

June 10

Lord, teach us to pray. Luke 11:1

IN brief, our prayers, to be acceptable to God, must express confident faith, loving esteem and reverence, full sympathy with

R5311 "Prayer is the vital breath of the New Creature. We cannot control, nor get the best out of our old bodies except we conform to our Lord's instruction to pray. If prayer was appropriate for our Lord, who was perfect, if He needed to go often to the Father in prayer, even so it is necessary for us to go to the Lord in prayer that we may be more and more transformed by the renewing of our minds. This does not mean that we should be always *on our knees*, but that we should go with regularity; if possible at least every night and morning..."

Not only should we have special *seasons* of prayer, but we should have the *spirit* of prayer, which should be with us in all life's affairs. As we are going about the duties of life, we should think, Now I am looking for the Lord's will and way. What shall I do about this matter? And, not stopping to pray again, we think as to what would be the Lord's will. Thus we shall have the Lord's blessing and guidance on that day in everything that is good."

R4603 "Let us live in the presence of the Father and the Son who have promised to abide with us."

MORNING PRAYER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

R1864 "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve; as for me and my house we will serve the Lord." -- Joshua 24:15...

Every day we should renew our covenant with the Lord -- renew it and make it fresh in our minds, thus showing that there has been no change on our part; that we are still in the same attitude."

R5630 "THE PRAYER OF THE CONSECRATED" "Dear Heavenly Father, reverently, and in the name of Jesus, I approach Thy Throne of Grace to renew my consecration vows *today*. Not content with having made my consecration years ago, nor even yesterday, I renew it *today*, and present to Thee my body and all its powers, my heart and all its affections. I give to Thee, willingly and gladly, *everything* I possess, to be wholly Thine--*today*. I would not withhold from Thee one single thing."

R2240 "Let us begin each day with prayer for wisdom and grace that we may serve the Lord acceptably and be a blessing to others and be blest ourselves: and let us close these morning prayers with the inspired petition--*"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my Redeemer."*

R5212 "At the beginning of the day we can say, "Lord, here am I; I thank Thee for the privilege of another day, which I hope will be full of opportunities for serving the Truth and the brethren. I ask Thee to direct my thoughts, words and conduct, that I may serve Thee acceptably." *Then* we may go forth and use our best judgment.

If the Lord wants to lead us in one direction or another, that is His part, not ours.

the divine plan and submission to the divine will, childlike dependence upon God, acknowledgment of sins and shortcomings and desire for forgiveness, with humble craving for the divine guidance and protection.

We have solicited His guidance; and our eyes are alert to know and to do His will at any cost. In this attitude we may rest easy, knowing that God is able and willing to overrule all things for His glory and our profit.

As a child, the Editor noticed that some people had a *certain way* of going to the Lord with all of their affairs. They would open their Bibles at random; and whatever verse their thumb or finger happened to touch they would consider to be the Lord's message to them; and they would follow its suggestion carefully. Sometimes the text to which they opened seemed to be a remarkable answer to their prayer.

This method is not one with which the Editor desires to find fault. But since it did not appeal to his judgment, he took the matter to the Lord in prayer and said, "Father, I am really afraid to adopt this plan. So if it please Thee, I would rather be directed by my judgment than by this method; for my mind does not seem capable of accepting it." The Lord seems to have taken him at his word.

There is surely a reason why right is right in every matter; and we should desire to know it. We should desire to know why God wishes a matter *this way* rather than *that way*; not that we doubt His wisdom, but that we may enter into the *spirit* of the Divine regulations. The Editor's method of seeking Divine guidance is to study the Scriptures, taking all of the verses bearing upon the subject under consideration, and trying to find the *underlying principle* of God's dealings and teachings.

By this method he has much more happiness than he otherwise could have. By following the other method he could not know whether God or the Devil or chance would open the Bible for him. He much prefers to follow what he believes to be the teaching of the Word of God; that is, to commit all to the Father in prayer, asking Him to guide both reason and judgment, and then go out and use that judgment and reason to the best of his ability. Even if God should permit him to use his judgment in a way that afterward appeared not to have been the best, nevertheless the Father may use it to bring some great blessing or profitable lesson. By *judgment*, of course, he means his understanding of the Father's Word and of His providential leadings. Thus doing, he knows that all things shall work together for good.--Rom. 8:28."

(Psa 25:9 KJV) "The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way."

R2205 "The Editor has a proposal to make to every reader... That during the remainder of this year each of us pray every morning, that the Lord will bless us in the cultivation of Love in thoughts and words and deeds throughout the day; and that every evening, when reviewing the events of the day at the throne of the heavenly grace, we remember to report to the Lord respecting our measure of success or failure..."

These may not always all be expressed in words, but such must at least be the attitude of the soul. Z. 95-213R1865:1

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed."

Note the results of your watching and praying; keep on the lookout for all encouraging evidences of growth in this fruitage of the holy spirit: and, when you write to us, if you please, mention your progress in *willing* to Love and in *practicing* it; we are specially glad to know of your growth *both* in grace and in knowledge."

EVENING PRAYER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

CR390 "Never go to bed, never go to sleep, with a spot on your robe--never."

R2240 "At the close of each day let us square our day's account with the Lord at his throne of grace: recounting so far as we are able its opportunities used and neglected, its victories won or its defeats, its sacrifices and its selfishnesses; -- thanking God for the grace that helped in time of need and apologizing for all errors and defeats, craving forgiveness in the name and merit of our Savior and promising greater faithfulness and zeal by the Lord's grace the next day."

TEACH US TO PRAY

R3351 "LUKE 11:1-13... We are not to suppose that the disciples had never prayed up to the time mentioned in this lesson, when they asked the Lord to instruct them in the matter. On the contrary, we are to suppose that they had, in common with the Jews in general, and in harmony with our Lord's example, been accustomed to go to God in prayer. They seem to have realized that, as our Lord's teachings were considerably different from those of the Scribes and Pharisees on various points, so also his conception of prayer was probably different, and they desired to have instruction on this subject along the lines of his advanced teaching..."

The account of this prayer, as given by Luke, differs considerably from the account given by Matthew, the latter, apparently, being much the more complete statement (Matt. 6:9). We are not to understand that our Lord meant, Say ye, but rather, as it is elsewhere given, After this manner pray ye. In other words, our Lord gave, not the words for our prayers, but a general sample of style."

R5835 "The children of God are not to "say prayers," they are to pray. There is much formal prayer -- much saying of prayers -- which do not get higher than the head of the one who repeats the words... We believe a great many have done themselves injury by going through a form of words in a mere formalistic manner. This is not prayer. True prayer is the language of the heart. Therefore the greater our earnestness, the more acceptable the prayer will be, and the greater blessing shall we receive."

John Bunyan "When you pray, rather let your heart be without words, than your words without heart."

R5378 "WHO MAY PRAY AND FOR WHAT?... LUKE 11:1-13 —"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."-- Luke 11:9

Apparently Jesus usually prayed alone. We read that on some occasions He spent the entire night in prayer to God...

No doubt the disciples noted the Master's frequency in prayer, and the blessing which He seemed to receive therefrom. Instead of urging them to pray, Jesus by His example taught them to desire the privilege and blessing of prayer. In due time they requested instruction, saying, "Lord, teach us to pray!" It is well that we inquire who may pray, and for what things we may petition the great Creator, else we might be praying without authority, or praying amiss, as St. James declares some do.

There is a difference between worship--adoration, homage--and prayer. Any one may offer homage to the Lord, bow the knee or express thanks and appreciation. But as for making requests of God, prayers, this privilege is distinctly limited. The Jews were privileged to offer prayer, because they as a nation were in typical relationship with God under the Law Covenant, as a "House of Servants." But the Gentiles had no privilege of approaching God in prayer until after the Jewish favor had ended--three and a half years after the crucifixion of Jesus...

So today while any one may offer worship and reverence to God, none is privileged to pray unless he has become a consecrated disciple of Jesus...

Prayer is a wonderful privilege. It is not for sinners, but for those who have been justified by the great Advocate whom the Father has appointed--Jesus.

"AFTER THIS MANNER PRAY"

The model prayer which Jesus gave His followers is grandly simple. It is devoid of selfishness. Instead of "I" and "me," the prayer is comprehensive of all who are truly the Lord's people, in any class--we, us, our. It is unselfish, too, in that it is not a prayer for earthly blessings. Only one petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," can be construed to apply to even the simplest of earthly blessings. And this may also be understood to signify more particularly spiritual nourishment.

The prayer opens with a reverent acknowledgment of the greatness and sacredness of the Heavenly Father's name, or

character. Next comes an acknowledgment of the present condition of sin in the world and an acknowledgment of faith in the promise that God has given, that eventually His Kingdom shall be established in the earth, and shall overthrow the reign of Sin and Death which has prevailed for six thousand years, and will bind Satan, "the Prince of this world." (Rev. 20:1-3.) The petition, "Thy Kingdom come," not only manifests faith in God and in His promise to abolish sin and establish righteousness in the earth, but it means more; namely, that the suppliant is in his heart in sympathy with God and His righteousness and out of sympathy with the reign of Sin and Death.

The next petition is, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven." This signifies full confidence in the promise of God that His Kingdom when it shall be established will not be a failure--that Satan will be bound; that the reign of Sin and Death will end; that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth and triumph, destroying all wilful opposers, until finally every knee shall be bowing and every tongue confessing, to the glory of God.

It is an expression of confidence that the Kingdom will effect the full restoration of the earth to its Edenic condition and of man to his primeval perfection in the image of his Creator; for not until such conditions prevail will it be possible for God's will to be as perfectly done on earth as it is now done in Heaven. An included thought is that when sin and death shall thus have been effaced, the world of mankind will be as happy in God's favor as are the angels now. This Jesus clearly expressed later, assuring us that eventually there will be no more sighing, crying or dying, because all the former things of sin and death will have passed away.--Rev. 21:5.

The request for daily bread implies our realization that our sustenance, both temporal and spiritual, must come from God. And the failure to specify any particular kind of food implies not only a hunger and desire on our part, but a full resignation to the provision of Divine Wisdom.

When the justified pray, "Forgive us our trespasses," they do not refer to Original Sin; for they were freed from that condemnation in their justification. By trespasses are signified those unintentional imperfections which appertain to all, and which all the followers of Jesus are striving to over-

come. The request that we shall have forgiveness of our blemishes as we are generous and forgiving toward those who trespass against us is a reminder of the general terms of our relationship to God. We cannot grow in grace and abide in the sunshine of God's favor except as we cultivate the spirit of love, which is the spirit of God--a forgiving spirit, a generous spirit, in our dealings with others. God thus purposes to favor more especially those who particularly strive to exemplify His gracious mercy.

"Abandon us not in temptation" indicates that we are aware that we are surrounded by the powers of evil, and that as New Creatures we would be unable to withstand these successfully except as we should have Divine aid. "Deliver us from the Evil One" is a recognition that Satan is our great Adversary; and that we are on the alert to resist him, and yet realize our own insufficiency, our need of Divine aid. "We are not ignorant of his [Satan's] devices." (2 Corinthians 2:11.) "We wrestle not against flesh and blood [merely], but against wicked spirits in high positions."--Ephesians 6:12.

"SEEK, KNOCK, ASK— AND RECEIVE"

In the concluding verses of the Study, Jesus admonished that the prayer should be with fervency or earnestness, and not merely lifeless, formal words. He gave the illustration of the man who at first refused to be disturbed, even by his friend, but was finally moved by the earnestness of his friend's petition...

What God really wishes to give to His people is His Holy Spirit. Because of the imperfections of the flesh none of us can be filled with the Spirit at first, as was our perfect Master. But as we come to God desiring to be filled with His spirit, desiring to be in harmony with Him, desiring to be in His character-likeness, by the seeking we find, and to our knocking the door is opened.

Nor should we be afraid that our Heavenly Father would give any bad answer to our requests. Would an earthly parent give to a hungry child a stone when it asked for bread; a serpent when it asked for fish; a scorpion when it asked for an egg? Surely not! We are to know that our Heavenly Father is much better than we, much kinder, much more just and loving, and that He delights to give His good gifts, His Holy Spirit, to those consecrated disciples of Jesus who earnestly seek it."

R1864 (From Harvest Truth Database V8.0 2013)

THE PRIVILEGE AND POWER OF PRAYER

"And Jesus spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint."—Luke 18:1-8

TO THE thoughtful, appreciative mind, one of the greatest privileges which the Word of God offers is that of personal audience and communion with the King of kings and Lord of lords. When we consider how great is our God, and how exalted his station, how wonderful is the condescension that thus regards our low estate! He it is whose glory covereth the heavens, and whose kingdom ruleth over the whole universe. He it is who is without beginning of days or end of years: "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God." He is the immortal, the self-existing One, "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see." The heavens declare his glory and the firmament showeth his handiwork. In all his vast universal domain there is nothing hidden from him, nor can he be wearied by its care. His wisdom, who can fathom? and his ways, who can find them out? or who hath been his

counsellor? His mighty intellect grasps with ease all the interests of his wide dominion, from immensity to minutia. His eye never slumbers nor sleeps, nor can the smallest thing escape his notice, not even a sparrow's fall; and the very hairs of our heads are all numbered. It is his skill which clothes with life and beauty the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven. And are not we, the creatures of his hand, "fearfully and wonderfully made," and the subjects, too, of his love and care?—"O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways; for there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.

"Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in the grave, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost part of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me,...even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."—Psa. 139:1-12.

Fallen creatures though we be, from the noble estate in which we were created, God so loved our race, even while we were yet sinners, as to make provision at great cost for our redemption and restitution and subsequent eternal glory. And therefore it is,—because he loves us,—that through Christ he extends to us the gracious favor of coming to him as children to a father. Wonderful is the condescension, wonderful the love and favor of our God!

Yet our God is a God to be revered: he is not one like ourselves, our equal, into whose presence we may come without that ceremony and decorum due to his glorious person and office. (Job 9:1-35.) The court of heaven has regulations and ceremonies of respect and due deference which must be complied with by every man who would gain an audience with the King of kings; and it behooves us to inquire what those regulations are before we presume to address him. Here the Word of God gives explicit directions. Our Lord Jesus, the appointed "days-man" for which Job so earnestly longed (Job 9:32,33), said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me. I am the way." (John 14:6.) Then he gave us an illustration of the manner in which we should address him, in what is known as the Lord's prayer. (Matt. 6:9-13.) The illustration teaches (1) that we (believers in Christ) may consider ourselves as in God's estimation reinstated (through faith in Christ) to the original position of sons of God, and that we may therefore confidently address him—"Our Father." (2) It indicates on our part worshipful adoration of the high and holy One, and profound reverence for the glorious character and attributes of Our God.—"Hallowed be thy name." (3) It expresses full sympathy with his revealed plan for a coming Kingdom of righteousness, which will be according to his will.—"Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." This shows the attitude of heart to be toward righteousness, and fully submitted to the divine will and purpose, that God may work in it to will and to do his good pleasure. (4) It expresses in plain and simple language its dependence on God for daily needs, and the confidence of a child in the Father for the supply of those needs out of his abundant fullness.—"Give us this day our daily bread." (5) It seeks forgiveness for trespasses, and recognizes also the obligation thus incurred to render the same to those trespassing against us—"And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors;" and (6) it seeks to be guarded against temptations and to be fortified by God's abounding grace against all the wiles of the adversary*—"And abandon us not to trial, but preserve us from evil."

Such are the principles which must ever characterize our attitude of mind and heart when we would avail ourselves of the privilege of addressing the throne of heavenly grace.⁽¹⁾ In brief, our prayers, to be acceptable to God, must express confident faith, loving esteem and reverence, full sympathy with the divine plan and submission to the divine will, childlike dependence upon God, acknowledgment of sins and shortcomings and desire for forgiveness, with a forgiving disposition on our part toward others, and an humble craving for the divine guidance and protection. These may not always all be expressed in words, but such must at least be the attitude of the soul.

Those who thus come to God are privileged always to have their interests considered at the throne of grace, and the welcome we shall always find there may be judged of by the cordial invitations to come often and tarry long. Well might we hesitate to avail ourselves of such privileges were we not thus assured, but having this assurance we may come with confidence to the throne of grace.—Heb. 4:16; 13:6.

* The Sinaitic and Vatican MSS. omit the words, "for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen." Matt. 6:13.

⁽¹⁾ Jun. 10 Manna, Luke 11:1

The Lord knew how necessary to our spiritual life would be this communion with himself. Tempest-tossed and tried, how much we need our Father's care and the comfort and consolation which his presence and sympathy realized imparts. And have not all the meek and contrite in heart the promise not only of the occasional attentive hearing, but of the abiding presence of both the Father and the Son, our Lord Jesus? Jesus said, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas—not Iscariot—saith unto him, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."—John 14:21-23.

The thought which this promise of the abiding presence of the Father and Son conveys to our minds is that their thought and care and interest will be constantly upon us, and that at any instant we may engage the special attention of either or both. The same idea is also conveyed by the words of the Apostle Peter (1 Pet. 3:12)—"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers." And we are urged to be "instant in prayer," to "pray always, and not to faint," to "pray without ceasing;" for "Like as a Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; for he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust." "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him," and "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Yea, "the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children, to such as keep his covenant and to those that remember his commandments to do them."—Rom. 12:12; Luke 18:1; 1 Thes. 5:17; Psa. 103:13,14,11,12,17,18.

We cannot come too often, then, to the throne of the heavenly grace, if we are of those who can claim the abiding presence of the Father and the Son—if we are of them that love him and keep his commandments and who recognize the Lord Jesus as the only way of access to the Father. And even "if any man sin"—be overtaken in a fault—so that from his outward conduct he might be judged as not loving the Lord, yet, if he repent, let him remember that "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," who "is the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins," "who also maketh intercession for us." "Who," then, "shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."—1 John 2:1,2; Rom. 8:33,34.

Wherefore, the Apostle urges, "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession; for we have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."—Heb. 4:14-16.

With such urgent and loving invitations let no child of God hesitate to come to him often or to tarry long in communion and fellowship with him. It is our privilege to enter into our closets and shut the doors and pray to our Father which seeth in secret, who will reward us openly. (Matt. 6:6.) And not only so, but he will go with us through all the business and hurry and commotion of the day; and at any instant in the midst of cares and perplexities we may turn our prayerful thoughts to him for wisdom, for strength and Christian fortitude, or for comfort and consolation for ourselves or others. And though we hear no responding voice, if we are attentive to the course of his providence we will shortly see the shaping of events and circumstances for our good and the good of others in answer to such prayers. Beloved, have we not many a time proved this true?—in perplexities, in tribulations, in afflictions, in persecutions, in bereavements, in temptations and trials?

⁽²⁾In coming to God we need have no fear that he is too busy with other matters of greater importance, or that he is weary of our

⁽²⁾ Jan. 30 Manna, Luke 18:1

coming to him repeatedly with things of small importance. It was to assure us against this very thing that our Lord spoke the parable of the importunate widow, who was heard and answered on account of her importunity. In so doing we evince both the earnestness of our desires and our faith that our prayers will be answered, if we faint not from lack of faith or zeal when the answer is delayed, as often it must necessarily be, since time is an important element in all God's work.

All night, until the break of day, Jacob wrestled in prayer, saying, "I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me." Paul *thrice* besought the Lord until he was assured his grace would be sufficient for him. The Lord himself frequently spent *whole nights* in prayer, and he prayed earnestly and with many tears. (Luke 6:12; Matt. 14:23; Mark 6:46; 1:35; Luke 5:16; Heb. 5:7) And the Apostle Paul says, "In everything, by prayer and supplication [earnest pleading] with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."—Phil 4:6.

The Apostle himself acted on this principle when he urged, in his letter to the Romans, that the saints "strive together [Greek, *agonize*] with me in prayers to God for me," that he might safely accomplish a certain work which seemed to be of the Spirit's leading.—Rom. 15:28-32.

"In every thing."—That signifies that our heavenly Father is deeply interested in everything that relates to us and ours. What thing is too small for his notice who numbers even the very hairs of our heads? In to-day's household or business cares, then, we may have his loving sympathy and helpfulness. Do a mother's counsel and a father's wisdom seem inadequate to restrain and guide aright the wayward course of impetuous and over-confident youth, they may bring their cares and fears to the Lord; and, as the children cross the threshold to meet the world's temptations, his wisdom and providence may be invoked to so shape their circumstances and surroundings as to show them eventually the sure safe way and the folly of pursuing any other.

Do business cares perplex and annoy? remember the Lord's caution, "Be not overcharged with the cares of this life," and the Apostle's warning, "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and utter ruin; for the love of money is the root of all evil, which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." And, remembering these things, come to the throne of the heavenly grace for wisdom and direction as to how you may so adjust your temporal affairs as not to be *overcharged* with the cares of this life. It is right to be charged with them to the extent of diligence (Rom. 12:11) and the utilization of such diligence in the Lord's service; but it is the overplus, the corroding care, that interferes with peace of mind and communion with God, that is to be avoided.

Does poverty pinch and cause anxious thought? take that also to the Lord in prayer; and then, while diligently using the means at hand, to provide things decent and honest, patiently and confidently wait and watch the indications of providence, assured that he who feeds the fowl of the air, which neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and who clothes the grass of the field, which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven, is both able and willing to clothe and feed you and yours.

And so through all the list of earth's trials and cares, its wants and its woes, its bereavements and disappointments and calamities and distresses, its failures and shortcomings and sins and mistakes, we may take them all to the Lord in prayer and receive that strength and sympathy and consolation and help we so much need. Let us live in the presence of the Father and the Son who have promised to abide with us. It will sweeten our days and comfort our nights and ease our burdens and lighten our cares and brighten our hopes, and, in a word, it will lift us up above the world into a higher and purer atmosphere. Such is the will of heaven concerning us: let us appreciate and avail ourselves of the privilege.

By all the encouragements of precept and example, the Lord assures us that the fervent prayer of a righteous man (a justified and consecrated child of God) availeth much. (Jas. 5:16.) We are urged also to come in faith. Jesus said, "If ye have faith and doubt not,....all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." (Matt. 21:22.) As he was addressing his consecrated disciples, it must of course be understood that all their petitions would be subjected to divine wisdom, and therefore the answers to their prayers, though always sure, might not always be in the way expected, but they would always be considered and answered in some way for their highest good.

^{3}What a blessed privilege, dear fellow-disciples of the Lord, is ours, to be instant in prayer, to pray always—to lift up our hearts and minds to God at any time and in any place and to realize thus daily and hourly that the Father and our dear Lord Jesus continually abide with us. And then, when the active duties of the day have been performed under his eye and supervision, or at any time when the soul realizes its necessity, how precious is the privilege of entering into our closets and there alone with God unburdening our hearts.

While secret prayer is the blessed privilege of every child of God, and one without which his spiritual life cannot be sustained, it is also the privilege of Christians to unite their petitions at the throne of grace. This united prayer is specially commended by the Lord. (Matt. 18:19.) "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father; for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

With such promises as these, together with an experience of their fulfilment, who can doubt the love and favor of our God and of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ? Therefore let us be encouraged to pray always and not to faint when the answers seem to tarry long, for time is often required to work out the deep designs of an all wise and loving Providence. Remember the words of the angel to Daniel. Daniel said, "While I was speaking and praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God, for the holy mountain of my God; yea, while I was speaking in prayer," the answer came by the hand of an angel who said, "O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. *At the beginning of thy supplications* the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved."—Dan. 9:20-23.

On another occasion, when Daniel had mourned three weeks, fasting and praying, because of his inability to understand, the angel of the Lord came and said, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that thou didst *set thine heart* to understand, and *to chasten thyself before thy God*, thy words were heard, and I am come *for thy words*."—Dan. 10:2,3,10-12.

Even so shall it ever be with all the beloved of the Lord: at the beginning of our supplications God begins to set in operation the influences and to shape the circumstances which are designed to work out the intended blessing for us—if we faint not, but continue instant in prayer, thereby evincing our continued earnestness of desire, and if we confess our sins, and set our hearts to understand, and chasten ourselves before him. How many prayers are not heard or are hindered because the one who asks does not first purify himself of evil in his own heart? "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts;" *i.e.*, you ask selfishly and without regard to the will of God. (Jas. 4:3.) But to the chastened and sanctified comes the promise—"Before they call [reading the desire of the heart even before it finds expression in words] I will answer [will begin so to shape events as to bring the answer soon or later]; and while they are yet speaking I will hear." (Isa. 65:23,24.) While this is in connection with a prophecy relating to the Lord's people in the Millennial age, it nevertheless is true of all his faithful ones of this age. Praise the Lord for all his loving kindness to even the least of his lowly children!

^{3} Jan. 16 Manna, Rom. 12:12