The Sabbath Watchman SPECIAL ISSUE 1980

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors, And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Week of Prayer Readings

To be read from December 5 to 13, 1980

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Introduction

ANOTHER year of mercy has passed into eternity. We stand again on the threshold of a new year, and we should pause a moment to look back at the time which has passed. We should thank, praise and honor the Lord for all the good that He has done for us, spiritually as well as materially. All glory be to Him for the benefits and blessings we have received from His hands, and praise and thanks to Him for how He has led us. We are thankful that He, in this time of confusion, has kept us in His marvelous truth and sustained us, despite all our weaknesses.

We are more conscious than ever that we are living in a very serious time. The events in the world speak eloquently. There is grave danger for every child of God today to become lukewarm, or to drift into cold formalism. The events on our sinful planet should awaken us. We should realize that the end of all things is near. In this solemn time, we must connect ourselves more closely than ever to the Lord. We are lost without a living connection with our Creator and have no power to resist the wily, modern deceptions of our age. The spirit of the world, materialism, prosperity, pleasure seeking, amusements and the comforts of this life are obstructing the working of the Holy Spirit within us. Besides this, we have a great commission to bring the saving message of the blessed gospel to a perishing world. Every church member should, in some capacity, take part in this missionary activity.

During this week we will study the exemplary prayer of our Saviour, "The Lord's Prayer." During this time, while people in the world are seeking amusement and worldly festivities, we, as the people of the Lord, will earnestly seek the Lord through prayer and the study of these Week of Prayer Readings. We shall, individually as well as collectively, again rededicate our lives to our heavenly Advocate. May the Lord grant this in His great mercy. Amen!

Instructions for all Church Officers

On Sabbath, December 13, 1980, the Week of Prayer offerings will be gathered. Make the gifts we give a real sacrifice for God. This Sabbath is also a day of prayer and fasting, well pleasing to the Lord.

We ask all workers and church officers, as well as all church members, to conduct these days of prayer in a most solemn manner. Wherever it is possible, the whole church or group should gather for the prayer meetings. The deacons should also remember the sick and the aged ones and read the prayer readings with them. The Week of Prayer offerings will be handed in in an unsealed envelope, on which a Bible text has been written. The church leaders should announce this procedure on the first Sabbath of the readings.

New souls should be carefully instructed ahead of time that on the day of fasting we surrender our hearts and gifts to God in deep thankfulness.

In churches and groups where it is possible to do so, the Week of Prayer offerings may be brought forward by the giver himself during the singing of the hymn, "They Brought Their Gifts to Jesus." Besides this, it would be good, as far as possible, especially on both Sabbaths, for the readings to be read by the leader as a sermon.

The Week of Prayer offerings are scheduled to go to new and needy missionary fields throughout the world.

—The Brethren of the General Conference

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"Lord, Teach Us to Pray"

By E. G. WHITE

"IN HIS sermon on the mount, Christ taught His disciples precious lessons in regard to the necessity of trusting in God. These lessons were designed to encourage the children of God through all ages, and they have come down to our time full of instruction and comfort. The Saviour pointed His followers to the birds of the air as they warbled their carols of praise, unencumbered with thoughts of care, for 'they sow not, neither do they reap.' And yet the great Father provides for their needs."[1]

The Lord's Prayer

"The Lord's prayer was twice given by our Saviour, first to the multitude in the Sermon on the Mount, and again, some months later, to the disciples alone. The disciples had been for a short time absent from their Lord, when on their return they found Him absorbed in communion with God. Seeming unconscious of their presence, He continued praying aloud. The Saviour's face was irradiated with a celestial brightness. He seemed to be in the very presence of the Unseen; and there was a living power in His words as of one who spoke with God.

"The hearts of the listening disciples were deeply moved. They had marked how often He spent long hours in solitude in communion with His Father. His days were passed in ministry to the crowds that pressed upon Him, and in unveiling the treacherous sophistry of the rabbis, and this incessant labor often left Him so utterly wearied that His mother and brothers, and even His disciples, had feared that His life would be sacrificed. But as He returned from the hours of prayer that closed the toilsome day, they marked the look of peace upon His face, the sense of refreshment that seemed to pervade His presence. It was from hours spent with God that He came forth, morning by morning to bring the light of heaven to men. The disciples had come to connect His hours of prayer with the power of His words and works. Now, as they listened to His supplication, their hearts were awed and humbled. As he ceased praying, it was with conviction of their own deep need that they exclaimed, 'Lord, teach us to pray.'

"Jesus gives them no new form of prayer. That which He has before taught them He repeats, as if He would say, You need to understand what I have already given. It has a depth of meaning you have not yet fathomed.

"The Saviour does not, however, restrict us to the use of these exact words. As one with humanity, He presents His own ideal of prayer, words so simple that they may be adopted by the little child, yet so comprehensive that their significance can never be fully grasped by the greatest minds."[2]

"Jesus, the divine Master, ever exalted the name of His heavenly Father. He taught His disciples to pray, 'Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.' . . . In the wonderful prayer that Christ offered just before His crucifixion, He declared, 'I have glorified Thee on the earth.' 'Glorify Thy Son,' He pleaded, 'that Thy Son also may glorify Thee.' 'O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.' "[3]

" 'When Ye Pray, Say, Our Father.'

"Jesus teaches us to call *His* Father our Father. He is not ashamed to call us brethren."[4] "For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Hebrews 2:11.

"In order to strengthen our confidence in God, Christ teaches us to address Him by a new name, a name entwined with the dearest associations of the human heart. He gives us the privilege of calling the infinite God our Father. This name, spoken to Him and of Him, is a sign of our love and trust toward Him, and a pledge of His regard and relationship to us. Spoken when asking His favor or blessing, it is as music in His ears. That we might not think it presumption to call Him by this name, He has repeated it again and again. He desires us to become familiar with the appellation."[5]

"The great God teaches us to call Him Father. He would have us understand how earnestly and tenderly His heart yearns over us in all our trials and temptations. 'Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.' The mother might sooner forget her child than God could forget one soul that trusts Him."[6]

"None but the Son of God could accomplish our redemption; for only He who was in the bosom of the Father could declare Him. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it manifest."[7]

Our Father

"Here is the announcement of that wonderful truth, so full of encouragement and comfort, that God loves us as He loves His Son. This is what Jesus said in His last prayer for His disciples, Thou 'hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me.'

"The world that Satan has claimed and has ruled over with cruel tyranny, the Son of God has, by one vast achievement, encircled in His love and connected again with the throne of Jehovah. Cherubim and seraphim, and the unnumbered hosts of all the unfallen worlds, sang anthems of praise to God and the Lamb when His triumph was assured. They rejoiced that the way of salvation had been opened to the fallen race and that the earth would be redeemed from the curse of sin. How much more should those rejoice who are the objects of such amazing love!

"How can we ever be in doubt and uncertainty, and feel that we are orphans? It was in behalf of those who had transgressed the law that Jesus took upon Him human nature; He became like unto us, that we might have everlasting peace and assurance. We have an Advocate in the heavens, and whoever accepts Him as a personal Saviour is not left an orphan to bear the burden of his own sins.

" 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God.' 'And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.' 'It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.'

"The very first step in approaching God is to know and believe the love that He has to us; for it is through the drawing of His love that we are led to come to Him."[8]

"Our heavenly Father waits to bestow upon us the fullness of His blessing. It is our privilege to drink largely at the fountain of boundless love."[9]

"Our God is a tender, merciful Father. His service should not be looked upon as a heart-saddening, distressing exercise. It should be a pleasure to worship the Lord and to take part in His work."[10]

"The perception of God's love works the renunciation of selfishness. In calling God our Father, we recognize all His children as our brethren. We are all a part of the great web of humanity, all members of one family. In our petitions we are to include our neighbors as well as ourselves. No one prays aright who seeks a blessing for himself alone.

"The infinite God, said Jesus, makes it your privilege to approach Him by the name of Father. Understand all that this implies. No earthly parent ever pleaded so earnestly with an erring child as He who made you pleads with the transgressor. No human, loving interest ever followed the impenitent with such tender invitations."[11]

"What love, what matchless love, that, sinners and aliens as we are, we may be brought back to God and adopted into His family! We may address Him by the endearing name, 'Our Father,' which is a sign of our affection for Him and a pledge of His tender regard and relationship to us."[12]

"God dwells in every abode; He hears every word that is spoken, listens to every prayer that is offered, tastes the sorrows and disappointments of every soul, regards the treatment that is given to father, mother, sister, friend, and neighbor. He cares for our necessities, and His love and mercy and grace are continually flowing to satisfy our need.

"But if you call God your Father you acknowledge yourselves His children, to be guided by His wisdom, and to be obedient in all things, knowing that His love is changeless. You will accept His plan for your life. As children of God, you will hold His honor, His character, His family, His work, as the objects of your highest interest. It will be your joy to recognize and honor your relation to your Father, and to every member of His family. You will rejoice to do any act, however humble, that will tend to His glory, or to the well-being of your kindred."[13]

"The Lord desires His children to take comfort in His service and to find more pleasure than hardship in His work. He desires that those who come to worship Him shall carry away with them precious thoughts of His care and love. . . ."[14]

"What a value this places upon man! Through transgression the sons of man become subjects of Satan. Through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ the sons of Adam may become the sons of God. By assuming human nature, Christ elevates humanity. Fallen men are placed where, through connection with Christ, they may indeed become worthy of the name 'sons of God.' "[15]

" 'Which are in heaven.' He to whom Christ bids us look as 'our Father,' 'is in the heavens; He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased.' In His care we may safely rest, saying, 'What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee.' "[16]

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[1] *Steps to Christ*, p. 123.
[2] *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 102, 103.
[3] *Prophets and Kings*, p. 69.
[4] *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 103.
[5] *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 141, 142.
[6] *Gospel Workers*, p. 210.
[7] *Steps to Christ*, p. 14.
[8] *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 104, 105.
[9] *Steps to Christ*, p. 94.
[10] *Steps to Christ*, p. 103.
[11] *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 105.
[12] *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 739, 740.
[13] *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 105, 106.
[14] *Steps to Christ*, p. 103.
[15] *Steps to Christ*, p. 15.
[16] *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 106.

THE POWER OF PRAYER

Nobody knows the power of prayer,
But somebody must be listening there,
With a friendly ear for the heart that calls . . .
Someone Who knows when a sparrow falls.

Miracles lie in the power of prayer;
Faith that can banish the soul's despair;
Hope that can shine like a holy light,
And brighten the spirit's darkest night.

When earthly help is of no avail,
There is one Friend Who will never fail;
Just lift your eyes—the answer is there . . .
For nobody knows the power of prayer.

—Author Unknown

"Hallowed Be Thy Name"

By A. CRAVIOTTO, *South America*

WHEN the Lord Jesus taught His disciples how to pray and spoke "The Lord's Prayer," He emphasized the sacredness of the name of the Father with these words: "Hallowed be Thy name." This sentence contains a rich lesson for us, because we certainly know that the name of God is sacred, for which reason it should not be used in an irreverent or careless manner.

There are grievous sins committed if His holy name is used in the trifling conversations of daily life. "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory." Isaiah 6:1-3.

If seraphims covered their faces and feet at the mention of the holiness of the Father, how much more reason do we poor, wretched sinners have to express that holy name with the highest reverence? And this is exactly what Jesus wants to teach us in "The Lord's Prayer."

We must earnestly consider what the name of the Father means. We, who are burdened with sin and separated from the divine requirements, might well consider what we are doing before we call upon the name of the Creator. Nevertheless, today just the opposite is being done. The sacred name of the Lord is flippantly and irreverently used.

During these solemn days of prayer, as God's people are assembling to worship God, we should meditate deeply about this subject of vital concern.

A frightening experience

"Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And He said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover He said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face: for he was afraid to look upon God." Exodus 3:1-6.

At every place where God's presence is revealed, proper reverence must be shown. The great men of the Bible understood very well the solemnity of God's presence. Moses revealed fear when he realized he was in God's presence. He took off his shoes in order to approach the burning bush. This teaches every one of us a lesson.

As we gather together in the house of God, or in any other place of worship, it should be with the great reverence in the knowledge that, ". . . where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Matthew 18:20. Yet often we hear common laughter, whispering, worldly talk or babies crying. Some mothers remain with their crying children in the place of worship, and the service is disturbed. Thus the name of the Lord is desecrated, especially if no measures are taken to stop these offenses. In this regard also, a reformation is needful, so that the place of worship can be hallowed by the Divine Presence. When David, the Psalmist, said, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psalm 122:1), he revealed his willingness to give God worship, reverence, and due honor. The hours of worship are the most important ones in our life. The contact with heavenly beings, even though they are invisible, helps us to remain firm amid the storms which come to us in this sin-cursed earth.

Let us also come punctually to the meetings. Those who come late to the Sabbath school and to the worship service are losing the heavenly blessings. There is no excuse for this, for God is a God of order.

Copying God

"For I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy." Leviticus 11:45.

The words, "Hallowed be Thy name," teach us not only that the Lord is holy, but also that He requires us to reach the same high goal. But this is not achieved in an instant; it takes a whole lifetime of struggle and self-denial. Every day brings its battles; and, if we are faithful, we shall win new victories. Sin wants to triumph, yet Christ has been victorious, and with His help we also shall conquer. We are surrounded by dangers and a corrupt atmosphere. We can overcome only through the blood of Jesus Christ, which has been shed for us abundantly. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Romans 12:21.

Both the Father and the Son have a distinct personality. Christ declared, "I and the Father are one." Yet the Son came in the form of flesh. He laid down His crown and kingly robes, taking upon Himself our human

form, so that we, as humanity, could become partakers of His divine nature through His infinite sacrifice—so we might escape this world of corruption caused by sin.

Jesus was tempted as we are, yet He never answered the tempter in a hurtful way. But at every temptation He used the word of God—"It is written." This was His unfailing weapon. In the same manner we, as representatives of Christ, must answer every temptation of the devil with the living word of God. We must never follow the steps of the serpent by using his scientific arguments. Satan will never gain an advantage if the child of God firmly defends himself with the word of God.

If we seek refuge in Christ, decide to obey Him on our own initiative, and are ready to do service, we shall receive strength and help to gain the victory. Let us never forget that only those who surrender themselves with all their heart to the Lord will receive divine assistance. The ministering angels are always ready to help every repentant soul.

Already Canaan is near

Again, another year is drawing to a close and the prayers of God's children shall ascend to the throne of mercy. The events up to the present day reveal the fulfillment of the prophecies. The door of mercy is still open, and Jesus continues His mediatorial service for us. These days of prayer should be days of reflection, self-examination and surrender. We have no assurance that we shall have another Week of Prayer, for time is fleeting, and the last movements will be rapid ones. Very soon there shall be time no longer. Revelation 10:5, 6.

Before we reach Canaan, we must wander through the desert of tests and trials. Therefore, we must, today, fully develop our faith and confidence in God and not allow our courage to flag. The enemy will try to stop us and lure us into the trap of discouragement. But as long as we look to Christ, holding fast the confession of our faith, we shall come forth triumphantly. Right now is the time when we must make our decision to be more faithful in our duties. Yes, dear brethren and sisters, let us redeem the last moments remaining to gain the victory over everything evil. If we pass through the wilderness of trials without murmuring, we shall reach the final end of our journey. Canaan is very near.

When the people of Israel went through the wilderness, they experienced disagreeable tests—their water supply often failed, and the food was not to their liking. They did not have all the comforts they desired, and yet the cloud led them by day; and the pillar of fire, by night. They experienced disagreeable things, and they complained against their invisible Leader. Bad results followed quickly. Thousands upon thousands perished in the wilderness. This sad story was written down in the word of God as a lesson for us, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things are our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. . . . Now all these happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." 1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 11.

The unsanctified children of Israel entered into such a situation. They were a people who murmured and neglected the opportunities God gave them. Divine evidences were disregarded, and disastrous results followed; the disobedient congregation was overthrown in the wilderness. May we learn from their experience!

Before the oasis

The following scene is just ahead of us: The sun is sinking in the West. Black clouds darken the sky. A cloudy and sad day follows. Melancholy grips all hearts. Everything appears dark and lifeless. Nature is hiding its enchantment, and the voice of the birds is silenced. Quietness and rest rule everywhere. The door of mercy has been closed, and Christ has ceased His office as Mediator for fallen humanity. Then the time of trouble, such as has never been before, commences. God's children must stand without an Intercessor and await the culmination of all things in this world. The heavenly oasis is not far distant, but the time of testing has overtaken them. It is the time of trouble when God's people have to face the last trials.

It is now—right now—that we need to think deeply about the subject of this prayer reading, "Hallowed Be Thy Name." He who has not reached this high goal at that time will not be able to stand the last time of trouble. He will perish with the wicked. Therefore we must now hasten to our eternal refuge—to our dear Saviour.

The Week of Prayer is a week for the spiritual refreshment of God's people. They are days of meditation in which we should make an analysis so we may know how matters stand with our "debits" and "credits." Conscience should awaken, and memories of the past should pass before our hearts and minds like a panorama. These days which the Lord presents to us annually are a valuable opportunity to ponder all things earnestly and to make a complete surrender.

After they have passed through the last trials and gained the victory through divine power, joy inexpressible will be experienced by the redeemed on that great day. All sufferings will be forgotten in view of the glorious coming of Jesus Christ. All will be a thing of the past when we view the glory and majesty of God. Therefore, in order to give us a picture of the future, the apostle Paul expresses himself as follows: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." 1 Corinthians 2:9.

What a wonderful oasis after such a long journey through the desert! Let us not doubt, dear brethren and sisters, but let us remain firm in this precious truth of Reformation. Let us not run from place to place, thinking we will be able to find another church which offers us something better. Doing so, we deceive our-

selves and step into danger. Those who separate themselves from God's church, from this prophesied Reformation, to join other churches, are making a serious mistake which they will one day deeply regret. It is here, right here in the church of the living God, where we must reach true sanctification, without which no one can see the Lord. There is no longer time to be shaken to and fro, for there is danger we may perish in the wilderness of doubt and insecurity. Let us go forward, constantly looking to the cross of Christ.

"Hallowed be Thy name"

We come to the conclusion that Christ, when He taught the disciples "The Lord's Prayer," made them understand that the sanctification of the name of the Father must be revealed in His children. "But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." 1 Peter 1:15.

Sanctification must not be merely theoretical but practical in all the details of life. A converted Christian must reveal in his private and public life that he has accepted Christ and that he lives according to his faith. The one who is not a true Christian example denies the Saviour and his religion and is only putting on a false appearance.

Many will be disappointed when the moment of their last trial comes. They will find that their faith was only imagination. Their foundation has been superficial, and therefore it cannot endure the difficulties of the last days. No one can change his life after the door of probation is closed. The years past, which were spent in indifference and in the shadow of doubt, have weakened the spiritual powers, and the time will be past. "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Jeremiah 8:20.

"True sanctification is harmony with God, oneness with Him in character. It is received through obedience to those principles that are the transcript of His character. And the Sabbath is the sign of obedience. He who from the heart obeys the fourth commandment will obey the whole law. He is sanctified through obedience." —*Testimonies for the Church,* vol. 6, p. 350.

The Sabbath is a sign between God and His children. He who faithfully keeps God's day of rest, and turns away ". . . 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: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isaiah 58:13, 14), and then endures unto the end, shall one day be in God's kingdom.

Sanctification causes a remarkable change in human nature. Character is perfected; the mind becomes meek; words are more controlled; anger disappears; lies no longer exist; and controversies cease to exist. One thing is deeply imbedded down in the heart—the love of Christ. It will work a genuine inner reformation, which will be effectual on the outside. Passions are tamed, and a very basic change takes place as a result of the working power of the Holy Spirit. This is called SANCTIFICATION.

What a state of happiness! May God grant that we will reach this elevated goal! "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matthew 5:48. AMEN!

THE PLACE OF PRAYER

The place of prayer is a humble place
And ere we enter there
We must leave outside our garb of pride
And our load of worldly care.

The place of prayer is a quiet place,
And at the outer gate
The voice of our will we must firmly still,
And bid our wishes wait.

The place of prayer is a holy place,
And ere we step therein,
With unshod feet our God to meet,
We must put away our sin.

But the place of prayer is high enough
To bring Heaven's glory nigh,
And our need speaks clear to our Father's ear,
And is open to His eye.

And the place of prayer is wide enough
For Christ to enter there;
And the humble heart need not depart
Without the vision fair.

And the place of prayer is large enough
To hold God's riches stored,
And faith is the key of the treasury
That opens the secret hoard.

—Annie Johnson Flint

"Thy Kingdom Come"

By M. P. RINGELBERG, *Asia*

THIS well-known phrase from the model prayer of our Lord places the suppliant in the position of asking for the rulership of God's kingdom on earth. This kingdom is to be set up at the second Advent and, thus, is in the future. However, to pray this prayer correctly involves far more than merely expressing the devout hope that one day the Divine Government will be established on this earth and that all will be subject to the heavenly rule. It is a true and reliable fact of faith that when we pray, "Thy kingdom come," we think of that kingdom of God which, according to prophecy, will overrule every other earthly kingdom. Yet we should not limit our understanding to only this aspect of God's kingdom.

When we study the subject of the kingdom of God, we soon distinguish the two phases of this kingdom; namely, the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory. The first phase, as the name already indicates, refers to the relationship of mortal man to the divine initiative in the plan of salvation. Actually, the term, "kingdom of grace," is not found in the Scriptures, but Paul clearly alluded to it when he exhorted the believers to come boldly unto the throne of grace. Hebrews 4:16. Likewise, Matthew speaks of the *throne* of glory, which indicates that there is a *kingdom* of glory. Matthew 25:31, 32.

If our view of this petition that God's kingdom be established remains limited to the future kingdom of glory, we shall completely miss the "here and now" aspect of the kingdom of grace. These two aspects of the kingdom of God cannot be separated, since the one forms the condition for the other; we cannot expect any glory without the measureless grace of our Lord. Therefore, when we pray, "Thy kingdom come," it is essential that we direct our views to the invisible but very real and important sphere of the government, rulership and influence which we call the kingdom of grace.

The kingdom of grace was instituted immediately after the fall of man. By believing and accepting the provision God had made for them, Adam and his family could become subjects of this kingdom. When Jesus came to this earth to die on the cross as the atonement for man's sins, the kingdom of grace, which thus far had existed only by promise, was established by His blood. No longer was there any chance that the proffered atonement and reconciliation would fail. Christ had paid the price for all time. The better covenant went into effect again when the rituals of the Jewish nation were annulled. Reality had met its ceremonial shadow at the cross, and henceforth men could approach God once more by faith and faith alone.

The kingdom of grace, so often called the "kingdom of God" by Christ in His teaching while on earth, was already in existence in His time. It was an actual fact, which required active participation on the part of its citizens. "Repent ye and believe the gospel," they were told. Mark 1:15. "Every man presseth [forces] his way into it." Luke 16:16. The kingdom of grace does not announce its presence with great pomp, fanfare or force. Jesus said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." Luke 17:20. The inner-working, secret, silent growth in grace, which makes the participant of God's mercy ever more in harmony with the divine principles of government, constitutes the kingdom of grace. As the Spirit of Prophecy states: "The kingdom of God's grace is now being established, as day by day hearts that have been full of sin and rebellion yield to the sovereignty of His love." —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 108.

Paul calls this the kingdom of God's dear Son. When speaking of His kingdom, we refer to the royal authority, sovereignty and power of the king, not so much to the territory over which He has sway. Thus, when the kingdom of grace rules within us, we acknowledge that Jesus is King of our life, and we voluntarily subject ourselves to His rulership and authority.

"Thy kingdom come," when prayed sincerely, causes an uprooting of all of our human values in life. If well understood by God's professed people, particularly those who have taken the noble name of Reformers in a time of ever-growing and gross apostasy, a vast change would be seen in the interests and content of their lives. All vanity, selfishness, sinful independence, extremism, indifference, lukewarmness and conformity to the world and its standards, would be swept away before the all-consuming passion to spread the gospel of the kingdom throughout the world and thus to usher in this glorious realm of God. No longer would there be a lack of participation in the churches or a lack of dedication and loyalty to the cause of God. Pride, possessiveness, undue self-esteem and conceit would crumble before the overwhelming need of the saving power of truth by all the world around us. If the kingdom of God would be fully understood and admitted into our souls, there would be no danger for God's servants to follow humanly designed courses, to rely upon the arm of flesh, worldly methods, governments, institutions or organizations to fulfill the heavenly plan.

The powers outlined in prophecy are now regaling their sinister forces before the church of God. They are applauded and jubilantly hauled in by the world's inhabitants as the Trojan horse was. The disappoint-

ment of their followers will be devasting when the mask is ripped off, but then it will be too late for repentance. The church of God in this last epoch of the world's history is the only realm where the kingdom of grace is alive and active. Before our very eyes we witness every detail of prophecy being fulfilled and the conditions being created which will rapidly ripen for the imminent establishment of the kingdom of glory at Christ's coming.

When we pray, "Thy kingdom come," we commit ourselves to every demand and necessity required to make our prayer come true. "Let this point be fully settled in every mind: If we accept Christ as a Redeemer, we must accept Him as a Ruler. We cannot have the assurance and perfect confiding trust in Christ as our Saviour until we acknowledge Him as our King and are obedient to His commandments." —*Faith and Works,* p. 16. Peace of mind and heart as well as total commitment of every talent and strength are involved in the kingdom of God.

"If through the grace of Christ His people will become new bottles, He will fill them with the new wine." —*Review and Herald Extra,* December 23, 1890. The liberating light of God's merciful dealings with sinful man, His gracious provision made in His gift through His Son and the outpouring of His Holy Spirit can come to their full right only in the renewed soul of the obedient citizen of God's kingdom of grace.

The kingdom of grace is also the kingdom of righteousness. Since the time when the crucial issue of Christ and His righteousness was presented to the Advent people in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1888, Satan has seen to it that a veritable flood of ideas has proliferated, presenting all kinds of theories and interpretations on this vital subject. Justification by faith is when the penitent sinner, contrite before God, discerns Christ's atonement on his behalf and accepts this atonement as his only hope in this life and for the future. Thus his sins are pardoned, and he is justified. Pardon and justification are one and the same thing. Justification is the opposite of condemnation. It is thus that God exercises His boundless mercy toward those who are fully undeserving. It is the righteousness of Christ which makes the penitent sinner acceptable to God and works his justification. However sinful his life has been, if he believes in Jesus as his personal Saviour, he stands before God in the spotless robes of Christ's imputed righteousness.

Because the kingdom of grace is also the kingdom of righteousness, we need to consider the importance of righteousness, or rightness, before God. Although it is very true, and needs to be stressed to many of our people, that our works can in no wise contribute one jot or one tittle to our salvation, it is also true that God expects the fruits of sanctification in the lives of His subjects.

"By living faith, by earnest prayer to God, and depending upon Jesus' merits, we are clothed with His righteousness, and we are saved. 'Oh, yes,' some say, 'we are saved in doing nothing. In fact, I am saved. I need not keep the law of God. I am saved by the righteousness of Jesus Christ.' Christ came to our world to bring all men back to allegiance to God. To take the position that you can break God's law, for Christ has done it all, is a position of death, for you are as verily a transgressor as anyone.

"Then what is it? It is to hear and to see that with the righteousness of Christ which you hold by faith, righteousness supplied by His efforts and His divine power, you can keep the commandments of God." —*Faith and Works,* p. 71.

If we expect our prayer, "Thy kingdom come," to be heard, we must fulfill the necessary conditions. This prayer involves faith *and* action. "Faith and works will keep us evenly balanced and make us successful in the work of perfecting Christian character. . . .

"We are living in an important and interesting period of this earth's history. We need more faith than we have yet had; we need a firmer hold from above. Satan is working with all power to obtain the victory over us, for he knows that he has but a short time in which to work. Paul had fear and trembling in working out his salvation; and should not we fear lest a promise being left us, we should any of us seem to come short of it, and prove ourselves unworthy of eternal life? We should watch unto prayer, strive with agonizing effort to enter in at the strait gate." —*Faith and Works,* p. 49.

Our King is ready; the capital, the New Jerusalem, is ready to come down to this earth; the subjects are now being prepared, and soon the die will be cast for eternity. It will not be long before the Mediator in the heavenly sanctuary will lay off His priestly robes and exchange them for His royal garments. He then will come to end the kingdom of grace and usher in the kingdom of glory. Now is the probationary time. Now the destiny of souls is being determined. Now is the accepted time, in which we may repent of our sins and choose to cast our allegiance with the coming King.

When we pray again, "Thy kingdom come," shall we not vividly bring to mind the deep personal spiritual significance for ourselves and begin to see it as a pledge of rededication and greater faithfulness to the King of our life?

Christ says: "Surely, I come quickly. Amen." And the church answers, "Even so come, Lord Jesus." Revelation 22:20.

PRAYER

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer, the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice,
Returning from his ways;
While angels in their songs rejoice
And cry, "Behold, he prays!"

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air;
His watchword at the gates of death;
He enters heaven with prayer.

O Thou, by whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way,
The path of prayer Thyself has trod:
Lord, teach us how to pray!

—James Montgomery

"Thy Will Be Done"

By C. KOZEL, *Argentina*

IN THE human mind (the inner life) there are many mysteries which man does not understand, although he would like to control them. The chief mystery, the central element on which so much of man's life depends, is *the will*! It is regarded by people almost universally as the most important thing, for nearly everyone places the greatest value on making his will count in a given matter, no matter what the cost may be. We, therefore, have the well-known expression, *"Man's will is his heaven."*

Everything occupies a certain place. As it is in heaven, so it is also on earth. With God all things are properly arranged. The will of man in its varied forms, for example, lives in his heart. At his death, it ceases to function. In order for man's will to be really good and pleasing to God, it must be in harmony with the will of God, expressed in the most holy place, where the law of God and the mercy seat are found. People who want to be saved must constantly pay attention to this, according to the Holy Scriptures. It is of the greatest importance that an analysis be made at the close of each day as to one's progress in the Christian life. Men who are careless and indifferent toward the sacred requirements of God will not enter the kingdom on the last day, because they do not pay attention to this most important concept of worship—"Thy Will Be Done"—the phrase which should be found on our mortal lips at every moment. A true child of God must make the expression of David from Psalm 40:8 his own: "I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart." Those who fulfill this condition with joy and contentment will most certainly have their desire to reach heaven realized.

In the dictionary, there are two small words of a few letters; namely, *mine* and *yours*. Yet the results they bring are as different as day and night. Thus in this life everything has its meaning and intent. One thing might be favorable, while another may bring destruction. So it is here. When, for instance, a person cannot distinguish between a desire which tends toward sin and one that leads toward the will of God in divine holiness, he is lost for heaven. And this is what is transpiring here on earth so mysteriously under the direction of the powers of darkness and will soon lead to a catastrophe on the earth.

"Behold the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him. The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is *defiled* under the inhabitants thereof; because they have *transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.* Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left. The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merryhearted do sigh. The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. The city of confusion is broken down: every house is shut up, that no man may come in. There is a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction. When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea. Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires, even the name of the Lord God of Israel in the isles of the sea. From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous. But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously. Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in prison, and after many days shall they be visited. Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously." Isaiah 24.

That which has not yet been fulfilled of Isaiah 24 will soon meet its fulfillment, to the dread and astonishment of all dwellers on earth, except the few who will be saved. We should, therefore, be glad that soon the whole will of God concerning the saving of His obedient children—those who always carry a solid and sanctified "Thy will be done" in heart and mind, will find fulfillment. Verses 14-16 will be literally fulfilled for them. They will be full of praise and thanksgiving, even though the treacherous dealers have taken everything from them. It is because they have consistently done the will of God that bread and water is assured them from heaven. Therefore, courage in the Lord, my dear brethren and sisters! We are very near our homeland! Soon we shall be with our dear Saviour forever.

Right now in this time, as the end is drawing constantly nearer, it is of the utmost importance that we be in the closest relationship with our dear Saviour, so the will of God—namely, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification" (1 Thessalonians 4:3)—may be completely fulfilled in us. Only in this manner will we be prepared to receive the latter rain, which we have expected so long. Never were the evil angels more actively engaged than today to draw us away from the union with our dear Saviour which we need so much.

"When Christ took human nature upon Him, he bound humanity to Himself by a tie of love that can never be broken by any power save the choice of man himself. Satan will constantly present allurements to induce us to break this tie—to choose to separate ourselves from Christ. *Here is where we need to watch, to strive, to pray,* that nothing may entice us to *choose* another master; for we are always free to do this. But let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. Nothing can pluck us out of His hand. In constantly beholding Him, we 'are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.'

"It was thus that the early disciples gained their likeness to the dear Saviour. When those disciples heard the words of Jesus, they felt their need of Him. They sought, they found, they followed Him. They were with Him in the house, at the table, in the closet, in the field. They were with Him as pupils with a teacher, daily receiving from His lips lessons of holy truth. They looked to Him, as servants to their master, to learn their duty. Those disciples were men 'subject to like passions as we are.' They had the same battle with sin to fight. They needed the same grace, in order to live a holy life.

"Even John, the beloved disciple, the one who most fully reflected the likeness of the Saviour, did not naturally possess that loveliness of character. He was not only self-assertive and ambitious for honor, but impetuous and resentful under injuries. But as the character of the Divine One was manifested to him, he saw his own deficiency and was humbled by the knowledge. The strength and patience, the power and tenderness, the majesty and meekness, that he beheld in the daily life of the Son of God, filled his soul with admiration and love. Day by day his heart was drawn out toward Christ, until he lost sight of self in love for his Master. His resentful, ambitious temper was yielding to the molding power of Christ. The regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit renewed his heart. The power of the love of Christ wrought a transformation of character. This is the sure result of union with Jesus. When Christ abides in the heart, the whole nature is transformed. Christ's Spirit, His love, softens the heart, subdues the soul, and raises the thoughts and desires toward God and heaven." —*Steps to Christ,* pp. 72, 73.

Only by a constant acknowledgment of "Thy will be done" can we reach the aforementioned Christian position and character, with the help of God. And this is really the goal of every one of us, for we long with all our hearts that the scene described in the following quotation will soon be fulfilled:

"Said the angel, 'List ye!' Soon I heard a voice like many musical instruments all sounding in perfect strains, sweet and harmonious. It surpassed any music I had ever heard, seeming to be full of mercy, compassion, and elevating, holy joy. It thrilled through my whole being. Said the angel, 'Look ye!' My attention was then turned to the company I had seen, who were mightily shaken. I was shown those whom I had before seen weeping and praying in agony of spirit. The company of guardian angels around them had been doubled, and they were clothed with an armor from their head to their feet. They moved in exact order, like a company of soldiers. Their countenances expressed the severe conflict which they had endured, the agonizing struggle they had passed through. Yet their features, marked with severe internal anguish, now shone with the light and glory of heaven. They had obtained the victory, and it called forth from them the deepest gratitude and holy, sacred joy.

"The number of this company had lessened. Some had been shaken out and left by the way. The careless and indifferent, who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to perseveringly plead and agonize for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, and their places were immediately filled by others taking hold of the truth and coming into the ranks. Evil angels still pressed around them, but could have no power over them.

"I heard those clothed with the armor speak forth the truth with great power. It had effect. . . . I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered, 'It is the latter rain, the refreshing from the presence of the Lord, the loud cry of the third angel.'

"Great power was with these chosen ones. Said the angel, 'Look ye!' My attention was turned to the wicked, or unbelievers. They were all astir. The zeal and power with the people of God had aroused and enraged them. Confusion, confusion, was on every side. I saw measures taken against the company who had the light and power of God. Darkness thickened around them, yet they stood firm, approved of God, and trusting in Him. I saw them perplexed; next I heard them crying unto God earnestly. Day and night their cry ceased not: 'Thy will, O God, be done! If it can glorify Thy name, make a way of escape for Thy people! Deliver us from the heathen around about us. They have appointed us unto death; but thine arm can bring salvation.' These are all the words which I can bring to mind. All seemed to have a deep sense of their unworthiness and manifested entire submission to the will of God; yet, like Jacob, every one,

without an exception, was earnestly pleading and wrestling for deliverance." —*Early Writings*, pp. 271, 272.

It is this condition which this prayer reading with the solemn topic, "Thy Will Be Done," would like to accomplish in us. Let us never forget that whoever is living his life faithfully on the foundation of the three angels' messages, constantly wanting "Thy will be done," is faithfully led by heaven.

The Spirit of Prophecy continues: "Soon I heard the voice of God, which shook the heavens and the earth. There was a mighty earthquake. Buildings were shaken down on every side. I then heard a triumphant shout of victory, loud, musical, and clear. I looked upon the company, who, a short time before, were in such distress and bondage. Their captivity was turned. A glorious light shone upon them. How beautiful they then looked! All marks of care and weariness were gone, and health and beauty were seen in every countenance. Their enemies, the heathen around them, fell like dead men; they could not endure the light that shone upon the delivered, holy ones. This light and glory remained upon them, until Jesus was seen in the clouds of heaven, and the faithful, tried company were changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, from glory to glory. And the graves were opened, the saints came forth, clothed with immortality, crying, 'Victory over death and the grave;' and together with the living saints they were caught up to meet their Lord in the air, while rich, musical shouts of glory and victory were upon every immortal tongue." —*Early Writings*, pp. 272, 273.

My dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, our dear Saviour desires to come soon to take us home. Let us, therefore, go forward with much gratitude, praise and honor, calmly saying in our hearts, "Thy will be done," for then we can hasten our preparation and the early return of the Lord. May God grant us this in mercy. AMEN!

Reading No. 5 — Wednesday, December 10, 1980

"Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread"

By F. DROFENIK, *Germany*

IN THIS prayer we ask God not only for our daily bread but also for our needs to sustain our earthly life, as well as spiritual food to receive eternal life. Every benefit in life brings us responsibility. Thus we are responsible to the Lord for the gifts which He bestows on us. We should consecrate our life to Him.

Included in this prayer is also a petition for our health. To receive health, we, ourselves, have to contribute something toward it. It is written in Exodus 15:26: "And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee." These words also apply to us at the present time. In His mercy, the Lord has given us the message of health reform, and we should earnestly heed it. The Lord could, in a moment, give to every human being perfect health, but He does not. We must do all within our power to attain to health; but the Lord determines the moment for the restoration of health.

I think about the young man who had been blind from birth. The Lord established the given moment for the restoration of his power of vision. Perhaps he had been blind for 25 or more years. In such extreme cases there will be the final moment for every redeemed one to be restored to health at the first resurrection, when all sickness and infirmity will be left in the grave. Yet in this world we must do everything we can and put forth every effort to achieve good health. Physicians, medically trained personnel and laymembers should become involved in helping other people regain their health. Besides the calling to the ministry, medical missionary work belongs to the most important occupations in this world; yet at the first resurrection it will cease to be, because there will be no sickness or hospitals on the earth made new.

We should not judge other people who, perhaps, have gone down into an early grave, although they were striving to live up to health reform principles. We should help our neighbors in a practical way, not condemning anyone, no matter how depraved he may be. We should serve and not wait to be served. A person laid low with sickness should be left untouched—that is, we should not reproach him because of transgression of the laws of health or sit in judgment over him. Only after the person has become well again should we draw his attention to the mistakes he has made in regard to healthful living.

The medical profession should not be the place to make one prominent, praised or rich. It should be just the opposite. The basic virtue of a helper is humility, coupled with love. Humility is that virtue which enables one to truly serve and sacrifice himself. We should say with John the Baptist, "He must increase, but I must

decrease." Our activity of service will be entered in the books of heaven. But it will only be entered if our service has been done in a self-forgetful way so that the left hand knows not what the right hand has been doing. God alone knows our motives. Yet it is right for the physician and his helpers to expect thankfulness from the sick person who has received treatment and is on the way to recovery. It was so with Christ. We are Christ's representatives. We should work as He worked. Christ accepted thanks, and yet He did not exalt Himself or seek prominence. He remained humble. In this same manner, without exaltation, we may also accept recognition from the patients. Every person is also duty-bound to express appreciation to his helpers.

For our daily bread, for all our vital needs, we are to be thankful to God. God knows all our needs, and yet He wants us to ask Him for them. It shows Satan's influence over us when we do not ask of God in prayer. By our prayers God is honored before the heavenly hosts and all the unfallen worlds. We are, as recipients of these gifts, obliged to give unto others and to help them. Many people in this world are famishing because they have no means to secure the basic necessities of life. We should not ask what caused their lack while they are in this condition but wait until they are in a better situation. Everyone who has more than those who are destitute is indebted to share with them, according to the principle of Galatians 6:10: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, *especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*"

A child asks for food when he is hungry, yet he never asks for enough food for the next day. He has confidence in his parents and does not even worry about the next day. We should have a similar trust in our heavenly Father. We should take to heart the words from the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6:34: "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."

On the other hand, we should not be discouraged if the Lord, in the dark hours of our life, does not give us everything right away. If we find ourselves in fearful difficulties, then we must consider it a testing time for us. As true followers of Jesus, we should always strive to be content in whatever situation we are. We should not cast away our confidence in God. The great apostle Paul also suffered hunger. We read in 1 Corinthians 4:11: "Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place." But in such hours let us exclaim with the apostle, "who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Romans 8:35. These emergency situations should not separate us from the love of God, but rather bring us closer to Him. If we remain in the Lord and in His truth, we shall gain the victory.

Spiritual food is just as necessary for the spirit and soul of man as is his physical food. We should ask the Lord for the bread of life, for an increase in knowledge and for strength to lead a life in accordance with our knowledge—such a walk which will exert a good influence upon our fellowmen.

People were brought to Christ so He might make them well, and they were made whole if they revealed faith. Let us read from Matthew 14:34-36, "And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret. And when the men of that place had knowledge of Him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto Him all that were diseased; And besought Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole."

This reminds us of the brazen serpent in the wilderness during the time of the travels of the children of Israel. It was because of their unbelief and disobedience that fiery serpents appeared. All who looked upon the brazen serpent erected by Moses became well. This symbol was an object which, in itself, had no virtue. It was faith, together with obedience, which helped everyone who looked upon it to be made well. So it was with Jesus and the people. The hem of His garment had no power in itself, but strong faith in Christ gave health to the one seeking help.

We are standing today in Christ's stead. We, also, are responsible to help the poor and sick people. We are to do this with the means which we have at hand. But we want to ask the Lord to help us improve our methods of treatment and to make progress. The whole world is a lazar house, and 90% of all diseases have their origin in the realm of the mind. Since this is so, we have much more reason to work. Ministers, mission workers, youth and all believers must arise and help in this work. We should be Good Samaritans, as Jesus was. In the military, one learns how life is destroyed, but with Christ one learns how to restore life again. Therefore, "Give us this day our daily bread." Lord, give us the ability and strength to reach a saving hand to a world faced with death.

We should consider bread as sacred. Never throw away a piece of bread. At one time Christ commissioned the disciples to gather the fragments that remained. "When they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." John 6:12. To throw bread which is still edible into the garbage is a sin. In eating we should exercise temperance. Keep the good things that remain, and, by a saving attitude, help others.

When we pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," we come down to this earth with our petitions. This request stands in the middle of "The Lord's Prayer." Earthly things should be neither the beginning nor the end of our life. We have been placed in this world, and yet we are striving upward toward eternal life. We want to go where Christ is, into that heavenly country where there is no sickness, suffering, want, sin or death.

In all matters and in all our doings, we are dependent upon God. This is the essence of The Lord's Prayer. We are dependent upon the Lord in all our situations in life. Whenever we walk, travel by car, or fly by airplane, something could happen to us. But there can also be a general catastrophe, such as an earthquake, fire, flood or accident. The people affected are suddenly without means or goods and without their daily bread. How appropriate it is, then, that we can pray, "Father, give us our daily bread."

The people of Israel were cared for daily during the wilderness journey. "And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot." Deuteronomy 29:5. The Lord gave His people everything essential for their daily lives, and yet they still murmured. The Lord has also given His people of the end times the health reform message as a sacred heritage. In doing so it has not been His purpose to place a burden upon them, but a blessing.

Part of this health reform is the observance of hygiene and health care in general. The Lord gave the people of Israel strict instructions for the perservation of cleanliness, which we should also observe. In this area church members should be instructed to be an example for others. Cleanliness and order are closely related.

The first principle of good digestion is thorough mastication. So it is also with spiritual food. It must also be thoroughly worked over, which means that the teachings of the Holy Scriptures and the *Testimonies* must be much meditated upon. We say grace at the beginning of every meal that the Lord might bless the food. We should also pray at the beginning of the study of the Word, that the Lord might give us the Holy Spirit and bless the searching of His Word. Mary, the mother of Jesus, kept the sayings of the shepherds in her heart, as it is reported by Luke: "And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning the child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart." Luke 2:15-19.

The people of Israel received the manna in the wilderness every day for forty years. They were educated to remember their dependence on God. However, they murmured because of the monotony of the food. They wanted meat, like they had eaten in Egypt. We, also, should not allow ourselves to become impatient or dissatisfied now. The Lord also provided food for the prophet Elijah, in his time of need, during the time of drought in the land of Israel. At the close of his activity, when he was fleeing for fear of his life, God did not forsake him but gave him the food he needed.

Christ, even in the severest hour of His life, did not forget His mother. He said to John, "Behold thy mother." In the severest hour of one's life, the Lord will never forsake or abandon anyone who consecrates himself to Him. He will take care of him.

The prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," also includes our thankfulness to the Giver. A child, rightly trained, is thankful to his parents for all the benefits he receives from them. So we should also thank the Lord for all the benefits He bestows on us.

Many of the older believers have passed through hard times in the past. They have endured the tribulation of war and the postwar years, but they could testify with certainty that the Lord has always cared for them. And He also fed them with bread and the heavenly manna, for which they were thankful to Him. We, also, as children of the Most High, should not forget in the future to thank Him for all the blessings He imparts to us.

We read in *Testimonies for the Church,* vol. 5, p. 317: "Shall all our devotional exercises consist of asking and receiving? Shall we be always thinking of our wants, and never of the benefits we receive? Shall we be recipients of His mercies and never express our gratitude to God, never praise Him for what He has done for us? We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks. If the lovingkindness of God called forth more thanksgiving and praise, we would have far more power in prayer. We would abound more and more in the love of God and have more bestowed to praise Him for. You who complain that God does not hear your prayers, change the present order and mingle praise with your petitions. When you consider His goodness and mercies, you will find that He will consider your wants."

We should in this manner appear before the Lord with our petitions and gratitude in this hour of prayer, and the merciful God will certainly hear and richly bless us! AMEN!

Next Sabbath, December 13, 1980, is a special day of fasting and prayer in all our churches, with the special offerings gathered that day going to needy and developing mission fields around the world.

The Week of Prayer offerings are to be prepared in advance and placed in their own envelope on which a Bible text has been written. The giver himself is to bring forward his gift during the singing of the hymn, "They Brought Their Gifts to Jesus."

After thanking God for His blessings, the texts may be read aloud in the congregation.

"And Forgive Us Our Debts, As We Forgive Our Debtors"

By O. WELKER, *Germany*

GOD created man in His own image. Let us direct our thoughts toward the Creator of heaven and earth, so that, as far as possible, we may get a clear conception of man as he was created in God's likeness. We read about God in Deuteronomy 32:4 that there is no "iniquity" in Him. And so it was also with man when he came forth from the hands of the Creator. There was no tendency toward evil; yes, it was totally unknown to him. "Man was to bear God's image, both in outward resemblance and in character." —*Patriarchs and Prophets,* p. 45.

When the great deceiver, through the serpent, wanted to bring about the fall of the first human pair, he presented the knowledge of evil, which God in His love had withheld from them, as something worthwhile to strive for. He thus succeeded in bringing about the fall. For the most part, we speak of death as the result of transgression. But something very grave came in. "When man transgressed the divine law, his nature became evil. . . ." —*The Great Controversy,* p. 505. Now the Lord said about man, ". . . for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; . . ." Genesis 8:21. Following a question of Peter, Jesus answered, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts. . . ." Matthew 15:19. Paul describes them as the "works of the flesh." Galatians 5:19. This is now the position of man toward God. Whoever you may be, and in whatever manner you have lived your life, even though with the greatest commitment of your will you try to appear before your fellowmen as correct and untouchable, yet the divine sentence is valid, ". . . and will not acquit the wicked." Nahum 1:3. "Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life." —*Steps to Christ,* p. 18.

Up until now the situation of man appears hopeless. Or is there hope? Jesus said something in a talk which He had with a man in the darkness of the night; and when we hear it, our hearts begin to throb. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. Now stop for a moment and consider your feelings. Does your heart really throb at the reading of these great, loving words of God? Or have you heard them so often that they do not make you tremble any more? It would be too bad if this would be so. By means of the Father's sacrifice of His Son, and through the willingness of Jesus to give His life for lost humanity, there is hope. Jesus took your sins and mine upon Himself, and for this He suffered death, "the wages of sin." But redemption is not a collective act which is accounted to all humanity, though certainly it would have been sufficient for all human beings; but the individual has something to do. He must first learn to know himself and to recognize his need for redemption. This is accomplished through the Holy Spirit, for He will "reprove the world of sin." John 16:8. "And we cannot even repent without the aid of the Spirit of God." —*The Desire of Ages,* p. 175.

What further step must we take in order to receive freedom from the sentence of eternal death? Let us first go in spirit to the last years of the Middle Ages, in order to recognize the value of the light which the Lord in mercy has given us. We place a man into the focal point of our study—Martin Luther. He was seeking peace for his soul and imagined that he would surely find it in a monastery. "He led a most rigorous life, endeavoring by fasting, vigils, and scourgings to subdue the evils of his nature, from which the monastic life had brought no release. He shrank from no sacrifice by which he might attain to that purity of heart which would enable him to stand approved before God. 'I was indeed a pious monk,' he afterward said, 'and followed the rules of my order more strictly than I can express. If ever monk could attain heaven by his monkish works, I should certainly have been entitled to it. . . . If it had continued much longer, I should have carried my mortifications even to death.' As the result of his painful discipline he lost strength and suffered from fainting spasms, from the effects of which he never fully recovered. But with all his efforts his burdened soul found no relief. He was at last driven to the verge of despair." —*The Great Controversy,* p. 123.

He went on a journey to Rome. Have we, who cover great distances with vast conveyances in a short time, given thought to such a journey at that time? "He pursued his journey on foot. . ." (*The Great Controversy,* p. 124) and left Wittenberg in November, 1510. After he had covered something like 750 miles, in January of 1511 he stayed in the city where the supposed representative of Christ had his seat. As he began to climb Peter's stairway on his knees, a change was effected in him, ". . . when suddenly a voice like thunder seemed to say to him: 'The just shall live by faith.' Romans 1:17. He sprang to his feet and hastened from

the place in shame and horror. That text never lost its power upon his soul. From that time he saw more clearly than ever before the fallacy of trusting to human works for salvation, and the necessity of constant faith in the merits of Christ." —*The Great Controversy,* p. 125.

No long pilgrimages, no painful scourgings are necessary to find peace for the soul. In Jesus forgiveness for all guilt can be found if the repentant one meets the Biblical instruction, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. Oh, how great is the merciful kindness of God!

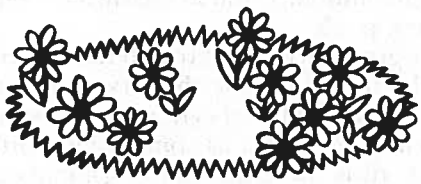
Where can we find the limit of forgiveness for the repentant sinner? At one time, after a torturous climb in the mountains of Austria, toward evening we reached a mountain cabin in which we intended to stay overnight. What a glorious picture unfolded itself before us in the morning—bright rays of sunshine and a clear sky; but, in the valleys below, dense fog had settled. But the fog dissipated in just a short time, and no trace was left as a reminder.

The Lord uses such an ilustration to tell us something. "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins." Isaiah 44:22. Let us use another illustration. A missionary had conducted a series of evangelistic meetings. Thousands of natives had listened to his words. Among them was one who watched for a chance to talk with the missionary. He said, "I have killed a man. Can the Lord Jesus forgive me?" In the course of the conversation, it became evident that he had killed two people. They became ten, one hundred, and then two hundred. He was the chieftain of a tribe of cannibals. In his answer the missionary stayed by the words of Isaiah 1:18, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow," and used many other texts in which the Lord promises pardon. With earnest prayer, this heathen man confessed all his guilt to the Lord and asked for forgiveness.

But there is one more condition to fulfill if you want to receive this great gift of grace. Consider once more the theme of this reading! What does it say? Forgive us, as we forgive others. In life there are always cases in which people—for example—have become debtors to you. Since forgetfulness is a weakness of mankind, there is perhaps even a list of injustices kept, so the debt will not be forgotten. But then, even if the debtor eventually comes and asks for forgiveness, it is denied in a cold, harsh way. Once I read of a man who was at odds with his neighbor and wanted to drag him into court. Since he was already old and felt sure he would die before the trial would end, he included a certain amount of money in his will so the trial could be continued after his death. What might such a person expect in view of the theme of this reading?

In the Holy Scriptures another goal is placed before us. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Philippians 2:5. He does not ask about the greatness of your guilt but pardons you if you come to Him in repentance. He then expects you to have the same attitude toward those who have trespassed against you. We shall be pardoned if we are ready to forgive others. "Jesus teaches that we can receive forgiveness from God only as we forgive others. . . .

"We should not think that unless those who have injured us confess the wrong, we are justified in withholding from them our forgiveness. It is their part, no doubt, to humble their hearts by repentance and confession; but we are to have a spirit of compassion toward those who have trespassed against us, whether or not they confess their faults." —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing,* pp. 113, 114. To do this might go against your nature. Many a person has omitted this petition in the Lord's prayer on purpose. But go on your knees and, with all earnestness, request from the Lord strength to forgive in such a way as He has forgiven. Or do you want to decline to accept a gain of perhaps over $6,000 only because you do not wish to forgive someone else's debt of 65¢? We have a similar picture in Matthew 18. One servant had already had a 10,000-talent debt forgiven. But he himself would not forgive a one-hundredpence debt owed to him by his fellow servant, in spite of his great gain. Because of his irreconcilable attitude, he lost the great gain which had been given to him. Does an unforgiving attitude pay?



A PRAYER

I knelt to pray when day was done,
  And prayed, "O Lord, bless every one;
Lift from each saddened heart its pain,
  And let the sick be well again."
And then I woke another day
  And carelessly went on my way.

The whole day long I did not try
  To wipe a tear from any eye;
I did not try to share the load
  Of any brother on my road;
I did not even go to see
  The sick man just next door to me.

Yet once again, when day was done.
  I prayed, "O Lord, bless everyone."
But as I prayed, into my ear
  There came a voice that whispered clear,
"Pause, hypocrite, before you pray;
  Whom have you tried to bless today?

"God's sweetest blessings always go
  By hands that serve Him here below."
And then I hid my face and cried,
  "Forgive me, God, for I have lied;
Let me but see another day
  And I will live the way I pray."

—Author Unknown

Reading No. 7 — Sabbath, December 13, 1980

The Last Petition

By S. GUTKNECHT, *Germany*

"AND lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Matthew 6:13. In this Week of Prayer, during which we, a people of the end times, are seeking the presence of God in prayer and fasting, the General Conference has taken the topics from the exemplary prayer of the Lord. The thoughts in this prayer are to strengthen our relationship toward God, deepen our prayers and revive anew our longing for the coming of Christ.

The gospels permit us to glance into the life of prayer of Jesus Christ, who, as the Son of man, used prayer to remain in constant connection with His Father in heaven. He was often alone in prayer. "And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." Luke 6:12.

But also, at times, He took His disciples along, and it was then that they heard Him pray. "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 raiment was white and glistening." Luke 9:28, 29.

Jesus came to fulfill the will of God for the redemption of mankind. The prayer which the Son of God prayed from eternity was fulfilled in the history of His suffering and dying. "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained My lips, O Lord, Thou knowest. I have not hid Thy righteousness within My heart; I have declared Thy faithfulness and Thy salvation: I have not concealed Thy lovingkindness and Thy truth from the great congregation." Psalm 40:8-10.

He prayed in Gethsemane, "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done." Luke 22:42.

The prayer of Jesus Christ was filled with perfect love for the Father, with the complete readiness of the Son to do the will of the Father and with the divine power of the Holy Spirit. We, therefore, need not marvel that the disciples came to Jesus with the request, "Lord, teach us to pray. . . ."

Prayer is a necessity for us. The Spirit of Prophecy calls it the "breath of the soul," and no one can live without breathing. Prayer is the greatest privilege of man. No other creature on earth is able to pray. Man, as the crown of creation, has the privilege of speaking to the Creator. He who does not pray sinks down to the level of the beasts. Every man can, at all times and in every need, call on his heavenly Father. God keeps the door to His throne room open to every man. He says, "And call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." Psalm 50:15.

"And lead us not into temptation . . ."

With this prayer, our Lord Jesus has led us into the sanctuary of the Father. We can speak to Him and tell Him everything about ourselves which pertains to both our external and inner life. We pray for our daily bread and for the forgiveness of our guilt.

In our God we have found complete satisfaction and security, as well as internal peace and deep rest. And, yet, the child of God still lives in this world, which is still ruled by Satan. Jesus prayed, "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." John 17:15.

This same request Jesus placed upon the heart of His own in prayer, when He taught His disciples, "And lead us not into temptation."

An evil world is full of temptations. We cannot, by ourselves, gain the upper hand over the problems of life, sin and the invisible enemy; and yet we are not alone! Jesus has promised us, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." John 14:18. He has kept His word. Through the Holy Spirit, He came to us, and He is with us always, even to the end of the world.

The children of God are not orphans. They have an Almighty Father who gives the following promise by His prophet, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands. . . ." Isaiah 49:15, 16. And in chapter 54:10, it says, "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."

This is a great comfort to us. A child may go on any path, as long as his father goes along and holds the hand of the child solidly in his strong hand. But one thing is necessary: We must, as God's children, be in full harmony with the will and the way of our Father. In the third part of the Lord's prayer, we have said, "Thy will be done." "Yes, Father!" Therefore, in view of the wicked world surrounding us, we can pray, "Father, lead us!"

This request expresses our absolute confidence in our Father. We admit that we cannot walk alone, for which reason we have chosen Him as our only guide and

trustworthy companion in life. We place the responsibility for our life, for our family and for all other concerns into His hand. He is the First One in our life. He walks ahead, and we follow Him.

At airports, we often notice the small, yellow cars, on which is written the words, "Follow me!" They drive ahead of large airplanes which have just landed and lead them safely to their appointed places.

These same words Jesus speaks to His disciples, "Follow Me!" He knows our situation and our many perils, and thus He asks us to follow Him.

Many people find it difficult to recognize the will of God. But this question does not depend upon our understanding but upon our will. The main thing is that we *want* to do the Lord's will in our lives, and then it is up to our Father in heaven to show us the way. He has imparted the Holy Spirit to His children as a guide, so that "not even fools may err therein."

Now we pray, "And lead us not into temptation." This means, Lead us in Your paths, so we may be kept from temptation.

Now, what is temptation?

Often we confuse a trial of faith with temptation. But a *trial of faith* is not temptation. Sometimes in life the Lord places the weight of burdens or stresses upon the faith of His own, to test them, as one would place weights on a bridge to examine its strength to bear up. Thus God tested the faith of Job. He permitted everything in which he could have trusted to be taken from him so that he could trust in God alone.

God also tested the faith of Abraham when He commanded him to sacrifice his son Isaac. When Abraham obeyed the voice of the Lord, the Lord said, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me." Genesis 22:12.

Abraham stood the test. The Lord tests our faith, our steadfastness, and our confidence through many heavy weights, so that our faith may become established and strong.

Sufferings, also, are not temptations. Physical sufferings or losses are the lot of all human beings in this life, since we are still living in a world of sin and death.

To the believer—a follower of Christ—sufferings bring internal gain, and are means to help us die to sin. They also lead us to a deeper, more intimate communion with the Father in heaven. Therefore, we cannot call sufferings temptations.

The originator of temptations is not God. The Bible says, for instance, "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 them that love Him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James 1:12-15.

Therefore, temptation is within us—in the lust of our flesh, which is enticed by the devil and easily falls into sin.

He who has a strong desire for drink should abstain from the *first* glass, or else lust can be aroused and become a power which rules him. If someone has ignitable or highly explosive material with him, he should not come near a fire, or even play with matches, because it could easily catch fire or cause an explosion.

Temptations which threaten to arouse our fleshly lusts may also come from without—through the devil or through people, whether they be friends or enemies, which he uses as his tools.

Even Peter became a tempter to the Lord Jesus when he said, "Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee." Matthew 16:22. To this the Lord answered, "Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art an offense unto Me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matthew 16:23-26.

The devil tempted Jesus when He was hungry and emaciated from long fasting. And he tempts us also, trying to draw us away from the path of God and then bring us under his power.

Often he appears as an angel of light with much hypocritical love, false humility, many promises and great honors. "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." He even recommends crooked ways to serve the cause of God. Don't we hear the counsel, "Be more conformed to the world and to people; then you shall have greater success"? Or else, "One must not be so strict." Or, "Smuggle Christian literature, and you are doing a good work!"

At a customs office, someone used a white lie, because it was for the cause of God—a healing bandage for an evil conscience. It is a hardship not to lie, but there is no hardship when one has to lie.

"One must not be so narrow," even some pastors say. Modern times have modern attire, and also a different kind of music. We follow the tempter step by step and do not even realize that through this the dividing line is erased; yes, we even become captives of this deceptive power. James admonishes us, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." James 4:7. Adam and Eve fell under the temptation of Satan, but Jesus Christ gained the victory over the devil with the weapon, "It is written."

For defense against the tempations of the devil, the word of God is the best weapon. Paul said from his own experience, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and

having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." Ephesians 6:10-18.

We pray in this prayer that the Lord might lead us in the way of His choice and keep us from the dangerous path of the temptations of Satan.

"But deliver us from evil"

This last request in the prayer of the Lord is closely related to the preceding petition. In this request, we look up to Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, who has shed His own precious blood to purchase for us release from the power of the devil. He is the rescuer from all the powers of darkness.

Paul, who wanted to root out all the "heretics," later received the shaking knowledge that, in the followers of Jesus, he persecuted Christ Himself. By coming to Jesus, he received forgiveness for his hatred and murder and said, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Colossians 1:13, 14.

The redemption of Christ on the cross was made full and complete. No one needs to add anything to His work. He alone has the power to redeem us from the power of Satan. This is why we come directly to Him; we need no other mediator. We pray in this prayer, Redeem us from the evils of self-redemption, spiritual lukewarmness, slothfulness, lovelessness, carrying of grudges, false ambition, intolerance or fanaticism. Let us be Christians who follow the Lamb wherever He goes and reflect His character in life and work. O, dear Lord Jesus, let your finished redemption come to full completion in our life! We have received untold benefits from God. We have been rescued from many dangers to both body and soul. We have so much for which to thank Him. But we have also experienced that His thoughts have often not been our thoughts, and His ways were not our ways. He made us go through trials and sufferings. Why? Because He had something greater in mind. That was the experience of the three friends of Daniel who did not want to worship the golden image of Nebuchadnezzar. God did not keep them from the fiery furnace. They said to the king, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning, fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand." Daniel 3:17. They fully trusted in their God who, even though He would lead them into the fiery furnace, would let them make the most glorious experience which man ever made. Jesus Christ Himself, the Son of man, was with them in His radiant glory in the fiery furnace; and, therefore, the fire could not touch them. It is indeed a great experience when the Lord keeps us from harm, but it is often even a greater experience if He helps us in suffering and brings us through victoriously.

But this last petition also looks into the future of eternal glory: Deliver us from evil, and bring us into Your glorious eternity. We are looking forward to the completion of the redemption of Jesus Christ on this earth. Jesus will come again, as He Himself has promised. He will establish His eternal kingdom on this earth. Then our prayer will be perfectly answered, "Deliver us from evil."

We read in Revelation 21:4, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." This is the living hope of the born-again children of God. We need a vision of the bright future to shine into our present time and brighten up our pathway.

"For Thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever. Amen."

The Lord Jesus closes the prayer with the worship of God. "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory."

Now we have told our Father in heaven everything that concerns our life for time and eternity. We have poured our heart out before Him. We have been able to unload all that burdened us, and now our soul and spirit have become calm, and we stand quietly before the majesty of our God. We worship Him.

There is a difference between worship and meditation. Worship is directed toward a person. True worship belongs only to God, the Creator. But meditation sinks down into nothing.

There is also a difference between worship and mysticism. Worship is directed toward the true God, while mysticism is directed within oneself and finds only itself. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." John 4:24.

The Holy Spirit teaches us true worship, if we will only give Him time and opportunity to do so. The professed Christians of our day have largely forgotten how to worship God. The Bible is full of the worship of God as an expression of our communion with God and of our acknowledgment of His power and majesty. It says in Exodus 15:2, "The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation: He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt Him."

David cried out, "Blessed be Thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as Head above all." 1 Chronicles 29:10, 11.

The New Testament begins with the worship of God, "Glory be to God in the highest . . ." and ends with the mighty Alleluia of Revelation 4:11 and 5:9-13: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created." "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of

many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." This is true worship of God "in Spirit and in truth."

"For Thine is the glory"

This is the glory of God, the expression of His magnificence. In the Old Testament, the presence of the holy God appeared in a cloud of glory, which accompanied the people of Israel in their journey through the wilderness. The cloud of glory entered into the sanctuary which Moses erected according to the command of God and later entered into the temple which Solomon had constructed.

The glory of God was revealed in Jesus Christ in His human form. John witnessed to this, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John 1:14.

The kingdom of Jesus Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit and the glory of God are the great realities which compose our living hope. They must influence our life and work themselves into our everyday experience.

The last word of this glorious, fervent prayer is "Amen." This is an old Hebrew word, and it means, "that which is true!" When we close our prayer with "Amen," we express our full confidence in God. Our Lord has bound Himself to hear our prayers according to His will. He has said, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you." John 16:23.

The Lord's Prayer is the prayer of God's pilgrims on the way to eternal glory. We may walk through this life in heartfelt association with our Father in heaven if we are united with Him daily and hourly in this manner, and if we are filled with the lively hope that we will see Him and will thank and serve Him throughout eternity.

I would like to close this prayer reading with the petition, Lord, keep Thy people in the hour of temptation, which will soon break upon the whole world, that we might not be deceived, and thus lost, so shortly before the goal we are longing for. AMEN!

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