** LORD JESUS CHRIST, whose goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our lives, Thou hast added unto us yet another day, and safely brought us to its conclusion ; and now we desire to renew our covenant with Thee, and to offer unto Thee the evening sacrifice. What can we render unto Thee for all Thy mercies ? we are lost in wonder at their extent ! We will take the cup of salvation, and call upon Thy name, O Lord.

We thank Thee, that we are again enabled to meet Thee in our peaceful home ; and that our kindred, and those who are dear unto us, are still around and with us. O how good and how pleasant it is to dwell together in unity ! And if the meeting of earthly friends brings comfort to our hearts, how unspeakably happy will be that meeting which shall bring us into the company of angels, and establish us in Thy presence to enjoy the beatitudes of Thy kingdom.

We look back with saddened hearts upon our evils ; those evils which have separated between us and Thee, and hid as it were Thy face from us. But blessed be Thy holy name for the wonders of Thy providence, which has at length led us to behold our danger, and brought us to Thy footstool to implore Thy mercy. O may we in spirit hear Thee speak to our repentant souls, " I am He that blotteth out your transgressions for mine own name sake, and will remember your sins no more." Under the bright hope of this gracious promise, O Lord, we commend our souls to Thee.

*Our Father, &c.*

## Saturday Morning.

**O** LORD ALMIGHTY, Who art ever ready to succour Thy creatures, and to counsel them when they are in difficulty, there is no being whom we can approach with so great an assurance of being heard as Thee. In the morning do we pour forth our petitions, and in the evening our cry is still unto Thee, our King and our God. While we kneel in Thy presence this morning, we would abase ourselves for our numerous transgressions; but not only would we confess our sins, but we would implore Thy gracious aid to enable us to show the sincerity of our confession, by putting away the evil of our doings from before Thine eyes, by ceasing to do evil and learning to do well. O make us to know our end, and the measure of our days what it is, that we may know how frail we are. Deliver us from all our transgressions, and bring us into the way of truth. Keep us this day in Thy fear, and in the path of duty. May our conversation be as becometh the gospel, in all sobriety, godliness, and honesty; and whatsoever we do, may we do all to the glory of Thee, our heavenly Father, and the good of our fellow-creatures.

*Our Father, &c.*

## Saturday Evening.

**O** LORD, Thou art our God, we will bless and praise Thy holy name for ever and ever. The evening and close of another week calls to our remembrance the extent and continuance of all Thy mercies

which never fail, but are ever new towards us; and we feel grateful that we are individually enabled to exclaim: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, Who healeth all thine infirmities, Who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercy, so that thy youth is renewed as the eagle." Lord, help us to remember, with becoming gratitude, the innumerable benefits showered down upon us in times past; and as Thou hast again and again graciously assured us of Thy pardon, on condition of our repentance, help us to perform that indispensable duty; and help us to have compassion on our erring fellow servants, and to pardon them. Cleanse us, we beseech Thee, by Thy truth; take us under Thy Divine protection this night, and permit us to arise again, and participate in the joys of another Sabbath in Thy church on earth.

*Our Father, &c.*

SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

**October**



## October First.

### THE SIX DEGREES OF LIFE.

*"And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."—GEN. i. 31.*

WHEN we read the Book of Genesis we should endeavour, in making ourselves acquainted with the history, to learn its true import and spiritual meaning, and above all things, strive to make an application of its spirit to our individual condition. For this end was the Word of God given unto us, and to this end it should at all times be applied.

What is recorded on the sixth day of creation by Moses, the Lord has been saying and doing, and will continue to say and do to all eternity. He is the source of life and blessedness! "we cannot live a single moment but from Him!" And this life He sends forth continually, so that "we live, and move, and have our being" in Him!

(1.) The Lord gives the life that animates our corporeal frame, and though, when infants, we know nothing of this, it is certain we cannot live a moment but from Him; nay, even in the foetal state this is the case. The heart, very simple in its functions, gradually increases in complexity as it is nourished by blood received from the mother; and blood is to the body

what Divine Truth is to the soul ; while the church is to the embryo Christian what the mother is to the foetus. By the church, the simplest truths are first inseminated, and gradually those which are more complex ; but still it is Divine Truth which is operative, it is by the blood of the Lord, the Divine Truth of his Word, that life is continued.

(2.) The Lord is the source of sensual life. He has formed the eye to receive the impressions of light ; the ear to receive the vibrations of sound ; the nostrils to perceive odour ; the tongue by taste to discriminate food ; and has pervaded the whole body by nerves of feeling : and thus are we beings of sense.

(3.) We are so organized as to be prepared for the enjoyment of external life ; and all the comforts and blessings of bodily existence are by the Lord bestowed upon us. All the objects of the wide creation are spread open before us for the employment of our rational faculties, and by the exercise of these we become (4.) Rational beings. (5.) We may, by the exercise of our rational faculties, rise to the higher plane of spiritual life.

Our internal constitution becomes open to the reception of influx from the spiritual world, and from some society of happy angels therein ; as we exercise our faculties in conformity with the holy Word, in the firmament of our minds the sun arises.

(6.) By the elevation of our affections to the Lord we rise still higher, and are supplied with life of a celestial quality ; we learn to prefer the love of the Lord to all things, and to bring our souls under its celestial influence. Thus are we kept in being from the foetus in the womb ; and life from the Lord is



supplied to the corporeal, sensual, natural, rational, spiritual and celestial man, and then are we prepared for the Sabbath of Rest in glory—the divine image and likeness is formed in us, and everything is pronounced to be very good.

We are thus instructed that the principles of man's life previous to regeneration, however excellent they may appear to be, are yet defective if they are not acknowledged as being derived from the Lord. He is the life of all. When this acknowledgment is made from the heart, then what was before good, becomes VERY GOOD; it is acceptable to the Lord, and blessed as well as BENEFICIAL to man.

## October Second.

### THE DOCTRINE OF DEGREES.

*"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them."*—

GEN. ii. 1.

THE first eleven chapters of Genesis do not so much treat of the physical creation, as of that which is moral, spiritual, and celestial. Theologians have trembled for the integrity of the Scriptures, and are still trembling, as the truths of science evolve themselves. Galileo was persecuted of old for declaring the true system of the universe: and geologists, for proving how much greater is the antiquity of the earth than that which commentators have assigned to it, are numbered with the sceptics. There is no necessity for this. God is truth. His word is spiritual, and to understand its meaning, we must view it

through its spiritual sense—we must first learn the true nature of the doctrine of degrees.

Every degree contains within itself, so to speak, the germ of that which is to succeed it, in the same way as the infant contains the germ of the youth, and the youth the germ of the man. God created the heavens and the earth : but the earth is the display of the lowest degree of wisdom, and is the natural degree. The breath of lives breathed into man constitutes him living, and thus prepares him for becoming spiritual, and by continuing in obedience to the Lord, and cultivating all the powers and faculties with which he is endowed, he has it in his power to become celestial. The second chapter of Genesis, therefore, treats rather of the celestial than of the spiritual man, and the wisdom of the Lord can alone fully describe the blessedness of that state. To understand the term celestial, we must ascend to the knowledge of the term by a series of degrees, and we must aim at understanding them by bringing ourselves into a teachable frame of mind. There are three terms necessary to be used, natural, spiritual, and celestial. Each of these terms has its three degrees, of lowest, middle, and inmost ; and each of these may be described as in some measure connected by a medium with the power or degree just above it ; thus, the highest of the natural serves as the nearest approach to the lowest of the spiritual, and the highest of the spiritual to the lowest of the celestial. But the church has so degenerated, that these terms, spiritual as well as celestial, are almost meaningless, and it becomes needful in some degree to explain them. A man that is merely natural, is little better than one that is dead, for he

believes nothing to be true but what he sees with the bodily eye, and nothing to be good but what ministers to his own selfish gratification. Such a man the Scriptures describe as dead while he liveth. The Lord, by His providence, is constantly operating on such a man, that the lowest of the spiritual degree may be opened in him.

A spiritual man in the lowest degree perceives by intuition that there must be truth and goodness, but he has no clear or precise idea how this truth operates; therefore his belief is rather one of faith than of love, and he only comes gradually into the knowledge of the existence of goodness, as he advances towards the higher degrees of the spiritual state.

But the celestial man, while he perceives all truth that is spiritual, and feels its effects within him, acts, nevertheless, entirely from a principle of love. With him yea is yea, and nay is nay, and whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. The natural man is always under restraint, and acts by restraint. The spiritual man sees truth, and is engaged in defending it; he is, therefore, more or less trammelled or shackled, even by the weapons of his own warfare. The celestial man is a man of love, he is the only free man, for with him "Perfect love casteth out fear." The first chapter describes the varied states and degrees of the natural and spiritual man, but the second enters upon a description of the celestial man.

## October Third.

## THE DOCTRINE OF DEGREES.

*"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished."*—GEN. ii. 1.

THE heavens and the earth being finished, implies that man being rendered spiritual by the combats undergone in regeneration, which the creation in six days represent, he is preparing to enter upon a higher and more interior state. Heaven is predicated of the internal man, and earth of the external. In the outset of his course, the external had the ascendancy or government, and the natural bore sway: "That was first which was natural."

But now the internal assumes the government, and what he does is not so much from the love of rule, as from the desire of good; and therefore good, not truth, becomes the ruling principle, and thus the preparation for the celestial government mentioned in the second and third verses has been brought about. And on the seventh day God ended the work which He had made, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made; and God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it. Here the seventh day describes the state of the celestial man, and is called the Sabbath, which word signifies rest. Now the Lord in the gospel invites man to come unto him, under the gracious promise, "I WILL GIVE YOU REST;" or, "I will give you the Sabbath; I will give you the state that is celestial;" and no one can give this but the Lord, because "the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath." The kingdom of heaven is a Sabbath,

because it is a state of eternal rest and peace ; and every regenerate person becomes a likeness of the Lord after the six days of temptation, trial, and labour, which always precede the state of rest, or Sabbath. Thus the rest of the celestial man is, "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day ; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable ; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words : then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord ; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father." (Isa. lviii. 13, 14.) The fourth verse opens with the words, "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth." The birth of the celestial man is here declared ; he passes through six successive days of the regeneration ; every day he becomes more perfect, for "the path of the just is a shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day," until he finally enjoys the Sabbath, by entering into the celestial state ; and this tranquillity and peace is secured, because all anxiety, doubt, and fear are subdued.

The celestial man is further called the Sabbath, because, having subdued the evil and the false in temptation, he has overcome all the infernal spirits ; they have, in consequence, ceased their malignant assaults, he is no longer infested by their presence, and hence rest has ensued ; but, inasmuch as victory could only have been secured by the Lord, it is, in consequence, said, "The Lord rested from all the work he had created and made." There can be no

real Sabbath where there is no peace; hence the wicked enjoy not the Sabbath, for "there is not peace, saith my God, to the wicked." So long as the external man is not reduced to obedience, and willing to serve the internal, there must be conflict; but so soon as the external begins to comply with the requirements of the internal, tranquillity is gradually formed; and the nature and quality of this tranquillity which produces the herb and plant of the field, are those rational and scientific principles from a celestial origin, which are plants fit to grow in the garden of God. This delightful state is further described by the Lord in Ezek. xxxiv. 25-27, 31: "I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I will make them, and the places round about my hill, a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke. And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God."

Man formed from the dust of the ground (Gen. ii. 7), can only be so far considered man, from the configuration. In reality, the external is *not man*, as, indeed, is declared in *verse 5*: "There was not a man to till the ground." To become a living man, it is necessary that the Lord should breathe into his nostrils the soul of lives—that is, the life which is of love, and the life which is of faith, and the power of perception to know and practise these.

The creation of man in the image of God after His own likeness, ought to be attentively considered by the devout reader of the inspired Word of God. So long as man is spiritual, his dominion proceedeth from the external man to the internal. Thus the fish of the sea, the fowl of the heaven, and the beast of the earth, are governed by the vigour and the power of truth in the understanding. But when, by pursuing the regenerate life, He becomes elevated by the love of heavenly good ; then his dominion proceedeth from the internal to the external ; the Son delivers up the kingdom to the Father, that "God (Love) may be all in all." Then the government is in true order, for He rules the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fish of the sea.

### October Fourth.

#### THE TREE OF LIFE.

*"The tree of life also in the midst of the garden."*—GEN. ii. 9.

THE more attentively we consider the first eleven chapters of Genesis, the more shall we be convinced that the things narrated in them "are an allegory." Though the particulars in the letter describe the generation of our first parents, still they are, by analogy, designed principally to teach the regeneration of man.

We have an intellectual as well as a spiritual principle ; and the intellectual principle can only be rationally formed by truths drawn from the letter of the holy Word. Still these truths are all symbolized

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by the different objects in nature; and every object has its uses, and corresponds to some principle within our own minds. In this way, "the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead." (Rom. i. 20.) Now, the garden of Eden literally means that which is delightful, and we may conclude that all that was delightful to the eye and pleasant to the taste, was to be found in it; and the mind of man corresponds to this garden, and when man is in a state of order, his mind is beautifully arranged, and all the holy truths within it are as so many plants that grow in the garden of God. The interiors of the regenerate mind are formed by the Holy Word. This makes, as it were, a paradisaical garden in the intellectual principle, in the midst of which is to be seen the tree of life. For what can this tree of life mean, but the Lord Jesus Christ Himself? He alone is the source of life, and nothing can be called living, but as it receives life from Him. Hence He is emphatically called "THE LIFE;" hence, also, we are instructed "to abide in Him, that He may abide in us." It is the Lord alone, through the medium of His truth, that can cause the gardens of our minds to blossom like Eden; that is, to become delightful. All that man can desire—all that can add to and increase his happiness—all that can impart practical charity and holiness to his life, is the result of the Tree of Life being placed in the midst of his spiritual garden; therefore is he counselled to "delight himself in the Lord, and the Lord will give him the desire of his heart." If the Lord be in the centre of our affections, He will preserve us,



and all our desires will be regulated by Him. He will feed us with food convenient for us. He will give us to eat of the fruit of the tree of life; all our affections will be satisfied by His goodness, and no good thing will He withhold from us. And while the tree of life is the centre of our Eden, there will not be wanting the river of the water of life to nourish all the trees in our spiritual garden.

Only let us exalt the wisdom of the Lord to the supreme seat in our understandings, and the love of the Lord to the inmost or centre of our affections, and our bread will be made sure to us, and our water will not fail. Every thought and affection will be hallowed, and the Lord Jesus Christ will dwell in the midst of us, and conduct us safely to His kingdom.

## October Fifth.

### THE OFFERINGS OF CAIN AND ABEL.

*“And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.”—GEN. iv. 1, 2.*

THE sacred Scriptures being a revelation from God to man, must be able to conduce to the happiness as well as to the instruction of man, in all ages of the world. And the word of the Lord being the wisdom of the Lord, we cannot suppose there will be any characters introduced into the sacred narrative but such as are calculated to be instructive to man. Hence Cain and Abel are representative characters,—types of individual classes in the church; and to be acquainted with their representative char-

acters, is to have the necessary art of applying the subject to our own instruction.

There are two great principles in the church of Christ, namely, Faith and Charity. They are brethren—they ought to be united. The former is represented by Cain, the latter by Abel. Now, if we consider Adam not merely as an individual being, but as the representative of a race of beings, and those beings constituting a church, which, as the first church, may be called the MOST ANCIENT; and if we consider that the leading or introductory principles of every church must be that which induces a belief in its principles, then we can see that Cain, as the first-born of Adam, must represent the principle of faith, and thus that faith is a tiller of the ground. The next principle, its brother, is charity; or faith brought into act in deeds of love; and this is represented by Abel. It is not enough for man to know what the truth is; he must do it, or he will not be accepted. The Pharisees believed in all the words of the law, and were attentive enough in external worship; they had faith, but the Lord said: "Except your righteousness *exceed* the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Worship grounded in mere ceremonies, or in external rites, or in even full conviction of its necessity, is powerless, unless accompanied by an inward feeling of delight. Worship from the mere conviction of truth, is but the fruit of the natural mind, the fruit of the ground tilled by Cain. Such worship is, in no sense of the word, beneficial. It neither opens the heart for the reception of holy influences, nor heaven, so as to conjoin it with the spiritual worshippers of that bliss-

ful kingdom. It is a work of constraint, not of cheerfulness. It does not 'cause the face to shine, but renders it rather downcast and lowering. It has no sympathy with charity, and often, as in the case of Cain, kindles into envy, and generates malignant feelings, until, at length, it becomes very wroth, and the countenance becomes gloomy and revengeful; thus sin lies at the door of such worship, and the Lord can never have respect to it: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? if thou doest ill, sin lieth at the door."

The worship proceeding from love is widely different. The soul is bowed down by a sense of its own unworthiness, and of the infinite goodness of that God who condescends to meet with it; and it cannot be in the divine presence in a state of humility, without receiving love from the Lord. As this love enters in, every affection becomes hallowed; peace, heavenly peace, takes entire possession of the soul; the world recedes, and heaven opens before the enraptured view; all of self is surrendered; the purest affections, the holiest thoughts, are offered unto the Lord: "the firstlings of the flock and the fat thereof;" and a state of unbounded charity and universal love pervades the soul, and "the Lord has respect to this offering." Let us then have much love; let us not worship from mere formality nor from mere duty, but from pure and devoted affection; so will the Lord have respect unto our offerings.

## October Sixth.

## THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS.

*"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins."—MATT. xxv. 1.*

THE great concern of man in this world should be so to live that, when his day of removal arrives, he may be prepared for the momentous change. And that he may be prepared, the Lord has given to him His book of life for instruction and guidance ; and it is well for him to remember that the words contained in this book, the same shall judge him at the day when time to him shall be no more ; consequently, to him the last day. He will do well, therefore, to be wise in time, not to trust to the views, opinions, and commentaries of others, but to study the book of God for Himself.

Religious profession, without the fruits of a good and holy life, is the grand deception, the mildew of the soul, the canker-worm that eats into the very vitals. Look for a moment at this beautiful parable, and let us strive to trace the analogies that compose it. How pregnant it is with meaning and with warning. The kingdom of heaven is by our Lord here compared to ten virgins ; because virgins denote such as are in the affection or love of truth, as all true members of the church are, or should be ; and the number ten is expressive of fulness.

But the parable shews us that half only of these virgins were wise ; thus, that the real principles of religion are, in reality, practised by few. All are called to the marriage of the great King's Son, and all seem

willing to accept the gracious invitation ; but all are not willing to labour, nor to be in that constant state of watchfulness necessary to secure a place at the divine banquet. And yet all are invested with the same power, endowed with the same ability, and able to secure the same privileges. Why do they not ? They depend rather upon others than upon themselves ; and " Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out," is no uncommon request even at the present day.

Faith is truly a bright and shining light, and, kept in active exercise, it is one of the highest ornaments of the Christian character ; but it must give place to, or exhibit its power by love or charity, because charity is the END of the commandment. Every man is provided with a containing vessel, or lamp : " the Word of the Lord is a lamp to the feet, and a light to the path ;" and it is the duty of a man constantly to take this lamp or containing vessel in his hand, to supply him with oil on his way. But beside this, every man has a lamp or mind ; and this is the containing vessel into which he must continually pour oil from the great containing vessel, the Word of the Lord. This oil is the good of love and heavenly charity, it possesses the property of always keeping in brilliancy the light of heavenly truth, so that, whoever possesses this oil—and it can always be had by labouring for—is sure never to be at a loss for light. If he be wise, and take oil with him in his vessel, even if sleep should overtake him, he can arise quickly, and trim his lamp, and go in to the marriage. But if he neglect this oil, how is he to procure an instant light when the cry, " Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet him !" is heard. No man has more than enough for himself ;

he has none to spare; his utmost diligence must be exerted to procure enough. What, then, is the condition of those destitute of oil?

All the ten virgins, we may conclude, were in the acknowledgment of sound doctrine, for they all had understandings—vessels, lamps. But celestial love in the heart, denoted by the oil in the vessel, was possessed only by the wise, and the others the Lord knew not.

Our faith is the light, our charity is the oil, and when these are united and manifested, we are known by the Lord. Faith alone will not save. Charity alone will not save. But both united are saving. Let us have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and bring forth the fruits of faith in a holy and religious life. Then will our lamps be always trimmed, and we ourselves ready to enter in to the marriage when called.

## October Seventh.

### THE BRILLIANCE AND THE POWER OF WISDOM.

*“They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”—DAN. xii. 3.*

**H**OW universal is the application of Scripture! It comprehends, in its illustrations, all that can be learned of the Great Supreme, of the immensity of His works, of the heavens in which His throne is fixed, and of the earth which He has made His footstool. But its illustrations also extend to the creature; and in looking at the wonders without, we are too apt to neglect the wonders that are within. God

is the life of all ; and this life, like a sea, fills every other deep ; and like a sun, its fervent beams of heat or love penetrate every heart willing to receive it ; while its rays of truth or wisdom permeate every understanding. They who are desirous of becoming fully wise, who seek after the wisdom that cometh from above, will, on receiving it, resign themselves to its benign influence, suffer it to pervade their whole lives ; and their lives being thus formed according to the pattern of all wisdom, the Lord Jesus Christ, they become as the resemblance of that brilliant, but mildly tempered, expansive firmament of spiritual glory, which beams forth as the only directing light conducting to the kingdom of our Saviour. They are, therefore, among those who may be denominated the "light of the world." These are, as the accommodated suns, to reflect the glory of the Lord.

All wisdom and all goodness belong to the Lord alone. And as the Lord takes up His abode in the inmost of their thoughts and affections, He becomes the sun that illumines their mental hemisphere, the sun that is in the centre of their spiritual firmament. Theirs is the light of true wisdom, drawn from the atmosphere of the Sun of Righteousness, which causes their face to shine ; theirs is the heat of that perfect love which beams forth in their expressive countenances, with all that benignity and suavity of pure charity and benevolence, speaking, in silence more eloquent than words, the language which inspiration utters, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Thought answers thought, expressive of the wisdom of the Most High, and of their delight in it. Affection responds to

affection in adoring love and gratitude ; and the Lord Himself, from the inmost of that adoring soul where He has fixed a throne on which He sits, looks down approvingly upon the efforts of His child. He is the wise son, and shines as the brightness of the firmament.

Nor are those who turn many to righteousness lost in the effulgence of this glorious brightness : no, they perform their allotted uses, and shall shine as the stars for ever. Love, faith, and knowledge, though in a lower degree than in those who shine as the firmament, animate their hearts and understandings. For the stars are all suns, their remote distances alone causing them to appear so small, and to twinkle with such diminished lustre. They are lost in the effulgence of the glorious sun of our system, and cheer the obscurity of our atmosphere, when the sun of our world has withdrawn its light. So those who are to shine as the stars, represent such as labour in the remotest part of the field of the great Householder. They who possess a knowledge of the holy truths of God's word, in however limited a degree, who instruct others in the duty of repentance, and thus turn them from folly to righteousness, or right-wise-ness—these shall shine as the stars for ever, because all their instructions tend to edification, and to the ultimate elevation of the soul to heaven. Their own knowledge will increase, will become more and more luminous. Their own hemisphere will be studded with purer gems of faith, with more fervent fires of charity, with more settled serenity of obedience. Yes, the prophecy is of universal application: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."



## October Eighth.

## JESUS PURIFYING THE TEMPLE.

*“And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves.”—MATT. xxi. 12.*

THERE is much now transpiring in the world which is looked upon with carelessness or indifference, but which, if examined by the light of Divine Truth, would be found of a character and tendency to need purification, equally as much as the temple on the memorable occasion just read from the gospel. “Let us imagine, for a moment, that the Lord should descend from heaven in a human form, and visit one among the many temples dedicated to His service, and should go to one of the worshippers, and say to Him, “What doest thou here, calculating thy exchanges, and weighing thy profits of worldly gain? Is it not written, ‘My house shall be the house of prayer for all people?’ but such as thou turn it into a den of thieves: depart hence, make not my house a house of merchandize.” The Lord our Saviour is an Omnipresent as well as an Omniscient Lord, and He will make His voice to be heard, at times, even by the most guilty, and by some unexpected appeal, let fall a truth upon the conscience, which may, like a spark of fire, set the whole selfish mind in a flame, and, ultimately, purify and save it by the fire. Let us look within for a few minutes, and see whether we can make any practical application of the subject. Let us permit the Lord to wield the scourge of small cords—those pure and sacred truths which discover our evils

in order to expel the iniquitous traders which carry on their unholy traffic in what ought to be the Lord's living temple—the temple of the heart. Is it not true, that, even in our places of worship, we find a difficulty to keep our thoughts from the world and worldly things? Ostensibly assembled for worship, instead of praying to be exclusively with God, and keeping our hearts open for the reception of the divine influences, do we not often spend our time in devising schemes of worldly advantage, while the Lord is standing and pleading in vain for admission, yea, even earnestly entreating in the words, "My son, give me thy heart?" We speak not to one only, but we desire each to consult his own bosom, and let the voice from within give the answer. Is it not true, then, that when the Lord of life and glory visits His *own place of worship*—and that place of worship is the human heart—His very first act, after He has gained admission, is to cast out all therein which is connected with the spirit of the world and of selfishness? Nay, is not the crash which He makes among the tables and seats of that worldly and selfish spirit, which, under the shelter of religion, would make the truths of heaven and innocence itself subservient to its purposes, almost appalling! almost enough to excite indignation at the treatment of what we have been so long wont to regard as devout? Woe unto us if it be so! The crucifixion of our Lord and Master will speedily follow, and His blood will be required at our hands.

We want you to see the state of the heart; we want you to raise the veil that has so long covered it. Look closely into it, is it not really hideous? **HERE,**

covetousness, which is idolatry. THERE, craft and Herodianism. In THIS place, hatred and malice, and all uncharitableness, covered with a seeming robe of sanctity! In THAT, a temporizing, double-dealing spirit, which aims to circumvent even the Supreme Himself! It is a horrible picture, this, of the human heart! of that heart, we repeat, which should be the temple of the Lord Jesus Christ. But why not clean it? Have we attempted it? We may answer, We have: but we find the work too great for our strength. That is the truth! It remains, then, only that we cheerfully suffer our Lord to purge His temple. We must pray for His aid; suffer Him to exercise the small cords of His Divine dispensations, and draw nearer to Him because He scourges us; and co-operating with Him, hating and removing sin, He will make our hearts His living temple, and bless us continually with His presence.

## October Ninth.

### THE AVENGING SWORD.

*"And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy."—LEV. xxvi. 25.*

THE Lord is essential goodness and mercy; and if, in the letter of Scripture, he is sometimes described as angry, and inflicting punishment upon the wicked, this is written in such accommodated language as shall reach us in our low state and condition. He desires nothing so much as our happiness, and the dispensations of His providence are so exer-

cised, that man may be saved—if by love and tender expostulation, all the better; if by terror and threatening in the first instance, it is soon seen that this is the means best adapted to reach the sinner, and that “God moves in a mysterious way,” to recover, if possible, even by fire and apparent threatening, His lost child. The covenant of the Lord with man is one in which the creature is the only gainer. Nothing is so destructive to the impure pleasures of the evil man as the spiritual truth of the Lord’s holy Word; and this Word is indeed the Sword of the Spirit—and hence the wicked strive continually to destroy it. And yet nothing will do the creature more good, and nothing can more strongly evince the divine love of the Lord, than that this sword should come upon him; for it may be, if the sword pierce him, or if the truth discover to him his inward state, he will tremble at the disclosure, and repent; and then, what a blessed discovery will it have opened up for the man! The sword of the Lord is quick and powerful, but it never wounds, except to heal and save us.

If, however, man fights against the Lord, opposes the Word of Truth, stifles conviction, refuses in his own obduracy the only means of safety, the Word itself will condemn him when he enters the eternal world; for the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, will avenge the quarrel of His covenant.

There is no man in the love and practice of evil but that seeks to entrench himself with a show of reason that he is right, and his arguments, or opinions, are to him the stronghold of his city. The scoffer at things sacred and divine dwells in the city of his own scepticism, and its walls are built of the brick of self-

derived intelligence, daubed with the untempered mortar of his own self-love. Perverted and falsified truth, united with unhallowed love, is the city in which he sets his habitation. It is to be lamented that the cities of the wicked are so numerous, and it is the more to be deplored, because they invariably nourish the principle that destroys both themselves and their inhabitants. For this principle is the pestilence which destroys, and by which the inhabitants are delivered into the hands of their enemies. This pestilence implies nothing else than the rapid decline of every kind and degree of goodness, and the opening of the mind to the dire assaults of those enemies of the soul which deprive it entirely of spiritual life. Thus the staff of their bread is broken, the real support of life, heavenly goodness, is withdrawn. They are in the condition described by the prophet: "They snatch on the right hand and are hungry, they eat on the left hand and are not satisfied." They prey upon each other, yea, they prey individually upon themselves; thus they punish one another, and "eat every man the flesh of his own arm," and thus their own pestilential evils destroy them. Let us beware how we break the covenant of the Lord our God!

### October Tenth.

#### THE LORD'S BAPTISM.

*"Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*—MARK i. 11.

**I**T is desirable at all times to remember that the glorification of our Lord Jesus Christ is a pattern of man's regeneration; and if it was necessary for the

Lord, after baptism, to go up straightway out of the water, so also is it necessary for us. If He was hailed by the Divine approbation, and we follow His example, the Divine approval will be extended to us.

In taking up the Holy Word, the Christian is certain He takes up no ordinary book, and enters upon the study of no ordinary subject. The subject is, how He may best prepare Himself for eternity. Such places as Jordan, Canaan, and Jerusalem, pass from his view, and the states and conditions of mind to which they lead become at once present before him. He sees in the divine truths of the Word of God the purifying waters of the river Jordan; and as he passes through them, they wash the mind, and cleanse away the stains of natural evil. But he rests not in these waters, but passes through them, and goes up straightway from them. This intimates an ascent into higher and more interior truths. John, indeed, baptizes us with water unto repentance; but there is a baptism which none but the Lord Himself can administer, the baptism of the Holy Spirit and of fire. To be made partakers of this holy rite is the very aim and end of our Christian profession, and this can never be accomplished by remaining in the waters of Jordan. Jesus went up straightway out of the water: so must we. The letter of the Word of God must be only considered as introductory to the Spirit; and, in order to serve the Lord in newness of spirit, we must pass through the oldness of the letter.

The Word of God is, in its spirit, heaven; and all the joys of heaven are beautifully portrayed therein. In its literal sense, it is symbolized by earth, as the basis on which heaven may be said to rest; for thus

saith the Lord, "The heaven is my throne, the earth is my footstool." And when we have contemplated the letter of the Word with attention, have dwelt with a holy calm upon its truths, how often has heaven, or the spiritual sense within been opened unto us! how has the Lord revealed His love, unfolded some of the wonders of His providence, and given us the tacit assurance of future peace and rest! When we have done good for its own sake, and have ascribed the praise unto Him who alone enabled us to do good, how often has a glimpse of heaven filled us with rapture, and conveyed to us the still small voice of heavenly approval: "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Then has a heavenly calm and serenity overspread our souls. Love to all that God has made, gentleness, and innocence, prepare the mind for the descent of the divine influences of the Spirit of truth, and we feel the approval as we see the symbol of the Dove descending upon us. Go forth, then, straightway out of the water, that the baptism of faith and love may be secured.

## October Eleventh.

### THE DIVINE ENQUIRY.

*"And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?"—*  
GEN. iii. 9.

**M**AN is continually looking out of, instead of within, himself, and thus fails to acquire a true knowledge of his spiritual and internal condition. Moreover, man is constantly listening to the seduction of his senses. Those allurements which minister to

the gratification of the body seem to him most worthy of attention. Thus he rises early, lies down late, eats the bread of carefulness, and anticipates a period when all his labour shall be ended, and he will have nothing to do but enjoy the natural appetites, and live in natural ease and comfort. To say nothing of the fact that all these anticipations too frequently end in disappointment, if we would only give ourselves a moment's serious reflection, we might, after saying to ourselves, "Thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry," hear the solemn response, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee;" and [then, where is the fruit, where the enjoyment, of all our care, labour, and anxiety?

It was this sensual reasoning that lost man his primitive innocence, that drove him from paradisaical delights, and whispered "Strive to hide yourself from the Supreme." Cunning as is the sensual principle, it at all times overshoots itself. Fertile as it is in expedients, it lacks the true wisdom of spiritual reflection, and it is sure to bring punishment upon itself in the end. But, amidst all the deviations from rectitude and honour which man continually makes, such is the goodness and mercy of his heavenly Father, that He is constantly devising means to awaken within him serious thoughts, and lead him to repentance.

After the riotous sensuality of the natural man, when the voice of mirth and festivity is hushed, he experiences too frequently nothing but disgust at the remembrance, and pleasure after pleasure leads him only to the melancholy exclamation, "This, also, is but vanity and vexation of spirit." It is while thus



suffering, that the Divine voice is heard in ex-  
postulation, "O man! *Where art thou?*"

Man sits himself down, and surrounds himself with earthly ties, and links his heart with fondness to his wife, his children, his family interests, and his family connections; and these too frequently occupy his attention to the neglect of the things above. Again the Divine voice calls, "O Man! Where art thou?"

He buys houses, and calls them by his name; at first he sees not the end to which all this too frequently leads; and those who profess to love him most, love him but for the hope of enjoying his possessions. He discovers this, and labours under the persuasion that all men are false, and that "every friend and brother will utterly supplant:" hence ensue misanthropy, anger, hatred, and a desire for revenge on those whom he imagines to have injured him, or who love him not for himself, but for his. But the Divine voice again whispers, "Pause, reflect!" and puts the question, "Man, man! Where art thou?"

The truth is, "Man is not where his body is, but where his affection and thought are. The Divine enquiry is, therefore, concerning the place or state of his affection and thought, and a very important enquiry it is, for every one to attend well unto in his own mind." Let us always endeavour to set the Lord before our eyes. To set our affections on things above. "Let us seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all things needful will be added unto us."

## October Twelfth.

## JESUS' PROGRESS FROM GALILEE TO JORDAN.

*"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him."*  
—MATT. iii. 13.

**L**EARN of me!" says the Saviour in one place. "Follow me!" is His language in another; and well would it be for mankind were they obedient to His divine injunctions. Not only would they be saved much misery and suffering, but they would have their eyes opened to behold many wonderful truths, and the simplest passage of Scripture would be found filled with wisdom, which those only who were instructed by the Lord, and followed Him in simple obedience, could know.

"Jesus came from Galilee to Jordan:" and what is there extraordinary in that? says the naturally-minded man. He was desirous of being baptized by John, and John was baptizing in the Jordan; therefore, if Jesus were in Galilee, He must needs leave it in order to reach Jordan. True. But let us see the different view opened up to the Christian, who humbly makes the Lord His model in all things, and believes that every incident related of Him has a spiritual application to himself.

Galilee was not, strictly speaking, connected with Israel. It is called "Galilee of the nations;" and as the nations unconnected with Israel were not in the knowledge of the true God, however much they might desire it, therefore, they of Galilee were in a Gentile state. They were in the desire for truth, and this

desire always draws down the Divine presence of the Word made flesh. Now, the Lord Jesus Christ is the very Eternal Truth, and He only can guide us into all truth. He mercifully instructs us according to our states ; and when we receive truth in the memory, and live according as we understand it, He gradually unfolds our powers of perception, until we are prepared for higher manifestations of His wisdom ; He changes the water of our natural truth into the wine of spiritual truth, and performs anew in us the miracle which He first wrought at the marriage in Cana of Galilee. But He left Galilee, in order to instruct us, that we must not be satisfied to remain in the mere knowledge of natural truth. He proceeds from Galilee to Jordan to shew us the necessity of progressing or going forward in the performance of our duty, in order to prepare ourselves for admission into His true and spiritual church. The Lord walks before us. His mild, encouraging voice calls unto us, "*Follow me, and ye shall find rest to your souls.*" Self often pleads for its own natural gratification. It clings to its father and mother ; to its former delights and gratifications ; to its former dark and ignorant thoughts ; and in the blindness of its own will exclaims, "Lord, I will follow Thee, but suffer me first to go and bury my father." The command of the Lord, however, is, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead." "Let us, then, go forward. Follow the Lord. Ye must be born again." When the Lord was baptized, it is said "He went up straightway out of the water ;" thus instructing us that there is no one state in which we must rest.

Water represents natural truth, introductory to spiritual truth. Jordan was the natural boundary of

the promised land—the boundary necessary to be passed ere entrance could be made. So with us. We cannot enter the true church of the Lord, and become partakers of its blessings, unless we go forward, straight up out of the water. And as the heavens were opened, and the divine benediction bestowed, when Jesus went up out of the water, so will it be with us. The interior things of the Word of Divine Truth will gradually unfold themselves before us. The love of our Father will take possession of our hearts. The truth of His wisdom will enlighten our understandings. The influences of His Spirit will fill us with serenity and peace, and the Lord will receive us into His church, as His beloved children, in whom He is well pleased.

### October Thirteenth.

AIR AND WATER FREE GIFTS ; BUT BREAD ONLY TO BE HAD BY  
LABOUR AND AT A PRICE.

*"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."*—GEN. iii. 19.

**T**HE LORD, in His wisdom, takes care that man shall be abundantly supplied with those aliments so necessary for securing the bodily health, as air and water. It is very certain we may term air an aliment, since without it man must soon perish as to his body.

The grand doctrine of the professing church at this day is, that faith alone is saving. The doctrine of the Bible is directly the reverse. But then faith can be acquired without any labour. It needs no seeking for,

no labour to attain. The ample page of the book of Nature, and the Eternal Truth of the book of Revelation, speak alike to the certainty of the doctrine that there is one God, and that the Lord Jesus Christ is that one God—the true God and Eternal Life. The very “devils believe” this doctrine; and though there may be, among men, some few who deny it, and affect a sort of argument to give colour to their denial, yet there can be nothing more certain and obvious than that “there is one God, and there is none else.” But this knowledge alone, this faith alone, this belief alone, never yet saved a soul. All the knowledge of those brought before the bar of the Lord was not disputed; it was the want of the good of life that condemned them: “I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not;” and, “Forasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not unto me.” That was the ground of rejection! The Judge did not dispute that they HAD taught in the name of the Lord, cast out devils in the name of the Lord, and performed wonderful works in the name of the Lord. They, therefore, had faith, but their faith cost them no labour, it was powerless for their own salvation, was absolutely dead; therefore the Lord knew them not, and they were accounted as workers of iniquity, and thus cast out.

Now faith, or knowledge and truth, is one of the aliments of the soul, and is by the Lord a free gift to man; it is as necessary for the soul as the aliment of air or water is for the body—neither the one nor the other could exist without them: hence we find that

air and water are given freely and openly to every man, "without money and without price;" but bread is only to be acquired by labour, and at a price. So also the spiritual things signified by air and water, namely—truth and knowledge—are the free gifts of the Lord. But the spiritual things signified by bread, namely, charity, or the good of our heavenly love, must be laboured for, bought, and made our own by labour; hence it is true, spiritually as well as naturally, that man can only "in the sweat of his face eat bread." It is charity, not faith, that is the one thing needful. It is charity, not faith, that is the end of the commandment. The knowledge of the Lord, and belief in His divinity, is indeed needful; but to our knowledge must be added charity, a life of usefulness: "If we know these things, happy are we if we do them."

### October Fourteenth.

#### JESUS—THE LIFE.

*"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life."*—JOHN xiv. 6.

THE immortality of the soul is based upon the grand doctrine that we are created in the image and likeness of God. We have two general receiving vessels, so to speak, into which life from the Lord is continually flowing; and from these two grand receiving vessels we may again say there are innumerable opening, expanding, and communicating valves, which convey the stream of life to every part of the structure of the soul. These two grand receiving vessels are the Will and the Understanding; and the valves which we

have supposed are the innumerable affections and thoughts which are filled with this life from the Lord, which is supplied from instant to instant, so that we indeed “live, and move, and have our being in Him;” and because the Lord never intermits this life, but supplies us with it continually; and because He has graciously promised that He will never forsake us—therefore we know that, in reality, we shall never die.

Yonder is fixed the glorious orb of day, and it would be quite as easy to darken that orb as to remove from us the light of the Lord, or to separate us from the love of Him who created both it and us. We are then immortal—we cannot die. “God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” “The dead praise not the Lord, nor any that go down into silence; the living, the living they shall praise Him as we do this day.” What a cheering doctrine for suffering humanity is this! and how must our affections and thoughts expand when we know that for immortal souls there is an eternal world where all is beautiful and glorious, and into which we shall enter when we leave the body, and participate in all its heavenly delight. A world this, more bright and glorious than it has entered the heart of man to conceive; a world where knowledge ripens into the truest wisdom, where charity expands into the purest love. A world whose sun is of such radiance as to be suitable even for the shade of a glory to the Supreme Himself. A world where envy never yet found a resting-place; where ravaging disease, with its catalogue of pains and miseries, never found an entrance. A world where the blessed inhabitants have no name for death, because death can never enter. A world where

" Everlasting spring abides,  
 And never with'ring flowers.  
 A land of truth, of hope, of peace,  
 Where Immortal flow'rets, glowing  
 With undying powers, increase  
 All our joys to overflowing.  
 Land of rivers and of fountains,  
 Brighter than the eye hath seen ;  
 Land of gold-capp'd dewy mountains,  
 Blooming in eternal green.  
 Land of blissful, fond affection,  
 Chaster than on earth we find ;  
 There our virtues gain perfection,  
 Home and birth-right of the mind.  
 Source of all our nobler feelings,  
 Hallowed thoughts are born above,  
 And the pure heart's strong revealings  
 Flow from Him whose name is LOVE."

Let us then believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and lead a life in harmony with that belief ; then shall we in the end be translated to a glorious mansion in the land of eternal life and beauty.

## October Fifteenth.

### THE MOMENTOUS QUESTION ANSWERED.

" *What shall I do to inherit eternal life?*"—LUKE xviii. 18.

**T**HIS question is answered by the great Saviour, who first remarks,—“Thou knowest the commandments ;” and then enumerating those which have reference to the maintenance of a good and useful life, and enforcing therefrom the sound doctrine, that life cannot be entered into unless the commandments are kept.



We cannot but confess that, hitherto, we have all, more or less, violated this plain injunction ; and were we to be called away to our eternal home this moment, what could we hope for but the reward of our ill-spent lives—death ! What, then, ought to be our present feelings ? We should say SORROW, that we have hitherto lived in open violation of the Divine precept, and a determination, with the aid of our heavenly Father, to live in this state no longer. From this contrition may be dated the first step of reformation ; now, if sin presents itself at this period, and in any of its alluring forms entices us to indulge in it, and thus prompts us to violate our resolution, and with it the Divine command ; and if we resist this seduction, by prayer to the Lord, by using earnestly, from our very souls, some such language as, “ O Lord, help me to resist this evil ! ”—the prayer will be heard, help will be afforded, the temptations to sin will be resisted, and reformation will become sanctified by repentance.

By continually looking unto the Lord for aid, by self-denial and resistance of every evil as it successively draws us to indulge in it, by abhorrence of sin, and by a love of goodness, we become gradually regenerated, and advance nearer and nearer to Him, who alone is “ able to save to the uttermost.”

But the eye must be kept single ere the body can be filled with light ; and we must desire to do the will of our Father who is in heaven, before we can enjoy true peace, and experience that blessedness which keeping the commandments will communicate.

If, therefore, we would enter into life, we must commence the work of moral purification, by keeping the commandments, first in the letter, and secondly in the

spirit. Whatever be the motive that first prompts us to act—whether the desire of reputation from man, or the fear of punishment—we must observe them in the letter ; and it is idle to affirm we cannot, for civil law will compel us, or punish us. The external worship of the one true God—reverencing His name and observing His Sabbaths—prepares us for obedience to our parents, prevents rage and vindictiveness, restrains us from incontinence, prevents fraud, theft, false witness, and covetousness. But as we continue in the moral way, and look to the Lord for help, we shall begin to act from higher motives ; and from keeping the commandments naturally, shall do so spiritually. The love of personal reputation will give way before the love we shall bear our Lord ; and the fear we shall then experience will be the fear to do evil, because it is sin against Him. We shall love Him for His own sake, and keep His commandments because they are just and reasonable, and because in keeping them there is the great reward of entering into the life of His love, and of entering into the life of His wisdom, and thus of being filled with true blessedness. Whatever is good we shall love, because it is of God, who is the only source of good, and because it introduces us into heaven ; and whatever is of evil we shall shun, because it has a tendency to bear us downward to the regions of death.

## October Sixteenth.

## MARRIAGE.

*"So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them."*—GEN. i. 27.

FROM these words we should understand not only that the Lord made them male and female in their bodily forms and functions, but that He made them in all things respectively male and female, so that all the powers both of head and will in the male have a distinct masculine character; and the corresponding powers in the female have an equally distinct feminine character: and these distinct and contrasting peculiarities prove that, independently of the natural tendency to each other, they are formed for a union of souls and of eternal interests. In this union of souls, wisdom joins with affection, strength with weakness, courage with timidity, firmness with feeling, and dignity with beauty. Indeed, each principle and quality in the one sex is formed to unite with its like, and yet, in some sense, contrasting correlative in the other; and it is this circumstance that causes every thing proceeding from the one sex to appear to the other as unceasingly imbued and adorned with the graces and freshness of inexhaustible novelty, and never-tiring variety and beauty. As the relation between the sexes is thus a compendium of all the relations that can exist between human beings, whether spiritual, moral, intellectual, temporal, or eternal, together with additional uses peculiar to marriage, it results that the all-bounteous Creator has collated into Mar-

riage all the happiness from highest to lowest which is attainable by rational and immortal creatures.

To have correct ideas of the true nature of marriage, we must reverently contemplate the character of HIM in whose image the male and the female are created. This image can only be seen while it is remembered that GOD IS ALMIGHTY AND INFINITE LOVE, AND ALMIGHTY AND INFINITE WISDOM. He made the man more the image and representative of His WISDOM, and the woman more the image and representative of His LOVE. In other words, God's male image is His wisdom in its own proper human male form ; and God's female is His love in its own proper human female form. And to represent the inseparableness of the marriage union existing in Himself, between His own love and His own wisdom, He provided that the human representative thereof should be capable of the most intimate union, as well of the soul as the body.

An apostle exhorts us not to "be unequally yoked:" that is, according to the spiritual application of the words, not to be conjoined with unholy affections and desires, or with unrighteous thoughts and persuasions. Unless we attend to this advice, the marriage cannot be considered truly conjugal. Before we can be interiorly united, the man must be regenerated, and made a form of heavenly love. To illustrate this, let us briefly recur to the marriage of the King's Son.

The King's Son is manifestly intended to represent the Lord Jesus Christ ; and the marriage implies the union of Love and Wisdom, or the union of the Son with the Father, after the humanity had been "made perfect through suffering;" for the perfection thus

attained consisted in the perfect union of Divine Love and Wisdom, and this was effected in order that the humanity might become the medium, or mediator, to conjoin mankind with the Eternal Father, or with the fulness of the Godhead, which thenceforward dwelt bodily therein.

In the Old Testament the husband of the church was the Invisible Jehovah: "Thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of Hosts is His name; the God of the whole earth shall He be called."—But in the New Testament, no other husband of the church is mentioned than the Lord Jesus Christ, which clearly identifies Jesus Christ with Jehovah, and proves the truth of His own words, "Whosoever hath the Son, hath the Father also." Those who were conjoined with the invisible God, under the old covenant, were invited in the parable to become conjoined with the same God, manifested in the flesh according to the provision of the new covenant, and all that avail themselves of this gracious invitation by a proper purification, will be found worthy to celebrate the marriage of the King's Son eternally in heaven. Now, if marriage is seen in its most exalted sense to be a union of the Divine Love and Wisdom, as well as a union subsisting between the Lord and His church; if the Israelite's God declared, "Thy Maker is thy husband," and in the New Testament the church is called the "Bride, the Lamb's Wife," how great is the necessity laid upon us, that we defile not so holy a union by spiritual fornication or adultery.

## October Seventeenth.

## MARRIAGE.

*"Marriage is honourable in all."*—HEB. xiii. 4.

THOUGH the apostle states that "marriage is honourable in all;" and although our Lord expressly gave His sanction to it, and wrought His first miracle in honour of it, Christian parents seem to shrink from making it a subject of thought, reflection and conversation with their children; they do not appear to think it necessary to guide them, by wise and holy counsel, in this momentous action of their lives: and yet, when an ill-assorted or imprudent marriage is the natural consequence, parents wonder that their children should so far act foolishly, and forget their duty. But ought they not to have told them their duty? Did they ever shew them the importance of the marriage covenant? Did they ever converse with them upon it, pointing out the sad consequences of improper and imprudent unions? No! they left them to wander without a guide, and yet are surprised that they have missed their way! How could they expect to reap what they had not sown? They neglected to shew the origin of the marriage covenant; they neglected to sow the seeds of truth and virtue: what, then, more natural, than that the young mind should become occupied with the rank weeds of unhalloved passion.

Marriage is holy, and proceeds from a holy God! It leads to holiness in itself, and is the image and cor-

responding form of the most holy of all unions, that existing between the Lord and His church.

Let married partners think of this, and remember the holy representation they are required to maintain. They have entered into a compact, which may either promote or hinder their eternal salvation. This will be determined by their conduct to each other. If they are sincere, loving, and pious, they will prove helps to each other in the way to heaven. They will ever be found to each other counsellors in prosperity, cheerers in sorrow, and comforters in adversity. Each will in turn become a kind and gentle reprover when necessary, and while they both act kindly and uprightly, each will be to the other a "CROWN OF REJOICING."

No language can adequately express the importance of marriage, in its bearing on the great business of this life, as a preparation for eternity! And how blessed is the consideration that, when genuine affection and piety unite; when the bond that unites the two in one is heavenly; when the love of the woman really joins with the intellect and wisdom of the man, and the wisdom of the man entwines with the affection of the woman—then the bond is as lasting as it is blessed—it is eternal!

It is a common saying, that death dissolves the marriage tie, and that when either of the married partners has entered eternity, the union is at an end. However this may be in the case of a merely external marriage, a mere union of body, apart from all interior union of spirit, it certainly is not the case with a real marriage. It is nowhere said in the Holy Word that death separates those "whom God hath joined together." Those whom God hath joined together in

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holy love and wisdom cannot be separated. The acts of the Lord are all perfect and need no revision. If nothing can separate the church from the love of the heavenly husband ; if "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come," can separate the Christian from the love of his adorable Lord and Saviour—who shall say that death can dissolve that marriage which is the union of love and wisdom in two human souls of different sex, and is at the same time an emanation from the Lord's love to his church, and an exact resemblance of it? No : whatever is of God shall stand ; and as marriage is of God, it, too, must stand, even after death has dissolved the bodily frame.

Death makes no alteration in the soul. It does not change or modify the love of the spirit. When, therefore, two souls are united together in the bond of hallowed affection, that bond must endure for ever. The tie that on earth has united two hearts in the bond of holiness and mutual love, will remain in heaven more close, more holy, more blessed and glorious than it possibly could be on earth.

## October Eighteenth.

### MARRIAGE.

*"Marriage is honourable in all."*—HEB. xiii. 4.

**M**ARRIAGE is honourable in all persons and in all respects. Honourable in its origin, its nature, its effects, and its end. But to be truly honourable it must rest firmly on the basis of sincere,



enlightened, practical religion. Nothing, be it remembered, but true affection, joined with true piety, can constitute a true marriage ; without this, marriage is but a temporary union of convenience, and is merely external ; but when the parties are united in one, because love is joined with wisdom, and goodness with truth, it is like its author, resembling Him in respect to His own divine and eternal marriage of Love and Wisdom.

Young women! suffer not yourselves to be unequally yoked, either in a natural or spiritual point of view. Diversity of sentiment in religion often induces much misery and suffering ; and an eminent writer has declared that it is heinous for a woman to marry out of the church—that is, supposing a woman to belong to the Church, which believes in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only wise God our Saviour, it would be heinous for her to marry a man who denies His Divinity, and it would be equally heinous for a man to marry a woman so circumstanced. On these accounts, we repeat, diversity of sentiment in religion often induces much misery. The family temple often becomes the abode of strife and contention. Let the views of religion harmonize, and peace is most likely to follow. The most important act in a young woman's life is the bestowal of her affections ; let her look well to the man with whom she is about to link her destiny. Where there is a trifling with sacred things ; where levity of manners and egotism associate themselves with vanity ; where carelessness of duties and neglect of the advice of parents distinguish the individual ; where extravagance and intemperance are united with neglect of civil duties, happiness need never be

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expected. Though the talents of the person be of the highest kind, and though his personal attractions be as glorious as the sun in the meridian, avoid him. The talents are but as the eye of the basilisk, the attractions but as the shining scales of the serpent: both are dangerous and subversive of happiness. Take heed to your way: "be not unequally yoked."

And, young men, take heed to your way, also! Take the dying words of King David to his son Solomon, and consider them as spoken to yourselves: "And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts. If thou seek Him, He will be found of thee, but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off for ever."

Young women! Remember every affection that tends to good in yourselves is an image of some principle of divine love in the Lord. Think of this, and so exercise it, that it may glorify your Father in heaven.

Young men! Every thought that tends to truth is an image of some principle of heavenly wisdom in the Lord, and when the two are united, they become a likeness of the Eternal Saviour. They live, they move, they have their very being in the SUPREME. O, think of this! Defile not these holy principles; cherish them, and they will establish a heaven within you.

"There is a chain which firmly binds  
Some kindred spirits as in one;  
A holy tie, a deathless link,  
Which closer knits as time rolls on.

There is a pure, undying flame,  
Which burns in some devoted hearts;

An inextinguishable fire  
Whose brightness but with life departs.

There is a sympathy which none  
But pure and holy hearts can feel,  
A blessed interchange of thought,  
A balm the wounded soul to heal.

There is a friendship, true and warm,  
Which time can never—never shake ;  
Which, like the rock, stands firm, unmoved,  
Midst storms and waves which round it break.

There is a sweet affection, which  
Earth cannot stain or time efface ;  
The love which warms congenial hearts,  
When worth in each is at its base.

There is a true, unchanging love,  
Which, like a star, shines mild and bright,  
A constant and a ceaseless light,  
Which brightest beams in sorrow's night.

O, joy of joys ! when two pure minds  
In unison can feel and live—  
When soul to soul is firmly knit !  
True love alone such bliss can give."

## October Nineteenth.

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF DEW, RAIN, AND SNOW.

*"The rain cometh down and the snow from heaven."*—ISA. lv. 10.

**G**OD has been pleased, in His infinite love and mercy, to reveal to man that every natural thing mentioned in His Word is but the type, the corresponding emblem, of something spiritual ; and He has also graciously made known to us the spiritual signification of these natural emblems.

We are all aware of the important uses of dew, rain, and snow. The same services that these per-

form to the earth, do celestial, spiritual, and natural truths perform to the church. For correspondence is according to use.

In that season of the year when the flower is about to change into fruit—when the falling of the rain would be too rough, when it would endanger the operation by sweeping away the flower too soon—we have the gentle dew. When we are in a state of innocence, we shall be watered with heavenly dew, invigorated by truth celestial, producing in us the purest love, the love of God and goodness above all things. This is the truth we shall receive from God to nourish, refresh, and invigorate us when we are just on the turning point of becoming regenerated, of arriving at the state of the innocency of wisdom.

When the earth is dry and parched, and the grass and herbs wither in consequence of drought, what is so useful as the rains of heaven to refresh and invigorate them, to renew their verdure, to cause them to bud, and blossom, and bring forth? And when the soul is warmed with affection; when it longs to perform good works, to exercise itself in deeds of charity; what can prevent the aspirations of the heart from being scorched by opposite desires, and thus withering away in inactivity, but spiritual truth, which will feed and strengthen them to further progression in the regenerate life? So important is knowledge, is intellectual and spiritual truth, as that by which the affections of the will can make themselves manifest, instead of being parched, and withering in vain wishes, that our Lord says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

And now let us consider the use of snow. If we

want proof that an Almighty Being created, and still governs and protects, the world, and all that is therein,—what evidence of His directing hand can be more convincing than the phenomena which take place in winter? When a season of frost commences, the earth is covered with snow, which prevents the frost from penetrating too deeply into the ground, and from destroying the vital principle in seeds and roots, and the eggs and grubs of numerous insects buried therein. Thus the snow is mercifully provided by the Lord as a protection to the living principle in nature.

In the mind of every member of the church, the Lord has beneficently stored up principles of goodness and truth, which He insinuates into him in infancy. They are seeds ready to spring into life and activity when the spiritual ground is properly prepared. But as man has to be regenerated before he can become a fit inhabitant of the Lord's heavenly kingdom, and for this purpose has to enter into various states of temptation, these living principles, these seeds of faith and charity, have to be protected when man is in that state denoted by winter. When he is in that state he is spiritually cold, he is destitute of any affection for celestial and spiritual things, and neglects to exercise his mind on them. At this time, when man is in the torpid state, in danger of sleeping the sleep of death, the Lord, whose omnipotent arm is ever stretched over all His works, graciously provides a covering of snow to keep the remains of goodness and truth from perishing—from freezing to that degree which would render them incapable of springing into life and activity in the time of spring, in that state when man permits the "Sun of righteousness to arise with healing in

His wings." This snow is natural truth, the Word as it exists in the letter.

When the man who is about to be regenerated is in this wintry state, if he read the Word at all, he reads it more from habit, and because he has been taught to do so by his parents and teachers, than from any love for its sacred contents. He, as yet, does not appreciate their value; they appear to afford him no spiritual nourishment; he thinks they relate merely to the regulation of his external conduct; he does not recognise their internal import.

But this natural degree of truth is of great importance, and, from its use and its purity, is typified by snow, white and shining. Therefore, it is written in Job xxxvii., that "God said to the snow, Be thou on earth;" and in Psalm cxlvii., "He giveth snow like wool." But, if we are really regenerating, the Lord does not suffer us to continue long in this state. "He sendeth out His word and melteth them; He causeth His winds to blow, and the waters flow."

## October Twentieth.

### PROVIDENCE.

*"Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself: sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."*—MATT. vi. 34.

HOW wise and merciful are the ordinations of Providence with regard to man's destiny in this world! We are so curious to know how we shall be circumstanced in the after stages of life, that, if we had the power, we would, with rude and unhesitating hand, draw aside the curtain which conceals from our

view the contingencies which shall happen to us in the interval between the present hour and the close of life's journey. Let us not "take thought for the morrow : sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Happy is it for us that our unhallowed curiosity is not gratified. Were we to have clearly placed before us all that shall happen to us between this moment and the moment that shall witness our departure from the world, there is not a human being to whom existence would be tolerable. We should not only be constantly looking at the shady side of our existence, and ever meditating on the physical evils which should befall us, and on the sea of mental sorrows and sufferings upon which we should be tossed, and through which we should then have to pass; but we should, there is scarcely a doubt, with the characteristic disposition of man's mind to magnify his misfortunes, make all our evils much greater than they really are in themselves. We should, in other words, not only have our eye constantly fixed on the troubles and trials of life, but we should suffer quite as much, if not more, from the anticipation of evils, as from the actual experience of them.

The futility of our endeavours, without the assistance of Divine Providence, is beautifully expressed in Psalm cxxvii.: "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Every man's experience may furnish him with examples to verify the truth of this position, but none are so striking as those that are furnished by Scripture. No doubt King David, like every other parent, rejoiced at the birth of Absalom,—that very son who drove his

father from his throne, and embittered the rest of his days. Jacob deeply lamented and bewailed the absence of Joseph, little knowing that very absence was the means of saving him and his family from famine, and that it was a necessary link in the chain of those astonishing events, the mighty influence of which extends even to our days, and whose final results are still hidden in the womb of time.

One of the seven sages of Greece, on being asked what was best, replied, "To do the present thing well." This is the testimony of experience to the truth of Revelation: "Take no thought for the morrow: sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Such will ever be the testimony of experience. For, as the whole duty of man is made up of various individual duties, so in the faithful discharge of the latter, in obedience to the Divine will, are found peace, happiness, and contentment. Worldly motives, however, will not suffice for the accomplishment of this object. In the discharge of every duty selfish feelings will arise, and must be resisted, till the love of God and man reigns supreme, and the ordinary employments of life are regarded no longer as burthensome duties, but as ever-present sources of new delight. Thus dying daily will be but the prelude to a daily new life; a birth of pleasures ever new. But, in the daily conflict against evil, the truth of Divine wisdom will ever be verified: "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."



## October Twenty-first.

### THE LORD OUR LIGHT AND OUR SALVATION.

*"The Lord is my Light and my Salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"—PSALM xxvii. 1.*

**T**HERE are two sources of light, though both have one origin. We have light from the natural sun: from that vast body of fire all the light of this world proceeds. This is natural light. But we have also light from another sun, which is the sun of the spiritual world, and of all that is spiritual in universal nature. This sun is the proximate sphere of the Lord's divine glory; from this sun is derived all the light of our spirits, or of our inner and spiritual man, as truly as our material bodies derive all their light from the sun of our system. And this spiritual sun is no other than the divine heat and light proceeding from the divine person, or divine humanity, of Jesus Christ our Lord. That heat is divine and infinite love; that light is the divine and infinite wisdom. When therefore it is said, "The Lord is my light," it implies a real knowledge that every degree of light we receive in the understanding or intellect, is from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Sun of righteousness, alone. Now, as spiritual light comprehends all science, all knowledge, all intelligence, all wisdom, whether natural, moral, civil, spiritual, or religious—it follows hence that from Jesus Christ alone, whose divine love and wisdom constitute the sun of heaven, all wisdom originates. **WITHOUT HIM WE CAN DO NOTHING—ARE NOTHING.** But there is one thing of importance to be here reflected upon. As with the natural sun in

the winter there is much light, but, comparatively speaking, little heat, and thus all nature is in a state of torpor, so with regard to our science, knowledge, and intelligence of any and every kind, although they proceed from the sun of heaven, and have in them a principle of heavenly heat when they come to us, still we may have stifled or perverted that heat. Let us see how this is. We observe great numbers of persons, in pursuing certain sciences, intent only on gaining the applause of the world, lusting after distinction, eagerly seeking pre-eminence, aiming after titles, honorary distinctions, a splendid name, wealth, and power. They acknowledge no source of superiority, believe in no God, cannot say from the heart, "The Lord is my light." Such is the class of persons calling themselves Secularists, who believe in no other God than humanity, and worship at no other shrine than nature. All their success is attributed to independent ability; and while they look upon their achievements in science or in art, theirs is the language of Nebuchadnezzar of old: "Is not this great Babylon, which I have builded?" Such persons do not say *the Lord is THEIR light*, for they do not acknowledge any Lord. Thus they in reality are destitute of both light and heat, and the Lord is neither their light nor their salvation. But when by the light of the Holy Word the Lord is acknowledged as the source of all goodness and truth, then the rational mind is open to receive the divine influx of spiritual illumination in the natural man, which is the light of life, and the Lord becomes our light and our salvation, the strength of our life. Life here signifies the inner life of the spirit, and strength is predicated of love or goodness. When, therefore, it is said, "The

Lord is the strength of my life," it means that the divine love or goodness of Jesus Christ is the essence and source of all our light and truth, our faith and love, from first principles even to ultimates.

We are hereby instructed that the man who can truly say, "The Lord is my light and my salvation," dwells in perfect safety, secure in the Divine protection; and no others are safe, because the Lord is not the strength of the life of other men. We learn, also, that whatever enemies the truly regenerating Christian may be exposed to, their rage and malice will be exerted against him in vain; they will stumble and fall in their wicked designs, while the object of their hatred shall stand unhurt and secure, for the Lord Jesus Christ is the strength of his life.

## October Twenty-second.

### HOW MAN SHOULD TREAT HIS ENEMIES.

*"When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell."—PSALM xxvii. 2.*

**I**N this world man has a warfare to engage in—many enemies to contend against: and the further he advances in his journey towards heaven, the more upright he is, the more faithful in his life and conversation, the more he strives to do justly and walk humbly with God, the more powerful are the enemies he may expect to encounter; because heavenly principles brought forth into the life, are ever opposite to the states not only of the outwardly wicked and profane, but also of false professors.

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself experienced much

opposition of this kind. His enemies perverted His words, feigned themselves just men that they might entrap Him in His discourse, and construed Him into a transgressor because He did good on the Sabbath-day. Let not, then, the disciple expect to meet better treatment than His Lord. But, says the Psalmist, "When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell." So true is it that the man who digs a pit for his neighbour, shall fall into it himself, whilst the neighbour or friend intended to be injured, shall escape the snare, and be saved from the evil.

It is rather a singular expression, that the enemies of man "come upon him to eat up his flesh;" not that such evil dispositioned people could actually appropriate the material flesh of those whom they oppose, but that they wish to destroy and consume the virtue, the character, the reputation, thus the natural life, which, by an appropriate comparison, is likened to "eating up the flesh." For all the malice, enmity, evil speaking, and falsehood of wicked men out of the church, or disorderly and mischievous men in the church, have no other design than to lessen the virtue, and disturb the peace of those who are the objects of their hatred and ill-will; therefore, "they come upon them to eat up their flesh," to despoil them of their natural character and reputation, thus to deprive them of life.

As followers of the great Redeeming Lord, calling ourselves by His name, let us avoid everything that would have the least tendency to injure our neighbour either as to his person or mind, his reputation or his usefulness. So far from indulging our pride, passions,

or any disposition of our self-hood that would injure him, let us rather seek every opportunity to do him good. We have no right to breathe suspicion against any man, to throw out insinuations that he may be indulging in flagrant evils, though we cannot openly charge him with such. We have no right to injure his peace, and introduce into his heart the adder of poison. Our duty is to copy the angels, who explore each other for good, imparting in return the good that is in themselves. Thus shall we act in imitation of our Divine Master.

### October Twenty-third.

#### THE LORD'S PEOPLE—WHO THEY ARE.

*"For the Lord taketh pleasure in His people, He will beautify the meek with salvation."*—PSALM cxlix. 4.

THE Lord's people are those who exercise heavenly principles. And what are these principles? It can be answered, they are such principles as have their origin in heaven; that is, such as are derived from the Lord, the essence of all that is good and true.

I. There must be a firm conviction of the Supreme Deity of our Saviour Jesus Christ, that He is "over all, God, blessed for evermore." There must be a firm faith in Him: it must be believed that HE IS, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. This is the first principle in heaven. To this every knee must bow, every tongue confess. This is the foundation of the church on earth, and other foundation must no man lay; and this is the corner-

stone of the church individually. This is the name by which heavenly principles are acquired, and by which the people of God have their stability. There is no other name under heaven whereby man can be saved.

2. From this name, there is a revelation of the love and wisdom, mercy and truth, of which the Lord's people are the recipients, and it is from this that all heavenly principles are derived. To love the Lord Jesus Christ with all the heart, with all the soul, and with all the strength, is the first principle of heaven; and to love our neighbour as ourself is a heavenly principle, having its origin in the love of the Lord. But that which is a distinguishing principle in the Lord's people, is the universal good which they are anxious to accomplish. A true and faithful disciple of the Lord, that is, one of the Lord's people, IS OF NO SECT. Like his Divine Master, he is constantly endeavouring to do good to all. He remembers the injunction, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven;" that is, that ye may be among the number of the Lord's people: "For the Lord taketh pleasure in His people, He will beautify the meek with His salvation."

3. The Lord's people are such as constantly wait upon Him for the renewal of their strength. Their prayer is, "Create within me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." No day finds them in a state of idleness. No Sabbath sees them absent from the public services of the church; no duty that can be performed by them is omitted: they are a

little lower than the angels, because they inhabit earthly bodies; but they strive to do good, and the Lord strengthens their hands, and is in the constant act of creating within them a clean heart. The will and the understanding, the affections and the thoughts of the meek, are continually being beautified. They are obedient, humble, friendly, benevolent, and charitable. They do good to all. They ask not to which section of the Christian church men belong before they exercise their office of charity; but wherever good is to be done, and they have the ability to do it, they set about it, remembering that, as it is done unto one of the least of the brethren, it is done unto the Lord. These are the people in whom the Lord taketh pleasure, and who are beautified with His salvation.

### October Twenty-fourth.

#### THE LORD A SUN AND SHIELD.

*"For the Lord God is a sun and shield."*—PSALM lxxxiv. 11.

**I**T is of the utmost importance to the soul that man should believe in the influence and operation of the sun of heaven. By this belief he is kept in perpetual remembrance that God is the life of all—that it is, indeed, an elevating truth that we live, and move, and have our being in Him alone. But, as where there is a sun, worlds and inhabitants may be inferred, and, indeed, must exist, upon which the heat and light of that sun may operate; so the existence of a heavenly sun establishes the existence of a heavenly world, and of blessed inhabitants who reside therein.

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And our heavenly Father has provided "many mansions" in His kingdom for the reception of the blessed who dwell and are to dwell therein. It is further necessary that man should believe in the sun of heaven, because He who is in the midst of it is life itself, and sends forth, through its medium, a constant efflux of life, without which all creation would be annihilated. Hence God is life itself, and love itself, and light itself. "The Lord our God is a sun."

And the Lord our God is a shield. The use of the shield in warfare is to protect the more vital parts against the missiles of the assailants, and was generally buckled on the left arm, thus serving readily as a covering to the heart and lungs, which are, of course, the vital parts of the internal organism. Now, the heart has correspondence with the will and its affections, and the lungs with the understanding and its thoughts; hence a shield, to defend these, would represent the protecting power of Divine Truth to these two receptacles, into which God originally breathed the breath of lives. Here the Lord Himself is called the shield. "The Lord our God is a shield."

The Lord, then, by His divine truth, is our defender. He is not only the giver of life—he is the continual protector and preserver of it. Exposed as we are to hosts of spiritual enemies—to enemies unseen—whose power is most malignant, as well as to those more open assailants which press upon us from without, and to enemies of our own household, which are the evils lurking within, and enticing us to indulge our sensual gratifications—how could we resist all these attacks if left to ourselves? We should soon give way, and our end would be eternal death. But the Lord graciously



condescends to be our shield. He constitutes Himself our protector—He contends against our spiritual adversaries. By the wonder-working power of His Divine providence, He thwarts the machinations of our secret foes, and delivers us from their snares: He protects us against the weapons of evil—against the arrows of falsehood—so that we can truly say, “The Lord is our refuge and fortress, our God in whom we will trust. He shall cover us with His feathers, and under His wings shall we trust; His truth shall be our shield and buckler: we will not fear for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day: for the Lord our God is a sun and shield, He will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.”

### October Twenty-fifth.

THE LORD THE RESTORER OF THE SOUL.

“*He restoreth my soul.*”—PSALM xxiii. 3.

TO restore the soul, implies the raising of it from a state of earthly-mindedness and death, to a state of heavenly-mindedness and life.

We see that mankind are prone to evil; to whatever is contrary to true peace. Pride, lust, intemperance, covetousness, and many other impure affections, all concur to prove how deeply man has fallen from God; and the soul can only be recovered from this state by a new birth, a new creation, a new life: as it is written,

“Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”

Whatever the ruling love of man is, that may be termed his life. In this love all his affections centre ; and to the manner in which he may best indulge this love, all his intellectual powers are strained. If he be in the love of evil, his understanding is subjected to that love, and whatever accords with that love he calls wisdom, while whatever disagrees with it, is to him foolishness : hence to the evil man, virtue, religion, piety, and conscience, have no attractions ; his life is “earthly, sensual, devilish ;” and the end of that life is death : because in the next world he will retain his love, but the objects and pursuits which gratified that love will be lost for ever. In this state, then, we may plainly see how fallen the soul is.

The Creator designed the soul for the enjoyment of spiritual and eternal beatitude ; but man has perverted the order or design of his creation, he has chosen what is earthly and vile in preference to what is heavenly and divine, he has turned away from God, he has become a form of disorder, has opened the mind to infernal influences, and entered into alliance with disorderly spirits. What, then, can be implied by a restoration of the soul, but a deliverance from this evil and fallen state ? And do we put the question, how can this deliverance be effected ? The answer is, by the love and wisdom of the Lord, by the holy influences of His love and truth—by these HE RESTORETH THE SOUL.

When by reading or hearing the Holy Word, by reflection, by the pleadings of truth, man is brought to perceive his fallen and dangerous state, is convinced

of his impurity and folly, and, feeling anxious, desires to be delivered from the degraded condition he is in, then the Lord immediately begins to operate upon him by the influences of the light or truth, and the heat or love of heaven. The truth contends against his evils, overcomes and expels them, and thus place is made for the implantation of goodness; and the admission of these holy influences of truth and goodness is the impartation to the soul of **NEW LIFE**. Love to the Lord and to goodness takes the place of infernal love. Wisdom from the Word of God enlightens the understanding, and leads to those pursuits adapted to the altered state of the affections, and the soul becomes gradually restored to a good and heavenly condition.

But he who is restored, is conscious that this is brought about by the uninterrupted goodness of the Lord, through the various providential interferences or dispensations, which have led to his conversion; therefore the language of the converted soul is, "The **LORD** restoreth my soul; **HE** leadeth me in paths of righteousness for **HIS OWN NAME'S SAKE.**"

## October Twenty-sixth.

### THE DUTIES OF MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

*"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men. Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening; knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him."*—EPHES. vi. 5-9.

**I**NEQUALITY of station is an ordinance of the Supreme; and this ordinance, when reflected upon,

conduces to the well-being and happiness of all. The distinction between master and servant existed in the earliest ages, and in every country, and appears to have been arranged and permitted by the Lord, that the reciprocal virtues of love and gratitude might not only have existence, but perpetuity.

Compassion and thankfulness, charity and respect, kindness and sympathy, originate in love and gratitude, and may be described as their offspring. Hence the utility of difference of station; and hence the wisdom that ordained it. If all were equal, there would be no place for kindness or gratitude, and men would remain unsocial, if not sullen, in their own solitary grandeur. The Christian graces and virtues would lie dormant; the kindly feeling of the good Centurion could hardly have been known, but for this inequality; and the beneficence and mercy even of the Redeemer would have shone less transcendently, had He chosen His disciples from among the rich and noble, rather than from among the humblest and the most hard-wrought of mankind—poor fishermen. The very inequality which appears to divide mankind in reality constitutes their true bond of union. As, then, there has ever existed masters and servants, and both are likely to continue in existence, it cannot be an improper subject for meditation, to ascertain the duties, and to see to the performance of the duties devolving on masters and servants.

The relationship subsisting between masters and servants is a necessary one, because it tends to unite and render happy those who perform its duties; and these duties, faithfully performed, are not merely beneficial to the body, but to the mind also. But all

depends upon their reciprocal performance, under the guiding influence of the gospel. The servant owes to the master submission, integrity, faithfulness, and strict obedience. The master owes to the servant, love, respect, kindness, gentleness, and strict honesty. In these two propositions the duties of both seem to be fairly stated, and we shall make them the subject of our subsequent reflections.

### October Twenty-seventh.

#### THE DUTIES OF MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

*"He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much."*—LUKE xvi. 10.

THE servant owes to the master submission, integrity, faithfulness, and obedience. Submission should be shewn not only in the performance of the duties required, but in the *manner* in which they are performed. Sullenness, apparent unwillingness, and insolence of language and manners, are all direct breaches of duty. When a servant enters into employment, he stipulates for a certain return to give his time and his labour for his employer's benefit: his time and his labour, therefore, are no longer at his own disposal, but his employer's, and ought to be used for the interest of his employer.

The servant owes his master strict integrity. If a servant waste either his time, or neglect the labour he ought to perform, he is unfaithful, using that which actually is the property of another, and thus compromises his integrity. Moreover, all the property of the employer should be considered sacred, and not

in the slightest degree violated. The smallest thing should never be appropriated without permission: "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much." Only a wafer, only a sheet of paper, only a few pins, and a multitude of other small matters, are all only violations of trust which may seriously affect the integrity of a servant.

Violation of truth is a compromise of integrity. The law of God is superior to the law of man, and a servant must obey God rather than man. It is very questionable whether, at the command of a master, a servant ought to be guilty of evasion or falsehood. In the common command given to a servant of, "I am not at home to-day," there is very questionable morality. The servant knows he is evading the truth, but he quiets his conscience with, "It is master's order." If masters require their servants to speak the truth at all times, it is dangerous themselves to set an example of evasion. How much more just would be the instruction—"I am engaged, and must not be interrupted to-day:" or, "I have accounts to investigate, letters to write, which require silence:" or, "I am indisposed, and cannot receive visitors," as the case may be. No sensible person would object to this; the integrity of the servant would not be compromised, and the privacy of the master would not be intruded upon. Let servants think of this, and respectfully remonstrate with their employers if induced to violate it.

Be faithful in your service, labour as diligently and cheerfully in the absence as in the presence of the master, for this is the purpose of the apostolic advice: You are to do your duty, "not with eye-service, as

men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart." In faithfulness, the duty of obedience seems included. When Joseph became a bond-servant in Potiphar's house, he was devotedly faithful to his master. In every sense of the word, the conduct of Joseph, as a servant, is worthy of universal imitation. "Eye-service," the service of men-pleasers, performed only from the hope of reward, the fear of displeasure, or to acquire praise, is not the kind of service which the apostle commends; on the contrary, he reprobates it: and hence the service must be performed in integrity, with a sincere desire to do what is just, not only because it is pleasing to man, but because it is enjoined by that higher law which masters and servants are both bound to obey.

### October Twenty-eighth.

#### THE DUTIES OF MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

*"The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much."*—

ECCLES. V. 12.

**L**ABOUR has every advantage over idleness: it produces competence, it conduces to health, and it brings at its conclusion the sweet repose of sleep. We are placed in this world to be useful: "Occupy till I come," is the command of the Highest. The highest state of primeval happiness was a life, not of inglorious ease, but of useful labour; and man was placed in the garden of Paradise "to dress and to keep it." There can be nothing good in idleness; and the apostle has taken care to exhort us seriously

against it. But our Lord's own rule, which has been justly termed the golden rule, is the law to be remembered both by masters and servants: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." Whatsoever you would wish your servant to do if you were a master, that as a servant do you. The neglect of this rule, or the total forgetfulness of it, has led to the general remark, that those who have at one time been servants, are, as masters, the most oppressive and overbearing. If we inquire into the reason of this, the solution is at once simple and easy. When they were servants, they practised every evasion, and used every cunning method to over-reach their employer; and hence, when they become masters, they suspect their servants of doing what they themselves had previously done. In this way the "eye-servants" become terrible as masters, and the kingdom of darkness gains an accession of miserable inhabitants.

There is a beautiful sentence contained in four words, which we should all do well to keep in remembrance, yea, engrave on the tablet of the heart, and keep as frontlets before the eyes; it is this: "THOU GOD SEEST ME." Were it remembered, and were reflections awakened in the mind, of its vast significance, how much evil would be avoided, how much more faithfully would our duties be performed! We should then so "let our light shine before men, that they might see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven." Here is the reward of a Christian servant—doing good for the pure love of good, loving and practising truth because it is truth, and shunning evil, not merely because it is mischievous in



this world, but because it is sin against the Most High.

Never let a servant consider his situation degrading. However diversified our duties may be, there is nothing dishonourable or degrading that is useful. We are placed as mutual helps, and the great Householder, in dispensing to us our several employments, does so with consummate wisdom; all we have to do, is to obey his Divine command, and "occupy till He come." Do not envy those who occupy what are called superior stations, and be not cast down at the lowliness of your own.

•  
"The storm

That makes the high elm crack, and bends the oak,  
The humble lily spares. A thousand blows  
That shake the monarch on the throne  
We humble folk feel not."

As it regards the real man—the soul—there is no difference in station in the sight of the Most High. The seraph and the angel, the master and the servant, are beheld by the great Redeemer alike as his children; and he gives to his children such employments as are most suitable. Whether, therefore, we be kings and priests within the temple, or whether we be door-keepers in the house of our God, we are still the children of God; and who shall separate us from His love? This is a most undoubted truth: "Every one that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of Him."

## October Twenty-ninth.

## THE DUTIES OF MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

*"And ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him."*—Eph. vi. 9.

THE very station of MASTER supposes that the person filling it is superior to the persons whom he employs, in information as well as in power: but at the present day, this is not reflected upon with the seriousness which its importance demands. Few are the masters and mistresses who set before their servants examples which they may with safety follow. We know not whether we are carrying the illustration too far, in comparing the master to the priest of his own household; but if we are not, it is certain that the neglect of duty in the master is not only the peril of the servant's soul, but the blood of that servant will be required at the master's hand. It is an extreme case, and here we do not press it as an absolute one, but it is not unworthy the reflection of all who have "servants under them." Missionary Societies and Tract Societies exist, and much good unquestionably results from them. There are books inculcating the duties of servants, and giving instructions for the best method for performing those duties, but we know not of any book which inculcates the duty of masters; and yet nothing can be more certain than that each has duties to perform. The servant must be obedient, must be honest, sober, and industrious. Ought the master not to set an example of these virtues? Ought he not to be careful, discreet, temperate, and mindful

of the comfort, as well as the instruction, of those who serve ?

But there is also another thing to be considered. When one individual is placed by the Providence of the Lord in a state of servitude to another, it is intended that both shall be benefited. The master, by the servant's attention, faithfulness, and care ; and the servant, by the example, kindness, and instruction of the master. An illustrious author has observed, that "the life of religion is to do good ;" and what can be a more good or useful work for a master, than to instil into the mind of a servant, as well as set before him an example, "To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God ?"

A reproof given with kindness, and in a spirit of love, an exhortation properly timed, and enforced by the example of the master and mistress, will be more beneficial than many formal homilies. The master owes to the servant that justice which he himself professes to admire. He cannot, however, expect reverence from a servant, if he be profane himself. He must not imagine his servant will be honest, unless he sets the example of strict integrity. If he is overbearing or intemperate, he cannot expect mildness and temperance. Let him set an example of Christian duty, and he will be of far more value to his servant, than that which results from mere pecuniary benefit.

## October Thirtieth.

## THE DUTIES OF MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

*"Your Master also is in heaven."*—EPH. vi. 9.

THERE is another duty which the master should enforce; observance of the Sabbath. It is the bounden duty of every master to allow his servant that time which is required to attend public worship, not as a favour or a kindness, but as a right, and by no means to interfere with the conscience. The Word of God may be read in the house, and family worship may call upon the servant to kneel at the household altar; but the conscience must be left perfectly free. Man is accountable only to his Maker, and religion is a question between the Lord and the soul of man. The master must remember that his Master also is in heaven, and exercise lenity and moderation towards the servant.

Human nature, especially where the education has been neglected, needs encouragement. It is not every mind that can pursue the straight path, and persevere in it without assistance and encouragement: therefore, strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

Reprove, but forgive, light trespasses, "for if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses." If with what measure we mete it shall be measured to us again, we can only expect kindness from others as we shew it to others: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

To enable both masters and servants faithfully to do their duty, each should remember that they have, individually, two sets of servants to superintend and direct. The human mind may be said to be divided into three great regions. From the highest of these he should regard his God, from the second his neighbour, and from the lowest himself. His principal duty is, therefore, so to elevate his thoughts and affections to the Lord, by keeping the channels of his mind open, that the Divine influence may flow into the supreme region, and be able to keep in subservience all the other powers. The supreme and governing principle of the soul ought to be spiritual. All the inferior affections and thoughts are to be guided, directed, and controlled by this. The spiritual principle is to be the master. Who, then, are the servants we have individually to watch over? They are the inferior propensities, the scientific and the intellectual faculties; all are to be rendered obedient to the spiritual principle: we are to glorify God in our bodies as well as in our spirits. We are to be watchful over our propensities, restraining our tempers, avoiding everything that has a tendency to promote strife or animosity, to employ all our talents and faculties in the service of the Lord, and for the good of our fellow-creatures. In all things the spiritual principle must exercise control. It is Israel that must be the blessing in the midst or inmost of our land. Egypt and Assyria—the scientific and rational principles—are eminently useful in their position as servants to the spiritual, and our duty is so to act, that the prophecy may be individually fulfilled in ourselves; every talent and every faculty we possess being hallowed by the

influence of the spiritual principle ; then shall we realize in our souls the Divine benediction, "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance."

## October Thirty-first.

### ELIJAH'S TRIALS.

*"But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die."—1 KINGS xix. 4.*

HOW often is this the condition of man even to this day. Every one imagines his own distresses to be greater than his neighbour's. Despondency often presses the soul, nearly to overwhelming, and, Would that "I could fly away and be at rest!" is the frequent expression of the tried and regenerating Christian. It is at such seasons when man feels his utter weakness, that the goodness of the Lord, displaying the wonder-working power of his providence, operates as a shield between him and the infestations of evil spirits, who are the origin of all doubts and all murmuring, and who strive, by inducing despondency, to create a belief that salvation is hopeless. Thus, in the case of the Israelites—whose murmurings originated in the belief that they should all perish of hunger—they were often ready to stone their conductor ; but the Lord gave them bread to eat, which they knew not. And thus with regard to Elijah—the angel or messenger from the Lord touching him, is a striking figure of the Divine protection, through the ministry of angels, vouchsafed through the ministration

of Divine Truth. And then, as in the case of Elijah, comes the Divine support, the cake baked on the coals, and the cruse of water at his head. It is in such a state that the Christian, like Elijah, eating of that bread, the Divine Love, and drinking of that water, the Divine Truth, finds in that meat and drink strength sufficient for the forty days' trial he has to undergo, until he comes to Horeb, the Mount of God; being then gifted with the power of a Divine patience to endure the whole process of the temptation, by which he is conducted to the full regeneration, or the conjunction of heavenly love and wisdom. There can be no real peace until our enemies are defeated. The hidden manna will not be bestowed upon us until we have overcome the trials which are the means of our regeneration. "He that overcometh, I will give him to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone." First, then, there is the labour, the trial, the contention against our evils and errors; and then there is the victory by the power of the Divine Truth, which brings spiritual rest and peace. Truth having overcome falsehood, and good overcome evil, combat and warfare is ended, and the reward is bestowed; the reward is in that which is hidden. The Divine love permeates the affections, and the hidden manna is to do the will of the Lord, and to glorify him for the wonderful deliverances during the progress through the wilderness. The white stone is the pure Divine Truth which governs the understanding, and impresses the soul with that new name, that new quality, which is fitting for all who enter the heavenly kingdom. But while we exist in this state of trial, while we are traversing through the wilderness, which

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is to be the means of our purification and regeneration, we must ever manifest a becoming but humble dependence on the dispensations of the Divine Providence. Recollection of the words of the wise man, "As thy day is, so shall thy strength be," will render us patient in every vicissitude, knowing that our times are in the hands of the Lord.



# MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS

FOR EVERY DAY IN THE WEEK.

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## *Sunday Morning.*

**O** THOU Who art the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords! all wisdom proceeds from Thee alone: and on this sacred day Thy people wait on Thee, to receive instruction and guidance from Thy Word. Lord, listen to the prayer of Thy people, extend Thy Divine aid to all who are placed in positions of authority and trust, whether elevated or humble, so that by Thy knowledge they may discharge the duties entrusted to them with fidelity. May the government ever rest upon Thy shoulders, and may the instructions contained in Thy Word be so applied, that the people may grow in truth and righteousness.

Lord, we humbly pray that Thy Divine blessing may accompany all those engaged in the dissemination of Thy Word of Truth, whether they be ministers or teachers. Let Thy heavenly influence enter into, and take entire possession of them. Endue them with an ardent affection for Thy Word, and give them a quick perception of its Divine meaning, so that they

may acquire a readiness in expounding its Divine truths, and a facility for imparting those truths unto others. Thus may they turn many to righteousness, and increase Thy church by an accession of true and useful members. Assist us all to live under the guiding influence of Thy truth. Help us to keep Thy commandments, to observe Thy precepts, and to walk in all Thy ordinances blameless. Preserve us, we beseech Thee, from all danger; lift up the light of Thy countenance upon us, and we shall be saved.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Sunday Evening.

**O** LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in goodness and truth, on the eve of this Sabbath we humbly approach Thy footstool; let our supplications ascend unto Thee, and listen Thou to the voice of our cry. We pray for Thy Divine blessing upon the exercises in which we have this day engaged. May the Word of Thy Truth, which has been read in our ears, be unto us as the joy and rejoicing of our hearts, the glory and the lifting up of our heads; and may we individually and collectively apply it for the improvement of our minds and the purification of our hearts. May it be the light to our darkness, wisdom to our folly, strength to our weakness, and life to our death; and may we desire a blessing from its perusal, and derive a blessing whenever we hear it read.

Lord, we desire with humble gratitude to adore Thee for all the blessings Thou hast showered down upon us; and while we enjoy the comforts of bodily

existence, we pray Thee give us hearts to feel, and hands to help those who may be placed in less favourable positions than ourselves; but above all things, we pray that Thy help may be ever present to those that suffer. Be Thou their consolation in pain and sickness, and let the light of Thy countenance shine upon all who languish. Into Thy hands we resign our spirits, retiring to rest in humble confidence on Thy divine protection.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Monday Morning.

**O** LORD GOD our Saviour, Who art near to all such as call upon Thee in truth, we desire to approach Thee this morning with heartfelt gratitude. We bless and praise Thy holy name as the great Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, as our Redeemer, Deliverer, and continual Benefactor. All Thy Divine perfections call for our adoring gratitude, and we would humbly come and worship at Thy footstool, acknowledging Thee as God over all, blessed for ever.

As the day returns, so we do feel the necessity of returning unto Thee, for we can do nothing without Thee; we feel our utter weakness and helplessness, and all our sufficiency is of Thee. Be with us, therefore, O Lord, we beseech Thee, this day, and may our weakness be rendered strong by Thy power. In Thy strength may we go forth, and may the arms of our hands be made strong by Thee, the mighty God of Jacob. O keep us in a state of watchfulness over our

propensities, that we be not hurried into the delights of the flesh, nor into the gratifications and pollutions of sensual pleasure ; but may we be modest, chaste, and discreet, and keep ourselves unspotted from the world. In our intercourse with our fellow-men, enable us to be just and upright, neither overreaching in business, nor staining our consciences by falsehood and evasion. May the fear of Thee be ever before our eyes, that we sin not ; but in all states and conditions of our lives, remembering the dignity of the name we bear, may we strive to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Monday Evening.

**O** LORD GOD our Saviour, we humbly beseech Thee to prepare the hearts and understandings of mankind, that as Thy truth is now revealed, they may be willing to receive it, and live under its influence. "The time, the set time to favour Zion, being come," may the truth of the everlasting gospel make steady progress. O send forth Thy light and Thy truth that the church, from the low condition into which it has fallen, may be raised ; and grant that the "little city with few men in it" may become a great nation, and Thou, O Lord of truth, be alone exalted in this the day of Thy second appearing.

Cause men to behold Thee as Thou art, a God of truth and love ; and establish Thou Thy church in purity and holiness. May all formality and worldly-mindedness give place to purity and spiritual affec-

tion. May error and corruption, strife and envy, false doctrine and perversity, cease; and may simplicity, peace, holiness, and purity, be established among us for evermore.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Tuesday Morning.

MERCIFUL and heavenly Father, another morning has dawned upon us, and again we humbly draw near to Thy mercy-seat, to Thank Thee for the blessings of the past night, and to offer unto Thee the first thoughts of another day; a day which brings us nearer to eternity, and which ought to impress us with greater seriousness and devotion.

We see, O Lord, the difficulties which surround us, trying to withdraw our minds from the spirit and life of religion. While in our closets, or on our knees in Thy presence, all the future seems spread before us, and its vast importance speaks to our souls in a language not to be silenced or mistaken. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge."

O Lord God our Saviour, we confess our sins before Thee, and humbly pray Thee to assist us, that we perform our duties more faithfully; that what we vow in our closet and on our knees, when in Thy immediate presence, we may be endowed with strength faithfully to perform in the world; and that while we complain of the injustice, ingratitude, and oppression of others, we take care that none of these vices enter into our souls; but that, condemning the evils which have

overrun the world, we may look constantly to Thee for assistance, to enable us to shun them ourselves. Lord, be with us this day, in our going out and in our coming in. May the fear of Thee be ever before us, that we sin not. May we strive to be continually exercised in works of charity, piety, and usefulness: and may all the glory be ever ascribed to Thee alone.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Tuesday Evening.

**O** LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, by Whose Divine bounty we have this day been fed, by Whose Divine providence we have been guided, and by Whose all-merciful goodness we have been preserved; we desire to adore Thy high and holy name, and to acknowledge with grateful hearts that Thy goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our lives. We praise Thy holy name for the cheerful light of this day, and for the light of reason which enables us to enjoy the beauties of Thy creation, and render all Thy works subservient to our use and benefit. But, especially do we desire to offer our humble and grateful thanks that Thou hast, by revealing Thyself, brought life and immortality to light by Thy gospel. In Thy Holy Word have we been taught that Thou art the light of the world, and that all who come unto Thee may receive of Thy fulness, and grace for grace. And Thou, O Lord, art ever present in Thy Word, and from its sacred truths we may constantly draw forth wisdom, if we peruse it with humility, and in a teachable spirit.

For all the blessings of this day, Lord make us truly thankful. For the privilege of approaching Thee this night, may we be humble, while we feel and acknowledge how unfailing is Thy love. And now, Lord, we beseech Thee, guard us through this night, for on Thee alone do we depend for protection, and into Thy hands we resign our spirits.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Wednesday Morning.

**O** LORD GOD of Truth, we pray for the influences of Thy Holy Spirit to guide and direct our souls, that a place may be formed within us for the establishment of a conscience void of offence. Help us to put away every species of licentiousness, strife, and envy. As time progresses, may we see more and more the necessity of preparation for eternity; and may no day of our existence pass without being devoted to Thy service in the prosecution of works of charity, piety, faith, and holiness.

We feel more and more, and we desire contritely to acknowledge, how imperfectly we have spent our time: how much we have devoted to the service of the world, and how little to the service of Thee, our Lord and Saviour. Help us, God of love and mercy, to turn away our eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken us by Thy truth, that we may bring ourselves under the guidance of that wisdom which cometh from above, which will order our steps aright, and suffer not evil to have dominion over us.

Lord, may the visitations of Thy love be felt by all

the human race. Thy love is never intermitted ; but oh, prepare the hearts of men that it may be felt, and that men may acknowledge Thy goodness, while they feel Thy love, and glorify Thee who hast so constantly supplied their every want. And grant that this family, who have so constantly been the subjects of Thy Divine bounty, may shew forth Thy loving-kindness, by being good, and doing good to the utmost of the ability with which Thou hast endowed them.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Wednesday Evening.

**O**MNIPOTENT, Omnipresent, and Omniscient Lord God Almighty, to whom all hearts are open, and from whom no secrets can be hid, permit us to humble ourselves this evening in Thy presence, and with reverence and pure devotion, enable us to worship toward thy holy temple.

Another day has passed : the return of evening again reminds us that we are strangers and pilgrims, and that this is not our rest ; and we feel that while the night season claims our bodies for repose, our souls ought still to be actively employed in securing a state of true rest and peace, when all earthly duties shall have terminated.

Every day's experience convinces us of the warfare that is going on in our minds. We feel within us a fearful opposition to the law of truth. The good that we would we do not, but the evil that we would not that we do. We find that when we would do good evil is still present with us. The inward man delights



in Thy law, O God, but the law of evil wars against our inner man. O, who can deliver us from the bondage of this death! It is thou, O Lord. Thou only canst be our deliverer. Thou only art the safeguard of Thy people. Thy name is a strong tower, into which, if we enter, nothing evil can approach. May Thy name, therefore, be that in which we trust, upon which we build; our shield and hiding-place, our ever-present help in time of trouble: and to Thee, therefore, we commend our spirits.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Thursday Morning.

**O** LORD GOD, merciful and gracious, slow to anger and of great goodness, Thou art the High and Holy One inhabiting eternity; Thy name is Jehovah of Hosts, the Mighty God, the Father of Eternity. Yet art Thou the friend and protector of the humble, dwelling with the poor in spirit, reviving the heart of the contrite ones. Who is like unto Thee! who can be compared with Thee! Possessing all power in heaven and on earth, and yet condescending to men of low estate. Infinite in justice, goodness, and wisdom, and yet willing to take up Thine abode within the hearts of all those who are meek and lowly. "O, that there were such a heart within us, that we might fear Thee always, and keep Thy commandments!"

Assist us, O Lord, to acquire a clean heart. We feel that our natural inclinations and desires tend rather to withdraw our souls from Thee; we acknowledge that our hearts appear set in us to do evil, and that

continually. O turn us unto Thee, Lord God of our salvation, yea, turn us again; cause Thy face to shine and we shall be saved. Send forth Thy righteous dispensations among us, take away our stony hearts, and give us hearts of flesh; grant us Thy grace, that we may wrestle with our corruptions, and, from this time forth, devote ourselves more faithfully to Thy service.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Thursday Evening.

**O** LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, behold with mercy the family who now humble themselves before Thee, and who, uniting in worship, desire to adore Thee as their tender Father and beneficent friend; as their protector in every danger, and as their Saviour and Redeemer, Whose watchful eyes behold and avert all evil from injuring them.

Lord, help us in our approach unto Thee to withdraw our affections and thoughts from the world, so that, while our knees are bent in prayer, our hearts and understandings may be united in the true and spiritual worship of Thee. May the quickening influences of Thy Spirit kindle within our souls the flames of pure devotion, and may we ever remember that they who worship Thee, must worship Thee in spirit and truth, for such only dost Thou seek to worship Thee.

Our humble petitions are offered unto Thee, O Lord, this evening, that we may still rest under Thy protection, be guarded through the dangers of the

night, and repose in peace and safety under the shadow of Thy wings.

Pardon for Thy name sake the evils we have this day committed, as well as all our deviations from duty. May our inconsiderate actions, our vain thoughts, our rash and hasty words, and the ebullition of our passionate tempers be pardoned; grant that Thy grace may be abundantly poured out upon us, that these evils and errors may in future be shunned; and conduct us, Heavenly Father, we beseech Thee, to Thy kingdom of peace above.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Friday Morning.

MERCIFUL and eternal Lord God and Saviour, we desire to adore Thee for Thy Divine protection, and to offer our thanksgiving for permitting us again to approach Thee. Keep us this day from evil, and subdue our pride and self-conceit. While in this world, we are too frequently bound by the chain of our own evils and become the slaves of our corrupt propensities, neglecting our duty both to Thee and to our neighbour. Check within us this love of self, and this conformity to the world. May the warning which the prophet gave to the children of Israel, when they were brought into captivity by Babylon, be a warning unto us, lest we also suffer by spiritual captivity from the same power. As we depart from our family altar, we enter into another Babylon, and all her idols of gold and silver are spread before us, and strive by their snares to seduce

us from the worship of the true God. The wealth, the glory, the pride, the pleasure of the world, all entice us to participate in their vain delights, and by their allurements they frequently succeed in withdrawing our souls from Thee.

O Lord God of our salvation, how can we escape these snares, unless prevented by the watchful eye of Thy providence? Unless Thou, Lord, shalt keep us, we labour in vain. Help us, therefore, Lord, we beseech Thee. Suffer not our affections to be entangled by the allurements of sense or drawn aside from the true allegiance which we owe to Thee, and in all things render us conformable to Thy will.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Friday Evening.

FATHER of eternity, blessed source of life and light, we now approach Thy mercy seat with humility and reverence. We thank Thee for Thy unwearyed care of us; Thou hast indeed kept us as the apple of the eye, and by the care Thou hast had for us, Thou instructest us in the duty we should perform to others. Help us, therefore, most blessed Saviour, to minister with willing minds to all who come within the sphere of our influence. May Thy Divine commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," be ever in our remembrance, so that we may feel happy in promoting the comfort, and ministering to the necessities, of all who come within the reach of our ability. If our neighbour be in sickness, may we use all available means to restore him to health; may

we be kind and affectionate, prompt to render all the assistance in our power, comforting him from the consolations of Thy holy Word, and praying that he may be visited by Thy healing hand. If he be in poverty, may we, according as Thou hast blessed us, minister to his necessities, remembering Thy own Divine words, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; thirsty, and ye gave me drink; naked, and ye clothed me; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me: for, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Help us to acquire this blessed state, O Lord, we earnestly entreat Thee.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Saturday Morning.

**O**MNIPOTENT and eternal Lord God, with gratitude we acknowledge the continuance of Thy mercy towards us, and we pray Thee to enable us at all times to remember that Thou art the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and no good thing wilt Thou withhold from those that put their trust in Thee. Our obligations unto Thee are, indeed, unspeakable. We have slept in peace and safety during the night, and Thou hast renewed our existence, and with the blessing of health we now kneel before Thee. Thou suppliest our bodies with food, and givest our souls to partake of the bread which endureth unto everlasting life. Thou hast nourished us from infancy to the present time, and, as our years have increased, our minds have expanded, and Thou hast given to us a

capacity to understand Thy truth. We feel Thy goodness in the enjoyment of bodily existence. Every breath we draw reminds us of the influence of Thy good Spirit, by which we live, and move, and have our being. In every deed of charity we are enabled to perform, we feel that Thy Divine goodness alone can render the deed blessed; and we pray that we may never be lifted up or inflated by pride, as though the righteousness, instead of being Thine, were our own. When the pure doctrines of Thy Word engage our attention, and from the little knowledge which we have acquired of Thy truth we are enabled to make known the light of Thy truth to those who are in greater darkness than ourselves, may we remember that Thou only art the Truth, and Thou alone art entitled to the praise; and may our prayer to Thee still be, "O send out Thy light and Thy truth, that they may lead us and conduct us to Thy holy hill."

*Our Father, &c.*

### Saturday Evening.

**O** LORD JESUS CHRIST, we pray that in the performance of our temporal duties, we may keep Thee ever before us. May the hand of our ability ascribe its power unto Thee. May the prudence with which we perform our worldly duties derive its blessings from Thy Divine wisdom. May the skill by which we produce articles of use and beauty be confessed as originating in a humble imitation of the work of Thy Divine hands; and may no earthly engagement be entered upon until we have implored

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Thy assistance to enable us to accomplish it, and Thy blessing, that it may be rendered useful to those for whom it is designed. Whatever be the labour in which we engage, Lord, sanctify it to the good of our fellow-creatures, and to the glory of Thy holy name.

While we are in the world, teach us not to be conformed to the world, but that we make Thee in all things our pattern. If provoked, may we cry unto Thee for help to possess our souls in patience; if treated with ingratitude, help us to overcome evil with good; and in every state or condition in which we may be placed, aid us to set Thee continually before us, so that we may acquire the temper and spirit of Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, and become of the number of Thy true and faithful disciples.

*Our Father, &c.*





SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

**November**



## November First.

### SHORT SCRIPTURAL PRAYERS.

*"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my [anxious] thoughts."—PSALM CXXXIX. 23.*

NUMEROUS are the prayers contained in the book of Psalms, which, though to the hasty or unreflecting reader they appear but as ejaculations, nevertheless contain the fulness of heavenly wisdom; and prove the insufficiency of the long prayers of those who "think they shall be heard for their much speaking."

In this prayer, while there is an acknowledgment of inability to discover our own evils and errors, there is also expressed a desire for the continual presence and watchfulness of the Lord, and a willingness to surrender the whole soul to the dispensations of His Divine providence. For it is by His providential dispensations that the Lord searches us, and knows us; and all the anxious thoughts with which we are so often disquieted can only be set at rest as we acquire confidence in His Divine dispensations.

In reality, the Lord is never absent from us; for it is by His influence we live; and by the Word of His Truth, in which He is present, that He is ever desirous of holding conversation with us. But we too often

doubt, or even oppose this influence, and neglect the opportunities which are offered to us for conversation with the Lord; that is, we neglect the study of His Word. It is the neglect of the Word which keeps us in darkness and ignorance; and because we do not consult the Word, which is the truth and the light, we have not the means of discovering our evils; and thus they lie beneath, hidden and undiscovered, like festering wounds, endangering the life of the soul.

If you ask yourself, Do you read every day a portion of the Word? must you answer "No: not every day." Then be sure that you are in danger of repelling the Divine influence, and closing the understanding against the light of its truth. In other words, your heart is likely to become more depraved, and your understanding more darkened, and such daily neglect must end in the destruction of the soul.

A great authority has said, "Let the man who desires to have his mind enlightened on the things of heaven, read the Word every day, one or two chapters, because, so far as we are in the understanding of the Word, so far we are in light: for the Word is the Divine medium of conjunction with the Lord, and of consociation with the angels. By the Word the Lord is present in the whole world, and heaven is conjoined to the human race. Further, when a man who accounts the Word holy, is reading and understanding it in its literal sense, the angels of the Lord's celestial and spiritual kingdoms are present, understanding it in their respective senses. The Word in the letter is like a cabinet, in which lie in order precious stones, pearls, and diadems; and when a man accounts the Word holy, and reads it for the sake of the uses of

life, the thoughts of his mind are, comparatively, like one who holds such a cabinet in his hand, and sends it to heaven, and it is opened in its ascent, and the precious things therein come to the angels, who are interiorly delighted with seeing and examining them. This delight of the angels is communicated to man, and makes consociation, and also a communication of perceptions."

It is by the Word that we are searched and tried ; and it is by the Word that angelic ministrations are kept in. But, alas ! how many thousands who have the Word in their possession yet neglect its daily perusal ! And even among professed Christians, how many are there who read a portion daily, and of those who read, how many practically apply ? What would become of us, were we left to ourselves ? But our merciful Lord does not leave us. He operates upon us by His providential dispensations, and as these to us are often dark and mysterious, He does not always disclose the end He has in view, but we are led into trial and temptation, to humble us and prove us : He allures us into the wilderness ; or He takes from us the props on which we leaned and delighted to rest ; He removes our selfish supports, He bends our stubborn wills, He leads us through circuitous paths, until He has weakened self-dependence, and brought us to an acknowledgment of our utter inability and weakness. Thus does the Lord search us and know our hearts, thus does He try us and know our anxious thoughts ; and the issue is, an humble dependence on the Lord, and a constant prayer that the Lord may lead us in the way everlasting.

## November Second.

THE SIMPLE HUMANITY OF MAN ; AND THE DIVINE  
HUMANITY OF THE LORD.

*"That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die."—I COR. xv. 36.*

THE natural and the spiritual body of man, mentioned by the apostle, plainly distinguishes between the body which is to perish and that which is to live for ever. "That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die," is precisely the same as saying that there is, within the seed, a germ of life analogous to the soul which exists within the body ; and as the husk becomes decomposed and the germ springs forth, so the body of man dies, and the soul, the spiritual body, arises out of it.

Man is, in Scripture, likened to a principle of truth ; and it is truth which shews the nature of the soul, and the end of its existence. Woman is representative of the affection of that truth ; and it is this affection which manifests love or desire for truth. "The desire of the woman is to her husband."

Man, therefore, derives his spiritual body from the father, and his natural body from the mother, and only becomes a living soul by the influx which is perpetually flowing into him from the Lord ; as it is written, "Thou sendest forth Thy spirit—they are created ; and Thou renewest the face of the earth."

If we humbly reflect upon the Lord's body, do we not perceive that there is, there must be, an infinite distinction between His body and ours ? For though to redeem us, it was necessary that that humanity

should be born of a woman, and was born of a woman, still the Lord had not a HUMAN father. His father was the inmost of Deity itself—the principle that no man had seen or could see; and from this principle alone was He able to spoil principalities, and having subdued the enemies of man, to glorify His humanity, and became for ever a medium, or, as the apostle expresses it, “a Mediator between God and man.”

Upon this distinction—that the inmost Esse of Deity was the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that He had not a human father like unto man—depends all true knowledge of the Lord's glorification.

Materiality can by no process be made divine. Matter, whether in a gross or etherealized form, is matter still, and if it could be found to possess any of the attributes of spirit, it would cease to be matter. The Lord's glorification could not consist in making materiality Divine—this was impossible even to Deity—but it consisted in manifesting, in the ultimates of the human form, that principle which was derived from the hidden, or inmost Esse of God, and by which Mary conceived—it consisted, as the apostle describes it, in rendering “God manifest in the flesh.”

John, speaking of the Lord Jesus, says: “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day.” To reject the Lord, is to reject and disbelieve the testimony of His Divine Word.

Let us pause and reflect upon this momentous truth? Rejection of the Lord in His glorified humanity, as the true and only object of worship, is the rejection of all life, all happiness. “He that be-

lieveth in Him hath everlasting life : but he that believeth not, shall not see life."

### November Third.

#### RASH JUDGMENT CONDEMNED.

*"And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man."—2 SAM. xii. 7.*

EVERY man has some besetting sin; and, in endeavouring to put away evil, we must beware lest we be imposed upon by appearances: "Judge not that ye be not judged," is the Divine caution. There is every reason to pass quietly over slight offences committed against ourselves. In many of these offences it is difficult to say on whose side the blame rests. We are all so prone to imagine insult where none was intended, that our own infirmity of temper, sometimes, nay, oftentimes, is the sole offender. I reflect upon the conduct of David, and I see the danger of rash judgment, while I note the careful manner in which Nathan fulfilled his important mission; and I see in this, as in everything else, that my surest and safest guide is the Scripture.

Suppose the Prophet Nathan, when he was sent to David, had denounced him as an adulterer in act, and a murderer in intention, the probability is that the guilty king would have become still more guilty, and might have hardened his heart, even to the personal injury of the prophet. But the prophet came, apparently, as a suppliant for justice; he described an act of wanton aggression in another; and so raised the indignation of the king, that, in anger at such flagrant



injustice and violation of honesty, he passed sentence upon himself in the words, "As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die." "And Nathan said unto David, THOU ART THE MAN." Then, indeed, he altered his tone; but the mission of the prophet was accomplished. David was able to see the enormity of his offence, and in judging another he had condemned himself. So it is with us: we take no time to consider wrong, when we imagine ourselves free from flagrant injustice; but the case is widely different when it is brought to our own door.

To reprove gently and effectively, is difficult; but between spiritual friends there should be, and there is, an understanding that the salvation of the soul must be sought for before all other considerations.

Be true to thy friend; never speak of his faults to another, to shew thine own discrimination, but open them all to himself, with candour and true gentleness. Forgive all his errors and his sins, be they ever so many, but do not excuse the slightest deviation from rectitude. Never forbear to dissent from a false opinion, or a wrong practice, from motives of mistaken kindness, nor seek thus to have thy own weakness sustained, for these things cannot be done without injury to the soul. But be thou to thy friend what thy Saviour was to Peter: reprove him when sin endangers the soul; and when thine own sin is pointed out, confess it, repent, and pray for help to go and sin no more.

## November Fourth.

### A MOTHER'S LOVE.

*"Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?"—ISA. xlix. 15.*

A CHRISTIAN mother is a striking image of God's love—untiring, unchanging, ever watchful. Looking constantly to the Lord, she knows that without Him she can do nothing. In this, her very weakness becomes strength, because she trusts in Him from whom alone help can come. From the love of God is produced the love of her husband, and then ensues the tender affection she bears toward her children.

There is a passage in the writings of a revered author which is very precious to her soul, and which is to the following effect:—"It is the highest privilege of parents to be able to think, that they have enriched heaven with as many angels as they have had descendants, and that they have furnished society with as many ministers to its happiness as they have had children." To have this high satisfaction, she brings the whole powers of her mind to bear upon the object of her love. All the knowledge she has acquired in early years; all the firmness which past experience has supplied her with; all the truths with which God's Holy Word has furnished her, and which are stored in her memory, are brought to bear upon the high work of forming aright "the mind and life of the young immortal." She is actively employed in training children for heaven, in forming the minds of angels. Her eye bends constantly in love over her young charge. How kind and affectionate to them! how self-denying

to her own wants! It may be that the mother is called upon to bend over the form of a departed child. She cannot but feel the bereavement, even though the child has winged its flight to that bright sphere for which she had been preparing it. The eye is closed in death; and the innocence of its gaze, bespeaking angel-like thoughts, is for ever darkened. The mother reflects on the fond, confiding manners of her child, when she was to it its entire world; but she reflects, also, that the real child is living; that it is under the guardianship and the instruction of the angels in a world where crime can never come. The true consolation of religion will then be afforded, and her heart, in humble and grateful resignation, will acknowledge that children are types of innocence, and that of such is the kingdom of heaven. But if children are spared to reward her maternal love by their love and gratitude—if the temper has been moulded in virtue, and the angry, but momentary, ebullitions of passion have been subdued by her gentleness—then does she experience inward joy and elevation of soul: “Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.”

It is impossible to conceive the amount of good which would result to society, were all mothers to take the active superintendence of their families, and not leave so much to be done by assistants. But let fathers remember that they also have part in the work—they are the ministers of their own houses. What the mother insinuates by her love, the father is to strengthen and confirm by his wisdom, and it is the duty of both to seek to secure the happiness of those whom the Lord has given them.

## November Fifth.

ALL THE DISPENSATIONS OF PROVIDENCE GROUNDED IN  
PERFECT LOVE.

*"Thy will be done."*—MATT. vi. 10.

**B**EFORE a man is brought to spiritual obedience, so as to be enabled to say from the heart, "Thy will be done!" he must be led to perceive that all the dispensations of the Lord are grounded in perfect love. The providential dispensations of the Most High are frequently dark and mysterious, and many are the permissions of desolation, and even of apparent destruction, visited on man before he is able to withdraw his confidence from the arm of flesh. The natural man sees in these providences the bare arm of a powerful God, and while he continues froward and conceited, the Lord appears to him a froward God. But when these providential dispensations have accomplished the purpose for which they were designed, a change is wrought in the mind, which becomes humble, and the merciful Lord is seen as a father; who, pitying His children, uses every means to reclaim them from suffering to peace.

Through a medium like this may we view the great king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon; first contemplating his character as it is portrayed in the third chapter of Daniel's prophecy, and then contrasting it with the humility recorded in Dan. iv. 37: "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment; and those that walk in pride He is able to

ABASE." In this contrast, we cannot but be struck with the extraordinary difference ; and while, on the one hand, we deplore the folly and the madness of the king, we are led, on the other, to admire the humility which the terrible judgment he had passed through was the means of awakening within him. Never was human pride, and power, and grandeur, more fearfully humbled. From an absolute monarch whose will was law, and whose fiat bore natural life or death in its mandate ; from the height of uncontrollable power and pride, which that power unhappily generated, we beheld the great king hurled down to the level of the brute, driven from the cheerful haunts of men, and eating grass like the cattle, till he was brought to know that the Most High ruled in the kingdoms of men—till he perceived how impious his course had been ; and then, at the end of the days—that is, at the termination of his infatuation—lifting up his eyes to heaven, his understanding returned to him, and "he blessed the Most High, and praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever and ever." Such an acknowledgment as this is the true mark of sanity ; but it may safely be affirmed, that, were we left undisturbed by the providential dispensations of the Lord, the salvation of many of us would be hopeless.

When worldly things go well with worldly minds, they are in good humour with Providence, and are willing to pay an apparent homage for the good things which they secretly hope to preserve, and even to increase by their own independent endeavours. That this is the temper of worldly men in prosperity, is evident from their general conduct in adversity ; they are then deprived of their apparent confidence, for

they cannot trust providence in the dark; still less can they suppose that providence is equally kind in depriving us of our possessions, as in securing them to us.

Severe trials are ordained for useful purification; but it requires great advancement in the Christian life, calmly and gratefully to contemplate the footsteps of the Divine providence, through the medium of intense sufferings. But when this is seen, then is there always the expression of 'Thy will be done!'

## November Sixth.

### THE DIVINE WILL.

*"He doeth according to His will."*—DAN. iv. 35.

THE will of the Lord is, that all men should be saved. The Divine will must be the perfection of holiness. As the Lord is perfect in goodness, and desires the happiness of all His creatures, so He leaves them perfect freedom of will, to choose either happiness or misery; and though He may—as indeed He does—counsel them to choose life, yet he plainly allows freedom of choice; for how can a man exercise choice unless possessed of freedom?

Man alone has freedom of will; and it is this which renders him an accountable being. Human laws violated by those who have not freedom, are never punishable. The most flagrant violations of social order, the commission of the most outrageous crimes, can never call down upon the lunatic or insane any visitation from violated law. No matter what amount of injury has been done, what extent of human life

has been wasted, if the agent of all this evil be idiotic or insane at the time, the distress produced may be mourned as misfortunes, but they cannot be punished as crimes. The great and necessary element of all crime is wanting—freedom of will, ability to have acted otherwise. If, therefore, this be admitted as undeniable in civilized society, will there be any person so unjust as to say, that the will of God, which is equity itself, requires of His creatures that which they cannot perform? Or will man be so unjust as to assume, that the Lord punishes His creatures for crimes which He Himself has not only permitted, but absolutely ordained should be committed? Such inconsistency is indeed frightful to reflect upon; and yet, in the *Formula Concordia*, it is affirmed, that “the reprobate are raised up for the purpose of glorifying God in their condemnation.”

In the pathetic lamentation of the Lord over Jerusalem, man's freedom is asserted: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and YE WOULD NOT.” The will of the Lord is that none of His creatures should perish. His Divine goodness, which is His will, is constantly operating, through the medium of His providence, that evil may be subdued, and good reign predominant: when we therefore behold severe dispensations of His providence, we must not class them as angry judgments, or vindictive punishments, but as the corrections of an all-wise Parent, who sees no other way to reclaim His wayward children. The will of the Lord is manifest by His

exertions to save us, but He can only save us as our will comes into conformity with His will. When the word of the Lord declares, "He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out;" it is plain that man *has* a will to come unto Him, if he will but exercise it.

What, then, is the will of the Lord? This is the will of the Lord, that all men may repent. It is we that are "unequal," not the Lord. It is "the soul that sinneth that shall die."

Therefore, let us turn unto the Lord, and if we repent, He will have mercy upon us, yea, He will abundantly pardon.

## November Seventh.

THE CHURCH IN THE LATTER DAYS, ITS PEACE AND SECURITY.

*"They shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid."*—ZEPH. iii. 13.

**T**HIS is, indeed, a gracious promise of the Lord, and will most assuredly have its fulfilment even in the literal sense of the words. There is always peace and security attendant upon him whose life is guided by the principles of truth and uprightness. He may be poor, but he has the true riches, and possesses his soul in patience. He may sometimes feel a scarcity of the bread that perishes, but still he has bread to eat which the world knows but little of; and he eats of his little, and lies down in peace and safety and his sleep is sweet and refreshing, and nothing can make him afraid.

But feeding and lying down have yet a higher and more interior signification. The soul of man is, in



truth, the real man, and can never die. The dissolution of the earthly body is, as it were, the first step in the resurrection, and what we term death is but the medium introducing into life. It is the passing of the man from the natural body in the natural world, to the spiritual body in the spiritual world. Let no man tremble at this truth. Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. Has he, in the course of his life, long or short, it matters not which—sown evil? let him be assured that he will reap its bitter fruits. No man expects to reap wheat where he has sown darnel; and no man need expect to reap heavenly joys, if he has sown worldly follies and delights.

The soul, being the real man, requires food; but the food which he will appropriate in a spiritual world, will be, of necessity, spiritual. The meat of the soul is to do the will of the Lord. The bread of life is the love of God incorporated into the affections. The bread of heaven is broken by the Lord, and given to his faithful disciples: they incorporate it into the affections, they grow in goodness, truth, and wisdom; they feed, they lie down. A state of perfect tranquillity and peace is enjoyed by them. They have no fear, no anxiety, no care; they are the remnant of Israel, who are truly happy; they live in the sphere of the Divine love and wisdom. They rest from their labour; iniquity has passed from them, deceit and guile form no part of their character. God is before their adoring sight; they have no care, no anxiety, no fear—nothing can make them afraid. O, what a glorious state is this! and we may attain to it. Let us, then, cherish all heavenly principles; bring them out into active good and usefulness; labour well and

unremittingly to promote the happiness of others; and, ever looking to the Lord for help, we shall become associated with the church triumphant in heaven.

## November Eighth.

### THE REMNANT OF THE LORD'S PEOPLE.

*"And there shall be an highway for the remnant of His people."—ISA. xi. 16.*

THE word "remnant" has a very extensive signification. There are stored up by the Lord in the inmost of man certain heavenly affections and principles, which are as the germs and beginnings of his life. These are brought forth in our states of infancy, and are exhibited in the innocency of childhood, in love to parents, teachers, and friends. These heavenly affections are in Scripture called "remnants," or remains. From these remains regeneration commences, and by them the kingdom of heaven is formed in the soul. Thus the remnant, or the remains, of Israel are significative of all those principles of the celestial life which enkindle every hallowed affection in the soul, and manifest in outward life the fruits of holiness, love and truth, charity and faith, mercy and peace. This application of the term remnant may not at first be distinctly recognised, but the thoughtful and reflecting reader will find numerous confirmations of it in the Holy Word.

We read that a "remnant of all shall be saved:" and of these we may thus speak:—There shall be saved all out of every nation, out of every religious persuasion, in whom the principles or remnants of the

celestial life are found to operate ; for these are the principles of goodness and of truth which, in their effect upon the life, mould the man into the image of heaven. Thus "the remnant of the house of Judah shall take root downward, and bear fruit upward." (Isa. xxxvii. 31.) Here, by Judah is meant the church in its state of celestial obedience to the Lord ; all the heavenly affections and desires, thoughts and perceptions, being rooted in the inmost principles of love to the Lord, and manifested by a holy, useful, and religious life.

"There shall be an highway for the remnant of the Lord's people." In those in whom are the remains of celestial life, the principles of holy love and charity, the truth of the Word shall form a light to their path, shall bring them into the high road of righteousness, and safely conduct them, through all the vicissitudes and trials of life, until they shall arrive at the kingdom where trial shall terminate in rest and peace. It must then be, indeed, a state of blessedness to be among the remnant of the house of Israel. None of the remnant can be lost. For the Word assures us that "the remnant of the house of Israel shall be thoroughly gleaned as a vine." (Jer. vi. 9.) Not one of the remnant can possibly be lost, for the promise of the Lord is, "I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds, and they shall be fruitful and multiply, and I will set up shepherds over them, which shall feed them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxiii. 3, 4.) The remnant of the Lord's people, therefore, are such, wherever they

may be found, as are principled in true religion. The religion of the "remnant" will be faith to enlighten, and love to warm, like the blending radiance and heat of the solar beam, that spread life and beauty wherever they fall; the religion in which works, morals, and righteousness are made equally essential, and without which there can be nothing really or permanently blessed.

### November Ninth.

#### THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE EAGLE.

*"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."*—DEUT. xxxii. 11, 12.

THROUGHOUT the Sacred Scripture, birds will be found to have a correspondence to the thought or intellectual principle. The following, among many, are instances: "He shall awake at the voice of a bird." "O, that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away, and be at rest!" "Though thou hast lain among the pots, yet shall thou be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." In all these instances birds represent the understanding or intellect. Now, if a bird has correspondence with the understanding or intellectual principle, then the strongest, most powerful, and keen-sighted among birds must represent, in the highest sense, the Supreme Intelligence, 'or the Lord, with respect to His Wisdom.

The eagle is, from its very nature, fitted to represent the highest intelligence. Its power of flight exceeds that of other birds. Its dwelling-place is in the highest

and most inaccessible rocks. Its eye is so powerful that the brightest rays of the sun at the meridian fall on it without injury; and its sight is so piercing that it can perceive the smallest object on the earth. Its strength and courage are equal to its activity and piercing power of vision. The eagle, by its penetrating sight, is a proper symbol of the Divine Intelligence. Its piercing eye, superior to any other, seems to sweep the world at a glance. While other birds make their dwellings in trees, the eagle builds on the highest rock; while ever so far above, it sees all below. The strongest and most courageous of its kind, it has been assumed as a fitting symbol of sovereignty.

Let us here draw a parallel. Yes: the whole Scriptures testify of the Lord; and there is not an object or subject, but that, in some way or other, shadows forth some power or quality, or attribute of the Divine nature.

The intelligence of the Lord is divine! As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His thoughts higher than ours. His intelligence is infinite. The eagle, then, is its fitting symbol, for it soars upward into the pure ether, where the eye of man can neither penetrate nor behold. To the Divine Being the whole universe is an open book. At one glance the Omniscient sees all, and the Divine Intelligence searches out all; and there is not a thought but the Lord knows it altogether. Finite minds are limited in perception—they see and know the truth only in part; but the Infinite is self-dependent. Omnipotent, His dwelling-place is high and holy; and alone in His power, His dwelling-place is inaccessible. None can approach Him so as to share His dignity or His glory: but the

man "who works righteously, and speaks with integrity; who despiseth the gain of oppression; he shall dwell on high, his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks; bread shall be given him, his water shall be sure." He, indeed, approaches nearer and nearer to his Maker's glory, but his nearest approach, though he travel upward to eternity, can but come to the confines of the Divine presence.

The beautiful figure which our motto has presented for our meditation refers to the efforts of the parent eagle to teach her young to fly, and is used as an analogy to illustrate the Lord's kindness to His church: "As the eagle stirreth up her brood, and fluttereth over her young"—to instruct and incite them to the use and exercise of their wings—so does the Lord constantly hover over His people, and, by His Divine influence, as well as by His providential guidance and support, encourage them to go forward, deliver them from all danger, and, like as a father careth for and pitieth his children, or, as the parent bird "fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings," so the Lord preserveth His church and people, and His mercy compasseth them about.

## November Tenth.

### THE RIDDLE OF THE EAGLE.

*"Thus saith the Lord God; a great eagle with great wings, long winged, full of feathers, which had divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and took the highest branch of the cedar. There was also another great eagle, with great wings and many feathers," &c.—EZEK. xvii. 3, 7.*

**I**N the first eagle, the description is of "a great eagle, long winged, and full of feathers, which

were of divers colours." A great eagle, referring to supreme intelligence; and longed winged, being powerful through doctrine; for as long and powerful wings enable the bird to soar, so doctrine enables the understanding to rise upward. Feathers are the coverings which clothe the wings, and enable the bird to raise himself. And what is it which enables the intellect to soar upward? Undoubtedly the love of truth. So, then, the love of truth is as feathers to the wing, enabling the thoughts of the understanding continually to ascend up towards heaven; and "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, and shall mount up with wings as eagles:" that is they shall be gifted with spiritual power, and shall be enabled, by a knowledge of the truth, to ascend into the regions of heavenly intelligence and wisdom.

"The eagle took the highest branch of the cedar of Lebanon." The cedar represents the spiritual perceptions in man, from which the intellectual and rational principles become enlightened: and thus it is that "the righteous grow as the cedar in Lebanon." Height in Scripture is used to denote the elevation of goodness or love to the Lord: as a man increases in goodness, he becomes more and more elevated. It is in consequence of this that the Lord is described as the HIGH AND LOFTY ONE, inhabiting eternity. The highest branch of the cedar denotes the most elevated principle of the reason, acting under the guiding influence of truth, and moved by love to the Lord. This branch is said to be planted by a city of merchants, denoting a situation where doctrines are taught and defended; and by its being planted near the river, such doctrines are nurtured and rendered

living by the waters of truth. But though this branch was taken from a cedar, it did not grow a cedar; but grew up a VINE of low stature! This is a singular circumstance—a cedar is planted, but a VINE rises. It cannot be accounted for but by the spiritual sense. The VINE is representative of spiritual goodness and truth. Now, it is certain, that if a man whose reason is enlightened by the truths of the Holy Word (and they are the only true sources of enlightenment) delights in their precepts, his understanding will expand or grow, and, from the knowledge and practice of literal or rational truth, he will begin to perceive spiritual truth, and love it. And thus the branch, originally a cedar when planted, will become a VINE. From rational truth, it will become spiritual truth.

If we consider this passage as having reference to the church, we may observe that, however limited our knowledge may be, we have the capacity for acquiring truth; and in proportion as we love it and live it, we become receptive of love from the Lord, until at length we become connected and conjoined with heavenly goodness. But we must be careful that we be not misled by the pride of human reason, or self-derived intelligence.

The application, primarily, is to the Jewish church. This was a vine of low stature: its principles of truth were merely typical. It had not the full knowledge of truth. It did not rise high in the region of wisdom—it was a vine of low stature. But the same passage is applicable to every individual member of the church, who has been led from rational to spiritual truth. We should, however, when spiritual truth has been perceived, exercise vigilant watchfulness that we be not



lifted up by pride or conceit at what we have acquired, for this would be to leave Israel, and wander back to Egypt; and here we should assume the character of the eagle in the pride of self-derived intelligence—that wisdom of the world which “centres in itself alone.” In this sense the eagle becomes the correspondence of high and prevailing error, whether in the church or in the individual, “and where the carcass is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.” When the church becomes perverted by false doctrines and inflated by the pride of self-derived intelligence, it sinks into a mere lifeless carcass, and all the intelligence it manifests is, how it shall maintain itself in the gratification of its evils.

But let us endeavour, looking to the Lord for assistance, to keep the principle of self in proper submission to the spiritual principle; then shall we constantly “renew our strength, we shall mount up with wings as eagles, we shall run and not be weary, we shall walk and not faint.”

## November Eleventh.

### THE EVILS OF SELF-LOVE.

*“The word that the Lord spake against Babylon.”—JER. I. 1.*

**I**N offering a few thoughts on self-love—an idol to which most of us are too prone to bow the knee—perhaps there may be some who have not maturely weighed its effects; or who are unaware what a vast multitude of evils it brings in its train. But if we really have ever examined our hearts, we must be

compelled to admit that man, without spiritual intelligence, is in a lower state even than the beasts ; that to the love of himself are attached evils of the most malignant, though unsuspected, quality ; and that from this source are continually flowing hatred, revenge, cruelty, adultery, covetousness, deceit, and a long catalogue of evils which stamp disgrace and deformity on man ; which place him in direct opposition to what is good and heavenly ; and, consequently, in opposition to God. Another melancholy consideration is, that when a man has thus far departed from submission to the Word and will of God, everything good and true continually flowing from him is entirely dissipated and lost, for he can acknowledge no single genuine truth ; every desire and affection for goodness becomes desolated. And the reason is, that opposite principles of good and evil can no more reside in the same man, than heaven and hell can coalesce and unite ; and, therefore, he stands the voluntary cherisher of evil and infernal spirits, and the willing slave of their hateful and destructive principles. This general outline of a perverted will and understanding is the representative character of the Babylonians : and Nebuchadnezzar, as the king and chief of this infatuated people, represented the reigning and dominant principle of the love of dominion, self-love and power derived therefrom. Every man partakes of the same quality, who, by an elevation of his sensual appetites over the eternal truths of heaven, arrogates impiously to himself that which in point of fact belongs to God alone.

And, therefore, we find the prophet, in the succeeding verses thus speaking : “ Declare ye among the nations, and publish and set up a standard, publish

and conceal not ; say, Babylon is taken. For out of the north there shall come up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein ; they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast :” or, in other words, every celestial and spiritual blessing, to be learned from the Divine Word of the Lord, shall be withdrawn and utterly vastated.

The sole and exclusive purpose of every species of infliction upon man by the Most High God, is to bring him to a proper sense of his weakness and his depravity, and induce him to place an entire dependence on a power superior to himself: we may always console ourselves with this encouraging reflection, that our Heavenly Benefactor never afflicts His children willingly, and but to bring about some important end in connection with their eternal welfare, for “whom he loveth, he chasteneth.”

## November Twelfth.

### THE CRY OF THE WATCHER AND THE HOLY ONE.

*“ Behold a Watcher and an Holy One came down from heaven.”—DAN. iv. 13.*

WHATEVER may be the effect produced on men by the cry of the Watcher and the Holy One, the consequences of turning a deaf ear to it are no less clear than decisive. We will consider the cry of this Watcher—this Holy One—as the voice of the Divine Truth ; in other words, as the Word of the Most High God Himself. Now, what would have been our state at this moment, had we been left to the

sole guidance of that enlightened reason on which so many pride themselves at the present day, as sufficient for every purpose? Without any deprivation of this distinguishing characteristic of man, we ask, would reason, unassisted by revelation, have ever disclosed to us those secret recesses of our hearts which are the defiled abodes of impure and evil affections, the continual residence of evil spirits, urging us to every act of violence? Would this same reason ever have opened the gates of immortality, and exhibited to our astonished minds the pure and blissful realities in store for the obedient and regenerated Christian? No: the stoutest advocate for natural reason would never venture to insist on such a perversion of truth; for the fact is, that common or instinctive reason is mistaken for true rationality, whilst the sacred Scriptures insist that no man can be entitled to the term rational, till he is born again of the Spirit of God; and, in the absence of this discrimination, all the error now prevalent on this subject has absolutely taken place.

What has been the effect of this boasted light of nature among heathen nations, who are probably born with, and capable of exercising, their innate ideas of right and wrong equally with ourselves? According to the best accounts we can collect, they live as beasts, and in some instances as cannibals, preying upon each other. Such then, might have been our lot, but for the mercy of our adored Father in opening to our minds our natural ignorance, our inherent depravity, and in His love and compassion communicating to us a power of exerting our prerogatives as men, and, by a knowledge of Himself, of His Word, and of our liability to rush into evil, to prepare us by such means for the

enjoyment of His kingdom of purity, order, and blessedness.

What, then, would be our states unassisted by a revelation from God? The very same to which we should speedily revert, were we severed from communication with the Divine Word. And, without being left to conjecture merely, we are informed, that no sooner was the dream of the king interpreted by Belteshazzar, than the mighty monarch of Babel became like unto a beast; he was driven from men to eat grass as the oxen, and was in all respects on a level with the lowest of the brute creation. And the very same would be our inevitable state, were we unhappily deprived of our rationality, of a desire to be illuminated by the Word of God, with the additional misery of losing all love, all affection for what is good, pure, and heavenly.

Happy, then, is that man who will use his rational faculties under the direction of the Word of God! and the best proof which he can give that he is really so engaged, is to worship and adore the Lord Jesus Christ alone as the true God; labour in all respects to promote good and useful ends, in leading others to take repose under the shade of this blessed tree, as our hope and passport to a glorious life of immortality in heaven.

### November Thirteenth.

#### THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE LAMB.

*"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."*—JOHN i. 29.

**I**S there anything more simple, more innocent, more interesting, than a lamb? Confiding as it is

innocent, it has been universally used as a figure to designate all that is harmless and void of guile. Our Lord himself is called the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." He is "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The saints in heaven "have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." The blessed in heaven are said to "praise God and the Lamb;" and John beheld "in the midst of the throne a Lamb, as if it had been slain;" while "from the throne of God and the Lamb flowed the river of the water of life."

Now, there must be some special reason for the introduction into Scripture of this interesting animal. By the Lamb, as applied to the Lord, is meant His Divine Humanity, and He is so called on account of perfect innocence: and by God is denoted the essence of the Godhead, which dwells within His humanity, according to the declaration of the apostle: "In Jesus Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." And "the river of the water of life," said to proceed from the throne of the Lord, signifies the Divine Truth which flows into the minds of those who love and obey the Word; and this is called *living* or *running water*, to imply that truth is genuine when it is kept in the activity of use by the living impulse of love.

There is one very striking peculiarity in the correspondence of the Lamb, and that is, that throughout the whole of the sacred Scriptures it has no evil application; it is universally used to signify the good of innocence, which consists in dutiful obedience to, and entire dependence upon, the Lord; and our Lord himself, while in the tabernacle of the body, evidenced this entire dependence upon the Father, or the Divine

nature within Him, from which His humanity proceeded and came forth: "I came not," said He, "to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." "I can of my own self do nothing; the Father that dwelleth within me, He doeth the works." And this is also the case with all the Lord's followers, of those who comprise His flock. They are in all things obedient unto Him. They hear His voice, they follow Him, and He gives unto them everlasting life

### November Fourteenth.

#### THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE LAMB.

*"These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."—REV. vii. 14.*

THE correspondence of the Lamb, when applied to the Lord himself, signifies the Divine human nature, or the Lord's humanity, united to the Divinity called the Father; and the Divine Truth, which proceeds from His humanity, and which cleanses the soul, is signified by the blood of the Lamb. It is this blood, this spiritual truth, which flows to man through the medium of the Divine Humanity, in which the righteous are said to have washed their robes, and made them white: meaning thereby, that they have been able to cleanse their principles and practice by the Divine Truth which they have received. It is on account of this application of the correspondence of the Lamb to the humanity of the Lord, that we read of "God *and* the Lamb;" and of "the throne of God *and* the Lamb:" referring not to a supposed separate person, but to God as the Lord's essential Divinity

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or Deity, and to the Lamb as the humanity taken into everlasting unity with it. For it is not said, "the thrones of God and the Lamb," but the Throne! Now, since there cannot be two supreme thrones in heaven, so there cannot be two persons or beings who rule there. If then, God *and* the Lamb occupy but one throne, and that throne be the seat of supreme dominion, as it must be, it is at once evident that *God and the Lamb* signify the same Divine Being; a being indivisibly one, for "THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD"—though spoken of with reference to two distinctions of His nature, the divinity and the humanity, which make one in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the soul and body make one individual man. The Lamb is said to be "slain," because the humanity was purified, and united to the Godhead, or Divine nature, by trials and temptation combats, and especially by the passion of the cross; and it is said to be slain for us, because the purification and sanctification of the humanity, and its union with the Divinity, by the influences of goodness and truth, called the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son, descend through heaven upon man. The Lamb is said to be in the midst of the throne, to indicate, by the Divine humanity, the possession of full and supreme power; because when that humanity was fully united to the Deity, and made one with it, it became the medium by which the Divine power was manifested, and by which it operates throughout the universe. To this union of the humanity with the Divine nature, and the effects thence resulting to man, the frequent sacrifices of the lamb under the Mosaic economy had special reference.



## November Fifteenth.

### THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE LAMB.

*"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you."—JOHN vi. 53.*

THE peculiar characteristic of those signified by the sheep of the Lord, is love combined with a knowledge of the truth. They love God most, undoubtedly, or they could not form that part of His flock; but love to their neighbour, and a desire to benefit their neighbour, more especially distinguishes them. Their power to benefit those around them is derived from their knowledge. They are able to instruct, to warn, to reprove, to exhort; and their business is to aid those simple ones whose love is without that superior knowledge which they possess, while at the same time, they can and do aid all around them in acquiring a knowledge of the way of salvation, administering to their wants, both temporal and spiritual. In this, we may find three distinctions peculiar to the lamb when mentioned in Scripture, combining goodness with innocence. The Lord is called the Lamb with respect to His Divine human nature, on account of the purity of innocence, and because He is the original fountain of all goodness and all innocence. The appellation of lamb is applied to that portion of the church of the Lord which is in simple goodness, who love the Lord with all the strength, and live in obedience to His Divine Word. The symbol represents each individual man who simply, and in the innocency of his heart, loves the

Lord, endeavours to serve Him, and to follow Him in all things. In one or other of these senses, the correspondence of the lamb is used throughout the Sacred Scriptures, either as referring to the goodness of innocence in the abstract, or the Lord, His Church, or His individual followers.

To offer a lamb in sacrifice, signifies to worship from the good, or delight, of innocence. The wolf lying down with the lamb, implies the subordination of all the inferior powers of the soul to the good of innocence. To be written in the Lamb's Book of Life, is to have the interiors of the mind imbued with the good of innocence, derived from the Divine humanity of the Lord.

Our Lord declares, "Except we eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, we have no life in us;" that is, except we receive into our souls those principles of Divine goodness and truth represented by His flesh and blood, we cannot be His disciples. As the eating of the paschal lamb preserved those who ate of it from the destroying angel, so the reception of those principles of goodness and innocence, of simple piety and ready obedience, will preserve us from the evils and errors which otherwise would destroy the soul.

It is of no avail to call ourselves the sheep of the Lord's fold, unless we really possess love to Him as the Good Shepherd and Overseer of our souls, and practise obedience to His precepts. Without this, we may have sheep's clothing, we may be covered by a profession, and, to outward appearance, may seem a part and portion of the flock of the Lord; but the evil nature is beneath, and, however men may look upon

us or admire us, we are in the eyes of the Lord but ravening wolves.

To become a part of the flock of the Good Shepherd, we must put on His nature, and strive to become holy, harmless, and undefiled. We must love the Lord above all things, serve Him, and trust in Him before the sons of men; and, putting away all guile, deceit, and malignity, shew by our conduct how greatly we desire to become like our Lord. Then shall we be blessed while on earth, and when this earthly house of our tabernacle is dissolved, we shall be gathered into the one fold of the Good Shepherd above, to go no more out for ever.

## November Sixteenth.

### THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE LION.

*"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour"—1 PETER V. 8.*

THERE is among evil men, the roaring lion; the man whose heart is evil, and who from his evil inclinations, endeavours to make all evil around him: this man is generally either a loud and noisy disputant, or he is a sly and insinuating companion. In the first case, he is always ready to take up an argument against religion; not because it will in any way benefit himself, but because he feels a natural pleasure in endeavouring to destroy everything that is godlike in the minds of those around him. The other, who is described as the couching lion, is slier. He watches and waits until he finds an opportunity, and then he comes out with objections, which perhaps the other cannot

answer, and which are left to rankle in the mind. The third, is he who never openly opposes truth, but who contents himself with insinuations and innuendoes, which, though not openly directed against religion, tell strongly in the minds of those who hear them.

These, though differing in degree, are alike in nature. They are all actuated by falsehood, derived from evil.

And here one remark seems needful:—there is a wide difference between falsehood derived from evil, and evil derived from falsehood. This will be apparent after a little consideration. Falsehood derived from evil, is the wilful errors into which a wicked man falls from the evil inclinations of his heart. Evil derived from falsehood, is the error of conduct into which a good man may fall through errors of opinion. The first of these is sinful; the latter, though injurious, may be blameless. But in the case of those represented by the adversary, the Devil as the lion, the falsehood is the offspring of evil. It is the evil inclinations of their hearts which cause the error of their opinions; and they are ever on the watch to insinuate their own errors into the hearts of others, or, by bold but specious argument, to force them there.

On the other hand, as the lion, in an evil sense, signifies those who are in falsehood from evil, so, in a good one, it represents those who are in truth from good; that is, who receive truth because it agrees with the good principles contained in their hearts. These may be divided into three classes.

They who openly advocate truth, who are bold in its defence, and who are always ready either to attack error or to defend truth. Those who seize their opportunity, and endeavour to insinuate truth into the

minds of those around them. And they who suddenly "spring upon their prey," who thrust forth an observation, or an argument, leaving it to work its own way in the heart.

Taking this view of the correspondent figure, we may ask, What is meant by the mouth and the teeth of the lion, so often mentioned? The mouth is the outlet for the voice. So in the case of the parties mentioned, the means which they employ are falsehood, errors, false doctrines—these are the mouth of the lion. By these he destroys truth, and renders good useless. In the opposite sense, the mouth of the lion is truth, true doctrines, and well-founded opinions. By these he destroys falsehood, and renders evil powerless.

Again, the teeth of the lion are those instruments by which it seizes and rends its prey. So, in an evil sense, the teeth of the lion are those principles of human learning and science by which the truth is rent or perverted; and in a good sense, they represent the same science and learning used to destroy falsehood, and to separate truth for digestion in the mind.

Like most correspondences employed in Scripture, the lion has an evil or a good signification according to the subject treated of. In a good sense it represents the principle of truth destroying falsehood, or Divine truth actuated by Divine power. In an evil sense, it represents the power of falsehood derived from evil, destroying good and truth in the mind.

Thus the Devil, or the powers of evil—understood by that aggregate term—is said to be "a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." But our Lord is called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah!" The first, because evil is ever on the watch to destroy truth and

goodness; the Lord, because by the power of His truth He puts to flight, or destroys, the principles of evil.

Let us, then, take care for ourselves. Our spiritual adversary works in different ways; he may come openly as a "roaring lion," or he may couch and take us by surprise. In either way he is a fatal adversary. It behoves us, therefore, to be ever on the watch, and trusting in "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," "put to flight the armies of the aliens."

## November Seventeenth.

### THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE DOVE.

*"Be ye, therefore, wise [prudent] as serpents, and harmless as doves."—MATT. x. 16.*

THERE are some correspondences in the Scriptures appropriated in an especial manner to the Divine Being. Among these are the Lion, the Lamb, the Eagle, and the Dove. Thus the Lord is called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah;" "the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world;" "the Eagle that planted the cedar;" and the Dove, when sending forth the influences of the Holy Spirit. All these figures have something peculiarly appropriate to the Divine nature. The lion, for its strength, activity, and power; the eagle, for its penetrating sight; the lamb, for its meekness and confiding innocence. We have already stated that the lamb denotes the love of goodness in innocence. The dove denotes the same quality, but with this difference—the lamb refers to goodness, the dove to truth.

The Divine humanity of the Lord, or the humanity

united to the Divine nature, is called a Lamb, on account of its purity and freedom from evil, which by trials and temptations had been ejected; and also because it was the truth united to Divine good. The Holy Spirit is compared to a Dove, and so called; and, under this appearance, the Divine Operation was seen to descend at the baptism of the Lord by John. "The Holy Spirit descended like a dove, and lighted upon him"—acting as a symbol to instruct us, that when Divine Truth enters the mind, before it can be of use in the church, it must be aided by the Divine Operation or influence. The love of truth must be united with the love of good.

Under the Mosaic ritual, the dove was a frequent object of sacrifice, shewing that the love of truth for truth's sake must be sanctified by the fire or fervency of Divine love: hence a woman after child-birth brought for her purifying two turtle doves or two young pigeons; thereby figuring that, when the mind has given birth to either good or truth, that affection to which truth gives rise must be sanctified and offered up to the Lord, otherwise the mind will continue in a state of pollution to self-pride and to worldly affections. As the lion denotes the power of truth conjoined with good, and is thus representative of the Lord as the "Lion of the tribe of Judah;" as the lamb denotes the good of innocence, and represents the Divine humanity of the Lord; so the dove denotes the spiritual affection of truth—the love of truth for the sake of benefiting others—or the love of truth derived from good in simplicity and innocence.

## November Eighteenth.

### THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE DOVE AND SERPENT.

*"Be ye therefore wise [prudent] as serpents, and harmless as doves."—MATT. x. 16.*

THE serpent denotes the sensuous principle or love of self; so that by the words, "Be ye prudent as serpents," the Lord would instruct us to be as prudent and watchful, even as the most sensual mind who believes only in present enjoyment and present existence; but at the same time to be harmless as doves. The watchfulness and the circumspection of the sensuous principle must always be accompanied by the love and harmlessness of the dove. In other words, the counsel of the Lord seems to be this: Strive after all the care and watchfulness of the serpent, but keep clear of its malignity. But the Lord, by this simile, would further instruct us, that the perfection of the human character arises from the combined perfections of the animal, referred to their Divine Source, that is to say, connected with the Lord Jesus Christ.

It would thus appear that the perfection of the human character will be increased in proportion to the addition therein of the perfections of the inferior creatures.

Certain it is, that the life of man is a compound life, made up of an indefinite variety of affections and thoughts; and hence we may conclude that the constitution will be more perfect, as the variety is more extended, and especially as the corresponding principles are in due proportion to each other. We may



therefore not only say, "Be prudent as serpents, and harmless as doves," but be strong as lions, or be playful as lambs, or be cheerful as larks; and endeavour to unite in ourselves the distinct excellences of all the inferior creatures; which, when connected with their Divine source, will all tend to increase the perfection of life.

Birds have a special reference to the intellect or understanding; and, from their peculiar constitution, they are fitted particularly to represent the thoughts of the mind; their velocity of motion, their lightness of structure, their exclusive adaptation for existence in the atmosphere, their beauty of plumage, and the harmony emitted by many of them—all connect them with the intellectual principle of man, though each species has a specific difference of meaning. The dove, one of the most harmless as well as one of the most affectionate and beautiful of birds, represents therefore some principle in harmony with its qualities.

As the lamb, above all quadrupeds, has no evil signification, so neither among the birds has the dove, its counterpart. Its signification is holy, not the reverse in any case. As the eagle refers to intelligence in power, so the dove refers to the same intelligence in gentleness; and it is emblematical of that true wisdom which cometh from above, of which the apostle James speaks when he says, "The wisdom which cometh from above is gentle." It is analogous to truth derived from goodness; it is the spiritual affection of truth, and its desire is to love out of itself: thus it is representative of that goodness of disposition which seeks the good of others.

## November Nineteenth.

## THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE DOVE.

*"Be ye therefore wise [prudent] as serpents, and harmless as doves."—MATT. x. 16.*

THE character of those represented by the dove is most exalted. And first, its highest application is to the Lord in His Divine Operation; and this is, indeed, most appropriate. The operation of the Lord upon the soul of man, is that of the purest truth derived from the purest good. The recipient may not at once be led into all truth, yet "the dove has alighted upon him;" pure truth from good has entered his mind, and, if cherished, will eventually produce its effect.

As "Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water, and lo! the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him; and lo! a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"—so these words may have their fulfilment in all cases of spiritual baptism, or purification from evil by the truths of God's Word. The first effect of such baptism is an elevation of the mind above those external principles of truth and doctrine by which purification was effected. The second effect is an opening of the internal man or mind; and the third effect is the manifestation of Truth Divine from an interior ground; while the fourth effect is the manifestation, the good of love to the Lord; and thus he becomes a son in whom the Lord is well pleased.

The colour of the dove is nearly white, denoting purity, and is thus descriptive of the holiness and purity of the Being of whom it is a symbol. It is perfectly harmless, and the most affectionate of the feathered tribe; so much so indeed, that if its chosen partner dies it will moan and pine away from the loss of its company. If the operation of the Lord on the mind of man be deprived of the co-operation of the human mind, it, too, will generally die, and leave the heart altogether; for "the Spirit will not always strive with man." Hence we are exhorted "not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption."

But, as the dove represents the Lord in the operations of His Holy Spirit, so it refers to those who are in the spiritual affection of truth, or truth derived from good. And here again it may be necessary to refresh the memory by a remark on the doctrine of degrees. There are three degrees or gradations, not only in heaven but in all religious profession. They may be described under the terms celestial, spiritual, and natural. The celestial are those who have suffered their wills to be so operated upon, as to be receptive of pure love—love to the Lord above all things, for His own pure sake, and in Him they behold all that the soul can desire; and from their purified state regard all with an eye of intense charity, and live in the practice of purity and virtue. They behold the truth in love. It is plain to their souls; their yea is yea, their nay, nay; and to them, "whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

" First and nearest to the throne,  
As if peculiarly God's own,

The seraphs stand, their burning sign  
 Traced on their banners—*Love divine*.  
 Their name, their honours, far above  
 E'en those to high-browed cherubs given,  
 Though knowing all ; so far does LOVE  
 Transcend all knowledge, e'en in heaven."

Love, supreme love to God, is the highest and the noblest quality that dignifies the eternal state. The love of goodness and of God, as essential goodness, is celestial love.

## November Twentieth.

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE DOVE.

"*Harmless as doves.*"—MATT. x. 16.

SPIRITUAL love, on the other hand, is the love of truth, and of truth for the sake of benefiting others. Persons of this quality are keen seekers after knowledge, zealous disputants in favour of truth, ready at all times to stand on the defensive against error. The celestial state enters not into warfare; the spiritual state includes all the soldiers of truth. The office of the spiritual state is to illustrate, defend, and enforce the truth. They love the truth for its own sake, and they love essentially the Lord Jesus Christ, because He is Eternal Truth itself.

But, besides these, there are minds simple and intelligent, though not highly intellectual. The man who usefully pursues the course which the Divine providence has marked out for him, who in obedience receives instruction, without disputing about doctrines, who is sincere and upright, and does what is right because he loves it, and who, without any pretensions

to superior knowledge, feels a delight in performing all the good he can, for the express purpose of contributing, to the utmost of his ability, to the general good—he, and the class to which he belongs, forms the third or natural degree. But we must not suppose that those who constitute the celestial degree, are not in the love of truth as well as goodness; or, that those in the spiritual and natural degrees are not in the love of the Lord. The love of the Lord exists in the whole of them, or they could not enter heaven. Each loves in his own degree. The first love the Lord for His goodness, the Lord being essential goodness. The second love Him for His truth, and He is essential truth. The third endeavour to do what is right, and, by simple obedience, without question, love Him in striving, from moral good, to shew themselves His confiding children. Or, to render the illustration still more familiar—the celestial love the Lord as celestial goodness, and serve as the media of conveying that goodness to the next in degree. The second, or spiritual, who are in the love of truth, shew the love they bear to the Lord by the visible love with which they regard their neighbour: “By this all men know them to be the Lord’s disciples, because they have love one to another.” In the third degree, the celestial and spiritual characteristics are almost hidden; but yet love is seen and exemplified in the natural charity and good works by which they are distinguished.

Those represented by the dove are actuated by truth derived from love; who, with the purest affection, desire the truth not only for its own sake, but for the sake of uses. These are figured by the dove. Harmless—they are capable of being elevated into

the chastened glory of heavenly light. Like the eagle, they can elevate themselves into the atmosphere above, though with inferior power. They can range through the regions of intellectual truth, and fly wherever the wish prompts them. But they are not like the eagle, solitary. Their love is best drawn forth in society; and, deprived of society, they lose their principal source of happiness; because, as has just been remarked, the love of truth is the love of the neighbour, for they who love truth find their happiness increased by making it known to others. Anxious to bring others to a knowledge of that truth which has added to their own enjoyment, their desire is to communicate; there language is, "Hearken, I pray you, unto me, and I will tell you what the Lord has done for my soul."

Descending now, in the third degree, to the individual, the same may be said of him that has been said of the general body of truth-loving Christians. The man of this character ardently loves truth: he is never wearied of seeking after it; he explores every source whence knowledge can be derived, and, as he ardently seeks for knowledge so he is eager to communicate what he acquires. The words of the Lord are ever before him: "Freely ye have received, freely give." Truth is indeed "sweet to his taste, yea, sweeter than honey and the honeycomb:" he wishes all around him to "taste and see that the Lord is good," and that true blessedness results from belief in Him. This intense love of truth is united to a harmless and religious life; a life of love, of the practice of truth, and of ardent and devoted affection to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the God of Truth. This is the class

of men who are emphatically "the light of the world." They are as beacons in the midst of a sinful and perverse generation. They are mediums in the hands of the Lord to spread abroad knowledge in the earth; they "run to and fro, that knowledge may be increased." Like the dove, they are fond of society; they cannot live in solitude, or separate themselves from others. Monastic cell or hermit's cave is not suitable to them. They must find companions, or they must make them; they are actuated by pure love to their neighbour, originating from love to the Divine Truth within them.

### November Twenty-first.

#### EDEN AND TYRE.

*"Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God."—EZEK. xxviii. 13.*

EDEN is significative of a state of love to the Lord, love of heaven and of the church; and thus it will embody every class of persons who love the Lord and their neighbour: but, while one class will love and adore the Lord more immediately for His goodness, another class will love and worship Him more immediately for His truth. One class will be dwellers at Jerusalem, another on the borders of the sea, and in the city of Tyrus. Both may have been in Eden, the garden of the Lord, and both may have been delighted with its verdure and its beauty. But the precious stones or spiritual truths which one class may have discovered there, he has garnered in his inmost affections, and placed to the account of heavenly goodness. These are the dwellers in the city of peace,

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who perceive the doctrines of heavenly wisdom, and exemplify them in the deeds of a quiet and chastened charity. The other class belong to the Tyrians. They like to exhibit their precious stones before the world, to exhibit them in their dress and on their garments. And, supposing these precious stones, with the gold, to symbolize every kind and degree of truth and good exhibited in the letter of the Word of God, and embodied in the Ten Commandments, "on which hang all the law and the prophets," we may see that the Word of God itself is an Eden, and every precious stone is to be found within it; for, as the diamond appears as a fountain of light, the beryl, the jasper, and the others, imbibing and reflecting the varied hues from the light of the sun—so bright, so beautiful and glorious, does every truth appear to those who contemplate the Divine Word of the Lord. All these precious stones are given as the ornaments to Tyre. They are for those who desire and love them, more especially for those who love to communicate them. They are for those, therefore, who feel delight in instructing others in the knowledge of them; for those who take a pleasure in distributing the pearls of wisdom; for those "who go down to the sea in ships, and do business in great waters;" for those who make usefulness their object and end, and who labour from the real love of truth, and not from a sectarian or vain-glorious spirit. Tyre, then, in a state of perfection, was a city well pleasing to the Lord, and the workmanship of its tabrets and of its pipes was prepared in the day that it was created. For what are these tabrets and pipes, but figures of the affections and desires for truth created within us? All sounds are operative



upon the affections and mind of man, the same as visible objects, the latter forming the proximate correspondences whereby the principle admits of being traced, as is observed by the apostle, "There are, it may be, many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification" (1 Cor. xiv. 10); and it is this which gives to music the extraordinary power which it exercises over our feelings; and every feeling and every affection is good and right in itself, if it be properly exercised. Every country has its peculiarity in dress, and adornment, and amusement, and all these in themselves are good.

### November Twenty-second.

EDEN AND TYRE.

*"Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God."*—Ezek. xxviii. 13.

**I**F we dwell in the peaceful city of Jerusalem, and are adorned with the simple yet beautiful garments of truth and goodness; if we have our affections raised by the melody of the songs of Zion, and take delight in the golden harps of peace and holiness; we must not think meanly of the inhabitant of Tyre, because he is busied with his merchandize, nor affect disdain for his wealth and the costliness and splendour of his garments, so long as he is in his proper sphere of use, and acknowledges the source whence every talent and faculty is derived. Let us exercise a wise discrimination between the several degrees of truth and goodness, but never prefer an inferior to a superior good. The rich merchant of Tyre is not to be looked down upon with contempt because he is not in possession of

the calm and holy delights of Jerusalem ; nor is the dweller in Jerusalem to be despised because he is not enrobed in the rich drapery, and externally wears not the brilliant gems of Tyre. We must remember that everything is good, if it holds its proper place ; and hence our duty is plain—wherever we may behold good and virtue in another, we must love and reverence him for the sake of the good and the virtue which he manifests ; and the more active he is in the dissemination of the particular good or usefulness of which he is the recipient, the more must we respect and strive to imitate him, in the sphere in which we are placed. All good is of God, whatever may be its kind and degree ; God is in everything that is good ; and, whatever may be the spheres respectively in which we move, if we do good from the real love of it, and ascribe the power to will and to do unto the Lord, our labour will be blessed, and we shall hereafter obtain a high reward.

But if Tyre, and the principle of which it is the type, forget the source whence every good is derived, and, instead of using its wealth and its labour to promote the good of mankind, and to honour the great and glorious Giver of all good, and, losing its humility, begins to be proud of its possessions—if, in consequence of this, inflamed with the lust of dominion, like the Romish Church in our own day, she plunges into all the iniquity of traffic, aims at extending her dominion by fraud, violence, and deceit, holding forth the terrors of condemnation to those who yield not to her sway—if such a Tyre, or its representative principle, shall come so much into the love of self, and the lust of universal power and dominion, the Lord hath pronounced against her that which shall most inevitably

be fulfilled: "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground; I will lay thee before kings that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth, in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee; thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more." (Ezek. xxviii. 17-19.)

### **November Twenty-third.**

#### THE TABERNACLE AND HOLY HILL.

*"Lord who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in Thy holy hill?"—*  
PSALM XV. 1.

**I**N the Holy Word, the term Tabernacle is frequently mentioned in reference to the Lord Himself; and in this passage it denotes the holy principle of Divine love and goodness existing in the Lord. For it is in these that the Lord dwells, as He also does in every human heart where these loves have their supreme abode; as it is written, "Thus saith the High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity, Whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit; to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." By which is meant that the Lord abides in both degrees of love and wisdom, namely:

—Love of the Lord, and neighbourly love. Man is the Lord's tabernacle, when he is in the sphere of heavenly love and charity; and he abides in the Divine goodness and truth, and may be said to be a celestial man, being nearest to the Lord, and in the sphere of the Divine love and glory.

By the Holy Hill, or by Jerusalem, a state next in degree is implied, and refers to the spiritual man, or to that holy principle of charity which comprehends the several degrees of neighbourly love; and it is called a HOLY HILL, because it has relation to an interior elevation of soul. It is denominated the Holy Hill of the Lord, because, as in the former instance, the tabernacle denoted the celestial state and degree; so in this is denoted the spiritual state and degree; these two states or degrees being inseparable in the Divine nature, and all love and wisdom, charity and faith, in man, have their origin in the Lord.

To abide in the Lord's tabernacle is to stand in the celestial state of pure love to the Lord, which is the life of that state. To abide in the holy hill is to dwell in the principle of charity or pure love to each other. If we are among the persons who abide in the Lord's tabernacle, whose inward life is love to the Lord and goodness, then, although we have to pass through trials and intense temptations, proportioned to the elevation of state to be attained, still the Lord's presence will never fail us, and when we pass through the fire the flame shall not kindle upon us. And if we are persons who abide in the holy hill, or in a state of neighbourly love and charity, we shall be careful "to do unto all men as we would they should do unto us." In the angelic state of the Lord's spiritual kingdom,

these, we may presume, are the distinguishing virtues and graces of the angels of the spiritual heavens.

Now, let us inquire, Is this the state of our interior affections, or do we ardently desire to attain it? If so, we must perceive something of its blessedness, and that this blessed state consists in holy conjunction with the Lord. If we are living under the influence of this principle—it being a pure, spiritual, and heavenly one—it will elevate our minds far above what is evil and unjust in the world, and we shall be daily advancing in the way of regeneration.

## November Twenty-fourth.

### THE GOOD MAN'S STEPS.

*"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord."*—PSALM xxxvii. 23.

**B**Y steps, or walking, when mentioned in the Holy Word, we understand, in a good sense, man's spiritual progress and growth in heavenly goodness; and the opposite when the subject treated of is evil. The inmost principle of love existing in a wicked man is evil, because it is love of himself and the world, and the growth or advancement, or the steps, which a man in this state takes, is described by his progressing and increasing in wickedness, and all his steps are in contravention of the Divine laws or orders. His steps are not ordered by the Lord, but by himself, or by his evil love. Like the Israelites of old, "he ceases not from his own doings, nor from his own stubborn way."

In the solemn protestation of his integrity, Job (xxx. 7, 8) thus prays: "If my step hath turned out

of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands, then let me sow and let another eat, let my offspring be rooted out."

The steps of a good man are in a contrary direction to those of the wicked. So very opposite are they to each other that, while it may be said of the good man he is constantly ascending, it may be said of the wicked he is constantly descending: hence the good man ascends to heaven, the wicked man descends to hell. Spiritual steps are the progressions of man's spiritual life. Every single truth a man derives from the Word of God, and applies to the amendment of his heart and to the regulation of his life and conduct, makes him increase in heavenly wisdom: and every increase of wisdom admitted into his understanding and exemplified in the life, may be said to be a step towards heaven, that step being ordered or directed by the Lord; and each step so taken increases the blessedness he feels, inasmuch as the source of all blessedness—the Divine presence—appears nearer and nearer to him. The good man's steps are ordered by the Lord, because his advancement towards perfection is made through his obedience to the Divine Truth of the Holy Word. The Divine Truth is the Divine speech, in which is embodied all that is required of man. The Divine Truth is the guide by which his steps are directed in the way. Jesus is the way, and whoever walks by Him, "none of his steps shall slide."

When we conduct our steps in conformity to the Divine precepts of the Lord, when our delight consists in bringing our will into conformity to the Divine will, then our steps are ordered by the Lord: and the man

whose life is governed and directed in all its points by the salutary teaching of the sacred truths of the Word, must possess internal tranquillity of mind—a state of comparative happiness arising from his conviction of the Divine superintendence—which makes him bear the toils and perplexities of this lower state with patience, and impresses him with an increased sense of the Lord's divine providence, whose goodness orders and directs his steps from this world to the heavens.

### November Twenty-fifth.

#### THE PERFECTION OF THE LAW OF THE LORD.

*"The law [or doctrine] of the Lord is perfect, converting [or restoring] the soul."—PSALM xix. 7.*

THE law of the Lord, or the doctrine of the Lord, is founded upon love to Him, and charity towards our neighbour. As man's ruling love constitutes the very essence of his life, and also determines his quality and character, of how great importance is it that the objects of such love should be in accordance with the Divine will! If our minds were a blank, ready to receive any impression, good or evil, the difficulty would not be so great to have heavenly love planted therein; but when it is known that man by nature is under the dominion of all kinds of evil, inasmuch as he is under the dominion of self-love and the love of the world, it behoves him to perform the work of repentance, and commence the spiritual life without delay, before evil principles become rooted, the judgment perverted, and the things of religion so distasteful in consequence of lengthened opposition to their

influence, as to confirm him in his evil courses, and so render his case hopeless.

Our blessed Lord declared that all the law and the prophets hung upon these two precepts—namely, love of the Lord above all things, and love of our neighbour. A requirement so spiritual and so extensive is peculiar to the law of God, to whom alone the heart is open ; and no other law ever claimed the subjection of the soul. Our Lord states that the first and great commandment is to love God ; and it may, with the greatest propriety, be so styled, from the excellence of its object, because it is the only principle from which any feeling or act of true virtue or goodness can proceed. The second, or love to our neighbour, is like to it in comprehensiveness, the authority by which it is given, and the happy influences which it exercises over those who obey it. To love God with all our heart, is to love Him sincerely and fervently with every affection. “Give me thine heart,” is the Lord’s claim.

Men may be imposed upon by profession of attachment ; but the Lord looks to the heart, and can see enmity to Him under all the disguises which may be assumed in the outward conduct : and to love Him with all the soul, is to employ the understanding in the contemplation of His character and works, and wisely to form ideas of him suited to His purity and excellence, as a guide to the affections. To love Him with all the strength, is to love Him with all the energy of our nature, with an energy which no fears can repress, no difficulties intimidate, no struggles exhaust, and no opposition overcome.

The love of our neighbour consists in the due estimation of their valuable qualities, an interest in their



happiness, and in a strong desire to promote their welfare, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. In a family, the form in which love appears is gentleness, sweetness, prudence, and judgment; in a neighbourhood, it is courtesy; in friendship, it is sympathy; in distress, it is mercy; to our country, it is patriotism; to the world, it is benevolence; and in the church, it is brotherly kindness, dwelling together in unity. "The doctrine of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul." It regulates every opinion we receive, every connection we form, every arrangement we make, every course we pursue, every hope we cherish! How admirable will it appear, if we contrast it with the maxims by which unenlightened nations are governed! Hospitality to the stranger is almost the only expression of benevolence known among savage tribes; and if we see there the traveller welcomed to food and rest in their dwelling, and his life and property counted sacred, we behold captives assassinated, children sacrificed to idols, and the sick and the helpless left to perish. Among the most civilized heathen nations, patriotism is the only feature of love that we can discern; but it is a patriotism which sanctions the pillage, the slaughter, and the conquest of other nations. It is not in the maxims or doctrines of their sages that you will trace the noble workings of charity; nor can you meet with, in the laws of the Roman kings, nor among the decrees of the republican senate, nor among the edicts of the heathen emperors, a single ordinance for the promotion or guidance of any scheme of mercy. These, in all their forms, are the result of the law or doctrine of Jesus Christ.

## November Twenty-sixth.

## THE PERFECTION OF THE LAW OF THE LORD.

*"The law [or doctrine] of the Lord is perfect, converting [or restoring] the soul."*

—PSALM XIX. 7.

THE Sun of Righteousness arose on the world with healing in His wings; and even in the most corrupted state into which Christianity has fallen, the institutions of mercy which are to be seen everywhere, shew the impression of its character and the residue of its spirit. The righteousness of the Lord's testimonies is everlasting.

It was the vain boast of the Medes and Persians that their laws were unalterable; but they have long since passed away, as well as the thrones from which they emanated. But vicissitudes do not change the laws or doctrines of the Lord's will, or modify or set aside the standard of excellence which He has framed, because "the doctrine of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul." The experience of all ages testifies to the fact, that no codes of jurisprudence which man, with his utmost wisdom, could devise, had sufficient power to convert or restore and purify the soul. Their influence, at the best, could only restrain from the commission of crime; even that exalted class of morals propounded by the wisest heathen philosophers appealed only to the natural feelings, and endeavoured to shew that, by external virtues, we ministered to our own happiness, and that, from motives of self-love, we should be assiduous in their exercise. Of the hidden sources of evil in the recesses of the soul they took no cognizance, and of its regeneration they had no

knowledge. The Saviour, in a conference with a ruler in Israel, affirmed the necessity of man's being born again; and it is in His holy Word that the means are prescribed whereby this great work can be effected. The doctrines of the Lord, unlike the doctrines of man, not only contain precepts for man's obedience, but information how we can render it conformable to the Divine will—yea, even more than this; for, like the ark of the covenant, to which it corresponds, it possesses an influence which will enable us to receive its doctrines and precepts with sincerity into our minds, to render this obedience in a spiritual manner. With an energy peculiar to itself, it will remove all fallacious principles and evil affections; it will exalt and purify the tender germs of goodness that begin to be developed in the mind; it will open those interior degrees of our spiritual organization which shall render us capable of becoming receptive of a more enlarged sphere of heavenly happiness—in a word, “it will restore the soul.” The law of the Lord alone can effect this wonderful change in man; and this it accomplishes because of its perfection. As God is a perfect being, so His Word, His law, His doctrine is perfect, because it is the expression of His own Divine wisdom, and is a pure emanation of Himself. There is no other medium afforded whereby the human race can attain conjunction with the Lord—and, therefore, salvation—except by the Word; and if it were removed from the earth, we should be deprived of the medium whereby we might obtain this conjunction, and our salvation would be impossible, because our regeneration could not be effected. There is a Divine sphere continually emanating from the Sacred Oracles,

which embraces all the members of the Lord's church. The holy Word contains the never-exhausted store from whence we obtain nourishment for our souls. Therein is to be found the bread of life and the wine of the kingdom. All the requisites necessary for our soul's well-being, both in time and eternity, are obtained from no other source. It is the fountain of all wisdom and knowledge; its stores can never be exhausted, for—unlike the expression of man's wisdom, which may be fathomed and fully comprehended—it contains a fulness and depth which can never be altogether grasped by the highest finite intelligence. Its stores of interior wisdom illustrate and delight the minds of celestial angels, yet it is so expressed, that, according to his state, the sensual man can understand it and be edified by it. It is not merely adapted for one order of minds, it is so written as to be instructive to every state and quality of human nature; and not only on earth but in heaven: for, as the angels increase in wisdom to all eternity, they obtain their intelligence from no other source, and yet they will never be able to exhaust it. All the wisdom and holiness which characterize their nature, is communicated to them through this Divine medium, for it is the only vehicle by which the Almighty can have communion with His creatures. With what reverence and fervour, then, should we approach this Divine volume! Well may we exclaim, "The doctrine of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul!" What an exalted privilege to have this inestimable gift put in our possession!



## November Twenty-seventh.

### THE OLIVE, THE VINE, AND THE FIG.

*"The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us. But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? And the trees said to the fig tree, Come thou and reign over us. But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou and reign over us. And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou and reign over us. And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow! and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon."—JUDGES ix. 8-15.*

THIS is one of the most beautiful and instructive parables in the whole of the Divine Word, equally edifying in the letter as in the spirit. Dr. Hales has, with great force and beauty, illustrated the literal sense, which we shall first transcribe, and then proceed to illustrate the spiritual sense.

"For their ingratitude to the house of Gideon, the Shechemites were indignantly upbraided by Jotham, in the oldest and most beautiful apologue of antiquity extant—the trees choosing a king. With the mild and unassuming dispositions of his pious and honourable brethren—declining, like their father, we may suppose, the crown, when offered to them successively, under the imagery of the olive tree, the fig tree and the vine—he pointedly contrasts the upstart ambition and arrogance of the wicked and turbulent Abimelech, represented by the bramble, inviting his new and nobler subjects, the cedars of Lebanon, to put their trust in his pigmy shadow, which they did not want, and which he was unable to afford them; but threatening them

imperiously, on their refusing, to send forth a fire from himself to devour those cedars; whereas, the fire of the bramble was short and momentary, even to a proverb."

Where wickedness predominates, it ever elects a power in conformity with its ruling love, to assume the sovereignty, and no principles that are good can ever unite themselves with those that are evil: "For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, or what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. vi. 14.) The distinguishing principles of the Church should be the OLIVE, the VINE, and the FIG—charity, faith, and good works—and these should be presided over by Celestial Love (Olive), Spiritual Truth (Vine), and Natural Good and Truth (Fig). And because charity, faith, and good works, when united, are the foundation of all true religion and virtue, therefore neither of them would rule over the wicked men of Shechem, mentioned in the parable, because neither of the principles to which their lives bore analogy had any dwelling-place in their rebellious and hard hearts. But the bramble being an exact analogy of the power of evil, and corresponding with the quality of their ruling love, accepted the sovereignty under a stipulation of unlimited trust and confidence, and in case of rebellion, then all the destructive powers of evil were to be let loose upon them, all the burning lusts of self-love should blaze forth and devour whatever might remain of good and truth. When the church, as to celestial good, suffers itself to be guided and ruled by the merely scientific principle, its character is degraded, "oil is carried into Egypt." (Hos. xii. 1.) In this state the rational principle is

exalted above the principle of holy love, and thus charity is degraded into a mere thing of science. Too true is it that Israel has profaned the church. She has carried oil to Egypt—she has become an empty vine—she has degenerated into a dead fig tree.

### November Twenty-eighth.

#### THE BOUNTEOUS HAND OF THE LORD.

*"Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing."*—  
PSALM cxlv. 16.

ALTHOUGH it is a rule among us "to read often, and meditate frequently, upon the Word of the Lord," it is to be feared it is more beautiful in the theory than in the practice. Happy will it be if, in the end, we are found among the least in the kingdom of the heavens!

But there are some whose faith, grounded in love, is so vigorous and ardent, so hungry and thirsty after righteousness, so anxious for the means of advancing in the Divine life, and of communicating what they acquire, that they are constantly coveting the best gifts, hungering after heavenly good, thirsting after heavenly truth. What they already know of heavenly things delights them, but their desires are great; and as they desire, the Lord gives; and as the Lord gives, they dispense freely to others; and, coming again to the Lord, hungering and thirsting, they become blessed with a fulness of Divine nourishment. They meditate upon their bed, upon the doctrines and truths of the Word. They read frequently, and with their eyes lifted up—that is, with their understandings elevated

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to the Lord—but with their hearts humbled in profound and deep reverence and love for what the Lord has done for them. To such as these, the Word of the Lord is a source of infinite wisdom; the explication of that word is a treasure of inestimable value. Trusting in the Lord and doing good, the Lord grants the desire of every living thing in their affections and thoughts; and why? Because they desire that which the Lord approves. Their desires are in harmony with the Divine will, and it is the will of the Lord to communicate all the good and truth of his Word as they are able to bear it.

The Lord opens his hand, and satisfies every living thing. By the hand of the Lord, is signified His Divine power or omnipotence; and by opening His hand, the exercise and manifestation of that power with Divine benevolence and liberality; by which we are instructed, that the kindness and mercy of the Lord are such, that all the riches of His grace, all the blessings of His Word, all the benefits of His redemption, and all the treasures of His kingdom, are free for every child of the human race; so much so, that there is not a desire or a wish which any of His creatures can express or feel, but, if it be for their good, He grants them; and, in the fulness of His perfect love, He only withholds those things that would be prejudicial. We are taught, further, that we cannot open our hearts, or desire any spiritual good or blessing, but the Lord opens His hand to fulfil that desire, and give us what we ask: as it is written, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." It concerns us, then, to inquire whether our principles of life are



living principles derived from the Lord—whether our faith and charity be from a Divine origin ; and if we have good ground to conclude our principles of life are such, then shall we do well to consider further the quality and nature of those principles, whether they are strong and vigorous or weak and feeble ; and this we may know by the nature and extent of our living desires. If these are low and few, our faith and love are weak and feeble ; but if they are ardent and animated, then our faith and love are living, zealous, and vigorous. And let us remember, that according to the state and quality of our spiritual thoughts and desires, so will be our reception from the Lord of the treasures of His truth and love. The hand of the Lord is open to satisfy the desire of every living thing, but no more than we desire can we receive.

## November Twenty-ninth.

### THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

*“ But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God. And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, he took Peter, and John, and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his countenance was white and glistening.”—LUKE ix. 27-29.*

WE have here the kingdom of God revealed to us in the most literal and exact language. How did the three disciples see Him? Was it not by having their spiritual sight opened, and beholding, in their full spiritual consciousness, the spiritual Divine man, whose glory was veiled from their material eyes by His material form? And thus, without having tasted of death, they did see the kingdom of God.

This relation of the transfiguration is full of significance, for the Lord's whole life on earth was a type of the states of the church. In His material body He represented the sensual material Jewish church, through which assaults were unceasingly made upon His Divine spiritual nature; and in the sufferings and indignities offered to His material body, was shewn the desecration of the Word in its literal sense, by those who live only in the external senses of their bodies, who see only the kingdoms of this world, who realize only the truths that relate to their outer lives. But the Lord descended to these to reveal to them "the kingdom of God;" to awaken their perceptions to a higher, brighter and more beautiful, inner life; and for this end, He gathered around Him a church upon earth, which loved Him in the external manifestation of Himself, and from this church He selected the representatives of its *three* ruling principles—Peter or *faith*; James, or the *works of charity*; and John, the indwelling principle of *charity*: and "He went up into the *mountain to pray*."

Prayer is an opening of our inner consciousness, by which we are brought into the presence of the Divine; and a mountain, as representing an elevation of the mind above the earth, shews in what degree of our being prayer should be made—to wit, from the inmost and highest. With faith and good works, and the heavenly principle of love, we should approach the Divine Saviour, and then He will be revealed in His spiritual glory.

The words of the Lord are infinite and universal in their signification, and that which He addressed to His church eighteen hundred years ago, is a living word

spoken now to His church; and this wonderful and beautiful assurance, "There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God," may be verified at this day, if the church will ascend the mountain and pray. Her inmost consciousness will be opened, and she will see the Lord. And His Divine humanity is the "kingdom of God," in which He "shall come with the glory of the Father and the holy angels."

Man has so long been submerged in the sensual and natural that he shrinks from his own spiritual consciousness; he almost thinks it sin to strive to see the kingdom of God before he has tasted of death. He accepts the revelations of the spiritual world, and believes the doctrines communicated from God, and yet thinks that, while he lives upon the earth, his interior consciousness must be closed.

## November Thirtieth.

### THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

*"But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God. And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter, and John, and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His countenance was white and glistening."—LUKE ix. 27-29.*

SO long as man is immersed in fables of doctrine and evils of life, all influx into his interiors is from hell: hence, the Lord, in His merciful providence, closed the spiritual consciousness of man. But when, through truth of doctrine and the good of life, man again comes into an orderly state of being, so that the interior influx is from heaven, he will be

again gifted with spiritual consciousness, such as was enjoyed by the most ancient church. When our thought dwells upon this state of existence, how appropriate seems its designation of the "Golden Age!" How beautiful human life must have been, when "families on the earth, and families in the heavens, made a one." Death, that now hangs like a pall of blackness over all our outer life, was then the highest culmination of joy to the loving heart; for the beloved were not removed from sight; there was no aching void left in anguished hearts; and the beauty of glorified spirits only elevated and purified more and more the glowing affections of those who yet walked in the outer life, and it cannot be imagined that the spirits of the most ancient church concerned themselves in the least with natural things. They were full of heavenly joy, and purified affections, and sought to lead those with whom they were consociated upon the earth to higher scenes of heavenly blessedness, and more interior perceptions of the Divine. Man did not then approach spirits to ask their guidance in their outer lives, for they were consciously led of the Lord. They lived in the heavenly sunshine, and sported, in an infantile purity and innocence of being, amid the joys of a heavenly existence.

What has been, will be. The spirit of man moves in gyres. Hitherto the gyres have been opened outwards and downwards; his whole external sensual life has been opened to his consciousness. The man of the most ancient church had not this consciousness; he was as the infant who has not yet realized the sensual life and power of the man. But now that the full manhood of the human race has been attained,

his final regeneration has commenced with a loathing of his gross sensual proprium ; man turns with a yearning thought to the purity and innocence of his infantile state. Here is the opening of the ascending gyre of his inner being, and now there will be "an enlarging and a winding about still upward to the side chambers ; for the winding about of the house went still upward, and so increased from the lowest chamber to the highest by the midst." As man descends, and all the beauty and glory of the inner life opens to his delighted senses, how calm and beautiful will the outward life become ; all animosity and contention will cease ; the selfish proprium will be dead, for the windings being upward and inward, those that were downward and outward will be closed ; and man in his renewed and regenerated state will realize heaven upon earth ; "the kingdom of God" that is within him, which "cometh not with observation," not with external manifestations, will be revealed to him, and the face of man will be turned to the Lord, as unvaryingly as every particle in the body, which is receptive of spirit and life, is turned to the soul as its centre.

At present there is a mighty influx of spiritual manifestations, which mark the opening of the spiritual degree in man. When the Lord descended upon the earth, there was a little marked influx. But if the early Christians had rejected all the visitations of angels because false and evil spirits also manifested themselves, then in vain would the stone have been rolled from the door of the sepulchre, and the dark wall of separation between the spiritual and the natural world opened : for none would have looked in and

beheld the angel. The "kingdom of God" has come nigh unto us, and if we reject all intimations of it, then would the dust of evil be shaken off against us, and the woe pronounced against Chorazin and Bethsaida will cleave to us.

No: it is better to "acknowledge the mighty works done in our midst," and repent of our falses and evils, that we may become recipients of the heavenly influx that is waiting to descend and ultimate itself upon the earth. The church upon earth must be one with the church in heaven, that there may be a full, pure, and perfect communication of the Divine soul with its created body. "Man is created only to be a recipient of the Divine life;" not a blind-unconscious recipient, like a half-dead, partially-paralyzed body, that cannot act in accordance with the will of the soul, but a living, conscious recipient, in a full and perfect communication with the soul, and in the full vigour of life hastening to do its bidding. When man looks to the Lord, and through Him comes into the "kingdom of God," then is the ultimate life perfected.

# MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS

FOR EVERY DAY IN THE WEEK.

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## Sunday Morning.

**G**REAT AND MERCIFUL SAVIOUR, Who art kind to all, Whose tender mercies are over all Thy works, we look up to Thee as our spiritual Father, and confess with confusion of face that we have been disobedient children. Take us, gracious Lord, defenceless as we are, into Thy keeping and protection. Send down upon us the holy Spirit of Thy grace and enable us to flee to the everlasting arms of Thy mercy; give us to feel deeply sensible of our helplessness, the depravity of our hearts, the dangers to which we are exposed, and our insufficiency to do that which is acceptable in Thy sight; and, being humbled and abased in our own eyes, may we be enabled to lay hold on the hope that is set before us. May we rightly apply the means of Thy grace so bountifully manifested in these latter days, that, shining into our understandings by faith, thou mayest animate our affections with Thy love, and uphold us by the endowments of Thy free Spirit. So shall we not fear though a host

encamp against us—though infernals tempt, and the world oppose—though the flesh be weak, and our prospects clouded: since we can then take up the words of Thy eternal truth, “The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?—the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?” Lord, we beseech Thee, let strength be imparted unto us, that we may pursue the straight and narrow path to life.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Sunday Evening.

**O** THOU Who searchest the heart and triest the reins, and knowest what is in man, we draw nigh to Thee this evening under a deep sense of our infirmities, and we pray Thee assist us to explore our own hearts, for we know they are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. When we reflect upon the manner in which we have performed our duties this day, we are conscious that there is much to blame, for there has been much wandering of our affections from Thee, the proper object of all love, and we have not felt that delight in Thy service, which, were our hearts filled by Thy love, we would at all times manifest.

How illusive and ill-founded are the hopes of such as are lukewarm; how easily is the heart drawn aside, while it even professes to be doing its duty. The seducing pleasures of the world withdraw our affections from Thee Who should be the only object of our love. Each vain pleasure increases our indifference,



strengthens our passions, and, like a moral pestilence, overspreads our heart, and renders our understandings more impervious to the light of heavenly wisdom. Then succeed a weakened and embarrassed conscience, a darkened and perverted mind, an insensibility to spiritual religion, and a careless and indifferent performance of duties, not amounting to absolute neglect, but to that which is even worse—to lukewarmness.

O Lord, while we thus confess our lukewarmness, help us to rise above so dangerous a state; help us to strengthen the things which remain, which are ready to perish, for we have not been perfect before Thee. We have lived in the world, and participated in its pleasures, as in the midst of spiritual Babylon, and our selfishness has continued to increase. We have lost sight of the truly spiritual principle of affection, of goodness, and Jerusalem has receded from our view. O, turn us again, Lord God of Hosts, cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Monday Morning.

**O** THOU Who art the Father and Friend of Thy people, by whose watchful providence we have been preserved through another night of our existence, we praise Thee for the renewal of our strength.

We come before Thee this morning with humble hearts, confiding in Thy goodness, and encouraged again to seek Thy guidance and protection upon our temporal avocations. As in spiritual, so in natural pursuits—nothing is prosperous unless it begins with

Thee, and is sanctioned by Thy Holy Word. It is by Thy wisdom that all successful usefulness is exercised; we only are the instruments—Thou alone the origin of all that is good and useful, and without Thee we can do nothing.

Lord, we pray Thee assist us to overcome the tendency to pride and self-conceit which lurks within us. Teach us daily to wait upon Thee, to seek Thy guidance, and implore Thy blessing on all we undertake. Impart unto us the necessary strength and ability to conduct our affairs; but that done, help us to leave the issue to Thy providence, to be careful for nothing, but to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. If Thou bless our efforts by prosperity, give unto us temperance, that we may use it prudently, never forgetting that Thy blessing alone has caused our success. If our efforts fail, teach us to submit without sinful murmurings to Thy wise permission of disappointment. Aid us in all things to become spiritually-minded, and to say from the heart, "Father, Thy will be done."

*Our Father, &c.*

### Monday Evening.

O. HEAVENLY FATHER, Thou art a God of love, and hast loved us from everlasting. O merciful Redeemer, Thou Who, pitying our infirmities, didst take upon Thee our nature; didst bow the heavens and come down; didst combat with all the powers of darkness which held us in cruel bondage; and, by spoiling principalities and powers, didst redeem

our souls from destruction, didst save us from our sins, and open afresh the gates of salvation to us.

O Thou, Who art at once, and in one person, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, God over all, blessed for evermore, permit us to make our deep and heartfelt acknowledgments of Thy goodness, and to offer our humble duty of gratitude and thanksgiving.

Again has the day closed upon us, and again are we able to say, Thy goodness and mercy have followed us this day, as in all the days of our life. As time rapidly passes by us, may we be careful to prepare to enter upon the important duties of eternity. While we have been engaged in our temporal duties, and, by them (Thy blessing having prospered them) have procured the things needful for our bodily subsistence, so that our bread has been given us, our water made sure, our habitation preserved from violence, and we kept in peace and safety—may we with gratitude acknowledge that it is Thou, Lord, which makest us to dwell in safety; Thou hast been our defender, and by Thee have we been upheld.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Tuesday Morning.

**O** LORD our Heavenly Father, at the commencement of this new day of our existence, let us again experience Thy watchful providence around our path, even as Thou hast protected us during the night; let Thy Word which we have read be ever with us, and go before us, that we sin not. Help us to give due attention to our several employments; may sloth-

fulness be banished, and may we labour not as eye-servants, or men-pleasers, but as the servants of Thee, O Lord Jesus, doing Thy will from our hearts. Help us to preserve cheerful, contented, and grateful spirits: and while we exercise becoming prudence and forethought in our worldly duties and callings, suffer us not to be anxious overmuch, but in all things assist us to place ourselves under the guiding wisdom of Thy divine providence. If prosperity crown our efforts, teach us to be humble and thankful, and as Thou hast freely given us, so may we freely give to others. If adversity overtake us, teach us to be submissive and patient, remembering that nothing can happen unto us but must eventually terminate in our everlasting good. Finally, O Lord, bless this day's duties to the good of our fellow creatures, and of our own souls.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Tuesday Evening.

**A**LMIGHTY GOD, our Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerator, Thou hast created man in Thine own image after Thy likeness; and though by evil we have effaced much of the original beauty we bore, yet hast Thou so mercifully provided for our restoration, that, by looking to Thee for aid, and following Thee in the path of regeneration, we may again recover that which evil alone has caused us to lose.

Lord, be with us this night, and let the influence of Thy good Spirit so possess our souls, that one desire alone may animate us—the desire to be at peace with Thee, to be pure, just, and upright, as the children of our Father in Heaven.

To attain to a degree of heavenly goodness, help us to arm ourselves with an invincible resolution of justice, and, in the midst of a wicked and adulterous generation, to be earnest and constant in the endeavour to practise that which is good; by this endeavour, blessed with Thy aid, we shall be able to bear the heaviest burdens with resignation, to resist the sorest temptations, and to come out from them more than conquerors, because purified by their action; to be calm under the storms of evil and passion which at present so infest the world; to rely on Thee, O glorified Saviour, Who art truth and goodness itself; and to attain to the measure of that spiritual stature which brings the soul into close and intimate union with Thyself.

O Lord, help us, we earnestly entreat Thee, to acquire this heavenly frame of mind.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Wednesday Morning.

**A**LMIGHTY, All-perfect, and All-gracious God, who hast in Thy Word invited all who feel their need to come to Thee, and hast graciously promised to supply their wants by the assurance, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will do it," hear us, O Lord, and help us, now that we kneel in Thy presence, to keep our thoughts fixed on heaven and heavenly things. In our position of humility, O help us to acquire internal humility, that we may be raised out of the depths of evil, and exalted into that which is good. As the kingdom of heaven cometh not by observation,

but exists where there is singleness of eye and purity of heart, O grant that we may now experience heavenly blessedness, by having our thoughts enlightened by true wisdom, and our affections warmed by heavenly love. In these pure principles reside the all of heavenly happiness. Charity is but the image of Thy perfect love, and it is from this that charity is enabled to suffer long and be kind ; from this, charity “envieth not ; charity vaunteth not itself ; is not puffed up ; doth not behave itself unseemly ; seeketh not her own ; is not easily provoked ; thinketh no evil ; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth ; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things : charity never faileth.” O God, help us to realize within our souls this Divine description of the all-perfect virtue of charity, and give unto us a clear discernment of that which is true ; that, while our charity is known of all men, Thy light may so shine within our souls as to be manifest in the glorification of Thee, our Father in the heavens.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Wednesday Evening.

THY throne, O God, is established for ever ; Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, which shall not be destroyed ; and Thou hast invited us to approach Thee, and given us the assurance, that we shall be heirs of Thy kingdom, if we do our duty according to Thy wise instructions.

We come before Thee this evening to offer our thanksgivings and praises for the blessings we have

enjoyed, and to implore Thy gracious aid, that we may be endowed with strength from on high to resist the evil inclinations of our nature. With deep contrition we acknowledge how often we have sinned against Thee, how disobedient we have been to Thy sacred injunctions, how sullen we have been under many of Thy righteous dispensations, how attached to the vanities and follies of this life, and how altogether unworthy we have been of the many blessings we have enjoyed. O Lord, assist us to be more watchful for the future. Assist us to strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to perish; assist us to take greater delight in heavenly things; and, while we live in the world, may we ever keep in remembrance that this is not our rest.

For the promises contained in Thy Word, O Lord, make us grateful. For the health in which we have been sustained, for the food which we receive, for the rest we enjoy, O render us sensible that Thy love alone has supplied us. Into Thy hands, O Lord, we resign our spirits.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Thursday Morning.

**O** LORD GOD of the spirits of all flesh, whose benignity and love we continue to experience, help us to approach Thee this morning under a due sense of Thy mercy, and grant that a just idea of Thy providential watchfulness may impress us with the certainty that no state of trial through which we pass is unobserved by Thee. Thou hast sustained us to

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the present moment, and we feel assured that Thou wilt be our guide even unto death.

Merciful God and Saviour, when our spirits are bowed down with care, and trouble presses heavily upon us, let us feel the consolation of Thy presence, and may confidence in Thee raise us above the cares and anxieties of this our natural state. Help us to comprehend the truth, that Thou regardest chiefly our eternal happiness, and eternal things must be so gained that those who pass to their enjoyment must be prepared for them. It was for this that Thou didst bow the heavens and come down; and it is for this that all things transient and temporal must give way.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Thursday Evening.

**O** LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, our Redeemer and Saviour, Thou hast exhorted us in Thy Word to set our affections on things above; help us to be obedient to this Divine injunction. When the world presses heavily upon us; when that in which we delighted and which appeared prosperous is suddenly withdrawn, and assumes a dark and threatening aspect; when those whose friendship we thought sure and permanent become cold, avert the eye, and with our change of fortune, change their feelings of regard, and even traduce, or appear to do so, the character they at one time so much admired; when all worldly supports are removed, and the spirit in bitterness is about to give place to despair, then, Lord, in the midst of our darkness, let Thy cheering light find its way to our



benighted souls. Awaken within us the feeling that there is still consolation in Thy Word, still a Physician there who will not break the bruised reed, but will in mercy truly minister to the wounded spirit, and prove still a friend who sticketh closer than a brother; whose encouraging voice is heard to whisper its words of consolation to the stricken soul: "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, I am thy God." O, lead us to behold Thee in whatsoever is permitted to assail us. In the gloom of despondency, penetrate the darkness by the light of Thy countenance; in the anguish of suffering, open Thy hand and bestow upon us the leaves of the tree of life; and, under all trials, give us that bread to eat which may sustain us, and teach us to keep in remembrance that Thou, Lord, leadeest every one by the way which is best for him, and Thou wilt be our guide even unto death. So lead us, that, however difficult the path may be to tread, its end may result in eternal blessedness.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Friday Morning.

FATHER of Life and Light, we yield Thee our humble and grateful thanks for the renewal of our existence. The glorious orb of day has again risen upon us and animated afresh our bodies: O, may Thy Son of Righteousness arise in our souls, and fill us with love and joy, and impel us with gratitude to worship and adore Thee, our gracious Father, our beneficent God, our tender and compassionate Redeemer. O, may one devout feeling of grateful

adoration animate the souls of all who have by Thee, during the past night, renewed their existence, and arisen to life and usefulness in this, another day.

Lord, impress the minds of this family, who kneel in Thy presence, as well as of all who now surround the family altar, with the true idea of charity and usefulness. Impress all with the conviction that the fulfilment of the duties pertaining to the various stations they occupy, is to accept with becoming obedience and submission the dispensations of Thy providence; for Thou only knowest what is best for us. Are we in prosperity?—it is Thy hand that maketh rich, and as the stewards of Thy bounty, Thou hast chosen us to dispense, with freedom and prudence, that which Thou hast freely given. Hast Thou placed us in a sphere where bodily and daily labour must procure our daily bread?—still may we remember that this labour benefits not only ourselves, but numbers of our fellow creatures. The work of our hands, Thy blessing resting upon it, may afford a shelter from the storm, a covert from the blast, a shadow from the noon-day sun, and a safe asylum through the silent hours of night.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Friday Evening.

**O** HOLY LORD GOD our Saviour, Who art the High and Lofty One inhabiting eternity, but Who still condescendest to dwell with the poor in spirit, we Thy unworthy, humble, and dependent creatures draw near to Thy throne at the close of another

day. We praise Thee for the blessings we have enjoyed ; we thank Thee that Thou hast safely conducted us, and enabled us to perform our duties : and, we pray Thee, let Thy blessing rest upon our labours, that while our own health has been promoted and preserved by useful occupation, those for whom we have laboured may also be benefited ; and grant that we may all have our hearts filled with gratitude and thanksgiving to Thee, Who art the giver of every good and perfect gift.

Thou hast now withdrawn from us the light of the sun, and darkness has spread its curtain over the earth : Thou hast given us the season of obscurity to rest from our labour. "Night is the time for sleep." How infinite is the wisdom which appoints the hours of solemn silence to refresh and invigorate the constitution of man. We thank Thee, O Heavenly Father, for this beneficent season of rest ; and previous to our retiring, we pray Thee to assist us to review the actions of the day, that, making confession of the evils we have committed, we may receive grace to overcome them in the future, and may find consolation in the mercy which has so long borne with us. Surround our beds with Thy watchful eye, preserve us from the infestations of evil spirits, and let Thy Word which we have read impart confidence to our souls, so that we may sink into sleep with an humble assurance of Thy gracious protection. Merciful Lord and Saviour, into Thy hands we resign our spirits.

*Our Father, &c.*

## Saturday Morning.

**O** LORD ALMIGHTY, our Saviour and Redeemer, we meet around Thy throne this morning with a humble and grateful sense of all Thy mercy. With renewed strength we arise again to our daily duties, and our first offerings are due to Thee, Thou great and bountiful giver of every blessing.

Unworthy as we are, we yet daily receive new blessings. Every temporal gift which the earth pours forth in abundance, Thou hast endowed us with ; and, what is of far greater moment, every spiritual blessing that has a tendency to encourage us to persevere in the way of holiness, is unceasingly conferred upon us. Thy temporal benefits know no intermission : but what are these compared with the riches of Thy grace—of that love and truth, which, as a copious stream, are continually issuing forth from the fountain of Thy holiness? While Thou carest for our corporeal frames, and nourishest our bodies with food convenient for them, how mindful art Thou of the food for the soul, and how constant and regular is the supply of the bread and the water of life !

With all the freshness of spring, with all the odours of summer, with all the fatness of autumn, and with the bracing air of winter, Thou regalest our senses, and strengthenest our bodily frames ; but our souls are filled with transport of love and truth, our perceptions are quickened to know Thy Word, and if we look to Thee for help, strength is afforded us continually. Thy blessings are constant and uninterrupted, and all classes of thy creatures enjoy them—the young

and the old, the rich and the poor, are alike the subjects of Thy bounty, for there is no respect of persons with Thee. "O, how great is Thy goodness, and how great Thy mercy! Corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids." O help us to become thoroughly sensible of Thy infinite goodness, great God our Saviour. May all the benefits which Thou hast conferred upon us, kindle our love and gratitude, and lead us to glorify Thee in every act of our lives. May we listen to the calls of Thy truth; may we walk in the paths of Thy holiness; may we constantly shew our love to Thee by a faithful performance of our duties to our fellow-creatures; may one unceasing song of gratitude permeate our affections and thoughts, and in the strains of inspired Truth may we sing, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name, who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercy. Bless the Lord, O my soul!"

*Our Father, &c.*

### Saturday Evening.

**A**LMIGHTY GOD, the Father of mercies, at the conclusion of another week we approach Thy glorious person: unworthy and sinful as we are, we cannot be insensible to the goodness and mercy which have followed us all the days of our life. We humbly desire to offer our tribute of praise and thanksgiving for all Thy marvellous love towards us.

O Lord our God, our Saviour, our Protector, our

Confidence, our Help, our Salvation, our Glory, and the Lifter-up of our heads, our hearts expand with gratitude as we enumerate the wonderful display of Thy love towards us, in the various divine ways and names which Thou hast devised and assumed for our deliverance. We thank Thee that Thou hast created us in Thine own image and likeness, that our souls are immortal, and that because Thou livest, we shall live also. We thank Thee that Thou hast visited us: and in Thy love and pity hast redeemed us, and hast become our Saviour. We thank Thee that Thou hast placed us in this world as probationers, that we may be prepared for the high and holy state of blessedness for which we are designed, in Thy heavenly kingdom. We thank Thee for all the wondrous displays of Thy providence which have been exercised in our behalf, and with the view of securing our everlasting happiness. We adore Thee for the wonderful frame which has been prepared for the residence of the soul, and which Thou hast hitherto preserved in health and strength. We praise Thee for the members of this wonderful body, and for the uses Thou enablest us to perform with them. We praise Thee for the senses of sight, of feeling, of hearing, and for the blessings we enjoy through their medium. We adore Thee for the wonderful forethought with which Thou providest for every want, giving to us our daily food, covering our bodies with sufficient raiment, blessing us with comfortable and convenient habitations, preserving us from foreign enemies, and making us to dwell in peace and safety. We adore the infinity of Thy love for the dear connexions with which Thou hast surrounded us, our parents, our children, and all our kindred and friends.

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We praise Thee for another period of our natural existence brought to its end, and for the nearer approach to the kingdom of true blessedness. But, most of all, do we humbly desire to thank Thee for the inestimable gift of Thy Word, which opens up before us all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; which makes us acquainted with heaven and its beatitudes; which discloses the beauty, order, and harmony of that glorious kingdom, and of the angels who inhabit it; and which gives us the certain assurance of a permanent residence therein, if we prepare for it. O may a recollection of these blessings, and of those which we cannot utter, and of those which, though unseen and unknown by us, are yet constantly bestowed upon us, lead us to glorify Thee in our bodies and in our spirits, which are Thine.

*Our Father, &c.*





SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

**December**



## December First.

### THE SACRED BANNER.

*"Thou hast given a banner to them that feared thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth."—PSALM IX. 4.*

WE every day experience the truth of the apostolic words, that "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the things that we would." The writer can say that he has experienced this again and again, and he believes it to be the case, more or less, with every one. If we examine ourselves and speak candidly, we must say we have, indeed, "nothing of our own wherein to trust," our only hope is in the unwearied compassion with which we are regarded by the Lord.

To whom, then, are we to look for help? Who is to conduct us during this fearful fight, so that the battle, which must be fought, may be followed by such a victory as shall put us in possession of the lasting blessings of peace? There is only one Being who can bring us safely through, and that is the Lord. He has forewarned us, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." Not the physical world only—though in it there is certainly much tribulation to encounter—but in the world of our own minds also; in our own impure desires, our unholy affections, our perverted thoughts,

which are drawing us in the downward road of death. It is the Lord alone that can rescue us; it is the Lord alone who gives to us a banner, if we fear Him, "that it may be displayed because of the truth." But what is this fear which it appears we must have before the banner can be given to us? The fear we must have, is, lest evil should gain the dominion—a fear, a perfect hatred of evil of every kind, an abhorrence of sin, and a determination to surrender our whole souls to the Divine Guidance; a negation of self; a laying down of our own life, and "counting everything as dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord;" an elevation of our Lord's love to the inmost place in our affections, and of his wisdom to the inmost place in our understandings; distrust of ourselves, and supreme trust in Him, so that our every affection and desire, from inmost to external, our every power, talent, and faculty, from highest to lowest, may be brought into devout obedience to the precept, "Ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing that is evil." This is to fear the Lord, and to such as do this, the banner to be displayed because of the truth, is given.

This banner is nothing else than love of the Supreme Good and Truth, and an elevation of these sublime principles to the highest place in the affections and thoughts, so that they may be constantly beheld, and the fear of them be continually before our eyes; for he whose heart and understanding are in constant elevation to the Lord, who is confident in the Lord's help, who feareth the Lord and obeyeth his voice, "who sets his face like a flint against his evils or adversaries;" he it is who receives the banner, which he constantly "displays because of the truth."

The quality or dignity of this banner, or the name inscribed upon it, is JEHOVAH NISSI—the most exalted, the most dignified, the most glorious of all names. JEHOVAH, denoting the Divine Love, and NISSI, my Banner: in other words, The Divine Love is my Banner. To this will I elevate my affections, to this will I lift up mine eyes: this Divine Love, this Divine Banner, shall ever go before me. It is this which waves its protecting folds over my soul. It is this which prostrates all my enemies before me. In the Lord, in JEHOVAH NISSI, is my strength and my salvation, and with this in my possession, I will fear no evil, for by the truth and love of the Lord shall I prevail.

### December Second.

#### THE TWO WITNESSES—THE OLIVES.

*“These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.”—REV. xi. 4.*

THE olive trees and candlesticks are undoubtedly symbols of those virtues which are ever in the Divine presence. The olive tree is the representative of celestial love, and also of the celestial church and state, and these are ever before the face of the Lord of the earth. When applied to man, the olive is significative of the goodness derived from love to the Lord. Happy, indeed, is the man who has the virtue of the olive planted in him; who carries to the holy place that oil which makes the face to shine.

Schiller has written, “Love, the fairest phenomenon in the animated creation, the omnipotent magnet in the world of spirit, the source of devotion, and the

noblest virtue—love is only the reflexion of this single power, an attraction of the EXCELLENT. There are moments when we are disposed to press to our bosom *every flower and every distant star; every lofty spirit of our divining—an embracing of all nature as of our beloved.* The divinity is already very near to that man who has succeeded in collecting all beauty and greatness, all excellence, both in the small and great of nature, and in evolving from this manifoldness the GREAT UNITY. If each man loved all such, then every individual would possess the world. I confess, freely, I believe in the reality of a disinterested love; I am lost, if there is none. I give up divinity, immortality, and virtue! I have no evidence remaining for these hopes, if I cease to have faith in love. A spirit who loves himself alone, is an atom floating in the immeasurable void! Let us perceive and imitate excellence, and it becomes our OWN. Let us become intimate with the high and holy, and we shall cling together with fraternal love. Let us think clearly and we shall love devotedly. ‘Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect,’ were the words of the great Saviour when on earth; but, as weak humanity seemed incapable of fulfilling the injunction, He rendered it more intelligible by the new commandment, ‘LOVE ONE ANOTHER.’”

To prove that love to the Lord and love to our neighbour are the two olive trees which always stand before the Lord of the earth, we may recur to the lamp which was kept burning before the Lord (Exod. xxvii. 20): “Command the children of Israel, that they bring Thee pure olive oil, beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always.” The oil is repre-

sentative of love to the Lord; the lamp, as the containing vessel, represents the will of man prepared to receive this love or oil, which love is best exemplified by the love we bear each other; and the light emitted is representative of both these degrees of goodness brought into act or life, illustrative of what the Lord enjoins: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

In consequence of this signification of the olive, the holiest article of furniture in the tabernacle and temple, were either anointed with olive oil or made of olive wood.

It was because the Mount of Olives was symbolic of celestial love, that it was so frequently resorted to by our Lord Jesus Christ: and so also, the man who is filled with this love is likened to a green olive tree in the house of the Lord. To sum up all, GOD HIMSELF IS LOVE!

### December Third.

#### THE TWO WITNESSES—THE TWO CANDLESTICKS.

*"These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth."*—REV. xi. 4.

THE witnesses are also called the two candlesticks, to represent that Divine wisdom which is the life of the spiritual heavens, of the spiritual church, and of the spiritual member of the church.

The Lord is not only love or heat, He is also wisdom or light; and it is this wisdom or light with which the Lord is clothed as with a garment. How beautifully

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this illustrates the Divine unity! How clearly does it prove the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. For He is the light of the world. He it is that tempers the ardour of the Divine love or Father, which otherwise were unapproachable. Truly no man cometh to the Father but by Him. He is the light, or garment, which clothes the Father that dwells within Him, and "he who hath the Son hath the Father also." The Divine wisdom may be considered as the life of the spiritual heavens and church, as the Divine love is of the celestial. The Divine love and wisdom are, therefore, the two witnesses, and their office seems to be three-fold. They stand before the God of the earth. They are media whereby the Divine love and wisdom are communicated to the celestial, spiritual, and natural heavens, each heaven receiving the life of love and wisdom in such an accommodated degree as may best conduce to supreme happiness. These two witnesses are also representative of the constituent principles which form the general church on earth, namely, goodness and truth: and, descending still lower, they are the media whereby the church in every individual man is formed, and constitute the life of charity and faith. They are, therefore, seen in vision, as standing before God in heaven, and that God being the Lord of all, they stand also before the God of earth. Thus the celestial, the spiritual, and the natural, the church in general, and the individual man of the church, are created to be the recipients of the Divine love and wisdom; and it is only by the reception of these that they can be rendered living.

Love in the Lord, and charity or holiness in the church, are the two olives: while wisdom in the Lord,



and a living faith in the church, are the two candlesticks.

The two witnesses are described as being clothed in sackcloth. Sackcloth, in oriental countries, is made of hair, and worn as a penitential dress, indicative of deep grief, either for some evil committed, or for the loss of some beloved friend or eminent person. Thus, on the death of Abner (2 Sam. iii. 31), "David said to Joab, and to all the people that were with him, Gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner." The prophesying of the witnesses in sackcloth is in consequence of the desolation of the church, the two divine principles of charity and faith being nearly dead, and love and truth prefer their claims to the Christian world almost in vain. The testimony of the two witnesses is thus rejected; the union of goodness and truth is dissolved; and all that is holy and true is described by the dead bodies of the two witnesses lying in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. Literally, our Lord was not crucified either in Sodom or Egypt, but spiritually He was, and alas! still is. For Sodom is the lust of dominion grounded in self-love, while Egypt is representative of the pride of science and self-derived intelligence. Thus was the Lord spiritually crucified in Sodom and Egypt, though literally the scene of that awful event was Calvary.

To this day the two witnesses—goodness and truth—are, as to externals, as to their bodies, lying dead in spiritual Sodom and Egypt. Look at the two great contending parties of the present day, and the fact is obvious. The lust of power and dominion, and the arrogance with which it is displayed, shew at once that

spiritual Sodom is, alas! in the midst of us; and in the street or doctrine of spiritual Sodom, the goodness and mercy of the Lord are set aside by one who claims power over the souls and bodies of men. Look, on the other hand, at Egypt, and there is an equal thirst for dominion; charity is prostrated, and faith alone is elevated, and the two witnesses lie dead in the streets of spiritual Sodom and Egypt. Look, again, at the exultation of spiritual Sodom. The literal words of prophecy are, seemingly, at the present moment, in course of fulfilment. When was there a more daring assumption made by the disciples of spiritual Sodom than at the present moment? And the nations, the kindreds, and the tongues, are literally rejoicing, because, externally at least, both charity and faith seem dead, and goodness and truth have apparently “sprung on the viewless winds to heaven again.” But, in reality, nothing that is from God can die, and according to the prophecy in the eleventh verse, the Spirit of Life from God will yet animate the two witnesses; and their teachings, or prophesyings, will yet convince mankind that all science, however externally beneficial; all knowledge, however great; all intelligence, however excellent it may be—can never be productive of benefit to the world, unless united with their respective degrees of goodness, so as to result in holiness and purity of life, with love to the Lord and the neighbour. The two witnesses, love and truth, are again preferring their claims to the Christian world; and though they are regarded by few, “their sound will certainly be heard in all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.”

## December Fourth.

### THE REPRESENTATIVE CHARACTER OF JOHN.

*"These things I command you, that ye love one another."*—JOHN xv. 17.

IT is impossible to read the chapter from which we have selected our motto, without seeing how all-essential is the doctrine of love or charity in the salvation of the soul. The Lord is the essential Divine Love, and the Evangelist John is the representative of love; but all the virtues and graces which dignify and adorn the Christian are referred to in this chapter.

The source of happiness, the conjunction between God and man, the essence of the Christian life, the necessity for practical holiness, the happiness the good enjoy, their sources of consolation, the love which the disciples of the Lord should ever evince towards each other, and towards all mankind, together with the most pure and perfect of all love and friendship, as evinced in the conduct of our great Lord and Saviour, are treated of throughout this divine portion of the Holy Word.

John is described in the gospels as the disciple whom Jesus loved. He it was who leaned on his Master's breast at supper. By an attentive perusal of the gospels it may be seen that his representative character is love. John indeed appeared receptive of a larger measure of love than either of the other apostles. He was all affection, charity, and tenderness; therefore was he the person most suitable to illustrate the subject of the Lord's divine love. In our study of the gospels,

we may observe in the one which bears his name, that many things are detailed of the divine love of the Saviour, which the other Evangelists have either omitted, or but very slightly touched upon. While John has related the facts which the other Evangelists have detailed, he has introduced many special exemplifications of the Lord in reference to His love for mankind. And, again, if we attentively peruse the three Epistles of John, we shall see that affection was, so to speak, the guide of his pen—that love breathes through every line and verse.

John, therefore, may be considered as the apostle representative of love, and, as such, as the disciple whom Jesus loved. The love of the Lord to His people, and their intimate connection with Him, are mentioned in these words: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend." But the love of the Saviour was even greater than this, because HE LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS ENEMIES. But though by nature and practice we have all been enemies to the Lord, yet, if we return to Him in faith and love, and look to Him for help, striving to be obedient to His commandments, He will receive us, and our former evils will not be remembered against us.

The language of the great Saviour is, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." Now, the command of the Lord is, that we "LOVE ONE ANOTHER." The sincere disciple of the Lord must love all his fellow creatures; he must strive to do good to all: as he sees that the goodness of his Saviour is universal, making His sun to rise on the evil as well as on the good, and sending rain on the

unjust as well as on the just, so must he strive to do good to all.

The example of John, the beloved disciple, should be ever before him, and his advice should be retained and followed: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God."—"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." (1 John iv. 7, 12.)

### December Fifth.

#### FRIENDSHIP.

*"There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."*—PROV. xviii. 24.

**F**RRIENDSHIP between man and man, grounded in real affection, is one of the purest and most delightful of blessings. The dearest comfort of humanity is that soothing sympathy of feeling that participates in all the varied emotions of the heart, when his pleasures and his pains, his joys and his sorrows, find an echo in the generous breast of a faithful, loved, and loving friend. Many are the combinations of circumstances that will occur to disturb our progress along the rugged path that "marks the few and weary days of pilgrimage to man;" many an intervening cloud will overshadow the brightness of our horizon, and leave us groping our weary way in trouble and perplexity. But we have the sunshine as well as the shade—days of sweet tranquillity as well as darksome nights of trial and tempest—and in them we find every pleasure enhanced, every joy brightened,

every natural sensation of delight, exalted by that friendliness and reciprocity of feeling,

“ Outspringing from the purest tree  
Of deeply-planted sympathy.”

A virtuous and well-chosen friend has justly been styled one of the greatest blessings man can possibly possess. There is something so pleasing and delightful in the idea of reciprocal affection, that life, in a great measure, would be insupportable without it. When we are persecuted by the world, and destitute of most of those comforts which are contained in it, friendship supplies their place, and is often more than a counterbalance in our favour. Nothing, therefore, appears more reasonable, or more congenial to our natural feelings, than to promote mutual intercourse : surely, then, we shall strive to cultivate those feelings which the new commandment enjoins, and “ love one another.”

But what is the friendship of man compared with that which the Lord has for us? and which the wise man speaks of in the motto, “ There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” If we value the friendship of men like ourselves, and strive to obtain it, how much more ought we to value the friendship of our Saviour and our God. And we may obtain this friendship ; the Lord is ever waiting to be our friend ; we have only to love Him, believe in Him, and fulfil His injunctions, to secure His friendship ; and without His friendship, the connexions of the world are of very minor consideration. Suppose any person loved us so well that he would lay down his life, were it needful, to save ours ; what would that avail us, if, at the same time, we were enemies to God? And, sup-

pose we were universally opposed, and hated by man, if, nevertheless, the Lord were our friend, what should we have to fear? Nothing! On the contrary, we should have everything to hope from the infinite power, love, and wisdom of our Friend; He being above all, God blessed for ever, We surely must see the unspeakable advantage of the Lord's favour and friendship. Are we then in possession of this friendship? Either we are the Lord's friends, or we are His enemies—there is no middle position to hold. If we are in the love of the world, the love of self, and the practice of evil, we are enemies to God by wicked works, and we are bitter enemies to ourselves also. The Lord, however, is still our friend, though we are not His; but, as the friendship is not reciprocal, His favour cannot be enjoyed. But if we love Him, and strive to do as He has commanded us; if we are obedient to Him, and walk in His ways; then is there a medium of conjunction opened, and we become His friends. Though we can render nothing to Him, but what He first gives to us, yet He will communicate to us every blessing that can tend to make us happy. The friendship thus begun on earth increases through life, and becomes matured and perfected in heaven.

This is a friendship between the creature and the Creator, between man and God. It is the poor, wandering, undutiful, prodigal son, brought back to his father's house to share His love and friendship.

**December Sixth.****MAN'S SOVEREIGNTY—IN WHAT DOES IT CONSIST?**

*"Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things under his feet."—PSALM viii. 6.*

**T**HE Divine Being, in creating man in His own image, after His likeness, designed him to be the most excellent creature on earth, to exercise a sovereignty over all other creatures, to "have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." To assert and maintain this dominion, he was endowed with powers which other creatures do not possess. Physically speaking, man is one of the weakest of God's creatures; but the noble powers of mind with which he is pre-eminently endowed, have enabled him to subdue all other creatures. By his power the strongest are overcome; by his ingenuity the most subtle are circumvented, and their energies of body made subservient to his pleasures or to his necessities; for "every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed and hath been tamed of mankind." (James iii. 7.) In what, then, does the superiority of man consist?

In his ability to receive from God such portions of the Divine love and wisdom as shall lead him to know and love his Creator, and, by such knowledge and love, to become meet for the enjoyments of a higher and more heavenly world than this. This ability the brutes have not; and, therefore, it is impossible to teach them any science, either respecting God or a life after death. Their abilities are confined merely to the



things of time, which is a demonstration that they were not created for eternity :—as, on the other hand, the abilities of man, which enable him to look out of time, are an equal proof that He was created to live for ever.

“ There is this difference between intellect in man, and the rest of the animal creation. Their intellect teaches them to follow the lead of their senses, and make such use of the external world as their appetites or instincts incline them to : *and this is their wisdom.* But the intellect of man is associated with an immortal principle; and, being in connection with a world above that which his senses reveal to him, he can, by aid from the Lord, control his senses, and bring under his instinctive appetites, so as to render them obedient to the governing power of his nature : *and this is his wisdom.*”

It follows, therefore, from the above distinguishing characteristic, that man has the ability to control the lower appetites of sense, which the brutes cannot do. Man can check a bad passion ; can set a higher good above a lower ; can prefer things eternal to things temporal : but the brutes can do neither. It may be added, as a further consequence, that man can change his state, either for the better or the worse, according to the use or the abuse of the above faculty ; but the brutes, as they are unable to exalt themselves to a higher state, so they are unable to degrade themselves to a lower. They can neither add to nor diminish their present stock of life : when they die they perish.

The life of man, therefore, consists in his twofold capacity to receive from the Lord such a portion of the Divine love and wisdom as shall enable him

ultimately, after this life of probation, to enter the heavenly kingdom of rest and peace.

## December Seventh.

### THE TOWERS OF MOUNT ZION.

*"Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof."*—

PSALM xlvi. 12.

**B**Y towers, are spiritually signified the interior principles of genuine truth and holiness. On account of its elevation, a tower is well suited for observation; and on account of the strength with which it was in ancient times constructed, it was well adapted for defence against an enemy. Let us now observe how these two points bear upon the soul of man.

Things of a spiritual and Divine quality, such as pertain, in the supreme sense, to the Lord Himself; and, in a subordinate sense, to the soul of man, who is created in the image and likeness of God; are expressed in the literal sense of the Holy Word by that which is elevated, such as mountains and towers. Thus the Lord's dwelling-place is, from its elevation, described as being on Mount Zion; and the name, or quality, of the Lord, as to His omnipotence, is described as a strong tower, a tower of defence, into which the righteous enter and are safe.

With respect to man, when he shall have become purified by the trials of the regeneration, it is prophesied of him that he shall worship the Lord in the holy mount of Jerusalem; and his dominion shall be as the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, as the tower of the flock. (Isa. xxvii. 13; Mic. iv. 8.)

The tower being thus for observation and defence, to build it we must collect, first, the materials; and, having done so, must lay such a foundation as shall support the superstructure we intend to raise. The foundation, indeed, must be our first care; and our tower, being a spiritual fabric, must be raised on a spiritual foundation, the Lord Jesus Christ. Other foundation can no man lay. If we build on any other foundation than the rock Christ, our superstructure will not stand. He, therefore, who would be successful in his spiritual elevation, must rest on the Divine Saviour, for there is no other name under heaven whereby man can be saved. This name must be as the foundation stone. Jesus Christ must be the first stone we lay. He is our Creator. "By Him were all things made, and without Him nothing was made that is made." He is our Saviour. There is no God else beside Him—a just God and a Saviour. He is the Supreme Truth, upon which all other truths must rest; and the foundation stone, the supreme truth, that "He is over all, God, blessed for ever," must be laid deep in all our hearts, or we can never raise a superstructure which shall be for observation and defence. The tower must be erected with stones or truths drawn from God's most Holy Word. But we must prepare the ground for our foundation; we must remove everything that would obstruct our progress: that is, we must cast out all our evils; but this, too, requires the Saviour's aid, for without Him we can do nothing.

The work of internal purification is accomplished by an affectionate reception of the Lord's truth. As truth is received, it contends against evil and error, and

leads to a more devout love of the Lord, preparing the heart that the Lord may there occupy the supreme place, and that all the affections and thoughts may be directed by Him. This being accomplished, the name of the Lord will be found a strong tower, into which the righteous can enter and be safe.

## December Eighth.

### THE WISE AND FOOLISH BUILDERS.

*"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man, which built his house upon a rock." "And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand."—MATT. vii. 24, 26.*

THERE are two classes of builders, wise and foolish—one digging deep and laying a sure foundation; the other taking little thought about what may ensue after the tower is completed, so long as it appears like a tower, and laying his foundation in sand. One of these may be compared with the man who calculates the cost of erecting his house, and provides, ere he commences, all the necessary means. The other, at once, and without reflection upon future consequences, or without the means of carrying the work to a successful end, or even without securing a proper foundation, enters upon it, and, being unable to complete it, those that behold him begin to cast reflections upon his want of prudence and forethought, saying, "This man began to build, and was not able to finish."

The persons who do not calculate the expense of erecting the tower or spiritual house of observation and defence, are those who enter upon the religious

life, and who yet wish to retain the defiling principles of their own evils—they do not clear the ground of their heart from the evils which defile it. They hear the words of the Lord; they believe them to be words of truth; they even receive the Lord Himself as the Supreme Truth, and thus they have faith or belief in the doctrines He makes known. But here they think their duty ends: as for digging deep into the earth of their affections, and removing their evils, that the sure foundation may be laid, they seem never to have intended it. They hear, but they do not. Their hopes are laid upon the mere sandy foundation of knowledge; they have no endurance; they cannot face trial and temptation; they give way before the slightest apparent difficulty, until at length they fall altogether. It is easy for a man to gain a knowledge of the truth, to be able to converse about doctrine, to crowd his memory with the literal facts recorded in the Word of God: but all this without a life of practical holiness will avail nothing. The Word of the Lord is, "IF YE KNOW THESE THINGS, HAPPY ARE YE IF YE DO THEM." Of the non-practical, our Lord thus speaks: "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name have cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity."

Very different, however, is the end of those who hear the "Word of God, and do it," following the Lord in His own appointed way. To erect the durable house, they act in obedience to the Lord, and surrender all that they have, their very life. But what is this life which the faithful lay down to secure life

eternal? We are taught that "out of the heart are the issues of life." But "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." We require a new heart, then,—different from the heart which our Lord describes as the seat of murder, adultery, and other evils, and which is our life before regeneration. This is the life which may be truly called our own, and this is the life that must be lost, if we would find life eternal. We must part with all our evils. As the Lord is present with us in His Word, His Word must be our guide; His truths, the stones with which we build our spiritual house; His love, the cement that binds them together. If we attend to this, our house will rise to a heavenly altitude, and we shall always find security in the tower of our strength, Jesus Christ our Lord.

## December Ninth.

### THE THREE EXCUSES—I. THE PURCHASED LAND.

*"I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused."*—LUKE xiv. 18.

**T**HOSE who are bidden to the great supper, relate, in the first instance, to the Jews; for they are always the first that are called; as it is written: "Tribulation and anguish upon every man that doeth evil, *of the Few first*, and also of the Gentile. But glory, honour, and peace to every man that doeth good, to the *Few first*, and also to the Gentile, for there is no respect of persons with God." (Rom. ii. 9-11.) The reason why the Jews are first bidden is, because they were in possession of the very means whereby they

could secure eternal life, namely, the written word of God, and written, too, by the finger of God Himself. There was thus a medium of communication between this people and the Lord, which the Gentile nations possessed not. Being in possession of the light, they ought to have been examples of goodness and holiness to the surrounding nations; but, alas! their history plainly shews that, notwithstanding all the wonders wrought in their behalf, and all the mercies they were daily receiving, they relapsed again and again into the most senseless idolatry. But their state cannot be more accurately portrayed than in the excuses made for non-acceptance of the invitation of the great supper. In the parable the man buys a piece of ground, and excuses himself from attending the supper, on the plea that he must needs go and see it. In the spiritual sense, the ground here alluded to represents the mind, and, as the man preferred the ground to the supper of the Great King, he preferred his own will and understanding, with all the evils and fallacies therein, to the goodness and truth of the Lord's living Word—yea, he preferred his own gratifications to conjunction with the Lord Himself, and he confirmed himself in his evil state. He bought the ground; made it his own; incorporated it with his very life—that life of self and evil which is in direct opposition to the life of love and truth—he despised everything not in accordance with his own ruling love.

Let this not be the excuse with any of us. The Great King, even the Lord Jesus Christ, invites us to His table; He sets before us the bread and wine,—the good and truth of His kingdom. The Lord wishes to give us strength; He desires to cheer us

with wine which maketh glad the heart of man, and with bread which will nourish the soul to everlasting life. Shall we, too, make light of the invitation?

Do not plead the purchase of a piece of ground; but hasten to avail yourselves of the gracious invitation, lest the time be past, and the door shut.

## December Tenth.

### THE THREE EXCUSES—II. THE FIVE YOKE OF OXEN.

*"I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused."*—LUKE xiv. 19.

THIS man has also made a purchase, and he expresses a desire to go and prove his purchase, and therefore prays to be excused. That which he has purchased exactly describes the quality of his life, and, as in the former instance, shewed he preferred his own selfish gratification to the most refined of spiritual enjoyments.

By an ox, is signified the affection of good in the exterior or natural man; but, as he preferred the enjoyment of his natural affections and desires to the Divine enjoyments which a spiritual intercourse with the Lord would have conferred upon him, he also excused himself: "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused."

The number five in this case, coupled as it is with the oxen, denotes all the affections and desires of the natural man; and to live in the indulgence and gratification of them, is to prove them. This man is the



type of a numerous class. How many are there among us who plead precisely the same excuse, "We are not fit to approach the supper table of the Lord!" That is indeed a most undoubted truth. "We are not worthy to approach the Lord's table!" True again; but may there not in these external disclaimers be something of arrogant assumption to a degree of goodness, equal to—"I am a sinner certainly, but not so bad as many whom I could name, and with whom I would not like to sit at the supper table."

We have known persons who could externally denounce themselves as the greatest of sinners, and speak with apparent complacency of what they deserved for their sins, but who, nevertheless, were filled with spiritual pride, and looked down with comparative horror upon the smaller vices of others, thanking God that they were not as they. To such as these the venerable Clowes addresses himself, putting this pertinent question: "One man is guilty of the most flagrant enormities, which expose him to the censure of all who know him; another is pure from the imputation of every vice; but, then, he despises him who is not so pure as himself, and exposes, instead of commiserating, his crimes. Which of the two is the greater sinner?"—Which, indeed.

When a man takes merit to himself in consequence of acquired good natural dispositions, and disregards the higher principles of spiritual religion, by neglecting its duties and ordinances in conjunction with the Lord, it will not be long ere he will consider morality alone a sufficient title for heaven; and his five yoke of oxen will be his excuse for negligence of spiritual duties.

Or, if he plead his unfitness, or his want of goodness,

we would ask—When he will be fit? or, When he will be good enough? And after he is informed that he never will be fit, never will be good enough, we would encourage him to read the great King's command to his servants to bring in the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind—those who have no money to buy pieces of ground, nor yokes of oxen, but who yet are grateful to approach the great King's table, who calls sinners to repentance.

### December Eleventh.

#### THE THREE EXCUSES—III. THE WIFE MARRIED.

*"I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come."*—LUKE xiv. 20.

THERE is an infernal marriage as well as a heavenly one; and he who pleads the excuse of a marriage for non-attendance, is the representative of a class who have united evil with falsehood; and, where such a union has been effected, it never can be present with him in whom love and wisdom dwell in inseparable union. "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come."

The Jews have rejected the Divine invitation; they have gone their way, "one to his farm, another to his merchandize." Many Christians have refused to acknowledge the union of Divinity with humanity, and will not have the Lord to reign over them.

The Jews in the parable plead the excuses upon which we have been meditating. Do we also, professing the name of Christ, neglect to avail ourselves of His gracious invitation, and plead excuses? Are our

affections so buried in the love of self, that our evil gratifications have become dearer to us than the love of God? Or does the mere adhesion to the profession of external good suffice us, so that we plead our absence in consequence of the five yoke of oxen which we wish to prove? Or have we consummated the infernal marriage by the union of the evil and the false?

If we really love the Lord, we shall gratefully respond to His gracious invitation. In humility and poverty of spirit we shall go to Him, and gratefully receive at His hands a portion of that bread which shall give us strength to contend with our corruptions, and power to fight against and overcome our evils. Are we blind? The Lord still invites us; he will open our eyes to behold wondrous things out of His Word. Are we lame, or halt, or maimed, and find it impossible to advance by our own strength, or to overcome evil by our own ability? we are the very persons who ought the more eagerly to press forward at the Lord's gracious invitation. We need both the healing hand of the Lord, and the strengthening aliments which alone can keep us firm in our course. It is by these aliments that we receive power to contend against evil, and ultimately to subdue it. And when—through the power which the good of love and the truth of wisdom can alone impart—we have been enabled to overcome the trials necessary for our entrance into heaven, we shall, in that kingdom, sit down at the king's table, and eat of the "hidden manna."

## December Twelfth.

## DANIEL'S VISION.

*"I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him."—DAN. vii. 13.*

DANIEL, in his vision of the four beasts, or living creatures, says, that at the consummation of the fourth kingdom, the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, the greatness of which under heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and shall not be destroyed.

This result is represented in the vision by the appearance of one like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven; and it is said that he came to the ANCIENT OF DAYS, and they brought him before him—or, as it might be more faithfully rendered, into contact or union with him—and there was given to him dominion and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away. (Dan. vii. 14.)

Again, in the vision of the great image (Dan. ii. 41), it is said: "The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron; but the kingdom shall be divided, yet there shall be in it of the strength of the iron; but the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest that the iron was mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men, but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these

kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed ; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and shall stand for ever." Now, it is certain, that, in the historical sense, these visions relate to the four great empires, the Assyrian, the Persian, the Greek, and the Roman. And it is equally certain that these empires represent, spiritually, the four churches, the Adamic, the Noetic, the Jewish, or Representative, and the Christian. The description given of the fourth kingdom as being partly strong and partly broken, shews the anomalous existence of the Roman power. "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men, but they shall not cleave one to another," refers not only to the situation of Rome itself, as divided into nobles and people, but to the state of the provinces; all the people of which were portions of the Roman population, but yet were far from cleaving to the empire, either by policy or by affection. Force alone kept them together, even as force alone can keep iron and clay united. At the time when the Roman empire was in its decline, Christianity arose. But the Roman power, though falling, remained long before it passed entirely away. It is, however, the consummation of the fourth church that we wish principally to consider.

The descent of the New Jerusalem is, by almost all commentators, acknowledged to refer, not to the state of the blessed in heaven, but to some peculiar state of the church on earth.

That it does not refer to the state of the saints in glory, is evident from its being described as descending from God out of heaven, upon earth: and can,

therefore, only refer to some special benefit which the church on earth will receive. Let us, then, now view the analogy subsisting between a natural city and a spiritual one. As a city is a community of persons living under the same government, and ruled by the same laws, so a spiritual city is a community of worshippers, paying adoration to the same Divine Being, guided by the same truths, and holding the same doctrines. In a word, it is a church : and we therefore find that Jerusalem, being the earthly capital of God's chosen people, always represents the church of the Lord Jesus Christ as the centre of His heavenly kingdom.

## December Thirteenth.

### DANIEL'S VISION.

*"I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him."—DAN. vii. 13.*

A NEW Jerusalem must represent a New Church ; and a New Jerusalem descending from a new heaven upon a new earth, must represent a New Church originating in new principles of life and action, and resting upon new doctrines of faith and practice. And here let it be noted, that the new heaven and the new earth are represented as being formed previous to the descent of the holy city. The principles of holiness will exist in the will, and the truths derived from them enlighten the understanding, before the church will assume any striking external appearance on earth.

The prophet Ezekiel beheld the same city, but not entirely. He saw it but as the frame of a city ; he

describes it (xl. 2) as standing on a high mountain, and on the southern side in the land of Israel: "In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south." In this case, as in the former, the description refers to the establishment of a New Church, and the nature of it is represented by natural images. A mount represents spiritual elevation—an exalted state of the affections; and by the prophet being taken to a very high mountain, is signified that the real truths and principles of the church can only be seen when the soul is elevated towards heaven—when the heart is raised by holy love, and the mind enlightened by Divine Truth.

It was not in the natural world, nor with his natural eyes, that the prophet beheld this. He was in the spirit; a state when the bodily senses are quiescent and wherein the sight is opened to discern spiritual things. This city was toward the south, and nearest to the light, indicating that the New Church of the Lord exists in the full light and heat of Divine Love and Truth.

Now, heaven, when introduced into the Word as a correspondence, is not to be considered as a place, but rather, as a state—a state described by our Lord, as having the kingdom of heaven within us—a state in which the will exists in love to the Lord, and the understanding in His truth: the pure and holy affections of goodness are described as being lost in the former church, and the light of truth no longer shines. The sun is darkened, and the moon gives not her light. "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought

up children, and they have rebelled against me." The former heaven and the former earth passed away before the church—the New Church—could descend; and this was absolutely necessary, for into the evil loves and false doctrines which prevailed, nothing divine or heavenly could descend, nor could anything truly spiritual exist in them. The love of self, of fame, of pre-eminence, of rule and domination over others, is diametrically opposed to love of the Lord, as the contentious doctrines derived from them is to His truth. Hence, a new heaven must exist, new affections and feelings must be prepared, before a new and heavenly Church can be formed; and a new earth, new perceptions, new opinions, new actions, before it can descend, or be established outwardly.

## December Fourteenth.

### SPIRITUAL GEOGRAPHY.—ISRAEL—ASSYRIA—EGYPT.

*"In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land. Whom the Lord of Hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance."—ISA. xix. 23-25.*

*"They shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount o Jerusalem."—ISA. xxvii. 13.*

WITH respect to the first of these passages, Egypt is representative of natural science; Assyria, the reasoning principle derived from that science; while Israel, and especially Jerusalem, is that divine and spiritual principle in which the Lord fixes His dwelling-place. The union of Egypt, Assyria,



and Israel, therefore, points out the spiritual union between science, reason, and religion, which shall be a distinguishing feature in the latter-day glory. There shall be a highway—an open communication between science and reason. The minds of men shall be prepared by natural truth, and strengthened to reason upon it; while both shall lend their aid to support, unite, and uphold those Divine principles of love and truth in which the Lord will reside in the midst of His church. In the same sense it is that the Lord will gather those that are ready to perish in the land of Assyria—those principles of truth, in those minds in which the truth seems nearly overwhelmed with false reasonings; and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, those truths of natural science which have been either lost or perverted, and which have in some instances been condemned by the adherents of a false and consummated church. All these lost truths of natural science shall be restored. They shall do homage to the superior truths of reason, and especially of revelation; they shall come and worship the Lord in the Holy Mount of Jerusalem. They shall combine with the truth and good of the church, to extend the glory of the Lord, until “the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea.”

Now, the establishment of the New and true Christian Church is preceded by new principles of truth, new feelings and new motives having taken possession of the human mind. Science and reason, which formerly were supposed to be injurious to the church and to have opposed its principles, will be sanctified and made one with pure truth and goodness; while perverted reason, and false science, will be destroyed or

driven away; evils of the will, and falses of the understanding, will no longer obscure the bright rays of truth. "For it shall come to pass in that day that men will cast their idols of gold, and their idols of silver, which they each made for themselves, to the moles and to the bats:" and when new principles of science, new modes of demonstrating their truth, new views of the Divine Word, and of Him who is its author, take possession of the soul, the New Jerusalem will descend from God out of heaven, and the tabernacle of God will be with men. And in the New Church love will not again decay, truth will not again be perverted; because the Lord Himself will dwell within it as its everlasting light, and the days of its mourning will be ended.

### December Fifteenth.

#### THE NEW JERUSALEM.

*"And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away."—REV. xxi. 1.*

PREVIOUS to the establishment of the New Jerusalem in the world, the motives or affections which have swayed the perverted church, and the errors which have clouded and darkened her, are to be shaken and destroyed, and new principles of love, and purer doctrines of faith, are to regulate the souls of men; and then the New and true Church of the Lord will descend to earth, be manifested in an outward form, and appear before the eyes of the world. The New Jerusalem can never descend, can never be manifested outwardly, until the new heaven is formed in

the human soul. It is folly to expect its appearance till the former heaven and the former earth have passed away. The grandeur of the external church, even among those who formerly were of great simplicity, shews that the disposition is of the earth, earthy ; but until the heart is cleansed from its evils, and the understanding from its errors, it cannot descend from the old heaven, from the old inclinations, from the unchanged affections of its delight.

Divine Love must rule in the heart, Divine Truth must govern the understanding, before the New Church principles can find a resting-place within the soul : until that time, the foxes will have holes, the birds of the air nests, but the Son of Man will have nowhere to lay His head.

Science and reason, which in the former church had either been separated from religion, or opposed to it, will in the New Jerusalem be united, and form a union upon which the Divine blessing may descend ; there shall no longer be any opposition between them ; the Divine Love will fill the soul, the Divine Truth will enlighten the understanding, and the Lord shall be in the inmost, and Israel a blessing in the midst of the land.

The great and essential foundation of the New Church is stated in the vision of Daniel : " I saw in the night visions, one like unto the Son of Man ; and he came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him into union with him." The manifestation of the Divine Unity, in the glorified humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, is here clearly revealed. The words used by the prophet imply complete union, and it is not until this union between the Divine Essence and the

Divine Humanity is made known, that the dominion and glory are given Him. But when the perfect unity of the Divine, as existing in the Saviour, is manifested, then that kingdom is set up,—is an everlasting kingdom, and shall never be destroyed.

## December Sixteenth.

### OUR FAITH MUST BE PROVED.

*“Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end.”—DEUT. viii. 16.*

**T**O humble us and prove us, by our being led through the wilderness, is done to make us good at our latter end. Our faith and love must be proved.

It is an easy matter to be religious, when, in worldly phraseology, “all things go well with us;” when the world smiles, and we have no trials and conflicts—no internal anxieties about “what we shall eat, or what we shall drink, or wherewithal we shall be clothed;” when we have no outward annoyance, and everything goes smoothly on, as though we trod on velvet. But these are conditions not likely to prove our love either to God or our neighbour; but more frequently are seen to puff up the mind with arrogance, and imagined righteousness—a righteousness akin to that of the Pharisee, who thanks God that he is not as other men are. Therefore the Lord sees fit to prove, as well as to humble us. He permits frequent trial from the world without, as well as from the world within. The world frowns; internal and external persecutions take place; evils within plead more potently for gratification;

hunger and thirst often assail us; the cross presses heavily upon us, and opposing influences seem to increase rather than diminish, as we press on our weary way; and these assaults are permitted to prove us—whether we will now be faithful to the Lord; whether our faith *in*, and love *to*, the Lord, with our dependence upon Him, be strong enough to carry us through these purifying processes; whether we can, with the fullest assurance of deliverance, say, “Though ten thousand times ten thousand should set themselves against me round about, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort and support me.”

We may, and probably do, often think that we are humbled and proved too severely. But let us feel certain of this, however severe the trial may appear to us, nothing short of it would draw us nearer to God.

The Lord does not permit these afflictions to shew His power over us, or to exalt His glory in our suffering—as some of us have mistakenly supposed—**BUT THAT HE MAY DO US GOOD.** All that good which is comprehended in the Divine presence where there is fulness of bliss for evermore.

Vain is it for us to attempt to describe the fulness of bliss enjoyed in heavenly society: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man fully to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him!” but this we know, that every man will enjoy a fulness of happiness according to his state.

Therefore, let us remember, that every state through which we are led, is designed to humble and prove us, whether we will be faithful to the Lord, obedient to

His Word, and submissive to His Divine government and direction. The whole of His dispensations, whether we pass through adversity or prosperity, joy or sorrow, health or sickness, is with the grand and merciful design "to do us good at our latter end," by receiving us into His kingdom, and making us part-takers in the beatitudes of heaven.

### December Seventeenth.

#### HUMILITY.

*"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."—MATT. v. 10.*

**WE** may feel certain that there is not a state or trial through which we pass, that our heavenly Father has not an important reason for; and the design is, the security of our everlasting happiness.

Pride is a vice which seems to man as natural as to speak. Every one of us has a great deal too much of it. We are too prone to think highly of ourselves and of our understandings, of our judgments, and of our abilities, of our morality, and even of our virtues. And by so much as we think highly of ourselves we often think meanly of and despise others.

Pride delights to contemplate man as the lord of the earth, vested with dominion over all the animated tribes, and gifted with "form and faculties express and admirable." Yea, we have so much pride as to think our own wisdom and virtue will conduct us to heaven, without being beholden to the Lord for assistance. We are in many—perhaps in most—instances, too blind to see whither this pride would conduct us. But all is present to the eye of the Lord, and therefore He

humbles us; suffers us to be tried and afflicted; allures us, brings us into the wilderness; permits adversity to overtake us: and all with the view of inducing poverty of spirit, which brings with it the blessedness of heaven. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

It is poverty of spirit which induces true modesty. It is ashamed to do anything that is repugnant to right reason. It is constantly looking to the Lord for guidance, that it may avoid everything that has a tendency to crime; and it brings all its actions under the regulations of prudence and religion. It no longer boasts itself in the multitude of its acquirements, but only strives to render them more subservient to use.

This state of humility is acquired through the operations of Divine providence; trials, temptations, and difficulties, which humble us, and are the means of "doing us good at our latter end." Our heavenly Father permits us, so to speak, to thirst for water and hunger for bread, to appear in want of both truth and goodness, so that we are given to see—yea, compelled to acknowledge—that unless the Lord of Life give us water, the water of life, we must pine and waste away; and, unless he give us bread, the bread of heaven, which is good of heavenly love, we must hunger, and eventually perish. Thus are we, by the Divine dispensations, brought to acknowledge that man is nothing; that he can procure nothing, and must perish in sin and misery, unless the Lord wrought every moment on his behalf, and contended for him against his enemies, the most direful being those that are within him, and which the Scriptures denominate "the enemies of his own household."

It is by the operations of the Divine providence originating in the purest mercy, that he humbles us, and brings down our pride and arrogance, that we may be led to depend upon him, and be at length brought to see and confess, that in ourselves we are nothing but evil, while he alone is essential good.

While sin displays itself in our pride, ignorance, guilt, and misery, the love of the Lord is displayed for us in pure mercy, by the only means calculated to effect our deliverance, and give us ultimate rest and peace.

## December Eighteenth.

### DUTY THE SALT OF LIFE.

*"Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another."*—MARK ix. 50.

**S**ALT has correspondence with truth. Truth is constantly exercising itself in overcoming evil, and in promoting good and useful works; and hence duty has been not unaptly compared with salt. Duty is, in reality, the salt of life. The sense of duty is as necessary a stimulant in the health and enjoyment of our spiritual being, as salt is to give flavour to the daily food of man; and this we apprehend to be one part of the meaning of the Divine Words of the Saviour, "Have salt in yourselves."

"Without duty, or a life of use, the world soon becomes utterly uninteresting and utterly tasteless. Objects, there are none to arouse; purpose, there is none to attain. The being who is deprived of the means of happiness, or condemned to the endurance of pain, suffers, and suffers much. But hope lingers at the



bottom of the cup. Life still smiles amid certain joys ; and future prospects of use present themselves, it may be distinctly, to urge us onward, and prevent weariness in well-doing. But woe to that wretched being who, like the gorgeous Eastern king, sated with magnificence and pleasure, has tasted of everything that the world can give, and has arrived at the dire conclusion that '*all is vanity.*'"

We repeat, then, the great maxim of the Lord, "Have salt in yourselves." This is the readiest means of acquiring that self-government, and of leading us to do our duty to our neighbour ; which, next to our duty to God, puts us in possession of true peace.

But this salt, this Divine Truth, by which we are so efficiently instructed in our duty, must be sought for where alone it can be found : not among the jarring creeds, the irritating contentions, the censures, the condemnations, the notes in our brother's eyes, that so much offend us ; not amidst the bigotries, the divisions, the strifes as to which shall be greatest ; not amidst the conflicting passions, which, under fair names, mar the Divine image, and destroy the unity of the church : BUT IN THE TRUTHS OF THE DIVINE WORD OF GOD, in the reduction of those truths to practice by a life of love and usefulness, and by a careful study of our own states, that we may keep within the sphere of our own duties, that we may have salt in ourselves, while we have peace one with another.

It is to the Word of God that our attention must be primarily directed. It is the "kingdom of God and His righteousness" that we must first seek. Obedience being paid to this injunction, all needful blessings will be added, and as much of happiness as is needful in

this probationary state will be enjoyed. A nation would be truly blessed if it were governed by no other laws than those contained in the Word of God.

## December Nineteenth.

THE SEASONS.—THE DIVINE GOODNESS.

*"Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness."*—

PSALM LXV. 11.

EACH season brings its blessings. In the spring, the Lord "makes the clouds his chariot, he walks upon the wings of the wind;" he it is that charges the air with moisture, which, discharging fertilizing streams upon the earth, gives us evidence that His footsteps drop fatness; so that in summer the habitations of the wilderness distil, the hills are girded with joy, the pastures are clothed with flocks, the valleys covered with corn. And still the Lord continues His goodness, and autumn matures the treasures which sustain the body of man. He gives us "plenty of corn and wine."

In observing the seasons, their vicissitudes, and the changes which constantly take place, the air which we breathe, and in which we are, so to speak, constantly bathed, the light by which we see, the heat that warms us, the fruits of the earth which nourish us, the water which cleanses, refreshes, and revives us, the animals which conduce partly to our assistance and convenience, and partly to our clothing—all are blessings which prove the goodness of the Lord.

But these are only a very small portion of the Divine beneficence. These blessings are absolutely conducive

to bodily existence. But the goodness of the Lord, in bestowing upon us senses, has provided also the means of their gratification and delight. What varied landscapes delight the eye. What fields of ethereal beauty present themselves, whichever way we turn our eyes. How reviving to all our senses is the season of spring! The air is a soft balsam, the trees leaf, the flowers blossom, and fields and groves are clad with fresh verdure: while summer presents nature under the most rapturous aspect. The verdant plants, the beautifully variegated flowers, which not only delight the eye with their innumerable tints, and raise admiration and wonder at their symmetrical forms, but spread abroad their odoriferous particles to the gentle breeze, delighting the sense of smell: the music of the birds, rendering the woods vocal, and filling the vaulted dome of the sky with melody—all speak to the goodness of the Lord.

Nor does the winter come upon us void of blessings, while it exalts our admiration, and raises our wonder at the Divine power: "He giveth snow like wool; he scattereth abroad the hoar frost like ashes. He casteth forth his hail like balls; who can stand before his cold?"

But with all the perils of winter, there is also associated the Divine goodness in His merciful provision for our comfort and safety. The abundant fruits of summer provide us food in winter. The earth teeming with mineral, ministers to our warmth. Everything in nature, the fleecy cotton, the bird's plumage, the worms, the animals, both wild and domestic, contribute to furnish us with clothing; and everything tends to the proof of the words, "Thou crownest the

year with thy goodness, and all thy paths drop fatness.”  
 “Surely goodness and mercy follow us all the days of  
 our lives.”

## December Twentieth.

THE SEASONS.—SPRING.

*“While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer  
 and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.”—GEN. viii. 22.*

THE duties which man has to perform in order to secure the blessings of heaven, are, by our Saviour, placed before us in the words, “I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work.” Besides the redemption of man, which the Lord in His love and pity came to accomplish, He performed the great work of glorifying His humanity; and we have, while it is day, the work of regeneration to labour in. The night is that period which passes us from time to eternity—when labour is ended, and our eternal state determined.

All the changes and vicissitudes of state through which we have to pass, may be compared to a year; and through each period of the year every person must pass in the great work of the regeneration. He has his spring, his summer, his autumn, and his winter. The first season of the spiritual, as of the natural year, may be called SPRING. It is the period when the understanding is prepared for the reception of the seeds of truth, and the spring-time of our existence is that period of youth, when line upon line, precept upon precept, like the shower upon shower on the herbage, is so necessary to produce the after-fruits.

It is a period full of brightness and expectancy, but at the same time requiring the utmost vigilance and watchfulness. It is a period when vegetation germinates; when the good seed gives promise of an abundant harvest. But it is a period when the enemy is most industrious in sowing evil seeds; and when, in consequence, poisonous plants are likely to spring up with the good, at the same time putting on so much the appearance of good, as to deceive those who are not in a constant state of watchfulness.

How active is the husbandman in the spring! how watchful over his tender plants! how diligent in nourishing, strengthening, and keeping them free from weeds! As is the labour of the natural husbandman, as is his activity, diligence, and watchfulness, so must be that of the spiritual husbandman: for upon the care and culture bestowed upon his plants in the spring-time of their existence, depends the reward of an abundant harvest in the autumn. The labour of the spring is more particularly the labour of the understanding: it is making the earth of the mind a treasure-house of the seeds of truth, in all its various degrees, under the anticipation that as the Sun—the heat of the Divine love—acquires a greater elevation in the internal horizon, its beams will fall with greater fervour upon the plants of truth, and so nourish them as to give promise of abundant fruit.

## December Twenty-first.

THE SEASONS.—SUMMER AND AUTUMN.

*"While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease."*—GEN. viii. 22.

THE state of summer in our spiritual existence, is representative of that period when the love of the Lord bears the supreme rule, when each degree of truth manifests itself by putting forth the degrees of goodness, charity, and love, best adapted to shew forth its purity and perfection. The good is not fully matured, but it exists in union with the truth; the fruit is not fully ripe, but it gives promise of ultimately supplying the soul with all that is nourishing and heavenly; and of so multiplying in production as to furnish seed for the sower, as well as bread for the eater.

The state represented by autumn, introduces all the plants of piety, charity, and holiness, in their fulness; poverty of spirit; meekness, and lowly-mindedness; an ardent desire for everything good and true; a keen appetite of the spirit for love and wisdom; a kind, loving, merciful, and forgiving disposition; a settled confidence and trust in all the Divine dispensations; purity of heart, and peacefulness of soul, indicative of the kingdom of Christ, even of God, being established within; a state in which every thought and affection is hallowed and consecrated to the Lord; a state in which the pastures of the wilderness, and the little hills, rejoice on every side; a state in which the pastures are clothed with flocks, and the

valleys covered with corn. In other words, our minds, which once were barren as the wilderness, now rejoice with abundant truths conjoined with goodness. Our affections are purified by the love of the Lord, and innocence takes up its delightful and peaceful abode in our souls; and, with cheerfulness of understanding and gladness of affection, we break forth into the song of gratitude, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

### December Twenty-second.

#### THE SEASONS.—WINTER.

*"While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease."*—GEN. viii. 22.

WINTER corresponds with a state of coldness and apathy, in which there may be no want of intelligence, light, or truth, but in which there appears little inclination to put forth the energies of the will in doing—a state analogous to that of the winter's sun, which shines, but does not warm; or equivalent to that described by the prophet (Jer. viii. 20), "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved;"—a state of which our Lord speaks when he advises us to "pray that our flight be not in the winter."

If summer represents, by the fervour of its heat and light, the state in which truth and goodness are in union, winter, as its opposite, must represent the direct contrary—a state in which there is no love to the Lord, and consequently, no charity to the neighbour. To depart in a state like this, to take our flight to the

eternal world while in so wintry a condition, would undoubtedly be to enter upon the eternal state of spiritual coldness or death.

What then, remains, but that we attend to the Divine advice, and pray that our spirits may not depart in the winter!

By the performance of deeds of charity, piety, and holiness, looking to the Lord for help, acknowledging that all our power and ability to do good is from Him alone, and rendering to Him all the honour and all the praise—though the season of the year may be winter, we may make it a joyous season of summer to the soul.

If the Lord crowns the year with His goodness, as we have seen He does, and if our duty be to learn of Him, to imitate Him, to do good, hoping for nothing again—then, by obedience to His Divine injunctions, and by doing good whenever we have the power, we may render the winter a season equal to that of the summer, by letting our charity be known.

## December Twenty-third.

### FALSE WITNESS.

*"Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit; thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son."—PSALM l. 19, 20.*

**T**HERE are slanderous ears, as well as slanderous tongues; the tongue propagates, the ear listens, and frequently adds to the tale of slander in its next recital; and thus is evil multiplied, and false witness borne.



Slander is one of the blackest and most deadly sins. It gives to evil in the aggregate its fearful names, and expresses in one word *Διαβολος* (*Diabolos*), *the Slanderer, Satan, the Spiteful Adversary, the Old Snake, or Serpent, or Dragon; venting his lies, spitting forth the venom of calumnious accusation; the Accuser of the Brethren, a murderous, envious, malicious Calumniator, the Father of Lies, the grand Defamer of God to man, of man to God, and of one man to another.* In short, slander is a complication and collection of all the degrees of wickedness which exist. It is opposed to veracity, to sincerity, and justice, to every principle of virtue, violating alike the sacred duty we owe both to God and our neighbour. By slander, the greatest mischief is perpetrated, because it pursues its course so insidiously as to be hidden from the observer.

“A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour, is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow” (Prov. xxv. 18); that is, he is a complicated instrument of mischief, too frequently unsuspected, so that the innocent, through their very innocence become his victims.

Yet, of the many revengeful, false, covetous, and ill-natured persons whom we complain of in the world, what man amongst us singles out himself as a criminal, or even thinks that he adds to the number? or where is the man so bad, who would not think it the hardest and most untair imputation to have any of the particular vices just named laid to his charge? But, as there is no vice that more hermetically closes the avenues to the soul against the introduction of the Divine influences than slander, let us look to the Lord for help to struggle against it.

The wise man has observed respecting it, "He that uttereth a slander is a fool" (Prov. x. 18); and its folly is obvious in many ways. A slanderer of any man's good name, is more despised than even the common plunderer. Sterne writes, "To pass an ill-natured reflection upon an undesigning action; to invent, or, which is equally bad, to propagate a vexatious report without colour and grounds; to plunder an innocent man of his character and good name—a jewel which perhaps he has starved himself to purchase, and probably would hazard his life to secure; to rob him, at the same time, of his happiness and peace of mind, perhaps his bread, the bread, may be, of a virtuous family; and all this, as Solomon says of the madman, who casteth about fire-brands, arrows, and death, 'Am I not in sport?'—all this out of wantonness, and oftener from worse motives; the whole appears such a complication of badness as requires no words or warmth of fancy to aggravate."

The slanderer is looked upon as a common enemy; and hence, if we would find a welcome in society, the best way is to keep "our tongue from evil, and our lips from speaking guile."

"*Slander is indeed folly,*" for we never see those who are wise in the truth of the Word indulge in it. "A righteous man hateth lying." The slanderer banishes himself from all good society; and even when he speaks the truth, so much is he distrusted, that the truth itself is hardly credited if it proceed from him. And if it be a truth that "whosoever loveth and maketh a lie, shall not enter into the holy city," how supremely foolish must that man be who is guilty of slander, of bearing false witness against his neighbour!

What a fearful condition, then, is that of the slanderer, the false witness. O let us listen to the voice of truth, even to the voice of Jesus Christ in the Word of Truth. Let us apply to this word and make it the rule of our lives. It detects all falsehood; confutes all errors. To understand this Divine Book is to be wise indeed; to be ignorant of it, is to be destitute of all wisdom. Its Author is "without partiality and without hypocrisy;" for in Him is "neither variable-ness nor shadow of turning."

Let us take the Holy Word for our guide; let us subject our lives to its control; and the peace of God will possess our hearts and minds.

## December Twenty-fourth.

### SPHERES.

*"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—PSALM XVI. 11.*

WE may have observed that we are attracted by some persons, and repelled by others. I once attended a meeting for the promotion of Sunday Schools; and observed a person sitting at the head of the table, I being at the foot; I felt an irresistible desire to come in contact with him. I thought how much I should like to know the person who seemed, by his beaming countenance, possessed of so warm and kind a heart, as to desire the happiness of all. Well, in the course of the evening, he made his way to me, and introduced himself. He said he had felt such a desire to cultivate my acquaintance, that he

could not refrain from coming to me. I stated that that had been my own desire, and we were friends immediately : and continued so till he passed to the "better land." This is what some would term sympathy, and others spherical influx. It is what I have denominated the harmony of our sphere. Although almost all persons admit the existence of antipathies and attractions, few seem to have entered on an investigation of their causes.

The Scriptures inform us that the "Lord our God is a sun." At the transfiguration, the "face of the Lord did shine as the sun." From this sun there is a constant emanation of heat and light ; and from the sun of the spiritual world, by means of the atmospheres decreasing in activity, and subsiding into a state of rest, all the earths in the universe have been created. "By the Word of the Lord," or the Divine Wisdom, or Emanation from the Sun of Righteousness (or Sphere), "were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath (sphere) of His mouth." Thus the world and the universe were not made out of nothing, but by the breath, the operation, the Divine sphere of the Lord Jesus Christ ; for "without Him was not any thing made that was made."

When the Lord was upon the earth, it was the Divine influence, or sphere, proceeding from him, by which his miracles were wrought. This sphere raised Lazarus from the tomb ; brought sound to the ear of the deaf, and on "the sightless eye-ball poured the day." This sphere extending to the hem of His garment, cured the poor woman of the "issue of blood." This sphere compelled even the winds and the sea to acknowledge His presence by obedience. In short,

the sphere of the Lord performed the miracles, and to be within that sphere was to be made whole.

Man, in another life, is known amongst the angels, we are told by a pious writer, by his sphere. His sphere is sometimes made manifest by colours, sometimes by odours, and sometimes by sounds. Lastly, we acknowledge this by our allusions to the brightness of the angelic garments, to the odours of sanctity and purity, and to the music of the spheres.

Descending lower in the doctrine of spheres, we are brought to see the reason why odours of certain animals, vegetables, flowers, or even metals, are intolerable to some persons, while they are agreeable to others.

There is a natural sphere proceeding from every person, and each person has a sphere peculiar to himself. By this sphere the dog traces the footsteps of his master, and distinguishes him from all others. Many persons have an antipathy to certain animals, to certain vegetables, to certain metals; and if obliged to remain in their sphere, become insensible, and would perish if the obnoxious sphere were not removed. How much misery, suffering, and even death, is induced by foul odours or spheres, the direful epidemic of cholera fearfully testifies. For where these causes exist in potency, the greatest amount of mortality is the result. The purer the air we breathe, the freer shall we be from disease and suffering.

We will conclude by a reference to the atmosphere of heaven, for angels breathe as well as men. "The atmosphere which is breathed by angels is fraught with that heat, which in its essence is love, and with that light, which in its essence is wisdom. Breathing

is not there a separate act from thinking. They are distinctly one. Hence the angels of the same society breathe simultaneously, because they think in unison; and no one can live there who does not love, think, and breathe with them. The spiritual life of each, and the ability to will and think, is thus supported by that atmosphere which is produced by the Divine sphere, and the spheres of the angels, particularly of those who are near Him. But as the atmosphere is received into the lungs, the blood is purified and vitalized; and by the blood the whole body, with all its organs, is formed and sustained; how perfectly must this purification and vitalization of the blood of the angels make one with that of their higher life, as the work is effected by this heavenly atmosphere."

### December Twenty-fifth.

#### WHO IS THE TRUE OBJECT OF WORSHIP?

*"To the only wise God our Saviour (Jesus Christ), be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."*—JUDE i. 25.

**I**N answer to this question, we would reply, If He who created the universe of worlds, who giveth life, perpetual sustenance, and all things useful, to the innumerable population of those worlds; if He whose providence is at once universal and particular, regulating the heavens and the earth in such manner as to order their destinies to eternity; if He is the only proper object of worship, then that object is the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

If He, who from pure love and mercy, followed man in all his devious wanderings, after he averted himself

from his Creator; He, who by His own right hand and His holy arm, effected for man redemption and eternal salvation, by undergoing a series of conflicts with man's most direful foes, which baffles human conception, and who by this means spoiled death, and him who had the power of it, and thus laid the foundation for man's restoration to the image and likeness of his Maker, and to eternal felicity; if He who did these things is the proper object of worship, then that object is **THE LORD JESUS CHRIST**.

If He to whom Moses and all the prophets bare this united testimony, that a King should reign in righteousness; of whose kingdom there should be no end; of whose throne or dominion it was said, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;" whose name was to be called "WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR, the MIGHTY GOD, the EVERLASTING FATHER;" who during his sojourn upon earth declared, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father;" "I and my Father are ONE;" if He who said of Himself, "Before Abraham was, I AM;" who styles Himself "the Resurrection and the Life;" who declares He has the keys of hell and of death; who calls Himself "THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA, the beginning and the end;" whose name is KING OF KINGS, and LORD OF LORDS, a name which no other being in the universe can fully comprehend; if He to whom such appellations belong, be the proper object of worship, then that object is **THE LORD JESUS CHRIST**.

If He, on whose name the primitive Christians called; in whose name the apostles and others baptized the nations, and performed the miracles which they wrought in confirmation of their testimony; into

whose hands they commended their departing spirits, and of whom one of them has expressly said, "THIS IS THE TRUE GOD, AND ETERNAL LIFE;" in one word, if He to whom the innumerable company of the heavenly host direct their unceasing acts of adoration and praise, as to HIM who alone is worthy of them; if He is the proper object of worship, then JESUS CHRIST, the only Lord God and our Saviour, is that object.

GLORY, THEREFORE, BE UNTO HIM! *All might, majesty, and dominion be ascribed unto Him.* HE ALONE IS OVER ALL, GOD! BLESSED FOR EVERMORE! AMEN! AMEN! AMEN!

## December Twenty-sixth.

MADNESS, BLINDNESS, AND STUPOR OF HEART.

"The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment (stupor) of heart."—DEUT. xxviii. 28.

KEEPING in mind that this anathema is the result of disobedience to the Divine commandments, and that man, by his evils, brings upon himself these fearful sufferings, let us endeavour to ascertain what kind of person he must be who places himself in this melancholy condition.

We imagine, then, a man whose desire in all things is to aggrandize himself; whose supreme wish is to rule and bring all others under his own subjection; who lays hold of any means, however cruel or iniquitous, to raise himself to supreme authority; who has no other regard for religion, virtue, truth, and holiness, than to render them subservient to his own lust of



dominion; who takes the holy things of the church, pollutes and profanes them, and turns them into channels for self-aggrandizement; who converts all the external and governing powers of the church into instruments of cruelty, exercising the most tyrannical sway over others, denuding them of their property, and even taking away their lives; who so far forgets his finite condition, as even to compete with the SUPREME HIMSELF, and in the plenitude of his pride exclaims, "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will be like the Most High!" Can there be a more melancholy picture of madness than this? Surely there is a striving against Omnipotence, an attempt to dethrone the great Saviour, and to occupy His august seat. This is madness in the extreme. But it lacks not imitators on a more limited scale; for the lust of dominion exercises itself continually in little matters, which escape notice only from the very circumstance of their frequency. From disobedience to the Divine command to, "LOVE ONE ANOTHER, AS I HAVE LOYED YOU," the state of insanity in the world is awful! *Here*, covetousness; *there*, craft and Herodianism: *in this place*, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness; *in that*, deception, intrigue, and attempts to circumvent even the Supreme Himself. It is a horrible picture of the human heart! No asylum for the reception and treatment of the physically insane, can present a more melancholy appearance.

Disobedience to the Divine commandments not only induces *madness* but *blindness* also. Madness relates to evils of heart, blindness to errors of the understanding; for the understanding is the eye of the spirit. As when love to the Lord reigns in the heart, the Sun

of Righteousness animates it with the fervid heat of heaven, and confers upon it all the blessings which the chapter from whence our motto is taken enumerates; so the light of the Sun of Righteousness cheers the understanding, and gives to it a clear perception of truth. But the absence of love to the Lord exemplifies the absence of the Sun of Righteousness; and as where there is no sun there can be no light, so the absence of spiritual light is blindness or darkness. The evil man is spiritually insane, and, confirming himself in evil, he becomes spiritually blind; he loves darkness rather than light, from the very circumstance of his deeds being evil; and there is no cure for this blindness but going to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Light of the world, and if we go to Him He will open our eyes, give us a perception of the enormity of evil, instruct us in the proper application of truth, and restore us to spiritual light and sanity. But if we neglect the Divine warnings, and continue in evil—our evils of heart and falses of understanding—our madness and blindness will finally terminate in stupor of heart. The heart is the grand machine by which physical existence is continued. The suspension of the heart's pulsations is the ceasing of natural life. Stupor of heart, then, in the spiritual sense of the word, implies total insensibility to spiritual life.

Such is the melancholy result of disobedience to the Divine precepts. They are smitten—not by the Lord, but by their own evils—with madness, blindness, and stupor of heart. Our duty is plain, and, with the Lord's assistance, easy; namely, to keep the commandments. If we “would enter into life, WE MUST KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS.”

## December Twenty-seventh.

## PEACE.

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you.”—JOHN xiv. 27.

THE peace which the Lord giveth, and the peace of the world, have but little in common. Worldly peace connects itself, to a greater or less extent, with the comforts, conveniences, and elegancies of this life; and the more abundantly these are enjoyed; the greater appears the peace and happiness of those who possess them. But the peace which the world cannot give—that which originates in the Lord alone, and which is the result of overcoming our evils by the power of the Lord’s truth—is an internal serenity, an inward satisfaction, independent of every worldly advantage, and which keeps possession of the mind, even though all worldly prosperity should be suddenly swept away. It is the state of confiding love in the Divine goodness, which enables the soul to say, “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!” It is a state in which angelic influence is especially felt.

Angels are in the stream of providence, and they are content in God, and possess themselves in peace. Murmuring is unknown to them; care never saddens their countenance; anxiety for the future enters not into their thoughts. The man who receives the peace which Jesus gives, is also in the stream of providence, and feels himself perfectly secure amidst all the changes and vicissitudes of this lower state. Though he can-

not divest himself entirely of anxiety—for while in the body this to a certain extent will continue—yet he learns to moderate it, and to feel an assurance that there is something good in store for him, when he has been prepared for its enjoyment; and in the meantime, the present state has its portion of enjoyment, and he strives to leave “the morrow to take thought for the things of itself.” Active and industrious, he discharges the duties of his station with fidelity; and with the Word of Truth as his weapon of warfare, he goes forward contending against evil, and his perception of peace becomes more and more delightful.

True peace is the arrangement in heavenly order of all the affections and thoughts. The soul of man is not to be considered as a part of the man, but as the entire man, the man himself. The soul of man consists of two faculties: the will, with its almost innumerable affections; and the understanding, with its almost equally innumerable thoughts. These two faculties of will and understanding exist by the constant inflowing of life or love from the Lord into the will; and of wisdom or truth from the Lord into the understanding. This twofold life is never intermitted; and as we suffer these two degrees of life to operate upon us, so are we kept in conjunction with the Lord; that is, as we are obedient to the Divine and living truths of God’s most holy Word, becoming his faithful servants, we enjoy the happiness of the Divine presence, for “where He is, there also shall his servant be.”

## December Twenty-eighth.

PEACE—THE RESULT OF OBEDIENCE TO THE GREAT COMMANDMENT.

*“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.”—MARK xii. 30.*

THE LORD must be loved supremely and exclusively. It is the nature of this love to extend and diffuse itself universally; that is, it displays itself by universal love to all, and hence it exemplifies its fervour to the brethren, fulfilling another commandment arising from the principal, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” Neighbourly love seems to be exemplified only in proportion as we love God. He who loves not God, in reality loves not his neighbour; he who loves God a little, loves his neighbour a little. He who loves God with all his heart, loves his neighbour as himself.

If we imagine a ring set with precious stones, and a large ruby in the centre of the circlet, the light falling upon the stones being received in the greatest proportion by the centre one, the ruby would transmit its comparative warmth to all the others, and tinge the others with the red of its own fervency. So celestial love to the Lord, when it is the centre or governing affection of the soul, imparts to all the subordinate affections a portion of its own heavenly warmth or quality, infusing into them that love which generates true peace. From and out of this love germinates love to man, begetting, so to speak, benevolence, good will, the love of truth, justice, integrity, and every virtue—all, however, it must be remembered, having

no other origin than the Divine love. The affections existing in the order of heavenly love, the thoughts arranged in the order of heavenly truth, perfect harmony becomes established, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keeps the heart and mind. This peace is a Divine gift. "MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU."

The arrangement of the affections and thoughts into the order of heaven, is what constitutes real happiness; and forasmuch as this is effected by the Divine Truth, and Divine Truth in its essence being the Lord, therefore it is a work of the Lord, and PEACE IS THE GIFT OF THE LORD. It is most probable that in this signification of peace, originated the salutation of the early Christians: "*Peace be to this house! peace be unto you!*" and as this peace was the result of overcoming the evils and corruptions within, it is presumed that the early Christians objected to any war, except that against self, and to any other weapon, save the sword of the Spirit.

Peace comprehends all that is tranquil and happy. In respect to the Lord, it comprehends all the beatitudes resulting from the glorification of the humanity after the temptations which preceded it; it represents the great Saviour as THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

In the first phase of the regenerate life, we have to labour to acquire a state of comparative goodness; for, at the best, man's goodness is comparative; but as we pass onwards, each step imparts a degree of blessedness, as of so much of the conflict inducing victory; and each victory, bracing the spiritual nerves for the next conflict, leaves with us its own degree of peace. But entire peace, when we rest from all con-

flict, is given to us only when we pass into the eternal world; there THE LORD GIVES US PEACE AND REST. Here He comforts us with a morsel of bread and a cruse of water, a little rest, a little refreshment, a perception of peace, which for the time strengthens us, and imparts new energy to meet the difficulties which are still before us. But when the Divine peace is fully given, we rest from all labour. In heaven all conflict ceases. The battle has been fought in this world, the victory is achieved, and a crown of glory is the diadem of peace.

## December Twenty-ninth.

PEACE TO THE GOOD—NO PEACE TO THE WICKED.

*"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace."*—PSALM xxxvii. 37.

*"There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked."*—ISA. xlviii. 22.

THE end of the regenerating Christian, his motives, intentions, and thoughts, are all fixed upon the Lord Jesus Christ, the God of peace and love. We shall better see the application of this if we reflect for a moment on the way of the wicked; and while we behold the end of a good man to be "peace," we shall see that there is "no peace to the wicked."

The life of the wicked seems to be a continual struggle for dominion and power, as though this world was to be their abode for ever. In no one pursuit of the wicked is the end thereof peace, but the direct contrary.

We speak not of that extreme wickedness which would consign the perpetrators, even in this life, to

the dungeon, or banish them from their country, but rather the wickedness which is practised under the cover of morality ; for great indeed is the wickedness indulged in, which, though it does not endanger personal safety, is still abhorred in the sight of the Lord, and, if unrepented of, must end in misery.

Do we begin with the mercantile axiom, "A penny saved is a penny got?"—unless it is well watched, and kept within the boundary of strict justice, it is the first step of the miser, the first step of the covetous ; and this vice unchecked will terminate in the worst kind of idolatry—the worship of gold.

Who has not found himself guilty of dissimulation, and concealed it under the name of expediency ? It is the first step in the grand wickedness of the hypocrite, upon whom so heavy a malediction is pronounced.

Who has not cultivated what the world terms self-interest, and excused it under the plea, that every man has a right to do the best he can for himself ?

Now, may not we have taken the first step in some one of these evil ways ? Extreme wickedness is rarely displayed momentarily, and we are reflecting upon the melancholy issue to which wickedness conducts. Self-interest—a present advantage—the slight opinion the world entertains of such crimes, will all contribute to draw us into a snare, and lead our steps downward, and alienate our souls from God : "and what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" The end to which the steps of the wicked conduct, is in every instance vexation and misery in this world. In every state of the wicked there can be no peace.

We are brought nearly to the termination of another



year, and it becomes us to enter upon the work of self-examination.

Communion with ourselves at the present season cannot but be profitable. It well becomes us to inquire, what, if any, progress has been made during the past year in the regeneration? The present season, with its cheerless imagery of decay, by bringing home to us the sense of our mortality, identifies us more closely with those who have gone before, for the veil of separation becomes, as it were, more transparent. We are impressed with a more perfect conviction that "we shall go to them," but "they will not return to us."

The life of the Christian, pursued under the guidance of truth, in the practice of religion and virtue, cannot fail to secure peace and contentment, whatever the sphere in which he moves may be; the closing scene of his mortal existence opens to his spirit the bright glories of the eternal world; and if we follow the Lord, and delight in his way, our crown of eternal blessedness will be sure, and our end peace.

## December Thirtieth.

### DEATH.

*"What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?"—PSALM lxxxix. 48.*

DEATH is the theme of universal interest. The lightest heart, the most thoughtless mind, has no disbelief of death. The distance of the dark cloud in which he comes sailing through the bosom of

futurity may be miscalculated, but the world unhesitatingly owns that he is coming, and will at last be here. In almost every other particular the fortunes of man may differ; but to die is common to all. The stream of life runs into a thousand various channels; but run where it will, brightly or darkly, smoothly or languidly, it is stopped by death.

“Leaves have their time to fall,  
And flowers to wither at the north wind's breath,  
And stars to set :  
But all—thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death !”

Every successive generation death claims for his own, and his claim is never denied. To die is the condition on which we hold life. Rebellion sickens with hopelessness at the thought of resisting death: the very hope of the most desperate is, not that death may be escaped, but that he is external; and all that the young, the careless, and the dissipated attempt, is to think of death as seldom as possible. No man, therefore, will deny, that whatever can be said of death is applicable to himself. The bell that he hears tolled may never toll for him; there may be no friend or children left to lament him; he may not have to lie through long and anxious days, looking for the coming of the anticipated hour; but he knows that he must die; he knows that, in whatsoever quarter of the world he abides, whatever be his circumstances, however strong his hold of life, however unlike the prey of death he looks, however careful of his health, and temperate in all his habits he may be, that “it is appointed unto all men once to die, and after death the judgment.”

And it is the judgment that is the principal thing

for which we have reason to prepare, so ordering our life and conversation, that, at the end of our natural existence, our life may be crowned with goodness; and on entering the eternal world we may say, "Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and now I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever!"

## December Thirty-first.

### THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

*"But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."*—HEB. xiii. 16.

THE luxury of doing good is certainly one of the greatest of human luxuries. Kindness and benevolence, like mercy, are twice blessed; they bless both giver and receiver; and while they bring forth an abundant fruit of happiness in the bosom from which they spring, they also generally grow up into kindness and benevolence in the minds of others. It is true that kind actions are sometimes not appreciated as they ought to be; not unfrequently they meet with an ungrateful return; but this can never deprive the individual from whom they emanate of the reward of the Divine approval; nor ought it ever to turn him aside from perseverance in well-doing. It is the duty of every individual to promote the happiness of his fellow-creatures, even of the worst and most ungrateful; and it should be remembered that the happiness of the worst man is as much an integral part of the whole of human happiness, as is that of the best man of the whole species—such at least is the teach-

ing of our Lord Jesus Christ : " Do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you." There are few, indeed, even of the most rugged natures, whom kindness does not affect. It constrains far more than force can do. A kind word, a sympathizing look, will act upon those upon whom coercion has been tried in vain. While kindness invites to love and obedience—harshness provokes to aversion and resistance ; " Power itself has not one-half the might of gentleness. Kindness is the very sunshine of social life ! it enters into the soul, cheering and elevating even the poorest lot ;" thawing away the ice of habit and indifference, it lets in a flood of heat and light—goodness and truth—upon the soul. It is the highest practical morality ; it is the very essence of Christianity itself ; it comes from the Lord Jesus Christ, from Him who crowns the year with His goodness.

We press this duty with the greater earnestness, because it is our duty in all things to imitate our Saviour, who went about doing good ; and who added but one commandment to the moral code : " LOVE ONE ANOTHER, AS I HAVE LOVED YOU."

If spared to enter upon another year, let our utmost endeavour be to imitate our Lord in all things. Wherever we go, in whatever paths of usefulness we walk, let there be some impress of goodness left behind us ; and ascribing all the power to will and to do unto the Lord, and giving Him all the glory, we shall, when the battle of life is ended, enter into the rest of the Lord. AMEN AND AMEN !

# MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS

FOR EVERY DAY IN THE WEEK.

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## Sunday Morning.

**O** THOU who art over all, God blessed for evermore, unto Thee every knee shall bow, every tongue confess; and in Thy name shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Thou art the Lord of the Sabbath, which Thou hast created for man, that, by properly spending it here, he may be prepared for more perfect enjoyment of it when the natural state of his existence has ended. We adore Thee, O Lord, our heavenly Father, for this gracious institution, and we implore Thy assistance to enable us so to spend it, that it may be a day to be remembered in our existence, a day in which important truths have been communicated, which have led us more closely to conjunction with Thee. We approach Thee, O Lord, as our Father. Thou art the foundation of our hope; and, as children, all our dependence is on Thee. Our very existence is sustained and preserved by Thy providence. Each moment reminds us that we “live, and move, and have our being” in Thee, and that neither spiritual, nor temporal benefits can be enjoyed,

but as they originate in Thy perfect love. Thou only art worthy to be adored; Thou art not only Our Father, but our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. Thou dwellest in the high and holy place, and yet dost Thou abide in every heart whose affections are consecrated by Thy love; in every understanding whose thoughts are enlightened by Thy truth. We behold Thee in every act of beneficence wrought by Thy creatures, for Thou art in everything that is good, and we behold Thee in every truth drawn and confirmed from Thy Word, for Thou art in everything that is true. Glory be to Thy holy name, O Lord!

*Our Father, &c.*

### Sunday Evening.

**O** HOLY and merciful Lord, at the close of this Sabbath we desire to approach Thee, and to praise Thy high and holy name for the privileges in which we have participated; and at the same time to implore Thine aid that the influences of Thy good Spirit may permeate our affections and thoughts, and keep us from falling away from Thy truth. We have indeed great need to supplicate Thy constant assistance, seeing how prone we are to forget even the most serious calls to holiness, and, when mingling with the world, how easily are we drawn aside and entangled, so that our best resolutions are forgotten, and the solemn exhortations of Thy servant who ministers to us in spiritual things, pass from our remembrance as a tale that is told; and even those duties in which we appear to have most fervently engaged, still fall short

of that spirituality which, as Christians, ought at all times to distinguish us. O Lord, we beseech Thee, quicken us by Thy truth—Thy Word is truth. May we be mindful of the instruction we have this day received. May the doctrines which have been preached, the precepts which have been so urgently pressed upon us, the persuasions which have been so affectionately urged by thy servant, lead us to devout obedience to all that thou requirest, so that we may adorn the doctrine of Thee, our God and Saviour, in all things.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Monday Morning.

**A**Lmighty GOD, the Saviour of the universe of worlds, all unworthy as we are to approach Thee, we yet know that Thy love is infinite, and that Thine eyes are never averted from the returning and repentant sinner. We acknowledge our transgressions; and our sins are ever before us: but O Lord most merciful, O God most gracious, pardon the evils we have hitherto committed, and let Thy grace uphold us, and restrain us from the commission of evil for the future.

We are now entering upon the duties of another week, and we pray Thee, O Lord, assist us in the performance of those duties, to the satisfaction of our own consciences, but, more especially, to the glory of Thy holy name, knowing that we can only be perfected through suffering. We ask Thee not to spare our trials, but we pray Thee to uphold us in the hour of trial, that our spiritual adversaries may gain no ad-

vantage over us ; that thereby we may be led nearer and nearer to Thee, and know that every suffering we endure, and in which we overcome, does but take away some part of our sinful desires, to give place to others which are pure and holy. May we feel the full consolation of the apostolic words, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to those that love Him."

*Our Father, &c.*

### Monday Evening.

**O** LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth ; Thy glory is above the heavens. We glorify Thee in the work of Thy creative hands, in the visible works of the earth on which we live ; we glorify Thee in the wonders of the heavens above ; in the starry orbs, and the worlds that revolve about them. But most of all we glorify Thee for the lessons they read unto us, as representative figures which teach us of the heaven within our souls, of the earth of our natural minds, and of the wonder-working power of Thy Divine name, which is ever present with us in our hour of need, and ever repelling the powers of evil which strive to bring us into captivity. Thy NAME is indeed excellent in all the earth. Every quality by which Thou art distinguished is perfect : pure goodness, pure truth, pure holiness, pure mercy. O that our earth—our natural minds—were so influenced by Thy goodness, so enlightened by Thy truth, so purified by Thy holiness, so softened



by Thy mercy, that its excellencē might be seen and universally acknowledged ; and Thee, our heavenly Father, glorified by the virtues which Thy name implies, and which name we pray may be engraven upon our every action in this life. But, while the qualities which Thy name implies, shine resplendently in the life of all who look humbly to Thee for guidance ; who do nothing without Thy counsel and instruction, it is the glory from within, the glory which is above the heavens, the glory which dwells in the inmost of the soul, which can alone bring perfect happiness. Reign Thou, O Lord, in the inmost of our souls ; there erect Thy throne, and make our hearts the habitation of Thy holiness.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Tuesday Morning.

**O** MERCIFUL FATHER, how great is the consolation of all who are undergoing the process of regeneration : in those words of the royal singer, "He shall give His angels charge over Thee." In these words, how sure is Thy protection made to us ! What are guards of honour to earthly princes, compared with those in the midst of which Thy faithful children ever walk ? Who need be afraid of the assaults and attacks, even of the direst spiritual enemies, when it is known that chariots of fire, and horses of fire, surround the dwellings of the humble but confiding Christian ? Who shall be afraid, when it is known that they who are for us, are more and mightier than they who are against us ? What creatures can be

more glorious, more potent, more magnificent in their appearance, than the angels in heaven? What though we be contemptible in the eyes of the world; what though scorn and contumely follow us in the persons and aspersions of the great and noble of earth—yet with the angels for our attendants, with Thy ministering spirits to guard and protect us, to infuse peace and love into our souls we become kings and priests unto Thee, and can meet scorn with prayer for the conversion of the scorner; and, while we turn our back to the smiter, can offer up Thy own prayer: “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!”

Lord, we commit our way unto Thee: bring us safely through the trials and difficulties of this day, for Thy name and mercy sake.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Tuesday Evening.

**O** LORD, our heavenly Father, we approach Thy mercy-seat this evening; help us to render our wills submissive and obedient to Thy will. May Thy love occupy the highest place, and all inferior affections be so arranged as mutually to shew forth Thy goodness, each co-operating with the other in humble and cheerful obedience, love, and duty to whatever Thou shalt ordain; and all dwelling together in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in holiness and purity.

Merciful Saviour, we pray not only that Thy love may occupy the highest place in our wills, and so subject all our affections to Thy Divine control, but that

Thy wisdom may reign supreme in our understandings, and subject all our thoughts to Thy truth. The doctrines of Thy Word are the heavenly sources whence we may be led to the temple of Thy holiness. As the multitudes thronged to hear the gracious words that flowed forth from Thee, so may the multitude of our thoughts be kept in constant waiting for the spiritual instructions Thy Divine discourses contain. When our understandings are in a desert state, pour Thou the streams of Thy truth upon them, until the desert blossom as the rose. Assist us, O merciful Saviour, to elevate Thee to the throne both of our wills and understandings; and help us individually to feel the assurance that Thou, if Thou be lifted up, and our inward souls be elevated to contemplate Thy perfections, Thou wilt draw all unto Thee.

Blessed be Thy name, O Lord, for Thy goodness towards us this day!

*Our Father, &c.*

### Wednesday Morning.

**M**OST merciful Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who art the bountiful giver of every good and perfect gift, either in this life or that which is to come; to whose tender mercy and loving-kindness we owe the possession of every blessing we enjoy; permit Thy unworthy creatures, the members of this family, to approach Thee; and enable us, with feelings of gratitude and reverence, to worship and adore Thee who alone art worthy. We are incapable of ourselves of one virtuous thought or of one righteous deed, and

but for Thee we must have perished in great destruction. In the midst of seeming prosperity, when no thought of Thee or of Thy kingdom has entered our understandings—or, if we have thought of Thee, it has been with a complacent idea of our own abilities, and that Thou hast rewarded us in raising us to an enviable position—even in this dangerous state, Thou hast not left us to ourselves, but, by Thy gracious providence, hast continually reminded us that it is of Thy mercy we are not consumed, and that it is better to trust in the Lord than to put any confidence in man. When adversity has come upon us, and we have cried unto Thee in our trouble, Thou hast delivered us out of our distress; when we have seen our friends in the extremity of death, and our hearts have been stricken and humbled before Thee, Thou hast still been near to comfort us, and to pour into our wounded spirits the balm of Thy heavenly consolation. When encompassed by spiritual dangers, and our infernal enemies have attempted to infuse doubt and despondency into our souls, still has Thy power defended us from their dire assaults; and though the magnitude of our danger has appalled us, and made us ready to sink, the Omnipotent arm of Thy love has upheld and sustained us, brought us up out of the pit of desolation into which our enemies had plunged us, and placed our feet upon the rock of Thy truth, and established our goings in the way of Thy holiness. O how great is Thy love towards us! Most humbly but earnestly do we render Thee the warmest aspirations of our hearts for Thy continued protection and salvation.

*Our Father, &c.*

## Wednesday Evening.

GREAT and merciful Redeemer, of Thy fulness have we all received, and grace for grace; Thy tender mercies fail not, but are continually showered down upon us; and another day of our existence hast Thou blessed with all needful comforts. Glory be to Thy holy name, O Lord.

We look up to Thee, O merciful Father, confessing that we are disobedient children; that we dare not say that either this day, or at any time, we have done our duty. Gracious Lord, take us this night into Thy keeping and protection, for without Thy care we must inevitably perish. Let Thy gracious dispensations so fall upon us, that our hearts may be softened, and our understandings humbled, and no obstruction be given to the influence of Thy good Spirit. We pray, O Lord, that we must be kept in states of humility, that we may be rendered deeply sensible of the utter depravity of our hearts, and by the light of Thy truth be led to see the danger to which our evils expose us, and our utter insufficiency to remove them without Thy Divine assistance. In this state of humiliation and of acknowledged dependence upon Thy aid, may we be enabled to lay hold of the promises of Thy Word, and especially of that gracious promise contained after Thy Divine exhortation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." O Lord, give us to feel the fulfilment of this Divine promise! "Into Thy hand we resign our spirits."

*Our Father, &c.*

## Thursday Morning.

**I**NFINITE, Omnipotent, and Eternal Lord God our Saviour, to know Thee is life eternal, for Thou art life itself; and to have a knowledge of Thy love, Thy wisdom, and Thy power, and to live as that knowledge counsels, is to be introduced unto Thee, and to unite us with Thee, as Thou also art united with the Father. To effect this union, Lord, we humbly come into Thy presence. Fill our hearts with adoring love and gratitude. Enlighten our understandings with Thy truth and wisdom, and help us so to live that we may be prepared for that fulness of bliss which awaits the regenerate in Thy heavenly kingdom. In the calling of Thy disciple, Peter, may we hear our own call. May the first principles of truth which awaken within us a sense of our sinfulness also desire that our evils may be removed, and look for aid in their removal unto Thee, who alone art the Omnipotent, and without whom we can do nothing. How abundant are the truths contained in Thy Holy Word. It is as a mighty deep, into which, if we launch, we shall inclose in the net of our minds truths of every kind—truths that inform the natural man how to conduct himself in the world, and truths which bring before his spiritual vision the Divine realities of heaven. Blessed Saviour, we entreat Thee to give us just ideas of the value of the gift Thou hast bestowed upon us. May we not only view it as a collection of spiritual precepts, but as embodying all the perfections of Thy Deity—yea, as being the wisdom of Thy own glorified person. This precious Word of Truth de-

clares that, if we lift Thee up, Thou wilt draw all men unto Thee. Elevate our thoughts, we beseech Thee, by a perception of Thy glorious presence. Help us to keep our minds continually fixed upon Thee. In the morning we would praise Thee, and look up unto Thee for counsel and guidance through the day. Help us to scrutinize everything presented for our acceptance. May Thy Word be unto us a mirror, in which we may see our duty, and to which we may bring every thought, desire, and affection, for trial. May its light help us to discriminate between the really and the apparently good ; and may we gather the good into the prepared vessels of our souls, and cast the bad away.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Thursday Evening.

**O** LORD, our Heavenly Father, we pray Thee, so enable us to prepare our souls, that the miracle of turning water into wine may be spiritually wrought in us. Whether we need water or wine, bread or flesh, there is no Being to whom we can apply with so great an assurance of being supplied as to Thee ; for all who humbly ask, receive according to their need. Help us to prepare our understandings as vessels into which pure water may be poured. Let that water be as the stream of truth meandering through the parched places of our understandings ; while it removes impurity, may it soften and moisten our barren land, and so prepare our thoughts, that the good seeds deposited in us from Thy Word, may

spring up and becomes plants suited to grow in our spiritual garden, and bring forth fruits to perfection. Lord, we pray Thee, so prepare our minds that our water may be turned into wine. May the natural truths we receive unfold their strengthening properties, and become spiritual and divine. May the table spread in Thy Divine banqueting-house receive us as guests. May the marriage to which we are the invited guests, find us in readiness to Thy call, when the day of its celebration shall arrive. At Thy table may we eat bread till we be full, and drink wine till we be satisfied. May Thy heavenly goodness be our meat, Thy pure and spiritual wisdom be our drink. In Thy presence may we enjoy that fulness of bliss, and taste at Thy right hand, those pleasures reserved for those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Friday Morning.

**O** LORD, the returning light brings with it new duties; help us, we beseech Thee, faithfully to perform them. May a principle of conscience animate all that we do, and a love of our neighbour stir us up to do good to all, as Thy children. And while the world employs our hands, and while our thoughts are occupied in the best and most efficient means of accomplishing our worldly duties, still may there be an inmost feeling of Thy presence; and still may the knowledge that thou, God, seest us, preserve us in the straight and narrow way, suffering us to diverge neither to the right hand nor to the left, but keeping



us pressing onward to Thee, our Lord and Saviour. Help us to support the cause of religion and virtue, in every possible way that lies within the compass of our ability. Help us to keep our conversation pure, and as becomes the gospel of peace and love. As thou didst pronounce Thy first disciples to be the "salt of the earth," "the light of the world," "the city set upon a hill," so may we strive to let Thy truth season every thought, and operate so beneficially upon those who surround us, that they may take hold of the skirts of our garments, saying, "We will walk with you, for we have heard that God is with you." Help us to make whatsoever things are true, honourable, just, pure, and lovely, the subjects of our imitation.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Friday Evening.

**O** THOU Omnipresent and Omniscient God, "the darkness hideth not from Thee, but the night shineth as the day, yea, the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee." Ever may we be impressed with solemnity at thine august presence; ever may we bear in mind that Thou God seest us. May Thy glorious perfections so impress us, that our worship may be at all times spiritual; and while in this world, may our conduct be such as shall prepare us for the high and glorious destiny for which Thou hast designed us.

Assist us, O merciful Saviour, to rise above mere external profession. May we, when Thou comest to explore us, be found to possess something better than the leaves of mere external doctrine, or outward

religion ; when Thou comest to explore us, may there be fruit found within us ! Whatever be the state or degree in the Christian life to which we have advanced, or which we profess, may the fruit be according to the profession, for every tree is truly known by its own fruit ; and may we find peace and rest under our own tree, whether it be fig or whether it be vine, whether natural good or spiritual good—in either case, acknowledging that Thou art the fountain of all goodness, and while our trust and confidence rest on Thee, none shall make us afraid. Reposing in Thy mercy, O Lord, we retire to rest, resigning our spirits into Thy gracious keeping.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Saturday Morning.

**O** THOU, whose mercy is everlasting, whose truth endureth from generation to generation, how great is Thy goodness towards Thy sinful children, how deep is Thy tenderness and pity ! What consolation to us under our trials do the words we have now read afford us ! Trials that are so necessary for our purification—trials which our own evils have been the causes of subjecting us to. Yet dost Thou, in the infinity of Thy mercy, exclaim, “ Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people ; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and say unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned ! ” Gracious, indeed, art Thou, O Lord ; for Thou dealest with us not according to our sins ; yea, Thou forgivest our iniquities, and blottest out our transgressions for Thine own name’s sake. By the light of Thy truth

Thou hast prepared a way for us in this our wilderness state ; and Thy voice of Divine condescension is perpetually saying, "*This is the way, walk ye in it.*" Thy presence is perpetual. Thy coming is continual. How cheering to the humble soul are Thy Divine and gracious accents—"Fear thou not, for I am with thee, be thou not dismayed, I am thy God." It is by this Divine encouragement that Thou raisest the poor from the dust, and from the valley of humiliation exaltest them to sit among the princes of Thy people. O may we, individually and collectively, feel grateful for this Divine encouragement.

*Our Father, &c.*

### Saturday Evening.

**G**REAT and Glorious Lord God Almighty, we approach Thy Divine person with heartfelt gratitude, and deepest reverence. Thou hast brought us safely to the conclusion of another week, and Thy bounteous hand has scattered profusion and abundance around, so that all Thy creatures may be richly fed. The year is indeed crowned with Thy goodness, and all Thy paths drop fatness. We have gathered in the fruits of the earth ; and seed for the sower, and bread for the eater, hast Thou abundantly supplied. How wisely, how bounteously hast Thou distributed the food of man through the varying seasons of the year ! O Lord we adore Thee for the beneficent tenderness which thus provides for our bodily sustenance : truly Thy goodness and mercy follow us all the days of our lives. "Thou art our God ! we will exalt Thee, we will praise Thy name for ever and ever !"

We adore Thee, O omnipotent Redeemer! there is none like unto Thee in creative power. Thou tellest the number of the stars, Thou callest them all by their names; the heavens, the earth, celebrate Thee; Thy name is great and glorious. In majesty Thou swayest Thy Divine sceptre; may Thy name be glorified. Are any distressed? if they come to Thee, Thou relievest them out of their troubles. Are we destitute of earthly parents—of earthly friends? doubtless Thou art our Father, tender, compassionate and merciful, and Thy Divine voice still sounds in our ears, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

We adore Thee, O tender and compassionate Father! Glory be to Thy Holy Name! Thou hast bidden the clouds shower down blessings upon us, Thou hast covered our gardens with verdure, Thou hast clothed our fields with flocks. Thou hast commanded the earth to bring forth by handfuls; the world is full of Thy love and benignity. We adore Thee, O God of plenty! How full of loving-kindness art Thou, O Eternal Father!

O God, Who art our Creator and Sanctifier, we adore Thee for all Thy blessings, for every temporal and spiritual gift, but especially for the gift of Thy Holy Word! To Thee may we and all mankind unite in ascribing praise! May we continually from the heart exclaim, "Let the Lord be magnified!"

*Our Father, &c.*



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