

HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

THIRTY-SIXTH WEEK.

MORNING WORSHIP.

GRACIOUS God, who hast made a covenant of unspeakable grace and mercy with us in Christ Jesus, and conveyed to us therein an heavenly inheritance, to the end that we should sincerely obey His commands, which is our reasonable service, grant that we may evermore rejoice in Thee, and walk worthy of our holy calling, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm cviii.* 1-6.

AWAKE, my soul, and with the sun
Thy daily stage of duty run:
Shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise
To pay thy morning sacrifice.

Thy precious time misspent, redeem;
Each present day, thy last, esteem;
Improve thy talent with due care;
For the Great Day thyself prepare.

In conversation be sincere;
Keep conscience as the noon-tide clear.
Think how All-seeing God thy ways,
Thy every secret thought, surveys.

Wake, and lift up thyself, my heart,
And with the angels bear thy part,
Who all night long, unwearied sing
High praise to the Eternal King.

All praise to Thee, who safe hast kept,
And hast refreshed me while I slept.
Grant Lord, when I from death shall wake,
I may of endless life partake.

Lord, I my vows to Thee renew:
Scatter my sins as morning dew:
Guard my first springs of thought and will,
And with Thyself my spirit fill.

Direct, control, suggest, this day,
All I design, or do, or say;
That all my powers, with all their might,
In thy sole glory may unite.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow:
Praise Him, all creatures here below:
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

RUTH I. 1-17.

NOW it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land: and a certain man of Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. 2. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah: and they came into the country of Moab, and continued there. 3. And Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. 4. And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelt there about ten years. 5. And Mahlon and

Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband. 6. Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread. 7. Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah. 8. And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. 9. The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them: and they lifted up their voice, and wept. 10. And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people. 11. And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters; why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? 12. Turn again, my daughters; go your way; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have an husband also to-night, and should also bear sons, 13. Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes, that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me. 14. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her. 15. And she said,

behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister-in-law. 16. And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

Prayer.

O LORD our God, Father everlasting and full of compassion! hear from the heavens our prayers and supplications, which we pour forth before Thy throne. In the multitude of Thy mercies Thou hast not only created us reasonable creatures, but also of Thine inestimable goodness Thou hast sent the great Angel of the covenant, our Lord Jesus Christ, to redeem us. By Him Thy wrath is taken away, the law is satisfied, the power of death, of hell, and of Satan is broken. Behold, when we lay in the shadow of death, in fearful darkness of the soul, Thou madest the light of Thy gospel to shine upon us, showing us the way to life everlasting. With these spiritual benefits it hath pleased Thee to continue temporal blessings. Thou hast been our

hope, our fortress, and our God. Thou hast covered us with thy feathers, and under Thy wings Thou hast made us to trust. Grant us, O merciful Father, thankful hearts for these Thy manifold favours. Open our mouths to sound forth Thy praise, and offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving, wherein Thou dost delight. And we most humbly beseech Thee give us unfeigned repentance for our past unthankfulness to Thee; create in us new hearts, work in us sorrow for our sins, and hatred of the same, and a hearty love unto Thy righteousness, that we, being not conformed unto this wicked world, but making thy will the order of our life, may offer ourselves up a living sacrifice unto Thee, consecrating to Thy glory both body and soul, with all our powers.

Preserve us, good Lord, from the thralldom of sin and the bondage of unbelief; continue the light of Thy glorious gospel among us; purge our land of all violence, uncleanness, oppression, and every other evil that defiles Thine inheritance; arm us Thy servants with Thy power, to strive against Satan, the flesh and the world, and all things that would beguile us from our allegiance unto Thee; that, walking in Thy paths, and obeying Thy blessed ordinances, we may end our lives to the honour of Thy name.

O God, who hast given us Thy Holy Scriptures for our instruction, we beseech Thee by Thy grace to enlighten our minds and cleanse our hearts, that we, having read, heard,

and meditated upon them, may rightly understand and heartily embrace the things Thou hast revealed. Give efficacy to the preaching of the gospel, that through the operation of the Holy Ghost this good seed may be received into our hearts as into good ground; and that we may not only hear Thy word, but keep it, living in conformity with Thy precepts, so that we may finally attain everlasting salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD, to whom belongeth the earth, with the fulness thereof, and whose bountiful hand liberally supplieth the wants of every living thing, grant that we whom Thou hast created, preserved, and redeemed, may evermore possess Thyself as our true inheritance, and in Thee all things, through faith in Him who was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich. *Amen.*

HYMN.

ALL people that on earth do dwell
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice
Him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell
Come ye before Him and rejoice.

Know that the Lord is God indeed;
Without our aid He did us make;
We are his flock, He doth us feed,
And for his sheep He doth us take.

O enter then his gates with praise,
Approach with joy his courts unto:
Praise, laud, and bless his name always,
For it is seemly so to do.

For why, the Lord our God is good,
His mercy is for ever sure;
His truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure.

PSALM LXXIII. 1-20.

TRULY God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart. 2. But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. 3. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. 4. For there are no bands in their death; but their strength is firm. 5. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. 6. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. 7. Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish 8. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily. 9. They set their mouth against the heavens; and their tongue walketh through the earth. 10. Therefore his people return hither; and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them: 11 And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High? 12. Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. 13. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. 14. For all day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning. 15. If I say, I will speak thus; behold I should offend against the generation of thy children. 16. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me. 17. Until I went into the sanctuary of God;

then understood I their end. 18. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction. 19. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors. 20. As a dream when one awaketh; so O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

ECCLESIASTES V. 8-13.

IF thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they. 9. Moreover, the profit of the earth is for all: the king himself is served by the field. 10. He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase. This is also vanity. 11. When goods increase, they are increased that eat them, and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes? 12. The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep. 13. There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.

SERMON XXXVI.

“THERE WAS A CERTAIN RICH MAN, WHICH WAS CLOTHED IN PURPLE AND FINE LINEN, AND FARED SUMPTUOUSLY EVERY DAY: AND THERE WAS A CERTAIN BEGGAR NAMED LAZARUS, WHICH WAS LAID AT HIS GATE, FULL OF SORES,” ETC.

-- Luke xvi. 19-31.

WE are all, I dare say, more or less familiar with the words of this story. But many of us may not have thought upon them, nor brought home to ourselves, as we ought to have done, Christ's teaching as a personal thing -- just as much as if it were spoken in our own hearing by Him now, or were addressed to us individually. Nor shall we, at this time, receive any good whatever from the parable -- no more than from the idlest gossip read in a newspaper -- unless we are able, by his grace, to remember who is speaking to us in these words, and try to understand their meaning, and to feel responsibility for the manner in which they are received.

This parable presents to us more than one remarkable contrast, which cannot but arrest our attention: --

1. Let us, for example, consider the contrast between the rich and the poor man *during life*: “There was a certain

rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores."

In this remarkable picture we are attracted first by a splendid mansion, with its outer gate and inner court, its suites of apartments, architectural embellishments, elegant furniture -- whatever, in short is tasteful, refined, and courtly -- with all the accompaniments of servants and equipages. This is the house of "a certain rich man." we know not his name now -- that has perished; but wherever he lived, or whoever he was, he was once well known. Tradesmen found it profitable to have him as a customer, and were proud in being able to announce the fact to others. Those who were ambitious to be in "good society" were glad, no doubt, of his acquaintance, and much gratified by a friendly greeting from him in the way. Young men rose greatly in their own estimation when they could tell their acquaintances how they visited this man, and were received as guests at his table; and they descanted upon all they saw in his splendid mansion -- how perfect everything was done, how delicious were the wines, how superb the plate, how choice the cooking, how numerous and well-trained the servants, how, indeed, everything was in the first style!

And Dives himself ! so refined in manner, so generous in his hospitality, so thoroughly the well-bred man of the world. And to know him, and call him by some familiar name, and be on easy terms with him, was a passport to the best society of the neighbourhood. If any person expressed the hope that one to whom God had been so generous, and whom He had so richly endowed, was acquainted with his Maker, and thought of duty, and realized his responsibility for all this rank, and money, and influence, those pledged admirers of his excellences were no doubt ready to defend him against insinuations from such “cant” and “hypocrisy.” What right had any one to doubt that Dives was as good as needs be, and sure of heaven? Could they point to any dishonourable action he had ever done? No. Did he not acquire his property fairly? Yes. Was there any sin in being rich? None. What “priest” or “Pharisee” would not partake of his cheer, and drink his wine? Very true. And if the man chose to wear costly robes of Tyrian dye, and fine linen of Egypt, and to fare sumptuously every day, what was wrong in all this? As for prayers or preachings, Sunday synagogues or temple services, these were between a man’s own conscience and God. It might be that he gave no money to help on objects of benevolence -- or “had too many other things to do with his money” -- or “thought it very impertinent to be so frequently asked for it” -- or “wished people would attend to their own business and

leave him alone” -- but who could blame him for doing with his own as he pleased? “Dives,” so his defenders always might have alleged, was neither greedy nor rapacious, but a kind-hearted, gentlemanly man, who thoroughly enjoyed himself -- that was all! Yes, that indeed was all!

And close beside his outer gate was a man whose presence was a constant memorial of suffering humanity. His name, strange to say, is preserved -- Lazarus. He was covered with sores -- a shuddering sight. And these were exposed, for the man was a pauper, and no provision made for him: he being dependent on charity, and thus forced to witness for his pain by mute signs of suffering. He sat at the rich man’s gate -- for it was a place of great concourse -- a broad gate, through which multitudes thronged; and many of those were able to give, and some did, no doubt, give of their abundance; while a few crumbs possibly fell to him from the rich man’s table. But his kindest friends, after all, were the dogs, who licked his sores; for God’s kindness is so inexhaustible, that He has some for the hearts of the very brutes, and which is not driven out of them, as it sometimes is from the hearts of their masters. And Lazarus sat there day by day -- silent and alone at night, with stars overhead, and no boon companions with him, but the dogs only!

No one was ambitious of having Lazarus as an acquaintance. Living or dying, what was he worth? How

men would have smiled to have quoted his opinions of things, or talked of consulting his feelings or likings! Dives was somebody, but who was Lazarus? Who was he? A beggar! Yes, and something more! “Behold, now are we the sons of God! It doth not yet appear what we shall be.” And, therefore, because it “did not appear” to the eye of sense, few, if any, perceived that Lazarus was a son of God, and an heir of heaven; that beneath the rags were royal vestments; and that he had a great sum in bank -- a treasure that waxed not old, eternal in the heavens; that possessing nothing, he had all things; and that, not dogs, but angels ministered to him! For Lazarus knew God, of whom Dives was ignorant; and he trusted that God amidst his poverty, who Dives, amidst his riches, lived without. Dives worshipped self; Lazarus worshipped God.

2. Consider, in the second place, the contrast which is presented between Dives and Lazarus in their *deaths*.

They both died, with what relative measure of pain or difficulty we know not. But doubtless the death of the rich man was a much more memorable affair than that of the beggar. The rich man had heard of a future state of suffering or of happiness; but what preparation had he made to escape the one and obtain the other? Did he ever think it possible -- if he ever dared to think at all -- that God would recognize him as a “faithful servant?” But the sickness comes, and self-denial is forced upon him. How sad to be

prevented from going to that party, or from receiving this company; to be obliged to be confined to his house, and to his couch; to feel the pain and the weakness increase; to have first the suspicion, then the certainty, that out of this house he must go, and leave the purple for the sepulchre, and the sumptuous feast for the worms, and go off on the long, long journey -- O! whither? And he has no true friend to warn him; for he has selfishly surrounded himself for years with those who were selfish like himself, and who, therefore, would only see to it that they would make themselves agreeable to the last; and whatever they might say behind his back -- whatever hard and unfeeling things -- yet before himself they would try to be all that was pleasing; and to help him, forsooth, to be cheerful, and to banish gloomy thoughts of death, or of God, or a future state, and “all that sort of thing;” and rather to hear the gossip of the day, and the politics of the government, or the scandal of the town, and the state of trade; until, by and by, there was much weakness, and pain, and evident approaches of decay, that it was no longer pleasing to have anything to do with such suffering. But at last there is a hurrying to and fro, and a sending for the physician, for Dives is dying fast; and then the mansion is silent, for he is lying there dead and senseless, as a sculptured stone. And no man in the house knows now what has become of him, if anyone asks himself the question. He has five brothers very

much like himself, and they see the body, and say, this is our brother, and talk low and soft as if he heard them. They speak of the evil things which he did not, and of the kind things which he did; and remember how well and cheerful he was on such a day, but a few weeks ago; and what he said to them the last time they met; or how long he had been drooping; or how rapidly he sunk; or how well or strangely he had left his affairs. And these same affairs gave rise to a world of talk in the neighbourhood; and Dives, his house, furniture, money, and five brothers, and the grand funeral, and the noble sepulchre, are the staple of the conversation of the hour. But Dives, the living man -- oh! miserable-- where is he? What cares he for this babble now?

Lazarus, too, is gone! He died, perhaps, where he had sat -- the dogs licking his silent face. Or he died in some house -- God looking on, angels ministering, but the world caring not. His door, perhaps, was longer shut in the morning than usual; but curiosity being excited, the house was entered, and the old beggar found dead. His body was got rid of some way or other, and no one thought more about him, unless, perhaps, the new beggar did so who occupied his seat at the gate of the rich man's successor, and was glad of the preferment from a less profitable post. And the world moved on. But while the streets of the town were busy as ever, and men bought and sold, and made

gain, as in the world before the flood; and brothers, and sisters, and friends met, and talked about the dead -- what a strange scene is taking place beyond the grave!

3. This would lead us, if our present opportunity admitted of it, to consider Dives and Lazarus in *eternity*. But what words of ours dare fill up this picture by our Lord! “And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.”

One word only: Jesus here teaches that a man like Dives is lost; for it is his character which is most dwelt upon here, and is presented to us as a warning. He is lost, and his misery is represented as being very great. Now, why was he lost? what was it which destroyed his soul? what had he -- what did he -- which, in Christ’s judgment, was so wicked that he selects him as a type of one most surely doomed to perdition? It needs no reflection to notice that he is charged with nothing of what the world calls

criminal -- such as theft, dishonour, adultery, murder, or the like. This alone is remarkable. Nay, he is represented in his lost condition to have had some interest in his godless brothers left behind. Nor do any of you believe that his crime was being rich. We are not likely, in those days, to reach that measure of infidelity in the mammon god. Riches comprehend God's best earthly gifts. The man is not even described as one who spent his substance in riotous living. For aught that is said of him there was nothing to offend the most delicate taste in his house -- nothing to obtrude itself offensively on the man of piety even, who might chance to visit it. He is described merely as a rich man, clothed in purple and fine linen, who fared sumptuously every day. Outwardly, that was all; but inwardly, what was his character? He lived to himself, without God! His life is summed up in that terrible memento: "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things." There were good things which he desired, and recognized as his good things and he got them. He demanded from his father his portion of goods; and he got his portion -- all he wished for. He wished wealth, and he got it. He wished the purple and the linen, and Tyre and Egypt were at his service. He wished the splendid banquet, and earth, sea, and air furnished it; birds, and beasts, and fish were seized, deprived of life and enjoyment, and laid before him. He wished guests to gather round him to help him the better to

enjoy self, and to flatter self, and sympathize with self, and to praise self; so that, in their every smile, and obeisance, and expression of delight, he should see self reflected -- and troops of guests arrived on the appointed day! He desired sleep, and sleep came; a soft couch, and it was spread for him; an easy day of luxurious repose, and the servants hushed the house in silence, and no one disturbed him with the noise and toil of the weary world. "Son, remember!" Go back to thy childhood, and follow up thy history from its earliest until its latest hour. Behold the scroll unfold itself before memory and conscience of all the past -- read it, examine it - hast thou not got all thy good things? Verily, thou has had *thy* reward!

Yes, *his* good things! But among the good things longed for, prayed for, laboured for, there was no such good thing as likeness to God, or meetness for eternity, or perfection in love, or deepening in humility, or outgoing of a largeheartedness to mankind, or living for others; and so these he never got, for these he never wished. He desired no things but such as earth and time could furnish, and these earth and time gave! But one thing was quite forgot and quite despised. O! horror of horrors! O! life of vanity and a lie! God was not in all his thoughts! The living God was not known, nor loved, nor cared for, nor sought for. The very thought of God, Maker, Preserver, Governor, Father, was banished as being not in harmony with the life

he was living and enjoying! Dives was an ungodly man; and it mattered not what he worshipped; whether it was a god of the lowest lust, or most refined pleasure, if he did not serve and worship, as his supreme good, the only living and true God! Dives was a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God. He loved the world and the things of the world more than the Father! And thus, we perceive, Dives does not necessarily represent men very rich or very poor, but all men who, whether rich or poor, are not “rich towards God” -- all men who think “their life consisteth in the abundance of the things they possess,” whether they really have this abundance, or wish to have it, or are half-mad because they have lost it, or curse God and forsake Him because they cannot have it. He represents a great class; and therefore it is well for us to look at him steadily, and inspect him very closely, and see if we are following him in the broad way.

Let us, then, ask ourselves the question, What are our good things? or what are the things, the possession or enjoyment of which our life consists in? Are they such things as death cannot touch? such things as our souls will find on the other side of the grave as well as on this? Such things as will prove its good things millions of years hence as well as now? Ah! Be assured that nothing can satisfy the everliving soul but its everliving Creator -- that he who seeks God as his eternal good, and who can be satisfied with nothing less, will surely find Him; and to such an one it

never can be said, “Thou has had thy things,” but “Thou has and ever shalt have Him who is goodness itself.” Hear the solemn words of the apostle: -- “but godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that *will* be rich” -- insist, as it were, on being so -- “fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the” -- or a -- “root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and has professed a good profession before many witnesses. Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not highminded, nor *trust* in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life;” for “This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent!” O! let us be able truly to say: “The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of

my cup:” “Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none on earth that my heart would desire beside thee. My heart and flesh faint and fail; but God is the strength of my heart, and portion for ever.” Amen. -- EDITOR.

THE CHILDREN’S SERVICE.

BEHOLD, THY KING COMETH UNTO THEE.

IN the writings of one of the old prophets, there is a very striking and beautiful passage which says, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” These words were spoken beforehand, hundreds of years beforehand, of the Lord Jesus Christ. You notice that they are very minute and exact, in the description they give of the way in which the King of Zion was to come to his own city. How they were brought to pass is what I am now going to tell you.

The morning after they had made a supper for Christ in Bethany, where Martha served, and Lazarus sat at the table, and Mary filled the house with the odour of the ointment which she poured on Jesus’ feet, the Lord gave a

command to two of his disciples. I do not know which two of the twelve they were, but no doubt they were pleased with their mission. He told them to go into the village, which was seen at the time over against where they were standing, and bring him an ass and a colt that they would find tied there. He said to them to loose them without any hesitation or fear: for if any person should ask them why they were loosing them, they were just to answer, The Lord hath need of them, and all would be right. Jesus knew that he had all hearts in his hands, and the best claim to the service of his own creatures.

Having been told what to do, away the two disciples went. When they came into the village, which was one near Bethany, sure enough there, at a door in a place where two roads met, stood an ass tied, and a colt also tied beside her. The colt no doubt was the foal of the ass, standing now beside its mother. It was quite young, and no one as yet had ever rode on it. Seeing thus what they had been led to expect, the disciples began at once to loose the beasts. Some people were standing near, among others the persons to whom the ass and the colt belonged, and they said very naturally, What are you doing? Why are you loosing the colt? They mentioned the colt particularly, because, I suppose, the disciples had begun with him; and indeed, it was the young ass that was specially wanted, though its mother was also to be brought. When the disciples heard

the question of the owners, they gave the very answer that Jesus put into their mouths. They said The Lord needs him; and there was not another word of objection. So they took the ass and the colt and brought them to Jesus.

We never read of Jesus riding at any other time. But he did not need to learn the art. And though the colt had never been sat on before by anyone, there was no fear of its being wild and disobedient. So when Jesus would mount it, his disciples made a kind of saddle of their cloaks, and set him on its back. The young colt went peacefully on under its blessed burden, and the ass paced meekly by its side. This was the way in which the King of Zion wanted to ride into the city. He did not choose to be driven in a chariot, nor to get a proud prancing horse to carry him, with a sword hanging and glancing at his side. For he was not a king come to make war on men's lives, and to conquer the world by force of arms: he was a king of truth, and was come not to slay men, but to save them. So he came meek and lowly, wishing all to meet him not as a foe, but as a friend. The Jews had high notions about a Christ who should make their nation stronger than Rome, and mistress of the world; but Jesus wished to show them that he would not fight as David had needed to do, that he would be king of subdued kingdoms only by subduing hearts.

By the time the things I have told about had been done, a crowd had gathered round the place where the Saviour

got up to ride. As he moved on, they followed. Then they became very joyfully excited, and began to make a carpet for him as he rode along the way, by spreading their cloaks on the road, and cutting down soft green branches from the trees, and strewing them in his path. This led to a crowd of people being in front of him, while a multitude followed close behind. Then they began to sing from one of the psalms; and loud and clear they sent up into the skies this cry: Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!

Shortly the procession came to the brow of the mount of Olives, from which the city of Jerusalem could be clearly seen, and lying near at hand. Here a strange thing took place. Even while the shouts of praise were rising from all around him, Jesus began to weep, not silently, but with loud sobbings. Those near him came to learn the cause; for they heard him say, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, would that thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes! While this was happening, it came to be known in the city that Jesus was coming, along with a throng of followers; and another crowd began to pour out through the gates to meet him. These also broke branches off the palm trees, and as they moved up from the valley and climbed the slope of the hill, waving them in their hands, the road looked like a green wood. They took up the song, too, when they met

with those who were coming down, and turning round with them, cried out, Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed be the kingdom of our father David that cometh in the name of the Lord! Glory in the highest! What a wave of joy and joyous shout that day rolled down the side of the mount of Olives, and through the valley where the brook of Kidron was flowing, and up to the city gate, as Jesus rode on in lowly pomp, the Prince of peace, in the midst of the multitudes!

The pharisees were watching all, and they were very angry. They pretended to think that it was very unseemly, in the disciples of one who had such claims as Christ's, to do such things. So they went to Jesus, and quite hinting that he was to blame if he allowed the rejoicings to go on, since he could put a stop to them if he liked, they said, Master, rebuke thy disciples; tell them to give over. But Jesus answered that he would not do so, for said he, I tell you that if these should hold their peace, the very stones would cry out at once.

But the most interesting thing of all happened after Jesus had come into the city. The whole place was quite in a commotion. The streets were filled, and people were asking eagerly, What is all this about? who is this? Then some would answer, It is the great prophet of Nazareth of Galilee: it is Jesus! Meanwhile slowly, as the throng would let him, the Saviour rode through the streets towards the

temple, and alighting from the colt, went into the courts; and finding all sorts of merchandise in sheep and oxen and doves going on, he drove the buyers and sellers out, and poured out the money of the money-changers, and overturned their tables, and said, Do not make my Father's house which is a house of prayer, a den of thieves. Then the blind and the lame came to him, and he healed them. A throng of little children, too, had gathered into the courts from which the traffickers had been driven; and taking up the song of the older people, they began to cry out, with their sweet little voices, Hosanna! hosanna to the Son of David. This made the scowling priests and scribes very angry indeed. They could not conceal their hatred. They went to Jesus, and as if in contempt, they said, Do you hear what these are saying! They meant to hint that he must be very silly and weak to allow a lot of boys and girls to cry out in that way about him. But Jesus always loved the little children. He would not let his own disciples on one occasion frown them away. He said to them, Suffer the little ones to come to me; by no means hinder them. You may be sure he would not tell them to be silent, when his bitter foes wanted him to do it. No; he answered them at once, Yes, I hear them; and did you never read in the Scriptures, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast brought the best praise of all? So the children still sang on, till Jesus having looked round on all things, went away back again to the

mount of Olives. Thus ended the only day of outward triumph in Christ's life.

Turning again for a moment to the prophecy to which I referred at first, I wish you to try and understand how the events of that day did not make the fulfilment of the prophecy. They rather repeated it, than fulfilled it. No doubt the thing described came to pass in the very letter; but that literal coming to pass was just a new utterance of the prophecy. It was providence in its own way repeating what prophecy in its own way had said. The meaning of both was a pointing out of the peaceful, blessed, happy character of Christ's reign in men's hearts, and men's world, when they received him. As he rode into Jerusalem, meek, lowly, bringing salvation, and welcomed with songs, may he ride into our hearts, and into all the earth!

QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Which of the prophetic books of the Old Testament contains the prophecy quoted at the beginning of the story?

2. Where do we read in the Old Testament of any incident in which God employed an ass in a wonderful way to do his will?

3. At what other time did Christ give a commission to two of his disciples, giving them a sign to direct them, and telling them what to say?

4. Can you find a prophecy where Christ is represented as riding like a great warrior? and do you notice what singular thing is there said about his sword?

5. Can you find a prophecy where Christ's reign is beautifully pictured, in figures taken from the lower animals, as a reign of peace?

6. What psalm did the crowds around Jesus quote, when they sang Hosannas?

7. What very joyous procession of a king and a crowd of people into the city of Jerusalem, do we read of in the Old Testament?

8. When did the pharisees find fault with the disciples for sabbath-breaking and when for transgressing the tradition of the elders?

9. Can you find a verse in one of the prophets in which God's house is twice called a house of prayer?

10. Christ spoke of the stones crying out: who speaks of God making children of them?

11. Where is Christ represented as a victorious rider, armed with arrows?

ANSWERS to the preceding questions will easily be found by consulting Zech. ix.; Numb. xxii.; Luke xxii.; Rev. xix.; Isa. xi.; Ps. cxviii.; 1 Chron. xv.; Luke vi. and Matt. xv.; Isa. lvi.; Matt. iii.; Ps. xlv.

Prayer.

O FATHER, Thou hast now set Thy king upon Thy holy hill of Zion. We thank Thee that he reigns as the Prince of peace. We pray that He may take the throne of our hearts, and reign there. We open the gates to Him, we ask Him to enter, we wish him to cast out all that in us is against His rule, as He cast the traffickers out of the temple. O let the time come soon, when His reign shall be owned in all the earth, when all wars shall cease, and nothing shall hurt nor destroy in all Thy holy mountain. We rejoice to think that Jesus loves the praises of little children. We desire to sing His praises. We would do it now, saying Worthy is the Lamb that was slain! Salvation to our God that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. *Amen.*

EVENING WORSHIP.

GLORIOUS God, who of Thy tender love towards mankind hast sent Thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon Him our flesh, and that in the form of a servant, and to suffer death, even the death of the cross, for our redemption, and that we should follow the example of His great humility, patience and obedience, mercifully grant that this mind may be in us which was also in Christ Jesus, that we may both follow the example of His humble obedience and patient suffering, and also be made partakers of His glorious resurrection, to live with Thee for ever. Grant this for the sake of Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xliii. 1-5.

APPROACH, my soul, the mercy seat,
Where Jesus answers prayer;
Then humbly fall before his feet,
For none can perish there.

Thy promise is my only plea:
With this I venture nigh.
Thou callest burdened souls to Thee,
And such O Lord, am I.

Bowed down beneath a load of sin,
By Satan sorely pressed,
By wars without, and fears within,
I come to Thee for rest.

Be Thou my shield and hiding-place;
That, sheltered near thy side,
I may my fierce accuser face,
And tell him, Thou hast died.

O wondrous love to bleed and die,
To bear the cross and shame,
That guilty sinners, such as I
Might plead thy gracious name!

JOHN 1. 35-49.

AGAIN, the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples; 36. And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, behold the Lamb of God! 37. And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 38. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, what seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, Master), where dwellest thou? 39. He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. 40. One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 42. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, A stone. 43. The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. 44. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. 46. And Nathanael said unto him, Can anything good come out of

Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. 47. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! 48. Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. 49. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

JOHN III. 1-10.

THERE was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2. The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. 3. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5. Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. 9. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? 10. Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

Prayer.

O LORD our God, we lift up our hearts unto Thee, in grateful acknowledgment of all Thy mercies. We praise Thee as the source of all blessing, full of compassion and goodness unto the children of men. We thank Thee that Thou hast formed us reasonable creatures, capable of knowing and serving Thee. We bless Thee for Thy preserving care over us, and for all our temporal enjoyments. Above all we praise Thee, O most merciful Father, for Thy spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, for the Holy Spirit and His influences, for the covenant of grace and all the precious promises thereof, for Thy word, for the gospel ministry, and all thine ordinances. For these benefits we bless Thee, O God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy

Ghost; our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. And now, Lord, we commit ourselves to Thee; we hope in Thy mercies, and we wait for thy salvation. Accept our worship, and forgive our sins, in the name of our crucified and exalted Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Thy glory, O God! is great in all the churches, and the praises of Thy name resound in the assemblies of Thy saints. We Thy servants would humble ourselves before Thee. We worship Thine infinite Majesty. We celebrate Thy wisdom, power, and goodness, that shine forth in the works of creation and redemption through Jesus Christ our Lord. We bless thee for all temporal and spiritual good that we continually receive at thy bountiful hands. But more especially, with all Thy people assembled this day, we praise Thee that Thou didst send into the world Thy Son to save us; and having delivered Him up for our offences, didst raise Him again for our justification; and through His glorious resurrection hast given us the blessed hope of everlasting life. We rejoice in the hope of His second coming “unto salvation;” for “we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as he is. O Lord! May these our thanksgivings come up with acceptance before Thy throne. Make us worthy at the last day to have part in the resurrection of the just, and the glory of the kingdom of heaven, whither Jesus the Forerunner is for us entered; where now He lives and

reigns, and is worshipped and glorified, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, God blessed for ever. *Amen.*

MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

MONDAY.

Morning.

And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.

Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things; this is known in all the earth.

Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.

For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings.

Isa. xii. 4, 5, 6. Jer. ix. 24. Hos. vi. 6.

Evening.

Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.

I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity.

Hos. vi. 3. Jer. xxxi. 33, 34.

TUESDAY.

Morning.

And, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here Elijah?

And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

And the Lord said, Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.

I Kings xix. 9, 10, 18. Isa. viii. 13.

Evening.

Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles; that, whereas they speak against you as evil-doeers, they may, by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous:

He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.

Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.

1 Pet. ii. 12. Prov. ii. 7, 8. Ps. l. 23.

WEDNESDAY.

Morning.

But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:

Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.

But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

2 Cor. i. 9, 10. 2 Tim. i. 10. 1 Thess. v. 10.

Evening.

Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults.

Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

Ps. xix. 12, 13. 1 John iii. 7, 8, 9.

THURSDAY.

Morning.

The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

Jesus said, As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

This is that bread which came down from heaven: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

John vi. 41, 43, 44, 52, 57, 58.

Evening.

For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread:

And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me

After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

1 Cor. xi. 23, 24, 25, 26. John vi. 56.

FRIDAY.

Morning.

Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? Why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?

The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.

For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.

Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him.

Ps. x. 1, 2, 3.

Isa. iii. 10, 11.

Evening.

Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy we faint not.

Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings.

2 Cor. iv. 1.

2 Cor. vi. 3, 4, 5.

SATURDAY.

Morning.

He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.

For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord.

1 John iv. 8. 2 Cor. xi. 2, 3. 1 Tim. v. 21. Zech. viii. 17.

Evening.

And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man

doth not live by bread only, but by every word that
proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.

Deut. viii. 2, 3.