

PRAYERS FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS.

I. -- *On the Occasion of Sickness in a Family.*

ALMIGHTY God, Creator of the end of the earth, we worship Thee; humbly acknowledging Thy dominion over us, and Thy right to order and to rule our life. Thy goings forth have been of old, from everlasting, and Thy years throughout all generations. Thy days are not as the days of a man, neither can the number of Thy years be searched out. But as for us, our days are determined, and our months are with Thee. Thou hast appointed the bounds which we cannot pass. Daily Thou givest to know that here we have no continuing city, but are strangers and pilgrims, as were all our fathers. O God, Thou only wise, so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom. So make us to know our end and the shortness of the time, that we may live as they who look for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

We know not what a day may bring to pass, but this we do know, that when Thou sendest trouble and pain, Thou dost remind us of the frailty of our frame, and of that

judgment that is passed on all men, because that all have sinned. Would God that each weaker and more trying hour in life, that all our infirmities and diseases, were sanctified of God, so that they might be to us seasons of heart-searching and repentance -- occasions of grace, and the channels of Thy saving health. Merciful Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast greatly encouraged us to look to Thee for help in all our doing and suffering, and to pray with and for each other; believing that Thou hearest prayer, and art able to fulfil all our desire. Wherefore seeing Thou hast been pleased to lay Thy chastening hand upon us and to visit us with trouble, we pray Thee, as the members of one household and family, on behalf of him who is sick among us. The Lord hear us in the day of trouble, and send us help from the sanctuary, and strengthen us out of Zion. We humbly pray Thee to bless all the means employed for his recovery, and in Thy loving-kindness to restore him to health and strength, so that he may praise Thee among the living, and behold Thy goodness on the earth. We commend him in faith to Thy fatherly care, beseeching Thee to relieve his pain, and to make all his bed in his sickness.

[To be used, or not, as occasion may require.]

Especially do we pray Thee, that now when Thou hast laid him on a bed of weakness and withdrawn him from

labour and duty, Thou wouldest cause this to be a time of holy meditation and communion, and of refreshing from the presence of the Most High. Cause Thy light to shine on him, so that he may see the things that are seen and temporal in the light of things that endure forever, and are at the right hand of God. So do to him, according to the purpose of Thy grace, that he may yet praise Thee for Thy faithfulness and for all the way by which Thou hast led him, and say, with thy servant of old, It is good for me that I have been afflicted. And though the outward man be weak, strengthen him with might by Thy Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in his heart by faith; that being rooted and grounded in love, he may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.

O God, who alone knowest whether there be length of days, or but few days before him, we leave him in Thy most merciful hand; we commit him to Thy fatherly care and keeping, now and for ever. Thou knowest our hearts and knowest we would have it otherwise with him than it is. O forgive us if we seem to doubt Thy love or wisdom. Forgive us, who are but of yesterday and know nothing; and in Thine infinite compassion prepare him for all that Thou hast prepared for him. Dispel his fears, enlighten his darkness, give him to see the measure of that love of Thine which passeth knowledge. Help him to look, not upon

himself, where all is vile, but unto Christ who hath borne our sins, and by on offering of himself hath perfected them that believe. Comfort, stablish, strengthen him, so that he may wait with patience all the appointed time, and be glad even in his trouble. Pour out upon him of Thy grace, so that he may have the unction of the Holy Spirit as his preparation for all that Thou hast appointed unto him. So help him, we beseech Thee, to apprehend the all-sufficiency of that atonement which Christ hath wrought for us in His blood, and to lean on His power and love, and to receive of His life into his heart, that his every thought may be brought into subjection to the obedience of Christ, and that he may yield him wholly in faith and loving confidence to Thy hand and will.

O God, our merciful God and Father, whatsoever be Thy purpose toward him in this life, grant that when the sojourn of life is ended with him and us, we may meet together where there is neither sickness, nor death, nor separation. Hear us, O God, for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

II. -- *On the Birth of a Child.*

ALMIGHTY God, our Creator and Preserver, who callest those things that be not as though they were, we thank Thee for life -- the first of all Thy gifts to us and to all men. And knowing that the increase of life is with Thee, and that Thou alone preparest the joys by which it is made glad, we praise Thee for this most precious proof of Thy goodwill and favour. And forasmuch as with this child Thou hast committed to our charge an immortal soul, made in Thy likeness, after Thine own image, help us to receive the child which Thou hast given us, as not ours only, but as also Thine -- that by the ties that bind our hearts together in a mutual love and trust, we may be also drawn, as by the cords of a man, to Thee our God and Father.

O God, of whom the whole family in heaven and on the earth is named, who carest for the least as for the greatest, and doth suffer the little ones to come to Thee, let Thy fatherly blessing rest on this our child, from this time henceforth, for ever. Spare him, we beseech Thee, that he may see Thy goodness among the living, and have joy in Thy loving-kindness to the sons of men, and rejoice in Thy salvation. Endue him with health and strength, with wisdom and understanding; and so enrich him with Thy heavenly grace that he may be as light in the household, for

solace and comfort to all relatives and friends, and live to the praise of Thy honour and glory. Deal kindly with him throughout all his time upon the earth; open Thy hand liberally that he may receive the things that are good and needful for the life that now is, and let Thy sweet mercies come to him abundantly, O God of our salvation.

We, who see but a little way before us, and know not what a day may bring to pass, beseech Thee to cause Thy power to be round about him continually for his defence, and Thy light and truth for guidance and instruction. In all time of danger be nigh unto him for deliverance, and forsake him not in any trouble. Give Thine angels charge concerning him, and uphold his goings and direct his path. And, at the time of his sojourning being spent in well-doing and honour, when all Thy purpose of grace has been fulfilled in him, and Thou hast perfected that which concerneth him, receive him into Thine everlasting kingdom and the inheritance of Thy children.

Even as we have received him at Thy fatherly hand, so now we commit him in faith and hope to Thy care. Father of mercies, we beseech Thee, hear our prayer, for the sake of Jesus Christ, Thine only Son, our Lord. *Amen.*

III. -- *On the Baptism of a Child.*

BLESS the Lord, O our souls, and all that is within us, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O our souls, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all our iniquities; who healeth all our diseases; who redeemeth our life from destruction; who crowneth us with loving-kindness and tender mercies. Merciful and gracious, slow to anger and full of compassion, hast Thou shown Thyself this day to us and to our dear child. How great are the riches of grace which Thou hast promised and confirmed to this Thy weak helpless creature! With what peaceful confidence may we not now commit him to Thy fatherly arms; with what joyful hope may we not bring him up before Thee! Seeing he has been received into Thy church, that Thou hast taken it upon Thee to care specially for him, and settest heaven before him as his true home. We thank Thee, O God, whose name is Love; and we beseech Thee now to fulfil unto this child all Thy promises, according to Thy faithfulness, and to keep Thy covenant to be a Father unto us, and we shall be Thy sons and daughters. Grant that henceforth he may be a true member of the body of Christ; keep him evermore in the possession and enjoyment of all the good gifts secured to him in the holy ordinance of baptism; and do Thou also help him to keep the covenant with Thee, and in the obedience of

faith to present himself an offering well pleasing unto Thee. Help, Lord, we pray Thee, that he may be brought up in all faithfulness and godliness, to the honour and praise of Thy holy name. Help us, his parents and friends, so that we may do unto him, as an heir of Thy kingdom, all that is needful for his wellbeing. And do Thou bless all our labour, and hear all our supplications; and grant that we and this child may be admitted into the heavenly inheritance, which Thou hast promised to all believers, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

IV. -- *On the Death of a Child.*

O GOD, who hast promised to be a refuge in times of trouble, we come to Thee in our distress and pain. It hath seemed good to Thee, in Thine unsearchable wisdom, to take from us our child whom we loved. Our wounds are open and bleed; yet do Thou help us to bow meekly to Thy holy will; not murmuring at Thy way and dealing. Thou willest he should now dwell with Thee; and we know that in the mansions of bliss Thou wilt provide for him, beyond our love and power. Therefore would we lay our hand upon our mouth, and humble us before that will of Thine, which alone is good. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord.

O God, our heavenly Father, who hast given us to know that all things work together for good to them that love Thee, make us patient and resigned, that we may glorify Thee in this sore affliction, and submit ourselves unto Thee in the obedience of Christ. Comfort us with the words which He spake -- Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. And so help us, lest weeping and refusing to be comforted, we be as they who thus forbid the little ones to come to Thee. O help us by that grace of Thine which is sufficient for us, to render with joyfulness of the spirit that which

Thou requirest; believing it is good it should be so with us, and that, as for our child, it is far better.

We bless Thee for the hope, set before us in the gospel, of a joyful resurrection and reunion with our loved ones that have gone before. And that we may truly comfort us with this hope, wash us, Thou Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, in Thine own blood, that we may be delivered from wrath, and in the power of Thy righteousness have joy in the day of judgment. O keep our hearts and minds in Thy perfect peace, whilst Thou guidest us through this vale of tears into Thy heavenly kingdom, through Him who loved us and gave Himself for us, who died and is risen from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

V. -- *On a Day Appointed for Communion.*

ALMIGHTY God, who hast revealed Thyself within us and around us, so that we might feel after Thee with the understanding and the heart, we thank Thee that Thou hast made known to us the purpose of Thy grace concerning us, in the knowledge and revelation of Jesus our Lord. And seeing that in Him Thou hast given us exceeding great and precious promises for the encouragement of our faith, help us now and always to believe Thy word, and to have hope in Thy mercy.

O God, Creator and Sustainer of all things, we, who have been upheld of Thee in all time of our strength and weakness, in our joys and sorrows, in prosperity and trouble, desire to acknowledge the help of Thy good hand in each hour of our life to this present. We have laid us down and slept, and we have awaked, for Thou the Lord hast sustained us. We, who continually do err and are ever nigh unto destruction, being girt about by infirmities of the flesh and spirit, and beset by the temptations of an evil world, and exposed to the dangers of this mortal life, do give Thee thanks for all the experience we have had of Thy faithfulness and love. Daily Thou loadest us with Thy benefits, and the night-watches do not withdraw us from Thy care. Especially do we praise Thee for the light of the

glorious gospel of Thy Son, Jesus, through whom we have received the message of reconciliation. We praise Thee for the faith which it kindles, and the blessed hope that is begotten of it. For its comfort in affliction, for its joy in tribulation, for its peace triumphing in death, we praise, we magnify Thy holy name.

O God, our merciful Father, who makest provision for our wants and callest us into the fellowship of the Holy Spirit; on this day of holy resting and communion enable us, we beseech Thee, to enter into the place where prayer is wont to be made, and let it be unto us according to Thy word. Deny us not Thy grace, nor withhold Thy loving-kindness, in the solemn duties in which we desire to engage. May we, and all who this day draw near to the table of the Lord, be moved with a true repentance and experience a godly sorrow. May we be filled also with a holy love, and supported by a lively faith -- being quickened by the power of the Holy Ghost. Doing this in remembrance of Him who bare our sins in His own body on the tree, may we know the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to his death, bringing home to us the greatness of our iniquity, may be apprehended by us as the proofs of an everlasting love, the sign and seal of an infinite mercy. So work in us, that in the eating of bread we may discern the Lord's body, and may feed on Him unto life eternal; and that the cup of

which we drink may be unto Thy servants as the new testament in His blood, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption. O God -- the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit -- descend this day into our hearts, and not into ours only, but also into the hearts of Thy believing people throughout the world, with Thine abiding peace.

To this end be pleased to direct and strengthen all those to whom Thou hast committed the ministry of the word and sacraments, as is needful for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Enrich them with Thy heavenly grace, and give to them the utterance of the heart and lips that is to the showing forth of praise; that at their hand the Holy Spirit may take of the things of Christ and reveal them unto us. These things we ask, even as we hope to receive all things that are good and needful for us, through the only Mediator, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

VI. -- *Before Communion.*

O GOD, who hast seen me and known my ways, Thou knowest all mine iniquity and my sin. Thou knowest how, in the blindness of a carnal, selfish life, I have forgotten Thee, and rebelled against Thy holy rule, and desired that Thou wouldst cease to strive with me.

Most merciful God, I bless Thee that Thou didst not leave me to every vain desire and wicked way, but hast called me by Thy Son unto repentance and new obedience of life in faith. I bless Thee that through faith in Hm, Thou dost enable me to look to Thee for the forgiveness of my sin, to trust in the all-sufficiency of Thy grace, and to rejoice in Thy salvation.

What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, I come in faith to Thee. O count me not unworthy to be numbered with Thy disciples, neither forbid that I do this in remembrance of Thee. By Thy humiliation and obedience unto death; by Thy cross and pains, witnessing to that love of Thine which passeth knowledge -- have pity upon me and redeem my soul.

O my God, I am poor and needy: make haste to succour me; for I wait on Thee. Thou who didst not withhold Thy Son, Thine only Son, withhold not now the consolations of Thy Holy Spirit; strengthen, quicken me. For the sake of Him who died, that we might have life, perfect that good work which Thou hast begun in me, to the praise of the glory of Thy grace. *Amen.*

VII. -- *After Communion.*

MY soul doth magnify the Lord, because of the goodness of His house, even of His holy place; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, and my heart is glad in Thy mercies.

And now, Lord, bless, I beseech Thee, this communion of the body and blood of Christ unto my spiritual nourishment and growth in grace, and of Thy mercy help me, so that henceforth bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in my body. As I have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so help me to walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in faith. Strengthen me with all might unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness, that I may be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. In all things assist me; in the discharge of every duty and in the bearing of every burden, alike in doing and in suffering Thy holy will. Having named the name of Christ, may I depart from all iniquity. O forbid that I should crucify afresh the Lord of glory, or put Him to an open shame. Prepare me for all that Thou hast prepared for me; strengthen me for all that Thou hast given me to do; and in the hour of weakness and of trial make Thy grace sufficient, and perfect Thy strength. Give me faith to follow in the footsteps of My Lord and Saviour, and lead me into those

pleasures that are at Thy right hand for evermore. Hear me, O God, I humbly pray Thee, and accept of me and sanctify me wholly to Thy service, through Jesus Christ Thy Son. *Amen.*

VIII. -- *On the Evening of the day of Communion.*

ALMIGHTY God, who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea, we lift up our souls unto Thee. Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever! We sinners, who of ourselves are in nowise worthy to approach Thee or receive anything at Thy hand, do give Thee thanks, as with one voice and heart, for all the goodness and mercy which Thou hast made to pass before us. May the prayers and supplications we have this day offered, with contrition of heart and unfeigned sorrow for our offences, and holy resolutions of amendment of life, enter into Thine ear. And as we have seen Thy power and Thy glory in the sanctuary, and have called upon our souls and all that is within us to magnify Thy name, so help us of Thine infinite compassion, that the temper and disposition of the day of holy fellowship and communion may abide with us in every pursuit and labour, in every change and trial, of our earthly pilgrimage. Forbid that at any time we should doubt Thy love or despair of Thy help, for Thou art faithful and canst not deny Thyself.

O God, impart to us the gift of the Holy Spirit according to Thy promise and the measure of our need. Make Thy grace sufficient for us, and perfect Thy strength in our weakness, that nothing that offendeth Thy holy rule may henceforth have dominion over us. And in all our shortcomings and offences turn Thou unto us in mercy, and restore our souls. We beseech Thee so to order our life that we may ever have a joyful sense of Thy presence and love, and commit our souls unto Thee in welldoing. And knowing that we are called to be fellow-workers together with Thee in every good and perfect work, may we follow after that which is good and engage with zeal in Thy service, and by so much the more as we see the day approaching.

We pray for all who have been partakers with us in the communion of the body and blood of Christ, beseeching Thee, in Thy abundant mercy, to satiate their souls with Thy goodness. We bless Thee in behalf of those who, at Thy table, tasted that the Lord is gracious, and who were enabled to eat the true bread which cometh down from heaven, and which giveth life unto the world. If any have been guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, may they obtain forgiveness, and be purged from their iniquity, through the blood of Jesus. May the mind which was in Him, be in all His followers. As He loved them, may they also have love one to another, and thus show to all men that they are his disciples. May their love be evinced by their

mutual forbearance, by deeds of brotherly kindness, and by their striving together for the edifying of the body of Christ. May they be enabled to hold fast the truth; and while contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from them, with all malice. May the faith that is in them be more and more seen to be a living and animating principle, impelling them to do good to all men, as they have opportunity, especially to those who have the seal of Christ upon them.

Grant, O Lord, that Thy people may feel an ever-deepening interest in all that pertains to the advancement of Thy cause in the world. Of their high and holy privileges, of the blissful and elevating hopes which Thou hast taught them to cherish, may they labour more and more strenuously that all be partakers. Confiding in the promises and the power of their risen and exalted Lord, and in nothing terrified by their adversaries, may they unceasingly strive to hasten the coming of the time when His gospel shall be preached to every creature that is under heaven. May they be nerved to grapple with every obstacle, and to face every discouragement and danger, by the knowledge that the Lord of hosts, wonderful in counsel and excellent in working, is ever on their side, and that His purposes of mercy in behalf of a fallen and perishing world none can disannul.

And now unto Him that loved us, and washed us
from our sins in His own blood: to Him be glory and
dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*

-- ARCH. CAMPBELL TAIT, D.C.L. (*Archbishop of Canterbury*).