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The rule of work and worship



By the Rev. Canon
R. L. OTTLEY, D.D.

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THE RULE OF WORK AND
WORSHIP.

THE RULE OF FAITH
AND HOPE.

THE RULE OF LIFE
AND LOVE.

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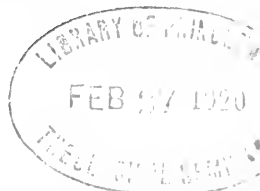
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THE RULE OF WORK AND WORSHIP

AN EXPOSITION OF THE LORD'S
PRAYER



BY THE REV.

ROBERT LAWRENCE OTTLEY, D.D.

CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH
HON. FELLOW OF PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD

Domine ad quem ibimus?
Verba vitae aeternae habes.

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CONIVGI DILECTISSIMAE

EDITOR'S GENERAL PREFACE

IN no branch of human knowledge has there been a more lively increase of the spirit of research during the past few years than in the study of Theology.

Many points of doctrine have been passing afresh through the crucible; "re-statement" is a popular cry and, in some directions, a real requirement of the age; the additions to our actual materials, both as regards ancient manuscripts and archaeological discoveries, have never before been so great as in recent years; linguistic knowledge has advanced with the fuller possibilities provided by the constant addition of more data for comparative study; cuneiform inscriptions have been deciphered, and forgotten peoples, records, and even tongues, revealed anew as the outcome of diligent, skilful and devoted study.

Scholars have specialized to so great an extent that many conclusions are less speculative than they were, while many more aids are thus available for arriving at a general judgment; and, in some directions at least, the time for drawing such general conclusions, and so making practical use of such specialized research, seems to have come, or to be close at hand.

Many people, therefore, including the large mass of the parochial clergy and students, desire to have in an accessible form a review of the results of this flood of new light on many topics that are of living and vital interest to the Faith; and, at the same time, "practical" questions—by which is really denoted merely the application of faith to life and to the needs of the day—have certainly lost none of their interest, but rather loom larger than ever if the Church is adequately to fulfil her Mission.

It thus seems an appropriate time for the issue of a new series of theological works, which shall aim at presenting a *general survey* of the present position of thought and knowledge in various branches of the wide field which is included in the study of divinity.

The Library of Historic Theology is designed to supply such a series, written by men of known reputation as thinkers and scholars, teachers and divines, who are, one and all, firm upholders of the Faith.

It will not deal merely with doctrinal subjects, though prominence will be given to these; but great importance will be attached also to history—the sure foundation of all progressive knowledge—and even the more strictly doctrinal subjects will be largely dealt with from this point of view, a point of view the value of which in regard to the “practical” subjects is too obvious to need emphasis.

It would be clearly outside the scope of this series to deal with individual books of the Bible or of later Christian writings, with the lives of individuals, or with merely minor (and often highly controversial) points of Church governance, except in so far as these come into the general review of the situation. This detailed study, invaluable as it is, is already abundant in many series of commentaries, texts, biographies, dictionaries and monographs, and would overload far too heavily such a series as the present.

The Editor desires it to be distinctly understood that the various contributors to the series have no responsibility whatsoever for the conclusions or particular views expressed in any volumes other than their own, and that he himself has not felt that it comes within the scope of an editor's work, in a series of this kind, to interfere with the personal views of the writers. He must, therefore, leave to them their full responsibility for their own conclusions.

Shades of opinion and differences of judgment must exist, if thought is not to be at a standstill—petrified into an unproductive fossil; but while neither the Editor nor all their readers can be expected to agree with every point of view in the details of the discussions in all these volumes, he is convinced that the great principles which lie behind every volume are such as must conduce to the strengthening of the Faith and to the glory of God.

That this may be so is the one desire of Editor and contributors alike.

W. C. P.

LONDON.

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The Rule of Work and Worship

CHAPTER I

THE AUTHOR OF THE LORD'S PRAYER

'Etiam Ipse Dominus oravit, cui sit honor et gloria in sæcula sæculorum.'—TERTULLIAN.

TWO versions of the Lord's Prayer are found in the Synoptic Gospels, and of these the shorter form recorded by St. Luke (xi. 1-4) is in all probability the earlier. Moreover, the actual occasion on which the Prayer was first delivered to the disciples by our Lord may well have been that which St. Luke's narrative suggests. *It came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, that when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray even as John also taught his disciples.* It is true that the evangelist mentions no details either of time or of place; but the incident is one which he would not have been likely to invent, and in default of any other evidence we may well believe that the form which he preserves is that which was originally taught by Christ, in response apparently to the request of a disciple who may have been, as the context seems to suggest, one of the seventy disciples mentioned in the preceding chapter of the Gospel.

But if the shorter version given by St. Luke is the original, the expanded form which we find inserted in the Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. vi. 9 foll.) has actually been the more authoritative and influential. It has more completely

satisfied the religious needs and aspirations of Christian people. In all probability the prayer was originally given in Aramaic, but it was doubtless very soon translated into Greek for use in Hellenistic congregations at Jerusalem and elsewhere ; and the version contained in St. Matthew's Gospel seems to represent a form which had already for some time been current among Greek-speaking Christians.¹ We must not forget, however, that even the fuller form given in the Sermon on the Mount is commended to the disciples rather as a comprehensive type or outline of prayer than as a precise and complete formula, since it is introduced by the significant words, *After this manner* (*οὕτως*) *pray ye* : that is, not necessarily in these very words, but at least in this simple manner and in this filial spirit ; not, like the heathen, mechanically reciting a stereotyped form, nor thinking to weary the Almighty into granting your requests by *much speaking* or by *vain repetitions*, but commending yourselves, with all your desires and needs, to the love and wisdom of a heavenly Father.

I

Two things may fittingly be noticed at the outset of our study.

1. First, the Lord's Prayer is rightly so called as having been taught by Jesus Christ to His disciples, but it was not a prayer intended for His own use. The most typical 'Lord's prayer' in this sense is the great intercession recorded in the seventeenth chapter of the Fourth Gospel—

¹ If, as is now generally believed by scholars, our present Gospel of St. Matthew incorporates (*a*) the substance of St. Mark's Gospel and (*b*) that of a possibly older document consisting mainly of discourses (Q), it seems most probable that the compiler of St. Matthew's Gospel derived his version of the Lord's Prayer from this latter source.

a passage which stands alone as a kind of sanctuary in the temple of Holy Scripture, but which nevertheless has several points of contact with the 'Our Father.' Thus in St. John xvii. our Lord addresses God as *Father, Righteous Father*; He makes mention of the sacred *Name* of God as that which He has ever *manifested* on earth and will yet *make known* to His chosen; He speaks of the *authority over all flesh* bestowed upon Him as Founder of the divine kingdom; He renews on the eve of His Passion that entire consecration of Himself to the *will* and service of God which has been the un failing law of His life. Again, the unity which He seeks for His Church is the counterpart on earth of that which is in heaven; *that they may be one*, He asks, *even as We are one*. Finally, He prays that those whom the Father has given Him may be guarded, while they are in the world, from the power of *the evil one*. The prayer as a whole manifestly breathes the very spirit of the 'Lord's Prayer': its confidence, its loyalty, its submissiveness, its repose. Moreover, it suggests to us a line of thought which will be pursued below: namely, that our Lord's own life is the only adequate commentary on the prayer which He taught, and that, in particular, the narrative of the Passion is intended to recall the great truths of faith which underlie its familiar petitions: the mystery of the divine Fatherhood: the truth that man's life on earth is a warfare with temptation and an opportunity of winning the victory over *the prince of the world*.¹

2. Secondly, we may note the instructive circumstance, mentioned by St. Luke, that immediately before He taught His disciples the 'Lord's Prayer' Christ was *praying in a certain place*. The same thing is recorded of Him on the occasion of St. Peter's great confession of faith: *He was praying alone*, we read, *and the disciples were with Him*.²

¹ John xiv. 30.

² Luke ix. 18.

St. Luke, as we know, repeatedly notices the fact that prayer was the habit of the Saviour's life. It was while He was in the very act of praying that the Holy Spirit descended upon Him at His baptism; *as He was praying the fashion of His countenance was altered* upon the Mount of Transfiguration.¹ These specially recorded instances of prayer were doubtless occasions of solemn import for the Church; and it helps us to realize the dignity and blessedness of prayer when we consider that our Lord deliberately prepared Himself for the task of instructing His disciples how to pray. The Lord's Prayer comes from the lips of One Who was Himself the supreme example of the spirit of prayer; Who through unbroken communion with the Father, and through His unerring knowledge of *what was in man*, was uniquely qualified to teach His brethren a form of utterance adequate to their needs. The efficacy of prayer is a subject sometimes very lightly and inconsiderately discussed. We should constantly remember that prayer—communion with *the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, Whose name is Holy*,²—is the most exalted function of which man is capable: that for which he was created: that which alone raises him to the true level of his destiny. If this conception of prayer is just, it is only the spiritual experts, the men of prayer, who possess the right to speak with the authority of experience, in regard to its meaning, its fruits, its power.

It has been conjectured that the locality in which the Lord's Prayer was taught was the garden of Gethsemane, whither our Lord *oft-times resorted with His disciples*. This suggestion seems to be favoured by the context of St. Luke xi. 1 foll.; for the passage immediately preceding (x. 38-42) gives an account of Christ's sojourn with Mary and Martha at the neighbouring village of Bethany; and

¹ Luke iii. 21; ix. 29.

² Isa. lvii. 15.

³ John xviii. 2.

there is certainly nothing to hinder us from supposing that the prayer was taught in some place near Jerusalem. This conjecture is obviously precarious, but it is not without value if it leads us to connect the Lord's Prayer specially with the solemn mysteries of the Agony and the Passion; if it deepens our sense of the real nature and significance of the last dread conflict of the Redeemer's life on earth. For the acceptance of the bitter cup from His Father's hand was the crowning manifestation of that spirit of filial obedience and trust which finds its perfect utterance in the filial prayer. To Him, as to His disciples, prayer was not an avenue of escape from evil and suffering, but a means whereby He was strengthened to meet and to overcome it. It was the Son of Man's supreme act of confidence in the 'fatherliness of the Father'; it was the utterance of a faith which no spiritual darkness could quench, no bodily anguish could shake, no violence of the evil one could subdue.

II

Our Lord, then, teaches the needfulness and the blessedness of prayer as One Who Himself ever lives and acts in the spirit of prayer. He prescribes the due order and substance of our petitions as One Who knows the mind of God and the needs of man. In every detail of His life on earth He manifests the spiritual temper which finds its appropriate utterance in the Lord's Prayer. *Made like unto His brethren in all things, yet without sin,*¹ He exhibits in its ideal perfectness the truth of that relationship in which man stands to God, as a son dependent on an all-wise and loving Father for the supply of every need; called for his own highest good to undergo the discipline of sorrow and temptation; privileged to labour as a fellow-worker

¹ Heb. ii. 17; iv. 15.

with God in the extension of His Kingdom, and finding his only true happiness in entire devotion to the Father's service, and in habitual subjection to His will. For prayer and obedience are the outward expression, in temper and in action, of faith in God. Prayer is the continual intercourse with God to which faith impels us ; obedience means that unreserved acceptance of His will which faith suggests.¹ Man only fulfils the true law of his nature when his appointed work is *wrought in God*,² with a living trust in His character and a steadfast desire to embrace His purposes.

In this connexion we may profitably consider four different aspects of our Lord's earthly life.

1. In the first place, His life as man was one of perfect dependence on God : a dependence which implied not merely a passive confidence in God's protecting care and providential control of events, but a habit of expectancy, a constant watchfulness for tokens of the divine purpose and manifestations of the divine power. *The Son can do nothing of Himself but what He seeth the Father doing* :³ words which do not suggest a limitation of the Son's power, but describe the *character* of His action. In all that our Lord does or suffers : in times of stress and of quiescence : in the work of teaching and in the display of wonder-working power, He is *not alone, because the Father is with Him*.⁴ He has a limitless faith in the superabundant resources and unchanging goodwill of the Father. It has been rightly pointed out that Christ's announcement of the consummation of the Kingdom as being near at hand was 'not prediction, but hope and expectation.'⁵ It was an expression of His own perfect trust in the power of God. It

¹ Cp. A. G. Hogg, *Christ's Message of the Kingdom*, p. 65 (T. & T. Clark). ² John iii. 21. ³ John v. 19. ⁴ John xvi. 32.

⁵ Hogg, *op. cit.*, p. 47. Cp. the striking passage on p. 45 : " Hopeth all things ! "—do we not see now where St. Paul got that

was a clear indication of what *might be* if only man's unbelief did not hinder the free fulfilment of the divine purpose.

This invincible confidence in the goodwill of Almighty God is the very spirit which finds utterance in the Lord's Prayer. It is the spirit which looks at all life in the light of the divine Fatherhood, and which discerns in the common elements of average human experience—prayer and toil, temptation and suffering so many links of union with God; so many invitations to seek guidance, strength and solace from Him. To Christ, the unfailing consciousness of dependence on the Father is a motive impelling Him to labour, nerving Him for endurance, inspiring continually a sense of security and a spirit of repose. Life as a whole—whether manifested in nature, or in the phenomena of human thought and activity—lies open before Him in all its solemnity and mystery: overshadowed by the presence, and pervaded by the Spirit, of the living God. In responding whole-heartedly to the Father's will and purpose, the Son of Man penetrates the very secret of the universe: finds Himself in harmony with the law that guides its movement and shapes its destiny. This spirit of filial dependence inspires in Him not only love for all that God has made, but a reverence which discerns, even in things least and lowest, tokens of the majesty and tenderness of the great Creator. To Christ even the most forlorn and pitiable of human kind is a lost child of the one God and Father of all. In the spirit of prayer He ministers to men; He assures them that His Father is their Father—His God

great thought about true Christian love? Our Lord loved man as none other ever did. Therefore He had the eyes to see in the unlovely men of His day possibilities of a faith so perfect as to permit the Father to usher in the perfect kingdom without any tarrying.'

their God ; that He shares with them a common nature and even a common faith. He and they are *all of one*. For which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren : saying, *I will declare Thy name unto My brethren. . . . And again, I will put my trust in Him.*¹

2. Again, our Lord's life on earth was one of temptation. *Ye are they*, He tells His disciples on the eve of the Passion, *which have continued with Me in My temptations.*² At the outset of His ministry, Satan was divinely permitted to assail Him in the wilderness, and when the tempter *departed from Him*, it was but *for a season.*³ He was in all points *tempted like as we are,*⁴ and we only do justice to the general tenour of the Gospel narrative when we regard His whole sojourn on earth as a prolonged conflict with the evil one and with those who were, consciously or unconsciously, his instruments. This view of the Lord's life is deeply impressed upon the New Testament ; so much so that the Apocalypse even depicts the history of the Church under this aspect. The Church is led along the very path which Christ Himself has trodden. Confronting the Bride, the holy society, the City of God, is ranged the world-power, the *great city* whose power is based on oppression, selfishness and pride. Over against the Trinity of glory, Father, Son and Spirit divine, is ranged a trinity of evil : the devil, *that old serpent*, the wild beast and the false prophet. So in St. John's Gospel and Epistles we may trace the progress of a permanent conflict between antagonistic principles : light and darkness, love and hatred ; we witness a warfare of the children of God with *the sons of the evil one.*⁵ It is plain that this idea of a conflict with the principle of evil corresponds to a real and prominent

¹ Heb. ii. 11, 12.

² Luke xxii. 28.

³ Luke iv. 12.

⁴ Heb. iv. 15.

⁵ Matt. xiii. 38. Cp. John viii. 44 ; 1 John iii. 10.

aspect of our Lord's life, and in the Lord's Prayer there are clear traces of its influence. The Kingdom of God 'comes' or is manifested on earth for the overthrow of that organized power of evil which has its 'prince' and its 'throne.'¹ The will of God stands opposed to the lusts of men and of the devil;² and those who in a world of darkness strive to embrace and to fulfil it, find that for them *temptation* is a necessary law of life; that the evil one is the inveterate foe and relentless accuser of the human soul.³ The Lord's Prayer, in fact, throughout implies a progressive discipline both of faith and character: faith learning to realize the companionship of an unseen Father, Guide and King; character growing under the stress of trial and temptation *from strength to strength*, sustained by bread of God's providing, cleansed by forgiveness and by the exercise of charity, guarded by divine power from the assaults of evil.

Moreover, in all their relation to God, in all their resistance to the power that would seduce them from their true allegiance, Christians look unto Jesus as *the captain and perfecter of their faith*;⁴ Who leads them into no conflict which He has not shared, and calls them to face no foe whom He has not already overthrown. It may be a hard matter to understand in what sense the sinless Christ could be *in all points tempted like as we are*, but we know that He had a moral nature akin to ours; that temptation is a normal element in that average human experience through which He *learned obedience* and was trained for His high-priestly work. We know, too, that His perfect fellow-feeling with sinners and His sympathy with the tempted depended on His having actual experience of their trials;

¹ John xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11. Cp. Eph. ii. 2; Apoc. ii. 13.

² 1 Pet. iv. 2; John viii. 44.

³ Apoc. xii. 10.

⁴ Heb. xii. 2, R.V. marg.

and we may look upon the prayer which He taught as bearing witness to the general character of human life. It is a prayer appropriate to a state of warfare: a prayer giving utterance to man's consciousness that in a world of mystery he needs guidance and protection; in a world of evil, strength and deliverance.

3. Again, we may consider the Lord's Prayer in its bearing upon the work which the Son of God came into the world to do. In His case, as in ours, the very notion of sonship implies the thought of a definite vocation. *Son, go work to-day in the vineyard.* In all that He set Himself to do, the consciousness of co-operation with God was ever present to the heart and mind of Christ. *My Father, He says, worketh even until now, and I work; and again, We must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work. My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to accomplish His work.* There are different aspects of the work which He accomplished on earth, and of which upon the Cross He testified, *It is finished.* But He Himself, as He looks back upon His earthly course, describes it in a single comprehensive sentence: *I have manifested Thy Name.*¹ To make the eternal *Father of spirits* known to mankind, to declare His purpose and character, to win men to belief in His righteousness and lovingkindness—this was, from one point of view, the scope of His endeavours.

Thus, the Lord's Prayer is illustrated by the life of Him Who taught it. It embodies and appeals to the eternal truths by which His human soul was inspired and sustained—truths so luminous to Him, but which only *through* Him and as the result of His testimony become to us Christians—

‘The fountain light of all our day . . .
A master light of all our seeing.’

¹ Matt. xxi. 28; John v. 17; ix. 4; iv. 34; xvii. 4 and 6.

Here, then, in the Prayer which reveals His mind, which embodies the secret of His human activity, we find the true Rule of work and worship by which His life on earth was guided. In Him is revealed in its simplicity and glory the very spirit of divine sonship.

His task is assigned to Him by a Father's hand, and is gladdened by the assurance of a Father's support and co-operation. His 'works' are those *which the Father hath given Him to accomplish*; they bear witness of Him that *the Father hath sent Him*.¹ They make manifest a Father's care for His children; a Father's compassion for their sufferings; a Father's willingness to save and redeem. They invite men to confidence in the goodwill of the great Creator, and encourage them to make known to God every need and desire, every hope and aspiration. So, too, the entire purpose of His preaching is to declare the Name of God; to bring all men everywhere to understand His purposes, to recognize the tokens of His presence, to confide in His character, to worship Him with the sacred fear and devoted love which are His due. The coming of the divine *kingdom*—its present power and future triumph—is the theme of His parabolic teaching. Again, the holy *will* of God which He proclaims to men, is the law of His own life. *I am come down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me*; ² the will of Him Whose unchangeable purpose of good towards His *little ones*, nay, towards *all men*,³ is the very substance of the Gospel. Those who do this will He claims as His kindred, and welcomes as partakers of the kingdom of heaven.⁴ In the spirit of trustful dependence on God with which He responds to every call and fulfils every obligation, we recognize the inner significance of the petition, *Give us this day our daily*

¹ John v. 36.

² John vi. 38; cp. iv. 34, v. 30.

³ Matt. xviii. 14; 1 Tim. ii. 4.

⁴ Matt. xii. 50; vii. 21.

bread. He bids us ask for *forgiveness* of our trespasses inasmuch as deliverance from sin is a vital element in the salvation proclaimed by the Gospel. He came, indeed, to deal with sin and its consequences: as Judge, as Absolver, as Redeemer, as Conqueror of death; and the condition of our forgiveness is that we should deal with others as we would have God deal with us. Nor, as we have already noticed, does the Prayer omit a reference to the stern and permanent conflict through which human character must pass in its progress towards moral perfection. Implicitly the three great diseases of the soul, or, as we might say, the three typical temptations—selfishness, care and the service of mammon—find their antidote in the petition addressed to ‘Our Father’ for ‘our daily bread.’ Christ also has experienced on our behalf the stress of temptation, and has overcome it by throwing Himself wholly on God. He has vanquished the evil one and obtained for us, through the prevailing power of His intercession, deliverance from Satan’s power.¹ *Whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not; but He that was begotten of God keepeth him, and the evil one toucheth him not.*² Thus the use of the Lord’s Prayer continually reminds us that in all its parts the work of our Lord was redemptive: liberating men from those false conceptions of deity which issued in vain worship; from those false ideals of goodness and happiness which closed to them the paths of peace; from that enslavement of the will which made them *bond-servants of corruption*.³

4. It remains to consider the Lord’s Prayer in its relation to the Redeemer’s Passion and Death. On Calvary we see Him consummating the work which had been given Him to accomplish. His humanity was there made *perfect through sufferings*; ⁴ His obedience reached its climax

¹ John xvii. 15.

³ 2 Pet. ii. 19; cp. i. 4.

² 1 John v. 18.

⁴ Heb. ii. 10.

in a final and complete self-oblation ; His love towards man, His devotion towards God, were manifested to the uttermost. Certainly, in our contemplation of the Passion, we do well to bear in mind the caution of Bishop Lancelot Andrewes : ' What His feelings were, it is dangerous to define ; we know them not, we may be too bold to determine of them. To very good purpose it was that the ancient Fathers of the Greek Church in their liturgy, after they have recounted all the particular pains as they are set down in [the narrative of] His Passion, and by all and by every one of them called for mercy, do after all shut up all with this : δι' ἀγνωστῶν κόπων καὶ βασάνων ἐλέησον καὶ σῶσον ἡμᾶς : " By Thine unknown sorrows and sufferings, felt by Thee, but not distinctly known by us, have mercy upon us and save us." ' ¹ But at least we know this much—that in suffering as man, our Saviour prayed as man. *He trusted in God* ; ² His soul was sustained in its mysterious conflict by that direct knowledge of the Father which had inspired and guided the conduct of His earthly life. As in the days of strenuous and self-sacrificing action, so in the awful hours of suffering, there was the same unreserved dependence on the Father, the same thirst for the living God, the same zeal for His honour, the same unfaltering desire to glorify His Name. On the cross itself, the very symbol as it seemed of uttermost weakness and hopeless failure, He opened the kingdom of heaven to penitence and faith ; and He endured all that came upon Him in entire submission to the will of His Father. To God he looked for that bread of the divine grace and help which alone could carry Him through the stress of His conflict. On the cross, again, as in His daily intercourse with the sinful and the scornful, *He suffered*

¹ *Sermon 2 on the Passion* [vol. ii., pp. 139 foll. ; ed. Parker, Oxford].

² Psa. xxii. 8 [PB] with the whole context.

being tempted. He refused to hearken to the voices that bade Him *come down from the cross.* He was fully conscious from first to last that *the power of darkness* was making its last and most desperate assault. *The prince of this world cometh,* He said, *and he hath nothing in Me.*¹ Finally, it was for the sins of men that He laid down His life: that they might obtain an answer to their cry for forgiveness, He bore *in His own body on the tree* the penalty which their sins had deserved; His blood was *shed for many unto remission of sins*; ² and in interceding for His murderers He manifested the pardoning love of God: *God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses.*³ Though the sinless Sufferer Himself could not need forgiveness, yet we may reverently think that as the representative of sinners, wearing their nature and sorrowing with an infinite capacity of 'appropriative penitence' for their transgressions, He might even breathe the petitions, 'Forgive *us* our trespasses,' 'Lead *us* not into temptation,' 'Deliver *us* from the evil one'; thus making Himself wholly one with those whom He came to reconcile to God through His blood and to save by His life.⁴

III

So far we have considered the way in which the Author of the Lord's Prayer illustrated in the spirit of His life and in His sacrificial death the essential significance of its several petitions. But it remains to say something of His express teaching on the subject of prayer. We should notice at the outset that He takes for granted the instinct and habit of prayer. Prayer is the instinctive expression of the feeling of dependence and helplessness which is natural to man, when he realizes that he lives in a world

¹ John xiv. 30.² Matt. xxvi. 28.³ 2 Cor. v. 19.⁴ Rom. v. 10.

full of mystery : a world which at best reveals only partially and obscurely the presence and the mind of that unseen Power Who controls its movement and development. Our Lord sets Himself, as it were, to encourage the instinct of prayer : to insist on its rationality and practical value. He expressly declares that *men ought always to pray and not to faint*,¹ and He gives them the assurance that their prayers will be answered, by dwelling upon the relationship in which they stand to the Power behind nature. Their petitions are addressed to One Who has the heart of a Father, caring for men as His children, and willing to *give good things to them that ask Him*.² He teaches that prayer in its simplest aspect is a means of making known to God our wants and desires. The pledge of its efficacy is the character of Him to Whom it is addressed. Though He understands beforehand the needs of His children, He bids them 'ask,' inasmuch as He yearns, Father-like, to win their confidence and love.

But even more powerful than Christ's teaching is the constraining influence of His example.³ Prayer was, as we have seen, the habit of His life. It was the means by which He hourly renewed His will and prepared Himself for each successive stage in His redemptive work. Prayer was, in fact, a necessary element in the perfectness of His sacred Humanity.⁴ In this, as in all other things, *it behoved Him*

¹ Luke xviii. 1.

² Matt. vii. 7-11. Cp. Phil. iv. 6.

³ Aug. *enarr. in Psalm lvi.* 5 : 'Ad hoc enim oravit ut doceret orare ; quia ad hoc passus est ut doceret pati ; ad hoc resurrexit ut doceret sperare resurrectionem.'

⁴ T. Aquinas, *Summa theologiæ*, pars. iii, qu. 21, art. 1 resp. : 'Quia in Christo est alia voluntas divina et alia humana, et voluntas humana non est per seipsum efficax ad implendum quæ vult, nisi per virtutem divinam ; inde est quod Christo, secundum quod est homo et humanam voluntatem habens, competit orare.' Cp. Aug. *serm.* ccxvii. 1 : 'Est enim Christus homo et Deus : orat ut homo, dat quod orat ut Deus.'

*to be made like unto those whose nature He shared. Prayer formed a vital part of His High-priestly work. It was the self-expression of that eternal Spirit through which He offered Himself continually without blemish unto God.*¹

Thus we find our blessed Lord habitually seeking in prayer an interval of solace and refreshment amid the pressure of exhausting toil. The first chapter of St. Mark, which apparently describes *one of the days of the Son of man*, relates that in the morning He rose up *a great while before day, and departed into a solitary place and there prayed*. His brief periods of repose are devoted to communion with God. So again He is found to prepare Himself for any momentous step in the fulfilment of His ministry by prayer. Before He 'ordained' the twelve whom He had chosen *that they might be with Him and that He might send them forth to preach and to heal*, He spent a whole night alone in prayer. Of the baptism, of the scene of St. Peter's great confession, of the Transfiguration, we have already spoken. Each was an occasion to Christ of prayer, of renewed self-dedication to the divine service. In an agony of prayer and supplication He sought strength to uphold Him in His last and fiercest strife; and we may surely believe that in the mysterious silences of the Passion—the silence before the Jewish tribunal, before Herod, before Pilate—the words of the Psalmist were fulfilled: *In return for My love they persecute Me: but I am all prayer.*²

Our Lord Himself is the supreme example of One Who lives, works and teaches in the spirit of prayer. But He is also recorded to have given explicit instruction in regard to (1) the legitimate objects of prayer, (2) the conditions of acceptable prayer, (3) the mistakes that men are apt to make in the manner and matter of their prayer.

¹ Heb. ii. 17; ix. 14.

² Psa. cix. 4; Heb. אָנִי תַפְלֵה; LXX. ἐγὼ δὲ προσηυχόμενος.

1. Touching the rightful objects of prayer, Christ seems to suggest that the character of men's supplications will depend on their whole outlook upon life, or, in other words, on their theory of the universe. If it be true that the most trivial incidents of life are under the eye and subject to the controlling providence of the Creator,¹ men are free to lay open to Him all their desires and needs, temporal as well as spiritual. But the order of the petitions contained in the Lord's Prayer also implies that prayer for earthly gifts and blessings will be guided and regulated by an ever-growing sympathy with the aims and interests of the divine kingdom. It is significant that our Lord nowhere discourages His disciples from praying for things earthly and temporal; ² but what He directly *enjoins* is prayer for that which will tend to the advancement of the kingdom: *e.g.*, for the multiplication of labourers in the spiritual harvest of the world; for deliverance from temptation; for the manifestation in human souls of spiritual power, with a view to the release of others from the grasp of evil.³ Finally, in one memorable saying He implies that all *good things* which the heavenly Father bestows upon His children are comprehended in a single glorious gift—a gift to be earnestly sought for and devoutly welcomed: He shall *give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him*.⁴

2. Speaking of the conditions of acceptable prayer, our Lord teaches, in more than one parable, the need of a persevering and even importunate faith.⁵ He seems to argue

¹ Matt. x. 29, 30. Cp. Hogg, *Christ's Message of the Kingdom*, pp. 106, 107.

² In Matt. xxiv. 20 He seems even to enjoin it in a particular instance.

³ See Matt. ix. 38; xxvi. 41; xvii. 21.

⁴ Luke xi. 13 compared with Matt. vii. 11.

⁵ Luke xi. 5 foll.; xviii. 1 foll.; Matt. vii. 7 foll. Cp. Hogg, *op. cit.*, p. 68 (quoted above).

that just as 'importunity towards men implies a praiseworthy trust in the ultimate brotherliness of man,' so importunity towards God is the sign of 'a faith in the fatherliness of God which persists unshaken in its trust by all appearances to the contrary.' He implies that the value of prayer consists in its being the spontaneous utterance of childlike confidence in the goodwill of God. Moreover, our assurance, that we shall obtain what we pray for, will depend on the degree of our sympathy with God's purpose, our wholehearted endeavour only to discover and to fulfil His will. This seems to be the meaning of the *moral* condition specified in the words, *Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name*.¹ Petition in Christ's 'Name' is that which is offered in union with His mind and intention; in sympathy with His estimate of the relative value of things. If we seek *first the kingdom of God*, our prayer will be for that which will most certainly conduce to our own eternal welfare.² As Augustine wisely says, 'The Name "Jesus" signifies "Saviour," and accordingly whatsoever we ask that is detrimental to our salvation we ask not in the Saviour's Name.' To ask for anything *in His Name* is to desire only that which is consistent with His redemptive purpose. 'Thus He is our Saviour, not only when He grants our requests, but also when He grants them not. He proves Himself to be our Saviour by not doing what He knows to be contrary to our salvation.'³ So in St. John xv. 7 the fulfilment of prayer is promised in proportion to the closeness of the believer's fellowship with Christ; and to this promise no other limitation or condition is added. *Ask whatsoever ye will. Ask and*

¹ John xiv. 13; xv. 16.

² Bp. Wilson, *Sac. Priv.*, p. 46 [ed. Parker, 1840]: 'To promote the Kingdom of God is to increase and hasten one's own happiness.'

³ Aug. in *Johan. tract.* lxxiii. 3.

it shall be given you ; seek and ye shall find. And the verdict of Christian experience confirms the express declaration of the Gospel: *Everyone that asketh receiveth. We know that we have the petitions which we have asked of Him.*¹

The other necessary condition of acceptance is a ready willingness to forgive those who have done us injury. In St. Matthew's version of the Lord's Prayer we find this condition annexed, apparently by our Lord Himself, as a kind of emphatic comment on what He has just taught. The principle here laid down is that God deals with men as they themselves deal with others. *If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*² On this point something will be said in another connexion. Meanwhile it may suffice to notice that the absence of a forgiving temper is obviously inconsistent with the trustfulness, the humility, and the goodwill towards God and man, which are essential to the acceptance of prayer. Nor, on the other hand, is anything here taught abrogating the condition under which an offender may properly claim forgiveness. *If he repent, forgive him.*³ A just and righteous resentment against wrongdoing has its due place, as in the State, so in the ordinary intercourse of individuals, and there are occasions when a too facile forgiveness involves both a breach of trust and a failure in true charity.

3. Our Lord seems also to teach that there are spiritual aids to prayer which cannot wisely be disregarded: for instance, *privacy* and *retirement*, which not only afford unfettered scope to the spirit of prayer, but are also to the suppliant an unmistakable token of the sincerity of his

¹ Matt. vii. 8 ; 1 John v. 15.

² Matt. vi. 15 ; cp. Mark xi. 25, 26.

³ Luke xvii. 3. See the admirable passage in Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory* [ed. 3], vol. ii, pp. 201 foll.

act ; and *concert with others*, which is a powerful aid to alacrity and fervour in devotion, and which has special promise of divine acceptance.¹ Nor does Christ omit to warn His hearers against faults in the practice of prayer which either contradict its real nature or neutralize its efficacy. He bids them *be not as the hypocrites*, who pray in public places *in order* to attract the notice and win the praise of men ; nor *as the heathen*, who make *vain repetitions*, or who, like the priests of Baal in their controversy with Elijah, think to weary the Almighty into granting their petitions.² Augustine observes that this ‘ much speaking ’ of the heathen is based on a debased conception of Deity. They imagine that He ‘ to Whom all hearts are open and from Whom no secrets are hid ’ needs, like a human judge, to be fully instructed in matters touching which He is ignorant, and so to be won over, as it were, to the petitioner’s view of the case.³ It is clear, however, that our Lord’s words on this subject do not preclude frequent offering of the same petition ; for even He Himself, in the garden of the Agony, prayed thrice, *saying the same words*, and He encourages, as we have seen, importunity in urging a particular request. What He condemns is the temper of faithless distrust and servile fear which regards prayer as a mechanical exercise, persistence in which is regarded as a form of *merit*, claiming the fulfilment of the petition as a right.⁴ The purport of Christ’s whole teaching is to inculcate simplicity and naturalness in our intercourse

¹ Matt. vi. 6 ; xviii. 19. On common prayer, see by all means the section in Hooker, *Eccles. Polity*, bk. v, ch. 24.

² Matt. vi. 5 foll. ; cp. 1 Kings xviii. 26–29.

³ *de serm. Dom. in monte*, ii. 3, 12. Augustine says in this connexion : ‘ Et revera omne multiloquium a gentilibus venit, qui exercendæ linguæ potius quam mundando animo dant operam.’ Cp. Chrys., *in Matt. hom.* xix. 249, A.

⁴ This appears to be the point of Matt. vi. 7.

with God. 'We are speaking to a Father. If it eases the burden on our hearts to renew a request again and again, let us do so until either our wish is granted or we are taught that what we have been desiring is not really good. . . . It is only *vain repetitions* that are displeasing to Him.' ¹ Fretful anxiety of mind is incompatible with the true spirit of sonship; and prayer has not fulfilled its function in the spiritual life till it has completely delivered the soul from distrustful fear, and has lifted it into the light of confidence and peace. 'For quietness,' says a Greek Father, 'is the mother of prayer, and prayer is the inward manifestation of the divine glory.' ²

It is noteworthy that the Author of the Lord's Prayer leaves unanswered most of those speculative difficulties which men have felt concerning prayer. He teaches the right point of view from which all such perplexities should be considered when He encourages us to confide simply in the revealed character of God and to trust to the uttermost those filial instincts which prompt us to make known to Him all our needs. Prayer in its simplest aspect is the instinctive movement of the human soul towards Him Who is at once its Source and its Goal. It is what Augustine describes it to be, 'The turning of the heart towards Him Who is ever ready to give.' ³ It is for the Christian essentially what it was for Christ: the heart-language of the spirit which *came forth from God and goeth unto God.*⁴

IV.

We may conclude this chapter by calling to mind what is implied in the fact that this is the *Lord's* Prayer. Christians call on the name of Jesus Christ as *Lord*. They

¹ Hogg, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

² John Damascene, *hom. de transfig. Dom.*, x.

³ *de serm. in monte*, ii. 3, 14: 'Conversio cordis ad eum qui semper dare paratus est.'

⁴ John xiii. 3.

recognize His sovereignty in the sphere of nature and of grace ; and in hailing Him as ' Lord ' they virtually worship Him as ' very God of very God.' They regard themselves as being *under law to Christ* ;¹ they accept His teaching as supremely authoritative, as the stay and guide of life ; they reverence and cherish His words as *spirit* and *life*.² Accordingly, to His believing Church, the prayer that He taught is necessarily the perfect pattern and type of all prayer. St. Cyprian remarks, that He Who thus instructed His disciples was the Lord Who of old spake by the prophets, and Who in due time came to crown their testimony by His own plenary authority.³ The Author of man's being became his instructor in the way of approach to God. Inasmuch as it is the eternal Son of the Father Who puts these words in our mouth, we are assured that when we use them we are praying in accordance with the divine mind and will ; nay, we employ the very words of Him Who ever intercedes for us ; we are learning by His example to bring our wills into conformity with the perfect rule and standard of desire : the *good and acceptable and perfect will* of a heavenly Father.⁴ ' Let the Father recognize,' says St. Cyprian, ' the words of His own Son when we utter our petition. Let Him Who dwells inwardly in our heart Himself be on our lips ; and since we sinners possess Him as our Advocate with the Father, when we implore forgiveness, let the words we offer be those of our Advocate.'⁵ The prayer taught by the Lord must needs be filled with prevailing power.

Again, we learn that *prayer for others* is a main part of Christian duty. Into the very texture of the Lord's Prayer

¹ 1 Cor. ix. 21 ; cp. Gal. vi. 2.

² John vi. 63.

³ *de orat. Dom.* i : Christ was ' Dei sermo qui in prophetis erat.'

⁴ Rom. xii. 2.

⁵ *de orat. Dom.* i : See also note at the end of the chapter.

is woven intercession, and the opening words, 'Our Father,' while they plainly call to our remembrance the needs of others, also inspire *thoughts of peace* and union with our brethren. The prayer is in the truest sense *oratio fraterna*¹—the prayer of brotherhood. It cuts at the root of all human inequalities; it levels all distinctions which sever high from low, rich from poor, educated from uneducated, wise from simple. It excludes all envy and ill-will; all that hinders or mars brotherly love. It reminds us 'that in the greatest and most essential things we all alike participate; on all alike God has bestowed one and the same patent of nobility' in calling men His children.² Therefore, He Who is *our peace*³ would have us pray, not only for ourselves but for all, so uniting ourselves to Him, the *One Mediator* Who pleads for all. We may indeed rightly regard the Prayer in its largest aspect both as an intercession for the unity of Christendom, and as a supplication in behalf of all mankind. It may perhaps help us to be regular and persevering in prayer if we recollect that when we omit it others besides ourselves suffer loss: the poor and the wretched, the sinful and the fallen, the suffering and the tempted, the sick and dying who need—how sorely!—the daily bread of divine grace and help; the relief of bodily necessities; forgiveness, restoration, and deliverance from evil.⁴

We learn also the due proportion to be observed in prayer from the divinely-taught order of the petitions.

¹ Augustine.

² Chrysostom, *in Matt. hom.* xix., 250 A.

³ Eph. ii. 14.

⁴ The order of petitions in the Prayer of John xvii. is noteworthy: The Saviour prays, first, for Himself (v. 5), next for His disciples, 'those whom Thou hast given Me' (9 foll.), lastly for the wider circle of those whom their influence may reach. See a suggestive sermon by Dr. Lock, Warden of Keble College, 'A Morning Prayer,' S.P.C.K., 1913.

In the prayer of faith we are called to enter into the mind of God, to make His purposes our own, to seek His glory and the extension of His kingdom, before we ask for the supply of our own wants. The last three petitions, indeed, we shall not always need; these are 'the prayers of our pilgrimage'; and have reference only to the necessities and perils of our present state. We are free, as we have already seen, to ask of God what we will, and to lay open before Him all the desires of our hearts; but if we pray as we ought, there can be no request that is not already included in the Lord's Prayer; ¹ and therefore no request for temporal blessings that is not subordinate to the spiritual purpose of life.

Once more, the Lord's Prayer is an example of the essential simplicity of true religion. Since our needs are few, our prayers should be simple. For the real answer to our prayers is God Himself: all that God gives, all that God *is*: life and light, truth and love. In the Lord's Prayer we ask for that which constitutes the true life of man, and for all else only in so far as it ministers to that life. It is the supplication of one whose eye is single, who has overcome all inward unrest, all division of mind, all anxious care; who in his prayer commits himself to *Him that is able to do for His children exceeding abundantly, above all that they ask or think, and Who makes all things work together for good to them that love Him.*² The Lord's Prayer

¹ Aug. *epist.* cxxx. 22. In the prayer of a Christian, 'nihil invenies quod in ista Dominica non contineatur et concludatur oratione.' So in the adaptation of Archbp. Thoresby's catechism ascribed to Wycliff: 'If thou runnest about by all the words of holy prayers, thou shalt find nothing which is not contained in this prayer of the Lord. Whoever saith a thing that may not pertain to this prayer of the Gospel, he prayeth bodily and unjustly and unlawfully as methinketh,' *Lay Folk's Catechism*, p. 105 [*Early Eng. Texts Society*, No. 118].

² Eph. iii. 20; Rom. viii. 28.

is, in fact, a kind of compendium of the Gospel—*breviarium totius evangelii*, as Tertullian calls it.¹ The new prayer taught by our Master is in keeping with that *newness of the Spirit* which is characteristic of His religion. Each clause suggests some new aspect of God's character; some different relationship in which He stands to His creatures. Each adds its own peculiar contribution to the message of the Gospel—to *the word of life*. It proclaims the name of God as the heavenly *Father of spirits*; as the Holy One Who has made known to mankind His character and claim; as the King and Ruler of the universe Who bears all things onward with wise and merciful providence to their appointed goal; as the Lawgiver and Judge Whose holy will is the eternal law of right; as the Fountain of Life Who sustains our being and supplies all our wants; as the Absolver Who can release us from the guilt and power of sin; as the Leader Who guides us throughout the days of our earthly pilgrimage; as the Saviour Who redeems us from all evil and overcomes all that hinders the accomplishment of His purpose.

He who has entered into the spirit of the prayer taught by Christ may say, in the words of a Christian poet:—

‘ I know He is, and what He is
Whose one great purpose is the good
Of all. I rest my soul on His
Immortal love and Fatherhood,
And trust Him as His children should.’²

As the Lord's Prayer gathers up all human needs of the past, the present and the future, so, rightly understood, it embraces all the truths of religion by which men live. ‘It may be compared,’ says one, ‘to a pearl in which the light of the whole sky is reflected.’³

¹ *de orat.*, ii.

² J. G. Whittier.

³ J. P. Lange, *Leben Jesu*, iv. 78: ‘Es ist einer Perle vergleichbar, in welchem sich das Licht des ganzen Himmels spiegelt.’

NOTE (*page 22*)

THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE LORD'S PRAYER

'Ista oratio superat et excellit omnem aliam orationem in dignitate et utilitate. In dignitate, quia Ipsemet Deus ipsam composuit et fecit : et ideo facit magnum dedecus et magnam irreverentiam Jesu Christo Dei Filio qui sibi accipit verba rithmitica et curiosa, dimittitque et relinquit orationem quam Ipsemet composuit qui scit totam voluntatem Dei Patris et qualis oratio maxime sibi placet, et pro quibus nos miseri maxime indigemus deprecari. Nam sicut prius dixi, Ille solus totam scit Dei Patris voluntatem, totam nostram necessitatem. Igitur centum millia hominum decipiuntur per multiplicationem orationum. Cum enim putant se habere devotionem, habent unam vilem et carnalem affectionem, quia omnis carnalis animus naturaliter delectatur in tali loquela curiosa.'

(From the *Speculum ecclesiæ* of St. Edmund, Archbp. of Canterbury, 1234-1240.)¹

¹ The passage is printed in the *Lay Folks' Catechism*, Early Eng. Text Society, orig. ser. No. 118, p. 103.

CHAPTER II

PRAYER AND ITS PLACE IN RELIGION

'He that has learned to pray as he ought has got the secret of an holy life.'—BISHOP T. WILSON.

IF we would understand the meaning and importance of prayer we must begin with the inquiry, What is religion ?

The end of religion is that *holiness without which no man shall see the Lord*; ¹ but religion is, of course, something wider and deeper than morality—the conformity of human life to divine law. It lies behind morality as its source and motive power. Religion consists in a living personal relationship between God and man : a relationship implying, on man's side, dependence, subjection, spiritual response to a personal Being Who manifests Himself to His creatures in ways of His own appointment : in His providential care, in His *Word of truth*, in conscience, in righteous dispensations of judgment and blessing. The link between the divine nature and the human that renders 'religion' possible and intelligible, is the fact of personality. Personality is known to us chiefly as that which implies capacity for fellowship with another ; it is the necessary condition of mutual comprehension, of spiritual intercourse and moral co-operation : in a word, of friendship. Accordingly, religion is perhaps best defined as the life of friendship between God and man : a friendship based in its origin

¹ Heb. xii. 14.

on affinity of nature, in its continuance on resemblance of character.¹ The Gospel tells us that the Son of God assumed our nature precisely for this: that He might win men to such a belief in the goodwill of God, as might transfigure human life and bring its noblest possibilities to fulfilment. This object He achieved in the first instance by the power of His own example. He showed by the whole tenour of His life on earth that religion is essentially a living relationship of love. In all His words of grace and works of mercy, in the constancy of His own filial obedience even unto death, He taught His disciples how they ought to think of God, how they should approach Him, how strive to please Him. In the Lord's Prayer, gathering up in substance the highest spiritual wisdom of the Old Testament, He instructed them how to converse with God; how to present their needs, how to open their hearts, how to 'walk' with Him continually as children with their Father.²

By religion, then, is to be understood a life of response to the divine self-revelation, a life of loving fellowship with God; and its intended effect is to impart to human personality all the moral strength, support and solace that true friendship—the sense of being known and understood, pitied and loved by another—can bestow. This 'other than self' is revealed to us by the Lord Jesus as a heavenly Father, Who watches over all His creatures with an infinite knowledge of their needs; communicating Himself to each according to its capacity, and dealing with each according to its opportunities. The goodwill and care of God towards men is analogous to, though it transcends, the affection of a human father for his offspring. He hears and answers

¹ Aug. *de civ. Dei*, viii. 17: 'Cum religionis summa sit *imitari quem colis*.'

² On the relation of the Lord's Prayer to the teaching of the Old Testament, see Note at the close of the chapter.

the spontaneous cry of human need ; He foresees and provides for every contingency ; He is the Author of all blessing, the Healer of all sin, the Conqueror of all evil. This is the idea of God which underlies all Christ's teaching on the subject of prayer. If religion consists in a filial relationship to God, prayer is essentially the intercourse of sons with their Father. It is man's response to the revelation of God's holiness, love and power. It is the means by which—yielding to an innate instinct of his nature—he holds communion with the unseen *Father of spirits*, seeks to discover His will and to embrace His purpose, and surrenders Himself to the claim of infinite Truth, Wisdom and Love. 'Prayer is the desire of the whole man, thought, will, feeling, receptivity and activity, turned Godward in expectation.'¹

I

Such is prayer, and it holds a supreme place in religion ; or rather it is the characteristic act of religion. It embraces all that is essentially included in the service of God, inasmuch as it implies that attitude of trustful and reverent submission to the divine will which is the true law for humanity.² *Men ought always to pray*. Prayer is the one function of the soul which circumstances need not interrupt. We cannot always be engaged in active toil of body or mind ; but always, while consciousness remains, we can pray. We are taught, moreover, by the example of our Lord and of His saints, that holiness *is* prayer : religion *is* prayer. 'Prayer,' says a mystical writer, 'is the most

¹ *The Practice of Christianity*, p. 228.

² T. Aquinas, *Summa*, ii, ii^{ae}, 83, 3 concl. : 'Oratio est actus religionis, siquidem per orationem homo Deum reveretur, seseque illi subjicit.' So Clement of Alexandria, speaking of the 'true Gnostic' or saint, says, 'For him his entire life is prayer and converse with God' (*Strom.* vii. 12, 73).

perfect and divine action that a rational soul is capable of ; yea, it is the only principal action for the exercising of which the soul was created, since in prayer alone the soul is united to God. And, by consequence, it is of all other actions and duties the most indispensably necessary.' Again, ' By prayer, I do not understand petition or supplication. . . . Prayer is rather an offering and giving to God whatsoever He may justly require from us—that is, all duty, love, obedience, etc. Prayer, in this general notion, may be defined to be *an elevation of the mind to God*, expressing, or at least implying, an entire dependence on Him as the Author and Fountain of all good ; a will and readiness to give Him His due, which is no less than all love, obedience, adoration, glory and worship . . . and lastly a desire and intention to aspire to an union of spirit with Him.' ¹

Thus Prayer, in its widest sense, is an exercise of the spiritual faculties which is not necessarily hindered or restricted by outward circumstances. Our Redeemer prayed upon the Cross itself, as if to teach us that the spirit of prayer need not be quenched either by the stress of bodily anguish, by the sense of spiritual desolation, or by lack of privacy. In all places and in all circumstances there is opportunity for the elevation of the heart to God, for the renewing of those desires which 'speak' to Him without utterance of words,² for that entire submissiveness of spirit which waits on Him and looks for tokens of His will. ' Sometimes ' (it is related of a holy man) ' he remained in

¹ Fr. Augustine Baker, O.S.B. (d. 1641), *Holy Wisdom*, treatise iii., ' Of Prayer,' § i, ch. 1.

² Cp. the language of the old Sarum collect for purity : ' Deus cui omne cor patet et *omnis voluntas loquitur*,' etc. So Erasmus, *Enchiridion mil. Christ.* 2 : ' Non strepitum laborum sed ardens animi votum *tanquam intentissima quaedam vox* ferit aures divinas.'

cessation and silence before God ; which manner of prayer he accounted a great treasure ; for then his heart, his desires, his secret intentions, his knowledge and all his powers spake, and God understood their mute language.’¹ So St. Paul realized the solace and power of prayer, less vividly perhaps in his days of absorbing missionary toil, than in the prison at Rome where he lay, chained to the heathen soldier who guarded him—his energies fettered and restricted in every direction, his soul harassed by manifold anxieties and distresses, yet feeling himself free to bow his knees unto *the Father from Whom every family in heaven and on earth is named*.² May he not thus have learned, as never before, the secret of power with God, of fruitfulness in labour, of strength *made perfect in weakness* ?

II

We have spoken of the conception of the divine nature and character which underlies the instinct of prayer, and which our Lord inculcates so explicitly in His own example and teaching. ‘ Primarily we pray because we love God or want to know Him, and because we desire that He will knit our wills with His and empower us to walk in His ways, and to co-operate in the works of His kingdom.’³ We pray because we believe that behind the veil of the visible order of Nature lives and works a Being Whose infinite might is ever controlled by a spiritual purpose ; Whose relationship to man is that of a Father, crowning His gifts to His children by making them *partakers of His holiness*.⁴ In the Lord’s Prayer we learn to approach God and to think of Him in accordance with what the only-

¹ *Holy Wisdom*, ubi sup., § i ch. 7 (alluding to the experience of Fr. Baltazar Alvarez). ² Eph. iii. 14.

³ Bp. Weston, *The One Christ*, p. 249. See the whole passage.

⁴ Heb. xii. 10.

begotten Son has revealed concerning Him. For, like all the other faculties of our nature, prayer corresponds to an objective reality external to us—to a reality which by means of it can be discovered and apprehended. It opens a way by which the soul can *feel after God and find Him*,¹ and may so attain to a real knowledge of His character and ways. Thus prayer becomes a more potent factor in man's spiritual education and brings him into more intimate contact with reality, in proportion as it corresponds to his growing knowledge of God. Further, the endeavour to assimilate what is, or may be, known of God, demands persevering effort. Prayer is an instinct which needs training and discipline, a faculty which is expanded only by continual and often laborious exercise. It is for this reason that our Lord says *Men ought always to pray and not to faint*; and St. Paul echoes the injunction when he bids his converts 'watch unto prayer' *with all perseverance*.² For like all other forms of knowledge, only in a far higher degree, the knowledge of God, which is the life of man, is the fruit of disciplined effort, of patient and steady persistence in the use of a faculty bestowed for this very purpose: that we might hold communion with the unseen, and by so doing enter into vital and quickening fellowship with Him Who is the upholder of life, the light of the understanding, the satisfying object of the soul's thirst.

Prayer, then, is primarily converse with a divine Father and Friend. It is the endeavour to ascertain His mind and purpose, to share His thoughts, to dedicate life to His service. Its function is to train and sanctify desire by directing it aright; but in its simplest aspect it is *converse*. The child of God is therefore free to lay out before Him all

¹ Acts xvii. 27.

² Eph. vi. 18. Cp. Rom. xii. 12; Col. iv. 2; 1 Thess. v. 17; 1 Pet. iv. 7.

his fears, hopes, joys, sorrows, perplexities, yearnings, aspirations. Through Christ, and in union with Him, he may have 'boldness' (lit. *freedom of speech*) in approaching God; ¹ he may feel 'assurance' of the divine sympathy and goodwill. St. James, in his teaching about prayer, suggests the thought that it is the appointed means by which all natural feelings or desires, of whatever kind, are to be hallowed and regulated. *Is any among you suffering? let him pray. Is any cheerful? let him sing praise.*² The life of fellowship with a heavenly Father implies this simplicity and 'openness' of converse. We are encouraged to speak to God as friend holds communion with friend. But since God is also the 'Giver of all good gifts,' the Fountain of life and blessing, prayer necessarily tends to take the form of *petition*. As Hooker says, It is 'a mean to procure those things which God hath promised to grant when we ask.'³ Here also the keynote of converse with the Father is simplicity. Our requests are to be simply *made known* to One Who gives simply, and *upbraideth not*.⁴ Just as, through the ordinary processes of Nature, He responds to the inarticulate cry of the brute creation—even the birds, Tertullian beautifully says, 'spread out their wings in the form of a cross, as if they were hands, and utter what seems to be a prayer'⁵—so it is His good pleasure to hear and

¹ See Heb. iv. 16; x. 19 and 22; Eph. ii. 18; iii. 12.

² James v. 13. ³ *Eccl. Pol.*, v. 48, 4.

⁴ James i. 5. On the word ἀπλῶς, meaning either (i) 'simply,' 'unconditionally,' or (ii) 'liberally,' see the note in J. B. Mayor, *The Epistle of St. James*, p. 36.

⁵ Tert. *de orat.* xxiv.: 'Orat omnis creatura. Orant pecudes et ferae et genua declinant, et egredientes de stabulis ac speluncis ad caelum non otioso ore suspiciunt. . . . Sed et aves nunc exsurgentes eriguntur ad caelum, et alarum crucem pro manibus extendunt, et dicunt aliquid quod oratio videatur. Quid ergo amplius de officio orationis?'

to answer the petitions of His rational creatures. If it be objected that, according to Christ's own teaching, the omniscient Father knows what things we have need of before we ask and that therefore prayer is superfluous, the answer would seem to be that man's request is included in that chain of causation by which the pre-ordained answer to prayer is brought about. God expressly conditions the bestowal of the gift or blessing that we desire upon the faithful use of prayer. *Every one that asketh receiveth.* Just as both in Nature and in the order of human society (*e.g.*, within the family circle) the principle of prayer—the expression of need and the request for its satisfaction—has its recognized place and function; so in the spiritual relationship between man and God, prayer is a *vera causa* tending to bring about definite effects. 'God of His own bounty bestows on us many things for which we ask not; but some things He wills to bestow upon us *when we ask for them*; and this for our profit, in order that we may acquire confidence in resorting to Him, and that we may learn to acknowledge Him as the Author of all blessings.'¹ Thus does prayer correspond to the spirituality of the universe; thus does it become an instrument for the training of faith, of obedience, of holy desire. Certainly Almighty God does not require to be instructed respecting our needs; but since it is His will to give *in response to* our petitions, the discipline of our desire is necessary in order to enable us profitably to receive His gifts.²

Such, then, is the Christian conception of the nature and office of prayer. Our lives are under the control of a living

¹ T. Aquinas, *Summa*, ii, ii^{ae}, 83, 2 ad 3; see the whole article.

² Aug. *ep.* cxxx. 17: 'Dominus et Deus noster non voluntatem nostram sibi [vult] innotescere, quam non potest ignorare; sed exerceri in orationibus desiderium nostrum, quo possimus capere quod praeeparat dare.'

and watchful Providence, which so fore-ordains and directs the course of nature as to include in it both man's prayer and the response to it.¹ We are accordingly encouraged by Christ to give the freest possible play to the instinct of prayer. At the same time, in so doing, we are led to follow the guidance of Him Who has taught us what, and how, we should ask, and Who in the Lord's Prayer has given us a summary of all gifts and blessings that we really need. We are sure that in using or expanding that divine outline of acceptable prayer we are asking *in Christ's Name*, and may be confident that in due time we shall obtain what we ask, in that form which will most effectually minister to our eternal good. *If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us ; and if we know that He heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of Him.* We have the petitions, although God answers 'not as we ask, but as He sees us to require.'²

III

What, then, may we gather from the order and the substance of the different petitions in the Lord's Prayer touching the rightful objects of prayer ?

Prayer in the name of Christ, as we have seen, means prayer in accordance with the revealed mind and will of God. Primarily, it is the effort of man's spirit to enter into sympathy and correspondence with the divine purposes, and there is an obvious element of truth in the contention that the only effect of prayer is to be discovered in the changed attitude of the suppliant's own will, submitting itself to the fixed order of God's providence and

¹ Aug. *de civ. Dei*, v. 10 : 'Preces valent ad ea impetranda quae se [Deus] precantibus concessurum esse praescivit.'

² 1 John v. 15. Cp. Fr. R. M. Benson, *Benedictus Dominus*, p. 24.

not looking for objective 'answers' to specific petitions. Unquestionably one chief object of prayer is to bring the soul into harmony with the divine will, and consequently to confirm faith and to kindle good desires. We do not pray either to inform the Almighty Father of what He does not already know, or to induce Him to alter His purpose in favour of our individual desires.¹ One great benefit of the habit of prayer is that it educates the soul in patience, in serenity, in quietness of mind. *Tranquillus Deus tranquillat omnia, et quietum aspicere quiescere est.*² The sense of God's goodness and resourcefulness grows through converse with Him, and leads the soul to restful acquiescence in His will, to trustful dependence on His power. It is of this *subjective* result of prayer that a Christian poet has spoken in well-known lines :—

' Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make !
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,
What parchèd grounds refresh as with a shower !
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower ;
We rise, and all the distant and the near
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear.
We kneel, how weak ; we rise, how full of power !
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong
Or others—that we are not always strong,
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee ? ' ³

¹ Calvin on Matt. vi. 8 says : ' Neque enim orant fideles ut Deum admoneant de rebus incognitis, eum ad officium hortentur vel cessantem sollicitent : sed potius ut seipsos expergefiant ad Ipsum quaerendum, meditandis Ejus promissionibus fidem suam exercent, curas suas exonerando in Ejus sinum se sublevent, denique ut tententur tam sibi quam aliis ab eo uno sperare et expetere quicquid est bonorum.' ² Bernard, *in Cant.* xxiii. 16.

³ Archbp. Trench, *Poems*, p. 141 [London, 1886].

But this subjective effect on the character of him who prays is by no means the whole account of the mystery of prayer. The very fact that prayer is addressed to One Who is *able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think* suggests that it sets in motion the springs of an illimitable spiritual power : that it can bring *mighty things to pass* ¹—what the Gospel calls *great things, strange things, glorious things*. There is no qualification in our Lord's ascription of power unto God : *Abba Father, all things are possible unto Thee ; remove this cup from Me ; howbeit, not what I will, but what Thou wilt.*² The children of God only do justice to His character, only take Him (so to speak) simply at His word, when they are 'men of desires,' when they are filled with a boundless expectation of good, when they believe that prayer is a force—the greatest of forces—at work in the universe. Nevertheless, the deepest desire of which prayer is the utterance will always be of a spiritual kind : the desire, namely, to know more of God's character, to fulfil His will more perfectly, to share His purpose for the world. For the very order of the Lord's Prayer instructs us that spiritual gifts and blessings far transcend those that are earthly and temporal. When we pray for the hallowing of God's Name, for the coming of His kingdom, for the fulfilment of His will, we are virtually seeking a single gift in which all *good things* are comprised : the gift of the Holy Spirit which God has promised to bestow on *them that ask Him.*³ This is in effect a petition for such a manifestation of divine power in our hearts and lives as may bring us into perfect correspondence with the divine will. Thus to pray is to seek for ourselves and for others the highest good—the very life of blessedness.⁴ We simply

¹ Psa. cxviii. 15, 16 [P.B.].

² Mark xiv. 36.

³ Luke xi. 13.

⁴ So Augustine says to Proba (*ep.* cxxx. 9) : 'Ora vitam beatam.'

ask, in other words, that we may be and do and suffer all that our heavenly Father wills.

We are taught, then, in the Lord's Prayer to seek *first the kingdom of God*,¹ as the possession of our own souls and as the goal of all human endeavour. Temporal blessings, on the other hand, both for ourselves and others, we have the right to seek in prayer, but not unconditionally. For we shall ever bear in mind, on the one hand, the omniscient love and wisdom of God; on the other, our own 'ignorance in asking' what is really expedient for us. The very name 'Father' is a pledge that whatever it is good and necessary for us to have, God is able and willing to bestow; and this thought, coupled with the sense of our ignorance, will probably restrain us, as we advance in the spiritual life, from too anxiously seeking earthly blessings or making our requests too definite.² Augustine goes so far as to maintain that we should not too earnestly deprecate for ourselves, or for those dear to us, even pain and misfortune, since experience shows that these, too, may be fruitful in blessing to the soul. Indeed, as the same writer elsewhere suggests, the mere fact that earthly prosperity and calamity fall to the lot of the just and the unjust alike may well warn us not to seek too eagerly those blessings which are manifestly shared by evil men, nor basely shrink from those misfortunes which often overtake even the righteous.³ Nevertheless we may lawfully ask for earthly things, not as an end in themselves nor as ministering merely to our personal comfort, but in so far as they are either aids to spiritual perfection and to the practice of virtue, or instru-

¹ Matt. vi. 33.

² Cp. Aug. in *Psalm*. liii. 5: 'In his ergo temporalibus, fratres, admonemus vos et exhortamur, ut non petatis aliquid quasi fixum, sed quod vobis Deus expedire scit.'

³ *de civ. Dei* i. 8.

ments serviceable to the better fulfilment of our appointed calling. We may freely ask, in short, for whatsoever we desire, provided only that we ask *conditionally*: that is, in a spirit of due submission to the divine will, and of trustful confidence that He grants what we ask, or withholds it, with a higher knowledge than our own of what is for our eternal good.¹

It may be asked, however, Will not reverence always restrain us from asking God to intervene, as it were, in the course of Nature and to override His own laws in order that some calamity that threatens us may be averted, some blessing that we earnestly desire may be bestowed? A usually wise teacher puts this very plainly: 'We must not kick against the pricks, or beg that this sickness or pain, the loss of this beloved one, may be averted from us. For God has taught us by many signs and proofs that these things are regulated by fixed laws. And is there not a kind of impiety in refusing to learn the plainest of lessons?'²

It may be submitted in reply that, even in this region, both experience and analogy suggest that, to a degree far greater than is commonly realized, spiritual forces interact with those that are merely physical. Many bodily diseases are caused or aggravated by conditions that are psychical

¹ T. Aquin. *Summa*, ii. ii^{ae}, 83, 6: 'Temporalia licet desiderare, non quidem principaliter ut in eis finem constituamus; sed sicut quaedam adminicula quibus adjuvamus ad tendendum in beatitudinem, in quantum scilicet per ea vita corporalis sustentatur, et in quantum nobis *organice deserviunt* ad actus virtutum.' Augustine implies that a Christian may even pray for *wealth* and *honour* if his motive be simply 'ut ex his secundum Deum prosit hominibus' (*ep.* cxxx. 23).

² B. Jowett, *Sermons on Faith and Doctrine*, p. 255. But see also p. 273, where in reply to a similar question the writer says: 'I will not answer this question. For sometimes human feelings cannot be reasoned with, and there would be a sort of impropriety in attempting to resist them.'

rather than material. The will, if it can be enlisted on the side of recovery, is often a potent factor in the healing of sickness, enabling the body to resist morbid conditions and noxious influences. If the 'self' could be changed, even the victims of their own ungovernable desires—the drunkard and the sensualist—might win some measure of freedom, health and peace; the misery of a divided consciousness might disappear and nature itself be renewed. Nay, what *might be*, not infrequently *is* the case. In the language of St. Paul, the old man is put off, and the new man put on; ¹ and prayer is the sovereign means by which this mysterious change is brought about. No limits can be assigned to the efficacy of that which enlists on the side of man, in his conflict with evil, spiritual or material, the omnipotence of God.

As we have the right to make known our requests to God in regard to such things as the recovery of a sick friend or the conversion of a sinner, so we are free to pray for seasonable weather, for the removal of pestilence, or other visitations which are matters of private or public anxiety. Even if science could assure us that the order of nature is so rigidly fixed as to be wholly unaffected by any causes other than purely physical, we should certainly not desist from prayer, though the *form* of our petition might be altered. We should in that case ask that God's will might be done, and that we might so love Him 'in all things and above all things' ² as to find all things working together for good

¹ Eph. iv. 22, 24.

² *In omnibus et supra omnia*: such is the original form in the Missal of the words in the Collect for the sixth Sunday after Trinity, 'loving Thee above all things.'

In regard to the point discussed in the text, Bp. Gore, in *Prayer and the Lord's Prayer*, ch. iii., well says: 'Christians will certainly go on trustfully commending their wishes about the weather to their heavenly Father's attention, as well as the health of their

both to ourselves and to those for whom we interceded. Without asking for that which we had reason to believe was contrary to God's will, we should simply commend ourselves to the perfect love and wisdom of a heavenly Father, confident of His goodwill, of His compassion, of His power to bring good out of seeming evil, and to overrule even the fixed course of nature in the interests of His purpose of grace.

We may briefly sum up what has been said on the subject of prayer for temporal blessings. We are encouraged by the teaching of our Lord to ask for everything we need or desire in so far as God has not plainly forbidden us so to do either in His Word or in the order of His natural providence. For, to Christians, the world is a spiritual order, and nature is ultimately under the control of that which transcends it, namely a personal Being, supremely free and powerful, wholly loving and righteous.¹ It is only reasonable to believe that in a universe, in which the will of man to so large an extent controls, modifies and directs, to specific ends, the forces of nature, there is infinite scope for the action of One in Whose eyes the moral and spiritual interests of mankind are paramount, and Who, because He is personal and omnipotent, is able to manifest Himself in ways which,

friends, until Science has got a power, altogether different from what it now wields, of predicting future events in these districts of experience. For only such power of prediction would make it apparent that in these, as in the vaster physical movements, events are simply determined in accordance with physical laws, without any reference to moral or spiritual causes.' Augustine, alluding to prayers for rain which had been offered in his church, says: 'It was the utterance of our earnest desire to escape death [by drought or famine]. It was not anything specially great that we asked of such a Father' (*serm. in Matt. vi.*, lvii. 3).

¹ Cp. Aug. *de civ. Dei*, v. 9: 'Ipsas naturales [causas] nequaquam ab Illius voluntate sejungimus qui est auctor omnis conditorque naturae.'

relatively to ordinary experience, we call 'miraculous.' The fact that prayer is frequently answered, sometimes in very marvellous and unexpected ways, testifies to the reality and potency of those spiritual forces which, no less certainly than physical laws, are expressions of the divine will. At the same time it must not be forgotten that in all true Christian endeavour prayer is combined with work. For we are called to act resolutely and intelligently in the sphere where God's laws are plain and manifest; and in the sphere where we need direction and inspiration we are to ask for fuller knowledge of the divine will, and for clearer guidance, in order that, having ascertained the will of God, we may whole-heartedly co-operate with Him in the fulfilment of His purposes.

In all this view of prayer we find ourselves supported by the spiritual experience of centuries. Those who try to live and act in the spirit of prayer are familiar enough with the mysterious fact of answers to prayer. They have again and again put to the proof the promises divinely vouchsafed to prayer and have not found them to fail. It is to the teaching of *experience* that Tertullian boldly appeals in the closing chapter of his treatise *on Prayer*:¹ 'We read and we hear and we believe,' he says, 'the many proofs of its efficacy.' Through prayer men like ourselves have actually obtained the grace of patience and fortitude in suffering, and power to triumph over sin; their faith has been strengthened; their comprehension of God's ways enlarged. Moreover, prayer has manifested its power in the sphere of physical nature and in the affairs of men. It has wrought things greater and more 'than this world dreams of.' Just as the actual experience of divine forgiveness—of deliverance from the bondage of evil—has a history reaching back to Him Who came into the world expressly

¹ *de oratione*, xxiv.

to deal with sin and its consequences, so prayer, too, has a history. We are able to point to the long line of those who have followed their Master in the life of prayer ; who have given their testimony to its wonder-working power ; who out of weakness have by it been made strong ; who through it have won victories of faith such as those enumerated in Hebrews xi. 33 foll. For prayer is the energy of faith laying hold of the promises of God and responding to His call ; of hope waiting for the manifestation of His power ; of love seeking an ever closer fellowship with Him in heart and mind, in will and character. Thus prayer is, as we began by saying, the very substance of religion ; it is the unceasing ascent of the soul to Him in Whom it finds its solace and its satisfaction, its well-spring of grace and its place of repose.¹ It is an act in which we place ourselves by the side of the incarnate Son Himself. *Etiam Ipse Dominus oravit.* We endeavour to be what He was : wholly submissive and devoted, wholly dependent and receptive, wholly enkindled with desire to fulfil the will of God and to manifest His Name. In other words, the object and aim of prayer is the development in us of a better and nobler self. For all that can in any way contribute to this we are bidden to ask, and as our religion has taught us to seek for this nobler self—to become our true selves—only in Christ, so the efficacy of prayer depends on the reality and sincerity of our union with Him in the power of Whose victory we may overcome the world.² Yes : ‘ Christian

¹ ‘ The Mystic learns that prayer is not an exercise for special times and places only, but rather is like our breathing—an energy of the soul which may go on *always*, of a soul which needs God *every moment*, of a soul that lives by breathing in the Divine fullness and beatitude. His prayer always tends to simplicity, to become love, to end with the never-ending restful contemplation of God ’ (Fr. Congreve, *The Interior Life*, pp. 190, 191).

² 1 John iv. 4 ; v. 4 ; John xvi. 33.

prayer is the same aspiration, the same desire as that which raised the eyes of the Lord Jesus on earth to look up to heaven to contemplate the Father. . . . Prayer is human desire that has found man's essential need, and in Christ has found a voice, has become articulate.'¹ Its object is not this spiritual gift or that, this earthly blessing or that, but GOD.

NOTE (page 28)

THE RELATION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER TO THE TEACHING OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The following passage from a sermon attributed to Bishop Andrewes (*serm.* xix. on the Lord's Prayer) is suggestive.

Starting from the word 'Amen,' he says: 'The reason of retaining of it is, that it might appear that the synagogue of the children of Israel, and the true congregation of the Church of Christ, is but one mystical body whereof Christ is the Head. . . . And indeed' (he continues) 'there is no petition in the Lord's Prayer which is not found in the Old Testament, used by the Church of the Jews.

For that which the Prophet prayeth, *Lift up Thyself, O God, above the heavens and Thy glory above all the earth: that Thy way may be known upon earth*, etc. (Ps. lvii. and lxvii.), is nothing else but the hallowing of God's Name.

Secondly, *Remember me, O God, that I may see the felicity of Thy chosen* (Ps. cvi.), is nothing else but an exposition of the second petition, Thy Kingdom come.

Thirdly, these words, *Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth Thee* (Ps. cxliii.), is a full comprehension of the third petition, that His will be done.

Fourthly, *The eyes of all do look upon Thee*, etc. (Ps. cxlv.), and the prayer of Solomon, *Give me not poverty nor riches, but feed me with food meet* (Prov. xxx. 8), is a full expressing of the fourth petition.

Fifthly, *My misdeeds prevail against me, O be merciful to our*

¹ Fr. Congreve, *The Spiritual Order*, p. 167.

sins (Ps. lxxv.), is a sum of the fifth petition, and the condition of this petition is Ps. vii., *If I have done any such thing or if there be any wickedness in my hands ; if I have rewarded evil to him that dealt friendly with me . . . then let my enemy persecute my soul* (Ps. vii. 4, 5) ; whereby he desireth no otherwise to be forgiven of God than as he doth forgive his brother.

Sixthly, that which the Prophet prayeth, *Turn away my eyes that they behold not vanity ; and Set a watch before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips* (Ps. cxix. 37 and cxli. 3), is that which Christ teacheth us to pray, *Lead us not into temptation.*

Seventhly, *Redeem Israel from all trouble* (Ps. xxv.), in effect is as much as, *Deliver them from all evil, which is the seventh petition.*

Lastly, look what reason Christ teacheth us to use here, the same doth David use (1 Chron. xxix. 11).

Therefore, having the same prayer that the Jews had, it is meet that we should have the same conclusion that they had, and the same is ; they said Amen, and so do we.'

CHAPTER III

THE USE OF THE LORD'S PRAYER IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

'Praeceptis salutaribus moniti et divina institutione formati audemus dicere, *Pater Noster*, etc.'—SARUM MISSAL.

WE have already pointed out the difference between the two versions of the Lord's Prayer given, the one by St. Matthew, the other by St. Luke. There can be little doubt that the version in St. Matthew's Gospel has been the most influential, and that it owes its somewhat expanded form to the fact that from the first it found a place in the public worship of the Church.

It is evident that there is some connexion between the Lord's Prayer as we have it and formularies in use among the Jews. We shall see, in the exposition of the several clauses, how far each petition is coloured by Jewish liturgical language. There seems, however, to be nothing distinctly Jewish in the *general arrangement* of the clauses. Indeed, in the spirit and manner of supplication, there seems to be a marked contrast between extant Rabbinic prayers and that which was taught by our Lord. Further, most of the Talmudic prayers, if not all, are apparently of much later date than the time of Christ. At the same time, it is undeniable that there were ancient petitions in use among the Jews which, in form at least, approach closely to those contained in the Lord's Prayer. The phrases, 'Our Father,' 'Our Father and our King,' or even 'Heavenly Father,' occur not unfrequently in Jewish service-books. The

'Kingdom' and the 'Name' of God are often mentioned. There are also requests for 'forgiveness,' and for deliverance from 'temptation,' sin and 'evil'; but it is important to remember that these expressions 'represent in Rabbinism something entirely different from that which our Lord had in view.'¹ It appears, indeed, that our Lord did make use of phraseology already current among devout Jews, and hallowed by long and sacred associations. But it is the spirit and tendency of the different petitions, their combination and succession in a particular order, that make the Lord's Prayer unique. We may suppose that Christ treated existing forms of devotion exactly as He did the Law—not destroying, but fulfilling; and it may be suggested that those clauses which seem to be wholly non-Jewish, e.g. *Give us this day our daily bread*, and *Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive*, etc., were possibly inserted with some reference to His teaching in regard to the Eucharist and the Atonement.

Here then, as in other instances, the great Teacher of mankind *brings out of His treasure things new and old*; and while in the order and progressiveness of its thought the Prayer serves as an education in the art of true and acceptable devotion, in the comprehensiveness of its petitions it gives expression to the infinitely varied needs of human souls. It was for this reason, among others, that the Lord's Prayer, together with the Creed, was employed in the Early Church as a basis of instruction for catechumens in the first principles of Christ's religion. For the six clauses of which the Prayer consists² fall naturally into two groups: the

¹ Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. i. p. 536. There are, of course, numerous passages, both in the Old Testament and in Jewish writings, resembling the Doxology.

² The division into six clauses (making *Lead us not*, etc., *but deliver us from evil*, a single clause) seems to be the most ancient.

first teaching the true end of man—the service and worship of God ; the second, the means necessary for the fulfilment of his vocation ; the first corresponding to *the great and first commandment* of the Law, the love of God ; the second to the love of man, for the single word ‘ our ’ implies that the need of one is the need of all. Just as by means of an exposition of the Creed, candidates for baptism were taught what to believe and think concerning God , so in the Lord’s Prayer they were instructed how to call on Him in whom they had learned to believe.¹

I

The earliest evidence we possess bearing upon the primitive use of the Prayer in worship is found in the eighth chapter of the *Didaché* : ‘ Pray not as do the hypocrites, but as the Lord commanded in His Gospel.’ The Lord’s Prayer follows,² and then comes the injunction, ‘ Thrice in the day thus pray ye ’ ; suggesting that Christians already observed the Jewish custom of private prayer at the third, sixth and ninth hours—a practice alluded to by Tertullian and commended by Cyprian.³ It would appear, then, that the earliest use of the Lord’s Prayer is to be connected, not with the Liturgy, but with the private devotions of the faithful, and that its introduction into the stated daily services of the Church belongs to a somewhat later period.

¹ See Aug. *sermm. in Matt. vi., de orat. Dominica (ad Competentes)* lvi., lvii.

² The version is nearly, but not quite identical with that of St. Matthew ; the Doxology is added in the form, ‘ For Thine is the power and the glory for ever.’ The same injunction is given in *The Apostolic Constitutions*, iii. 18, vii. 24.

³ On the origin of this observance of the ‘ canonical ’ hours, see Bingham, *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, bk. xiii.,^r ch. 9, § 8. Cp. Tertull., *de jejuniis*, x. ; Cyp., *de orat. Dominica*, xxxiv.

Meanwhile it is a noteworthy point that the use of the Lord's Prayer was confined to the faithful; hence it was known as *oratio fidelium* (εὐχὴ πιστῶν). Augustine expressly says that 'they only have the right to say *Our Father, Which art in heaven*, who have already been begotten again unto the Father, of water and of the Spirit.'¹ By the rule of the *disciplina arcani*, both the Creed and the Lord's Prayer were withheld from catechumens, and were only imparted to the candidates for baptism (*competentes*) eight days before the actual administration of the rite. On the eve of Palm Sunday (for example) they were taught the Prayer and were asked to repeat it for the first time on the very day of baptism (the vigil of Easter).² In the churches of Antioch and Jerusalem it was customary for the neophyte, having quitted the font and having been anointed with the sacred chrism, to turn to the East and recite the Lord's Prayer immediately before the celebration of the Eucharist.³ Thus he was admitted to a share in all the privileges of the faithful, including participation in the Eucharist and the opportunity of receiving instruction in the deeper mysteries of his religion.

The Lord's Prayer was in due course introduced as a regular feature in the daily services of the Church, both in the East and the West. The history of the gradual development of these daily 'offices' is obscure; but so far as the available evidence goes, it shows that the holding of two such services came to be the established rule: an *early morning* office, apparently substituted for the primitive vigil or midnight office (Nocturns) which had been customary

¹ *Enchir.* lxxi.

² For an account of the ceremonies of Christian initiation, see Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, ch. ix. [S.P.C.K.], and Bingham, *op. cit.*, i. 4, 3.

³ Cp. *Const. Apost.* vii. 44; Chrys. *hom. in Ep. ad Coloss.*, vi. 370 B.

in the earliest times ; and an *evening service*, held about the hour of the lighting of lamps. At each of these services it is most probable that the Lord's Prayer was used, since Tertullian alludes to it as 'the prescribed and customary prayer' (*legitima et ordinaria oratio*), 'prefixed as a kind of foundation to all the Church's intercessions.'¹ A canon of the Third Council of Orleans (538) required the laity who might be present at the morning or the evening service not to leave the church before the recitation of the Lord's Prayer and the benediction of the Bishop (if present).²

In addition to the two prescribed offices mentioned above, the services of *Terce*, *Sext* and *None*, corresponding to the 'canonical' hours, were apparently introduced in monasteries towards the close of the fourth century. The system was completed by the addition of *complin* and *prime*, some time before the close of the fifth century.³ In all these offices the Lord's Prayer came to be regularly used. It is in view of this common use that Augustine calls it 'the Prayer of the Church,' and says that it is perpetually recited in obedience to the express command of Christ.⁴

In these daily offices of the Church, the Lord's Prayer came in course of time to be employed in two distinct ways : (1) as an introduction or prelude to the service. This gradually became the ordinary practice in monasteries. The Rule of St. Benedict required the recital of the Lord's

¹ *de orat.* ix.

² See Bingham, xiii. 11, 7. The canon runs (*Conc. iii. Aurel. can. xxviii.*): 'De missis nullus laicorum ante discedat quam Dominica dicatur oratio.' On the use of *missa matutina vel vespertina* for daily offices, see Bingham, xiii. 1, 4.

³ The original custom of public prayer twice daily tended to perpetuate itself as the numerous offices came in medieval times to be grouped together in two main agglomerations—in morning and evening prayer.

⁴ *serm.* clxxxii. [al. xxix.] *de verb. Apost.*, 6. For other references see Bingham xiii. 7, 1, notes.

Prayer before Mattins and Prime. In late medieval times, it was recited together with the *Ave* and the *Credo* as a preparatory devotion before *each* of the canonical hours, and also at the close of Mattins and Evensong.¹ In the Quignon Breviary (1536), and in the English Prayer Book of 1549, a similar usage was followed; the daily offices began with the recital of the Lord's Prayer. (2) Again, the Lord's Prayer, prefaced as a rule by the 'lesser litany,' took its place as a regular part of the prayers which followed the recitation of the Psalms and reading of the Lections. But even in this context, it served both as a 'foundation' or preface to subsequent prayer, and as a summary of the special supplications that followed. Archdeacon Freeman points out that while the prayer apparently has a reference to the Eucharistic service, of which 'it furnishes in a measure the outline,' it also has a certain baptismal aspect, derived perhaps from its close connexion with the recitation of the Creed.² This may very possibly be the case; but it is unquestionable that the Prayer is used as a kind of summary of all subsequent petitions. It seems to serve the same function retrospectively—gathering up the substance of the *preceding* intercessions—in the medieval litanies and in the Bidding prayer of which it forms the natural close.³

We are here concerned only with the general *rationale* of the place occupied by the Lord's Prayer in the daily offices of the Church, and not with special or doubtful

¹ C. Wordsworth, *The Old Service Books of the English Church*, p. 84.

² Freeman, *Principles of Divine Service*, vol. i., pp. 328, 364.

³ The same general character of the Prayer as a *summary* of petitions preceding or following is noticeable in the various offices of the medieval Manual. It is thus used in the services of Holy Matrimony, Churcing of Women, Visitation of the Sick, and Burial of the Dead: also in the Ash Wednesday service. On these the corresponding offices in our present Prayer Book are based.

details. But a word respecting the *method of reciting* the Prayer will not be superfluous. In the daily offices of the West, the Prayer, together with the Creed, was usually said silently or under the breath—a practice which is presumably a relic of the primitive concealment of the Lord's Prayer from the unbaptized. In the Prayer Book of 1549, the priest was directed to begin the Lord's Prayer 'with a loud voice' instead of saying it secretly as a part of his private preparation.¹ It was not till the revision of 1661 that the people were directed to take part in repeating the Prayer; and a further change was made by the addition of the doxology,—a detail in which the Revisers followed the usage of the East as against that of the West.²

II

The place of the Lord's Prayer in Eucharistic worship next demands attention.

In this case also we find evidence of a threefold use of the Prayer:

1. The Lord's Prayer, regarded as *oratio fidelium*, has ever since the fourth century held in all liturgies a central and conspicuous place, namely at the close of the canon, or prayer of consecration.³ In this connexion it has some-

¹ The priest raised his voice at the clause *Et ne nos inducas, etc.*, to which the people responded *sed libera nos a malo*.

² The doxology was apparently borrowed by the revisers from the Scottish Prayer Book of 1637. The addition 'has great liturgical value, and there is special reason for its insertion in this place where the Lord's Prayer immediately follows the Absolution and the moment is one of praise' (*New History of the P. B.*, by Procter and Frere, p. 374). Compare its occurrence in the office for the Churching of Women (1661) and in the Prayers for those at sea.

³ Aug. *ep.* lix *ad Paulinum*, 16, speaking of the distinction between 'precationes' and 'orationes' in 1 Tim. ii. 1, expressly identifies the 'orationes' with the prayer of consecration, and he adds: 'Quam totam petitionem fere omnis ecclesia Dominica oratione concludit.'

times been described as 'the daily prayer' of the Church, and it was an invariable and indispensable feature of the divine service. But St. Gregory of Rome draws attention in one of his letters to a broad distinction between the customary usage of the East and of the West. In the East, the Lord's Prayer was usually recited *by the congregation*, the priest alone adding the doxology; in the West it was said *by the priest secretly*, with an elevation of his voice at the clause *and lead us not*, etc. The same Father makes a statement which has given rise to much discussion. He asserts that the Apostles used the Lord's prayer *only* as the formula of consecration.¹ The statement as it stands is unsupported by other evidence and is by most authorities on the subject dismissed as an error on Gregory's part. It occurs, however, in a passage which seems to suggest that, in the Roman use, the Lord's Prayer had at one time occurred not as part of the canon but *after the communion*, and that it was transferred to the close of the canon by Gregory himself; or possibly the statement merely implies that Gregory wished to introduce the custom of recitation of the Prayer by the *people*, instead of recitation, as heretofore, by the celebrant alone.²

However this may be, the fact is sufficiently clear that the Lord's Prayer has from the earliest times been an almost invariable feature of the consecration prayer.³ Its habitual

¹ Greg. *epist.*, lib. ix. ep. 12 (to John of Syracuse), 'Orationem Dominicam idcirco mox post precem dicimus, quia mos apostolorum fuit, ut ad ipsam solummodo orationem oblationis hostiam consecrarent.' See A. Fortescue, *The Mass, A Study of the Roman Liturgy*, pp. 362 foll.; Woolley, *The Liturgy of the Primitive Church*, p. 59, where the passage is discussed.

² So Woolley thinks, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

³ 'Almost invariable,' for (as is well known) there is no express mention of the Lord's Prayer as closing the canon in the Clementine liturgy (*Apost. Const.* viii.) or in that of the Abyssinian Church, or in the liturgy of Sarapion. See Additional Note A (p. 58).

use in this connexion probably suggested the idea that the petition for daily bread was primarily intended to refer to the sacred gift of the Eucharist.¹

2. At a later time, which cannot be precisely determined, the Lord's Prayer was prefixed to the Eucharistic service as a preparatory devotion for the priest before proceeding to the altar. This use of it seems to have been customary in some parts of the East at a very early date.² In the developed Eastern rites, however, it usually formed part of the preliminary office (*ἔναρξις*) in the sacristy, which gradually developed into a highly elaborate function. It is thus used in the Nestorian rite and in the present liturgy of St. Chrysostom.³ The Sarum office of preparation included the *Veni Creator*, a collect for purity, the psalm *Judica me, Deus* (xliii.) with antiphon, the lesser litany and the Lord's Prayer, besides the mutual confession and absolution, etc., at the foot of the altar. In the Edwardine Prayer Book of 1549 this preparatory service of the priest was curtailed and adapted to the needs of the congregation also. Thus the Lord's Prayer and the ancient Collect for purity were henceforth recited as a kind of public preparation for the service by priest and people together; but the older significance of the prayer is attested by the traditional custom according to which the priest alone recites it, the congregation not even joining in the *Amen*.⁴

¹ See especially Cyp., *de orat. Domin.* xviii., and the exposition of the prayer in the *de Sacramentis*, v. 4, where the 'daily bread' is thus explained, the writer adding 'Accipe quotidie quod quotidie tibi prodest; sic vive ut quotidie merearis accipere.'

² Freeman, *Principles of Divine Service*, ii., pp. 313, 389.

³ See F. E. Brightman, *Liturgies, Eastern and Western*, pp. 252, 353.

⁴ Cp. Luckock, *The Divine Liturgy*, p. 70. He points out that this public recitation of the Lord's Prayer violated two liturgical principles: (i) that of prefixing some kind of reverential preface

3. To return, however, to the employment of the Lord's Prayer as an integral feature of the Eucharistic service: there are indications that, in some liturgies at any rate, the Prayer occurred not only as the climax of the Canon, but also as a thanksgiving said by priest and people together after communion.¹ It is thus used in the Nestorian rite and in that of the Abyssinian Jacobites.² The evidence of *The Testament of our Lord* points to the same conclusion. There appears, then, to be a strong case in favour of the change made in our English liturgy in 1552, when it was directed that the Lord's Prayer should be said by the priest after communion, 'the people repeating after him every petition.' This was in effect a return to the usage of the Eastern and Gallican Churches; but it also implied a deeper and more primitive view of the act of sacramental communion: namely, that the entire service finds its culminating point not in the consecration, but in the reception of the elements by the worshippers, through which the individual soul enters into fellowship with Christ and with His whole Body the Church. Nothing can be conceived more fitting and appropriate than the recital of the 'prayer of brotherhood' by those who have been knit together, by participation in the Redeemer's Body and Blood, in one divine communion and fellowship. Thus the Prayer may be regarded as forming an essential part of the great sacrificial act of the Church; in using it after Communion, the Church 'offers herself, one with Christ as a Body with its Head . . .

to the saying of the Prayer (*see* additional note, B, p. 58 below); (ii) that of concealing the *oratio fidelium* from catechumens.

¹ See Woolley, pp. 131 foll., and the passages of the *de Sacramentis* to which he refers. See also Note C (p. 59)

² See Brightman, *op. cit.*, p. 303 (Nestorian); p. 242 (Abyssinian). In the modern Liturgy of St. Chrysostom, the Lord's Prayer occurs in the short office of dismissal, said in the sacristy after the service (*Ibid.*, p. 399).

that her whole fellowship, both the living and the dead, having their sins forgiven through the participation of Christ, may be accepted with all their good works and prayers "in the Beloved." And in the self-oblation of the Church is the culmination of the sacrifice.'¹ The Church itself, as Augustine points out, is the Body of Christ which constitutes the sacrifice. It is in harmony with the note of thanksgiving that in our liturgy, as in the Eastern rites, the doxology is appended to the Prayer.

It is to be much regretted that one ancient usage has for the present at least disappeared from the Anglican liturgy, namely, the solemn and reverential preface to the Lord's Prayer which is a feature of almost all extant liturgies. The use of the Prayer was, indeed, a privilege open to all baptized persons, but in the Liturgy it was almost always preceded by a petition that the worshippers might be found worthy to utter a Prayer taught by our Lord Himself. To take a few typical examples, the Liturgy of St. James (Syrian) introduces the Lord's Prayer as follows :

'Count us worthy, O Lord, lover of man, with confidence, without condemnation, with pure heart, with contrite soul, with face unashamed, with sanctified lips, to be bold to invoke Thee, the Holy God in heaven, as our Father, and to say,' etc.²

The following are from other liturgies :

'Bestow upon us Thy Holy Spirit, that with a pure heart and an enlightened conscience, with face unconfounded and faith unfeigned, with perfect love and stablished hope, we make bold in fearless confidence to say the holy Prayer

¹ Bp. Gore, *The Body of Christ*, pp. 212, 213. Bp. Gore points out that this is a leading feature in St. Augustine's doctrine of the Eucharist. See the passages of the *de civitate* mentioned p. 208, especially *de civ.* x. 6; xx. 10.

² Brightman, *op. cit.*, p. 59. For the Byzantine use see p. 391.

which Thy beloved Son gave to His own holy disciples and saintly apostles, saying unto them, For at all times so ye be going to pray, pray on this wise and say,' etc.¹

'Account us worthy, with the boldness which is of Thee to pray before Thee this pure and holy prayer which Thy life-giving mouth taught to Thy true disciples, the sons of Thy mysteries, Whensoever ye pray after this manner pray ye and confess and say,' etc.²

'Admonished by His saving precepts and guided by the divine instruction we are bold to say, Our Father,' etc.³

It has, moreover, been customary to expand the last petition of the Lord's Prayer in what was called by Easterns the *Embolism* ('interpolation'). This was perhaps originally a reminiscence of the litany which in ancient times preceded the Eucharistic service.⁴ An early example is found in the liturgy of St. James: 'And lead us not into temptation, O Lord, Lord of hosts, who knowest our infirmity; but deliver us from the evil one and from his works and from all malice and guile of his for the sake of Thy holy name.'⁵

The liturgy of St. Mark has: 'Yea, Lord, Lord, lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one; for Thy compassion knoweth that we are not able to endure, owing to our great infirmity; but *with the temptation make also the way of escape that we may be able to endure it*; for Thou didst give us power to tread upon serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy.'⁶

¹ Brightman, *op. cit.*, p. 182 (Liturgy of Coptic Jacobites).

² *Ibid.*, 295 (Nestorian).

³ Roman and Sarum. The same form (in English) occurs in the P.B. of 1549, and in the Scottish P.B. of 1637.

⁴ See Freeman, *The Principles of Divine Service*, vol. ii., p. 323.

⁵ Brightman, p. 60.

⁶ Brightman, p. 136. In the Byzantine Rite the embolism is lacking. For the Roman embolism see additional note D (p. 59).

In our English liturgy, the retention of the *Embolism* may have been thought inconsistent with the present position and intention of the Lord's Prayer. That intention is sufficiently clear. The Lord's Prayer, recited after reception of the elements, is an utterance of thankful self-oblation. In it the worshipper gives thanks for the divine gift he has received, and dedicates himself afresh, with all his faculties of body, soul and spirit, to the service of the living God, in union with the whole Church which in the Eucharist commemorates and proclaims the sacrifice of the Redeemer *till He come*.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

THE LORD'S PRAYER IN THE CANON

A (see page 53)

The facts are summarized by Mr. Srawley, *The Early History of the Liturgy*, p. 217, as follows: 'The use of the Lord's Prayer in the liturgy is attested by Cyril of Jerusalem and probably by Chrysostom, but it is absent from the *Apostolic Constitutions*, and there is no certain evidence for its use in Egypt in the fourth century. Nor, again, is there any explicit mention of it in connexion with the liturgy in North Africa before Optatus [c. 363]. This absence of evidence may be partly accidental, but we must allow for the possibility that its introduction into the liturgy was only slowly adopted in some Churches.'

B (see page 55)

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LORD'S PRAYER IN THE OFFICE OF PREPARATION FOR COMMUNION

Freeman, *The Principles of Divine Service*, vol. ii, p. 448, writes: 'The eucharistic Lord's Prayer—His own vestibule to His own holy temple—will be pregnant indeed with meaning in this its ancient position. It is specially to be viewed as a solemn request to be admitted to our Father's house by the divine ministry of the incarnate Son Himself, now, as of old, waiting upon us in lowliest guise, in the person of His ministers, to wash our feet, to soothe our penitential sorrows and fears,

to enlighten our ignorance, to sanctify our whole being, to carry us in very deed, though in deepest mystery, in the accepted gifts of His own Body and Blood, into that glorious Presence and Home; finally, to "break" to us, in our still abiding estate of orphanhood here below, "the bread of mourners," and pour for us "the cup of consolation."

C (page 55)

THE EVIDENCE OF THE BOOK *de Sacramentis*.

The six books of the treatise *de sacramentis*, addressed to the newly baptized, and evidently modelled on St. Ambrose's work *de mysteriis*, have been attributed to Maximus of Turin (c. 451-465), but in any case they belong to the period before the pontificate of Gregory I (590-604). The treatise is a valuable witness to the structure of the early Roman rite. In book V some portions of the canon are preserved. It seems clear that in the period before 590 the Lord's Prayer occurred twice in the Mass. It was said by the celebrant at the end of the canon and was apparently followed by a rich doxology. It also seems to have occurred *after* the communion, being said privately by communicants as an act of thanksgiving. 'Here,' says Mr. Woolley (*The Liturgy of the Primitive Church*, pp. 60, 61), 'we find, lingering on, a sign of the older use, in which, after communion, the people said the Lord's Prayer as an act, or as part of an act, of thanksgiving. In the process of development and in the gradual hedging of the mystery, the Lord's Prayer became confined to the priestly act of consecration. But already in the canon of the *de sacramentis*, the Lord's Prayer has the same position as in St. Gregory's days.'

D (page 57)

THE EMBOLISM AT THE CLOSE OF THE ROMAN AND SARUM CANON

'Libera nos, quaesumus, Domine, ab omnibus malis praeteritis, praesentibus et futuris; et intercedente beata et gloriosa semper Virgine Dei genetrice Maria, cum beatis apostolis tuis Petro et Paulo atque Andrea et omnibus sanctis: da propitius pacem in diebus nostris, ut ope misericordiae tuae adjuti, et a peccato simus semper liberi, et ab omni perturbatione securi: Per eundem,' etc.

CHAPTER IV

'OUR FATHER, WHICH ART IN HEAVEN'

(ST. MATTHEW)

'FATHER' (ST. LUKE)

'Pater arcani et ineffabilis sacramenti vocabulum est.'—RUFINUS.

THE title by which Almighty God is here addressed was already familiar to the Jews. In the Old Testament God is called 'Father,' in the sense that He has created Israel and *formed it for His praise*; that He has manifested His fatherly goodwill and compassion in redeeming His people from bondage.¹ Indeed, the very phrases, 'Our Father,' 'Your Father which is in heaven,' are actually found in Rabbinic writings.² But in its spirit and scope, how unlike is this clause of the Lord's Prayer to an ordinary Jewish petition! It is not addressed to the 'Lord God of Israel' nor to the 'God of our Fathers.' It introduces a prayer in which no single expression suggests the idea that a knowledge of the true God is the peculiar possession of Israel. The name 'Father' encourages every son of man to look heavenward for the pardon, sympathy or help that he needs. Even the Jews are encouraged to call God 'Father,' not by the express teaching of their Law, but by the promises

¹ Isa. xliv. 24; cp. lxiii. 6; Deut. xxxii. 6; Ps. lxxxix. 6.

² C. Taylor, *Sayings of the Jewish Fathers comprising 'Pirque Aboth,'* p. 124, mentions a saying attributed to R. Jehudah ben Thema: 'Be bold as a leopard, and swift as an eagle, and fleet as a hart, and strong as a lion, to do the will of thy Father which is in heaven.'

of prophecy. By so doing they profess their hope of a redemption yet to come; Christians calling on the Father express their faith in a redemption already accomplished, and their hope of a *salvation ready to be revealed in the last time*.¹

I

The doctrine of the divine Fatherhood is usually spoken of as having been first revealed to mankind by our Lord. But our first impression on reading the gospels is that the fatherly character of God, and His fatherly relationship to men, are always presupposed and taken for granted in the teaching of Christ. He seems to appeal to what is most simple and elemental in men's thoughts concerning God. He would have them believe whole-heartedly in the reality of that filial relationship to the great Creator which is attested by their own primary instincts. Nature itself suggests, as St. Paul pointed out to the Athenians, quoting a passage from their own poets, that *we are the offspring of God*.² Wherever men have connected with the idea of God a providence which watches over them, a care which anticipates their needs, a pity which compassionates their ignor-

¹ 1 Pet. i. 5. Cp. T. Mangey, *Practical Discourses upon the Lord's Prayer* [London, 1721], p. 11, note. As regards the doctrine of the divine Fatherhood in the Old Testament, it is, broadly speaking, true that Jehovah is occasionally represented as the Father of the *nation* in the canonical books; as the Father of *individual Israelites* in certain passages of the Apocrypha (cp. Ps. ciii. 13). The title 'Son' is applied to the Theocratic king, regarded as a type of the Messiah (Ps. ii. and lxxxix.).

² Acts xvii. 28, 29. Cp. Lactantius, *div. inst.* iv. 3: 'Omnem deum qui ab homine colitur necesse est inter solennes ritus et preces *patrem* nuncupari; non tantum honoris gratia, verum etiam rationis; quod et antiquior est homine et quod vitam, salutem, victum praestat ut pater. Itaque et Juppiter a precantibus *pater* vocatur,' etc. See also Warde Fowler, *The Religious Experience of the Roman People*, p. 155, who quotes this passage.

ance, a righteousness which chastises their sins, they ascribe to Him in effect the attributes of Fatherhood. Nevertheless, in the teaching of Christ the doctrine obviously receives a vast enrichment. Not only was God from all eternity a Father in virtue of His relation to the only-begotten Son in Whom He manifests His Name and His glory. In relation to mankind the very essence of His 'fatherliness' is seen to consist in His infinite willingness to communicate Himself to His offspring; to impart to them, according to the measure of their capacity, His own spiritual attributes; to make them, by His own free gift, *partakers of the divine nature*. 'God is Father in the sense of being One Who, on the appeal of His children, is ready to put forth His infinite power to help them when they cannot help themselves. . . . *All that I have is thine*—that is the constant attitude of true fatherly love, and therefore of our heavenly Father's love; all that He has is ours': the treasure of His grace, the riches of His glory and the fullness of His might. 'The Fatherhood of God, in the Christian form of the conception, involves all that our Lord teaches about the availableness of the supernatural.'¹

We may say, then, that what our blessed Lord presupposes and takes for granted in His teaching about God is tantamount to a new revelation of Deity. We know God, as Father through and in Jesus Christ. *Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father; he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also. No one knoweth . . . who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him.*² Only in so far as we have the mind of Christ and share His spirit of dependence and trust do we 'know'

¹ A. G. Hogg, *Christ's Message of the Kingdom*, pp. 150, 151. See Additional Note, p. 75.

² 1 John ii. 23; Luke x. 22. Cp. Bern. *in Cant.* viii. 3: 'Alter enim sine altero nequaquam innotescit.'

the Father and pray to Him aright. Only *in Christ*—only through incorporation into His Body by baptism—do we rightfully enjoy the privilege of adopted children and have boldness to call God 'Father,' and to claim His promises. In praying thus, we pray in union with Him ; we are guided and inspired by His Spirit. It is the witness of *the Spirit of Christ* in our hearts that emboldens us to utter the children's appeal and to cry *Abba, Father*.¹

We cannot wonder that the Lord's Prayer was enshrined in the heart of the Early Church as a treasure not to be lightly dispensed ; that it was regarded as a mystery to be withheld from the unbelieving and the uninitiated ; that the knowledge of it, and the right to use it, was restricted to 'the faithful,' who had a right to communicate at the altar, where they would hear it repeated at the culminating moment of the eucharistic oblation.²

Accordingly, the Christian's sense of sonship does not originate merely in the fact that he is a being created in God's image, and that in nature—in the possession of reason and will—he is akin to his Creator. He calls God 'Father' in virtue of a life which he possesses only *in Christ*, Who not merely declares the fact of our sonship, but Himself mediates and bestows it. *As many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His Name*.³ Our sonship is at once a truth of revelation and a gift of grace.

At the same time, in revealing the Fatherhood of God,

¹ Rom. viii. 15, 16 ; Gal. iv. 5, 6. Aug., *Enchir.* lxxi. : 'Eorum est enim dicere *Pater noster qui in caelis es* qui jam Patri tali regenerati sunt ex aqua et Spiritu.'

² Hence its title, *εὐχὴ πιστῶν, oratio fidelium*.

³ John i. 12, 13. Augustine dwells on the ungrudging love of the divine Son, who though He was the 'Only-begotten Son,' yet 'deigned to have brethren,' and to share His inheritance with those for whom He died (*serm. in Matt. vi., de orat. Domin. lvii.*).

our Lord re-enforces the teachings of natural religion and of Hebrew prophecy. He ascribes to the Father all those attributes which inspired thought and devotion had ascribed to *the Holy One of Israel*: omnipotence, separation from the world, moral transcendence, holiness. The Father Whom He proclaims is a *heavenly* Father, in Whom lovingkindness and creative compassion are blended with 'exquisite justice' and incomparable majesty. *If ye call on Him as Father, Who without respect of persons judgeth according to each man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.*¹ Thus writes St. Peter, expressing the sacred paradox implied in Christ's revelation of God: *Our Father*: therefore near us and in us; *Our Father in heaven*: therefore infinitely exalted above us; *Our Father*: therefore the object of child-like trust and dependence; *In heaven*: therefore the object of sacred reverence and awe.² We may truthfully say that the divine Fatherhood is the central doctrine of the Gospel—that which gives colour to all its teaching about God. Nevertheless, the other attributes of Deity are necessarily present to our minds when we pray, not only *with the spirit*, as St. Paul says, *but with the understanding also.*³

The prayer of Christian faith is, in fact, the fruit of a new spiritual impulse. It corresponds to a new outlook upon life, a new insight into its meaning and issues. The word 'Father' suggests the idea of steadfast lovingkindness as that which controls and conditions the exercise of creative and sustaining might. It gives the needful clue for a re-interpretation of the universe; of human nature and its possibilities; of man's relation to his fellows; of those

¹ 1 Pet. i. 17.

² Cp. Iren., *c. haer.* iv. 16, 5: The Law of Christ 'auxit etiam timorem: filios enim plus timere oportet quam servos, et majorem dilectionem habere in patrem.'

³ 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

awe-inspiring facts of life—sin, temptation, pain, sorrow and death—which, for multitudes of mankind, conceal the real character, and obscure the spiritual purpose, of the Creator. The name 'Father,' perfectly understood in its full depth of meaning, implicitly contains all that makes up the content of religion and of moral obligation. Moreover, it tends to awaken in man the element of emotion and desire ; it kindles love and aspiration—the motive power of the new life, the life *unto God*, to which we are called. It invests the sternness of duty with a new glory ; it deepens the dread significance of sin ; it opens to man the vision of *new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness*.¹ He who calls God 'Father,' in this one simple title confesses his belief in the reality of forgiveness, in the possibility of redemption, in the manifestation of the divine Spirit and of the divine Kingdom, in the ultimate fulfilment of the divine purpose to *restore all things, to sum up all things in Christ*.² For the Fatherhood of God is a pledge that the work of His hands is continually the object of His care ;³ that He directs and controls the issues of life ; that the world is a spiritual order in which there is no blind chance ; in which no life is 'upheld for naught' nor 'walks with aimless feet' ; in which prayer is not fruitless, nor labour vain, nor suffering purposeless ; but *to them that love God, all things work together for good*.⁴ We may venture to think that just as the first recorded utterance of the incarnate Son is a dedication of His life to the service of the Father, so His last word upon the Cross is a supreme act of trust in the creative compassion and power of Him Who is the life and final home of every human soul.⁵

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 13.

² Matt. xvii. 11 ; Eph. i. 10.

³ Cp. the appeal of Job x. 4-12.

⁴ Rom. viii. 28.

⁵ Luke ii. 49 ; xxiii. 46.

II

We may consider somewhat more closely, though by no means exhaustively, what is implied in the invocation of *Our Father, which is in heaven*.

(I) The word 'Father' encourages us to have *confidence in the power of prayer*. We approach a Being to Whom in nature we are akin: One Who *knoweth our frame*, Who understandeth our *thought afar off*, Who *knoweth what things we have need of before we ask*.¹ 'I speak to thee,' writes the author of *The Imitation*, 'to Thee Who knowest all things; to Whom all my inward thoughts are open, and Who alone canst perfectly comfort and help me. Thou knowest what good things I stand in most need of, and how poor I am in all virtue.'² The children of God make known to Him all their wants, whether of body or soul, trusting in His providential care, in His freedom and willingness to give. Their eyes wait upon Him, not only as the Sustainer of the bodily life, but as the Source of all grace, *the Father of spirits*, Who, in calling men to fulfil the true law of their nature, bids them seek from Him the living power that will enable them to respond to His gifts and His purpose. This temper of dependence is of the essence of the Christian character; it is the chief element in that child-likeness which none can produce in himself but which is, as Christ affirms, a new nature, a birth from above.³ In calling God 'Father' we implicitly acknowledge that, without Him we are not able to please Him; and that as we derive from Him a supernatural life, so we rely solely on Him to uphold and

¹ Ps. ciii. 14; cxxxix. 2, 3; Matt. vi. 8.

² *de imitatione Christi*, iv. 16. Cp. a saying of Bp. Creighton mentioned in his *Life*, vol. ii., p. 389: 'Every one wishes to be understood: that ought to be the bottom of our prayers, "I go to talk to God because He understands me."''

³ See John iii. 3, R.V. marg.

renew His gift. The very name kindles in the suppliant, not only affection and desire, but a holy confidence that he does not ask in vain. 'Our Father' will *give good things*—even the best and greatest—to *them that ask Him*.¹

On the other hand, the recollection that our Father is *the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity*² will restrain the eagerness with which we ask for temporal gifts and blessings. If we enter into the spirit of the Lord's Prayer it will suffice us to commit the care of our bodily life trustfully to Him as to *a faithful Creator*, Who is able and willing to uphold us in being so long as may be needful for His glory and for our perfecting in grace; and Who will bestow or withhold His gifts as may best promote our true spiritual welfare. Thus, at the outset, the Prayer strikes the note of unworldliness; it teaches us 'for nothing earthly, temporal, mortal, to long nor to wait';³ and to put aside all heathenish anxiety and care, resting in the assurance of His goodness and power.⁴

(2) Our invocation of the Father is also, in effect, an act of faith in the *impartial love* of God, Who, as St. Peter says, *without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work*.⁵ He deals with ourselves and with all mankind as

¹ Matt. vii. 11; cp. Rom. viii. 32. Aug., *de serm. Dom. in monte*, ii. 4, 15, says: 'Quo nomine [Patris], et charitas excitatur, et simplex affectus et quaedam impetrandi praesumptio quae petiti sumus.' Cp. Bern. *in Cant.* xv. 2: 'Mihi dictatur oratio, cujus principium, nomine dulci paterno, sequentium obtinendarum petitionum praebet fiduciam.'

² Isa. lvii. 15.

³ Bp. Andrewes, *Private devotions* (the fourth day).

⁴ Tert., *de orat.* ii.: 'Appellatio ista [Patris] et pietatis et potestatis est.' Our Lord speaks of earthly care as 'heathenish' in Matt. vi. 32. Samuel Johnson in his *Journal*, p. 123, notes a private resolution: 'To consider the act of prayer as *a reposal of myself upon God*, and a resignation of all into His holy hand.'

⁵ 1 Pet. i. 17.

One Who has absolute knowledge of the capacities and opportunities of each, and of all that is needed for the fulfilment by each of His peculiar vocation. To Him, earthly distinctions are nothing. All men are equal in their capacity for divine sonship, in their need of divine grace and help. In His sight, says Augustine, 'master and servant, commander and soldier, rich and poor are brethren.' This title of God, writes Chrysostom, 'suggests that charity which is the mother of all good things and excludes the inequality of human affairs; it shows that the poor man has equal worth with the monarch, since in those things that are greatest and most necessary we all alike are partakers. . . . For on all He has bestowed one and the same patent of nobility, in that He deigns to be called the Father of all alike.'¹ From this there follows the mystery of *vocation*. He Who is Father of all has a purpose for each of His children. Mankind is a vast Brotherhood, in which the peculiar gift of each is divinely intended for the service of all; and it is forgetfulness of this that is chiefly accountable for the appalling social evils of the modern world. When we say, *Our Father*, we bear witness against that self-seeking temper which, in ourselves or others, lies at the root of all the misery and injustice, all the confusions and anomalies, which seem in the eyes of multitudes to give the lie to any public profession of Christianity.² As the name 'Father' is a rebuke to all selfishness of aim, all forgetfulness of the claims and needs of others, so it implies that all Christians are called to be fellow-workers with God; to share His thoughts, to make His purposes for human society their own. They are not only

¹ Aug., *serm. in Matt. vi.* lix. 2; and Chrys., *in Matt. hom.* xix., 250 A, B. Cp. *The Rule of Faith and Hope* [Lib. Hist. Theol.], pp. 25, 26.

² In *The Creed and Real Life*, by the Rev. J. G. Adderley, this point is urged with characteristic directness and force. See pp. 30-39, on the Fatherhood of God.

servants, but friends ; not only children, but heirs. They form a spiritual community of which He is Lord ; a household or family over which Jesus Christ rules as Son of God.¹ They are pledged, as it were, by the privilege of their supernatural birth, to make the Father's interests their own ; to honour Him, not merely by willing obedience, but by intelligent co-operation, and so to participate in His work here that they may hereafter *inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.*²

(3) *Our Father* is commended to us by our Master as *the supreme object of imitation*. The title sets before us an ideal to be pursued ; a moral standard by which action is to be tested. What God *is*, that His children are called to be. *Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*³ 'Let us consider,' Augustine says simply, 'Whose sons we have begun to be, and let us live as beseems those who have such a Father.'⁴ Christ points to the Father as the pattern of active and impartial goodness, pouring His benefits ungrudgingly upon the unthankful and the evil ; of creative love, seeking everywhere and always the good of men. But equally in His teaching and in the example of His life He emphasizes the *heavenliness* of our calling, the transcendent glory of the divine standard. The word 'heaven' suggests the lesson so often repeated in the New Testament : that Christians should *set their mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth* ; that they should *look for an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled reserved in heaven for them* ; should follow the example of Him Who *died unto sin*, and passed over into a higher state of being,

¹ See John xv. 15 ; Heb. iii. 6.

² Matt. xxv. 34.

³ Matt. v. 48.

⁴ *serm. in Matt. vi. lvii. 2.* Cp. Pet. Chrysologus, *de orat. Dom.*, serm. ii : 'Qui se filium Dei credit, actu, vita, moribus, honestate, tanto generi respondeat.'

separated for ever from contact with the evil world.¹ Just as He always refused to employ the weapons of the world and deliberately chose the path of failure, poverty and reproach; as He conquered by meekness and triumphed through self-humiliation; as He was ever guided by a heavenly law—*not My will but Thine be done*—so the children of God are summoned to a like detachment, a like victory over the world. We were created for something nobler and higher than the world can give, namely, for life *in God* and *unto God*. The Father does not indeed deny us in due measure the good gifts of earth; but His characteristic gift is the Holy Spirit. He blesses us with *every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ*.² This we are to seek, because only through the bestowal of this promised blessing can we attain to the likeness of His holiness.

Thus the title 'Father, Which art in heaven,' suggests the true aims that should guide the child of God, to whom the universe is a spiritual order, controlled and impelled by spiritual forces. Heaven is the sphere in which the might and glory of the living God are manifested; and the secret of influence over the world and victory over its evil is the heavenly mind: self-separation from its aims and methods, indifference to its rewards. Describing the character of the earliest believers, a Greek Apologist says: 'They sojourn upon earth, but their true commonwealth is in heaven. They obey the established laws of the state and in their own lives transcend the laws. They love all mankind and are persecuted of all. They are despised and condemned; they are put to death and yet they live. They are poor, and make many rich; they are in need of all things, and

¹ Cyp., *de orat. Dom.* xi.: 'Conversemur quasi Dei templa, ut Deum in nobis constet habitare . . . Qui caelestes et spirituales esse caepimus non nisi spiritalia et caelestia cogitemus et agamus,' etc.

² Col. iii. 2; 1 Pet. i. 4; Rom. vi. 10; Heb. vii. 26; Eph. i. 3.

yet abound in all things. In a word, what the soul is in the body, that the Christians are in the world. They dwell in the world, but are not of the world.'¹ Such was the 'unworldliness' of the first Christians. They passed, as their Lord had passed, through a world of sin, untainted by its spirit, undefiled by its evil, unmoved by its allurements. In calling upon a heavenly Father, they *confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth* ;² that earth was not the inheritance of God's children ; that the true home and refuge of their spirits was He in Whose presence there is freedom from sin, fullness of joy, perfection of life.³

(4) Another thought is suggested by the mystery of the divine Fatherhood. We *call on the Father, Who without respect of persons judgeth according to each man's work*. In other words, we ascribe to Him the work of moral governance. We bow before Him as *the blessed and only Potentate*,⁴ exercising authority, revealing, in ways of His own appointment, the idea of right, the everlasting law of duty. To the revelation of God's parental relationship to man, moreover, corresponds that of moral retribution. We fear Him because to Him *vengeance belongeth* ; because He punishes transgression, and *will by no means clear the guilty*.⁵ We think of Him as chastening His sons for their profit, that they may be *partakers of His holiness*. We approach in the Lord's Prayer One Who deals with men as needing discipline. This discipline is of various kinds. St Augustine dwells particularly on two consequences of wrong-doing, 'ignorance' and 'difficulty'—*ignorance*, that is, a certain blind-

¹ *Epist. ad Diognetum*, v. 9-vi. 1. Cp. 2 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

² Heb. xi. 13.

³ *de sacramentis*, v. 4 : 'Caelum est ibi ubi cessavit culpa ; caelum est ibi ubi flagitia feriantur ; caelum est ibi ubi nullum mortis est vulnus.'

⁴ 1 Tim. vi. 15.

⁵ Exod. xxxiv. 7.

ness of spirit which cannot discern the spiritual significance of life, nor the meaning of God's dealings with the soul; in other words, that incapacity to know God which results from lack of sympathy with His purpose and character; ¹ and *difficulty*, springing from the weakness of a disordered will, from despondency of mind, from the importunity of evil desires only partially subdued. Our appeal to the Father is our acknowledgment that these spiritual trials and disabilities are the mark of divine discipline; a means of healing and deliverance to be accepted with penitential submission. Nor must we forget that the doctrine of the divine Fatherhood involves a call to repentance. The lost son of our Saviour's parable is described as coming 'to himself.' There stirs in him the aching sense of misery, want and loss, and self-pity melts into a wistful recollection of what he has once enjoyed and recklessly spurned—the priceless treasure of a father's love. The thought of his home rekindles faith, affection, hope. He resolves to trust to 'the fatherliness of the Father,' to the unfailing pity and goodwill which is ever on the watch to 'welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,' the penitent. True penitence is the turning of the human heart homewards, the self-surrender of the sinner to the divine love: the love which, while it judges, understands; while it condemns, pities; while it chastens, heals. 'See,' is Chrysostom's comment, 'how at once the word "Father" raises up the hearer, and reminds him at the outset of the lovingkindness of God. For he that calls God "Father," in this single title acknowledges the reality of forgiveness, the remission of penalty, righteousness, sanctification, redemption, adoption, inheritance, brotherhood with the Only-begotten, and supply of the

¹ ἀγνοία Θεοῦ, as St. Paul calls it (1 Cor. xv. 34): 'A settled incapacity for knowing and judging rightly in regard to God and His will'. Cp. 2 Pet. ii. 15.

Spirit.'¹ Repentance is not merely a 'negative movement' of the soul turning away from sin; it is the turning of the whole personality Godward;² it means the recognition and acceptance by man's reason, heart, and will of God's paternal claim and of His Fatherly goodwill. This seems to be the leading thought in one of Bishop Wilson's paraphrases of the clause: 'My Father, I have sinned against heaven and in Thy sight, and am not worthy to be called Thy son. Look upon us, O Father, as poor, weak, ignorant, froward and helpless children; and pity us according to Thy goodness, for Jesus Christ's sake, the Son of Thy love.'³

III

Such, then, are some of the thoughts, the hopes, the aims which we associate with the name 'Father.' Taught by the example of *the Son of His love*, we approach God as children, who, realizing their own ignorance and helplessness, cast their burden of weakness and guilt upon Him, and look to Him for the fulfilment of every sincere prayer, every heavenward aspiration. The Saviour Himself has taught us the meaning of filial trust, and the greatness of the response which it elicits; He has taught us 'to lean upon God with that submissive confidence which sets free the omnipotence of His love.'⁴ But He has also shed forth upon the Church of the redeemed, the Spirit by Whose inspiration they enter into the Father's mind and embrace, with intelligent zeal and with a ready will, His world-wide purposes. What the Father has manifested Himself to be to His *true worshippers*,⁵ that He potentially is to every

¹ *In Matt. hom.* xix, 249 D.

² Cp. Acts xx. 21: τὴν εἰς τὸν Θεὸν μετάνοιαν.

³ *Sacra Privata*: Tuesday meditations (ser. 1).

⁴ A. G. Hogg, *Christ's Message of the Kingdom*, p. 157.

⁵ John iv. 23.

child of man. Therefore we invoke the Almighty and All-merciful in behalf of all that He has made, pleading for all men alike, of whatever grade or estate, and commending them to the everlasting mercy of their Creator with trustful faith. In 'the prayer of the faithful' we ask that they also may have fellowship with us, and may come to *know the breadth and length and height and depth*¹ of that love which as yet they know not, or to which they make only a faint and fitful response. As the Prayer excludes all selfishness of desire, all narrowness of sympathy, so it corrects the spirit of rivalry or ill-will. It is an intercession for 'our enemies, persecutors and slanderers,'—a petition not only that they may be forgiven, but also that they may learn to behave towards us as children, with them, of a common Father; Bishop Ken beautifully gathers up the purport of the divine title with which the Lord's Prayer opens: 'Glory be to Thee, O Lord, Who in teaching me to call God "Our Father," hast taught me not to confine my charity to myself, but to pray also with the affections of a brother, and to enlarge it to all mankind, who are children by creation, to all Christians, who are children by adoption, of the same heavenly Father. O give me that brotherly kindness to them all that I may beg the same blessings for them as for myself, and earnestly pray that they may all share with me in Thy Fatherly love.'²

Thus at the very outset we learn that the 'Prayer of the faithful' is also the 'Prayer of brotherhood'; and that greater even than faith, greater than hope, is love. It is by love that we prove our affinity to Him Whom we call 'Father'; by love that we show *what manner of spirit we are of*; by love that we are called to *be servants one to another*, and so to glorify our *Father which is in heaven*.³

¹ Eph. iii. 18.

² *The Practice of Divine Love*, part iv.

³ Luke ix. 55 A.V. (R.V. marg.); Gal. v. 13; Matt. v. 16.

ADDITIONAL NOTE

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

'This term [Father] expresses not only the Person, the Being to Whom it is to be paid. It expresses a peculiar character. It ascribes peculiar attributes to God. It ascribes to Him the parental relation and the disposition of a parent. . . . That God has not always been worshipped as a Father, even among Christians, you well know. Men have always inclined to think that they honour God by placing Him on a distant throne, much more than by investing Him with the mild lustre of paternal goodness. . . . Men have too often been degraded, broken in spirit, stripped of manly feeling, rather than lifted up to true dignity, by their religion. . . . Thanks to Jesus Christ, that He came to bring us to a purifying, ennobling, rejoicing adoration! He has revealed the Father. His own character was a bright revelation of the most lovely and attractive attributes of the Divinity, so that He was able to say *He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father*. By His manifestation of the parental character of God, He created religion anew. He breathed a new and heavenly spirit into worship. He has made adoration a filial communion, assimilating us to our Creator. Ought we not, then, to rejoice in this house as set apart to the worship of the Father, to the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ ?

'The Father ! In this one word what consoling, strengthening, ennobling truth is wrapped up ! In this single view of God how much is there to bind us to Him with strong, indissoluble, ever-growing love and to make worship not only our chief duty, but our highest privilege and joy ! The Father ! can it be that *the high and holy One Who inhabiteth eternity, the Lord of heaven and earth*, the Majesty of the universe, bears to us this relation, reveals Himself under this name, and that we, so weak and erring, may approach Him with the hope of children ! Who cannot comprehend the dignity and blessedness of such worship ? Who does not feel that the man to whom God's parental character is a deep-felt reality, has in this conviction a fountain of strength, hope and purity, springing up into everlasting life ?'—W. E. CHANNING, *Discourse on 'Christian Worship'* (1836).

CHAPTER V

‘HALLOWED BE THY NAME’ (ST. MATTHEW, ST. LUKE)

‘Hoc Nomen est quod mundo perdito dat salutem.’—PETRUS CHRYSOLOGUS.

THE Name of God is a characteristic Hebrew expression. ‘The Name’ (*shem* or *hash-shem*) is occasionally used as a substitute for ‘Jehovah,’ which from motives of reverence was left unpronounced.¹ The ‘Name’ virtually means the objective manifestation of the divine nature and character; God Himself, as He has actually made Himself known to beings capable of apprehending His essence and attributes. Our Lord teaches us to pray that this name may be ‘hallowed’; in other words, that God Himself may be known and revered, loved and worshipped, in perfect accordance with that which He has revealed concerning His nature. In the received text of the Gospels, there is no limitation of the clause; but an interesting variant in the passage, St. Luke xi. 2 (Codex Bezae) runs as follows: ‘Thy Name be hallowed in’ or ‘upon us’; and there is some trace of this reading in the

¹ See Lev. xxiv. 16; and cp. Acts v. 41; 3 John 7. Dr. C. Taylor, *Sayings of the Jewish Fathers*, etc., p. 67, says: ‘The non-pronunciation of JHVH (according to Lev. xxiv. 16, LXX.) which was already an established practice when the Septuagint version was made, may be regarded as the germ of the Qabbalistic theology in which God was removed to an infinite distance from the material world, and the interval was populated with a succession of intermediate creations or emanations from the Deity.’

comments of Tertullian, Cyprian and Cyril of Jerusalem.¹

It is suggested by some scholars that the form of petition, 'Thy Name be hallowed upon us,' may have been originally based upon two different phrases which occur in Hebrew prophecy: (1) to be *called by the Name*, and (2) to *sanctify the name* of Jehovah²; and that the clue to its significance is to be found in the baptismal formula, by which the Christian neophyte is baptized 'into the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.'³ The Name of God is invoked upon the baptized person and, so to speak, rests upon him; thus making him a temple of the Spirit and a sanctuary of the divine Presence. He 'bears' the threefold name before his fellow-men,⁴ and is called to reflect, in the conduct of daily life, the character of God: to reveal (we may say) the Father by love, the Son by obedience, the Spirit by faith. Accordingly, the primary meaning of this clause is that which is suggested by several ancient commentators: 'We ask and implore that we, who have been hallowed in baptism, may continue steadfast in that state whereinto we have entered. . . . We beg that the sanctification and the quickening imparted by God's grace may be maintained by His protection.'⁵ Nor of course do we limit the petition to ourselves: 'We ask that the Name may be hallowed also in those others for whom the grace of God yet waits'⁶; we pray for the unconverted and the heathen, that they also, through the labours, prayers and sacrifices of the Church may be brought to know the only true God as Creator and Saviour, as the Source of all truth and

¹ Tert., *de orat.*, iii.; Cyp., *de orat. Dom.*, xii.; Cyr. Hieros., *cat. myst.*, v. 12.

² Cp. Isa. lxi. 19, with xxix. 23, and Ezek. xxxvi. 23.

³ Matt. xxviii. 19. Cp. Acts viii. 16. See Bp. Chase, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

⁴ Acts ix. 15.

⁵ Cyp. xii.

⁶ Tert. iii.

holiness, as *the Hope of all the ends of the earth and of them that are afar off upon the sea*. It is a prayer for the fulfilment of the true Israelite's ideal: *The nations shall fear the name of the LORD and all the kings of the earth Thy glory. From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, the LORD'S name is to be praised.*¹

I

The Father, Whom all men everywhere are called to worship, is One Who has revealed Himself to man *by divers portions and in divers manners*,² in response to the growth of man's spiritual capacity; and the Bible is the record of this progressive self-disclosure. At different stages in the history of faith, the Almighty Creator has declared His Name. Indeed, to the Old Testament writers, human history, especially in its relation to Israel, presents itself as the continuous self-manifestation of God, so that, speaking broadly, it may be said that the successive declarations of the divine Name correspond to different stages or turning-points of revelation. The conception of Deity becomes more definite and distinct in proportion as redemptive history advances towards its goal.

Thus, that vague sense of the presence and operation of the supernatural in nature which is characteristic of primitive man, seems to be expressed in the prehistoric title of God 'El ('strong one,' or 'pre-eminent one'), or in the plural form 'Elohim, which is perhaps intended to suggest the notion of 'fulness of might.'³ The names 'El 'Elyon and 'El Shaddai, which are characteristic of the narratives

¹ Psa. lxxv. 5; cii. 15; cxiii. 3 (R.V.).

² Heb. i. 1.

³ It is sometimes said that the word 'Elohim is a relic of primitive polytheism. But this term is not quite applicable to the religion of the ancient Semites. Probably the word 'polydaemonism' more accurately describes their point of view.

bearing upon the patriarchal period,¹ seem to be general titles expressive of religious awe and dread, such as might naturally suggest themselves in a prehistoric stage of thought. They are in fact names 'preceding revelation,' and they apparently emphasize different aspects of the divine nature, the word '*Elyon*' meaning 'most high' or 'exalted,' while *Shaddai* dimly suggests the notion of 'might,' whether displayed in blessing or in judgment.² More significant, however, are such designations as *the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*³ and similar expressions. They testify to a growing faith that the Almighty Creator is One Who deigns to enter into personal relations with individuals or tribes in order to fulfil towards them, and through them, a purpose of grace and mercy.

We first meet with a name of revelation in the strict sense in connexion with the deliverance of the Hebrew tribes from the bondage of Egypt. He Whom Moses proclaimed to them as their deliverer and as the one Deity to Whom they owed allegiance, made Himself known by the name JEHOVAH, the traditional meaning of which is 'He Who will be'; that is, the Eternal, Who manifests Himself throughout the successive ages of history as the

¹ See Waller's arts. 'Jehovah,' 'El,' etc., in *Murray's Illustrated Bible Dictionary*.

² See Davidson, *Theology of the O.T.*, p. 45. On early titles of Deity see Driver, *The Book of Genesis*, excursus I, and Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, ii. 198. At a later stage in Redemptive history the idea of illimitable might finds expression in a title characteristic for the most part of the prophets, viz. 'God' or 'Lord of Hosts.' The idea suggested in this expression is that of 'omnipotence.' The word 'hosts' includes all the forces of nature, the armies whether of Israel or of heathen nations, the hosts of stars, the multitude of heavenly beings who surround the heavenly throne on high. All these own the sway of Jehovah and fulfil, blindly or intelligently, His sovereign purposes. See also Driver on *The Book of Amos* [Camb. Bible], additional note p. 231 on Amos iii. 13.

³ Exod. iii. 15.

Creator, Redeemer and Saviour of His chosen people. 'The name was intended to express not what God is in Himself, but rather what He was in relation to Israel; a personal being, willing to enter into covenant with man and to reveal Himself progressively as occasion might demand; a being self-consistent and faithful in fulfilling His threatenings and promises; able, moreover, to control the course of history in fulfilment of His purpose of grace. The name by its very vagueness implies that "no words can sum up all that JEHOVAH will be to His people."'¹

The Name of God, then, has been to His people in all ages an object of love, adoration, awe, worship and joy;² and that because the name denotes the *character* in which He ever manifests Himself, and is the pledge of His abiding presence among men as Saviour and Judge, visiting them in mercy or in displeasure, and revealing His will in blessing and in judgment. The prolonged spiritual discipline to which Israel was subjected was designed to lead the people, first, to hold in due reverence *the glorious and fearful name*³ of their Redeemer; secondly, to glorify that name among the heathen by a life consistent with the divine holiness.

There is one passage in the Old Testament which must not be overlooked in this connexion. In Exodus xxxiv. the Name of the LORD is solemnly proclaimed in response to the prayer of Moses himself. *I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight, shew me now Thy ways that I may know Thee . . . shew me, I pray Thee, Thy glory.*⁴ What is specially noteworthy about the declaration of the divine Name is that it seems to be occasioned by the very fact

¹ See *The Religion of Israel*, p. 30, referring to Prof. W. R. Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, lect. ii, note 10.

² Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* i. 2, 2: 'To know Him 'is life, and joy to make mention of His name.'

³ Deut. xxviii. 58.

⁴ Exod. xxxiii. 13, 18.

of Israel's unfaithfulness. At any rate it stands in close connexion with the account of the people's signal act of apostasy,—the worship of the golden calf (Exod. xxxii.). The unfolding of the Name is a disclosure not so much of power as of goodness.¹ Israel's guilt throws into high relief, as it were, the moral glory and transcendence of its Redeemer. *The Lord, we read, passed by before him and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord, a God full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and upon the children's children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation.*²

In this epoch-making declaration, two aspects of the divine character seem to be emphasized. (1) On the one hand, the LORD is righteous. He acts according to the law of unerring justice and unfailing truth. He deals with men by rule and measure, requiting them according to their deeds, and fulfilling His purposes in pursuance of His threatenings and promises. Ever consistent with His revealed character, ‘most sure in all His ways,’ Jehovah is One on Whom men may lean with confidence and security :

*The Rock, His work is perfect :
For all His ways are judgment :
A God of faithfulness and without iniquity,
Just and right is He.*³

(2) On the other hand, Jehovah is merciful and long-suffering; full of compassion for the penitent, the suffering, the oppressed. This is the most characteristic and enduring element in His character—that which manifests itself in the forgiveness of sin, in the glory and beauty of nature,

¹ Exod. xxxiii. 19.

² Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

³ Deut. xxxii. 4.

in the providential care which embraces even the lowliest of created things, in the compassion extended even to that heathen world which Israel held in such abhorrence. *The LORD is good to all and His tender mercies are over all His works*, sings the Psalmist. *The mercy of the LORD*, writes the Sage, *is upon all flesh ; He reproveth and nurtureth and teacheth and bringeth again, as a shepherd His flock.*¹ Even His 'jealousy' is but the zeal of love, kindled whether by the apostasy of His chosen or by outrage done to them. The bond which unites Him to His creatures is, in short, that of creative compassion. The manifestation of His just resentment against sin is only a transient stage, so to speak, in His dealings with the sinner. In wrath He remembers mercy, and His power is restrained by pity. This may be said to be the central message of the Old Testament.² Hence 'mercy and truth' are constantly co-ordinated in the theology of the Psalmists and Prophets, as for instance in the short Psalm cxvii., which seems to embody the essence of all Messianic psalms. Thus, the habitual combination of 'truth' and 'lovingkindness' in the Old Testament conception of Jehovah is a kind of prophecy of His coming in Whom was manifested the fulness of *grace and truth* ; in Whom God was revealed as Love and as Light.³ In Him the words of the Psalmist found their supreme fulfilment : *Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy name* : i.e., the fulfilment of God's promises transcended all that He had wrought, or had revealed concerning Himself, in the past.⁴

¹ Ps. cxlv. 9 ; Eccles. xviii. 13 (see the whole context).

² Three of the prophets in particular seem to be linked together by a distinct reference to the passage Exod. xxxiv. 6 foll., viz. Jonah (iv. 2), Micah (vii. 18 foll.), Nahum (i. 3). Cp. Joel ii. 13.

³ John i. 14.

⁴ Ps. cxxxviii. 2, with Dr. Kay's note.

For at the last God *spake unto us in His Son*: in One Who expressly declared that He had *come in His Father's Name*,¹ and Whose mission it was to manifest that Name, that men, knowing it, might be won to penitence, trust and love. In word and in life, in act and in precept, He ever manifested ‘the Name’; in miracle, He showed forth the greatness of God’s power; in works of mercy, the wealth of His loving-kindness; in parables, the mysteries of His providence; in rebuking sin, the intensity of His hostility to evil; in receiving sinners, the depths of His compassion. And since the Nature of the Most High is supremely manifested in the incarnate Son, we find the characteristic Old Testament phrase *the Name of the Lord* replaced by the Name of Jesus. In the power of that Name, our Lord’s disciples cast out demons and healed the sick; in it they offered their prayers; for it they gladly suffered shame and persecution. To believe in the Name of Jesus is to yield to His claim, to acknowledge whole-heartedly that in Him the Eternal Father has spoken,—has made Himself known to His creatures. ‘We praise Thee,’ is the language of an ancient Egyptian liturgy, ‘Who art known of Thy Son the only-begotten; Who through Him art uttered and interpreted and made known to created nature . . . and art brought to the sight and interpreted to the understanding of the saints.’² As the Creed of the Church is, in one aspect, the unfolding of the Threefold Name revealed in the Gospel, so in the actual history of the Church, in the extension of the divine kingdom, and in the proclama-

¹ John v. 43. Cp. Tert., *de orat.*, iii.: ‘Nomen Dei Patris nemini proditum fuerat: etiam qui de Ipso interrogaverat Moyses aliud quidem nomen audierat. Nobis revelatum est in Filio. Jam enim Filius novum Patris nomen est.’

² See the Eucharistic anaphora of Sarapion, Bishop of Thmuis, c. 350 [Eng. transl. by Bp. John Wordsworth in *Bishop Sarapion's Prayer Book* (S.P.C.K.), p. 60].

tion of the message of salvation to all mankind, that Name is continually exalted, glorified and hallowed.

This petition, therefore, is in the first instance a prayer that there may be a progressive manifestation of the Three-fold Name; that the true faith which acknowledges the glory of the eternal Trinity and worships the Unity may be spread abroad throughout the whole world. It is a prayer also for Christian people that they may *walk up and down in the Name of the LORD*,¹ that in the daily conduct of life they may be guided by the power of the Father, enlightened by the wisdom of the Son, quickened by the grace of the eternal Spirit.

II

The form of Prayer which the Son of God has delivered to us is necessarily a law of life—a rule of work as well as of worship. It teaches us primarily how we should think of God and how approach Him; but it also instructs us how to please Him, how to direct towards Him our thoughts, words and actions. In all ages the sole function of the people of God is to glorify His name, by shewing forth *the excellencies of Him Who called His chosen out of darkness into His marvellous light*.² As it was with Israel of old, so is it now with the Church of the redeemed. The purpose of God was to make Himself known to the nations of the world as *the God of Israel, the Holy One of Israel*. His glory was to be manifested in the redemption and sanctification of His elect people. His 'Name'—such was the teaching of the prophets—would be dishonoured either by the apostasy or by the destruction—by the sin or by the overthrow—of Israel.³ Thus would the heathen be led to cherish

¹ Zech. x. 12.

² 1 Pet. ii. 9.

³ Ezek. xx. 9, xxxvi. 21, 22. Driver on *Amos* ii. 7 [Camb. Bible] points out that the phrase 'To profane Jehovah's name' is character-

unworthy thoughts of the Creator, to deny His attributes or to question His power.

The Christian Church inherits the privileges and the titles of God’s ancient people, as St. Peter implies in his first Epistle (ii. 9). Its members are called to bear witness to the actual fulfilment of the divine promises, and *to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things*, by appearing *as lights in the world*, and thus commending the truths of revelation to the heart and conscience of mankind.¹ Accordingly, the petition *Hallowed be Thy Name* is a prayer that we may so glorify God by our *faith* and *worship*, our *character* and *activities*, that all whom we can reach may be led to surrender themselves to His call, and devote themselves to His service; that the heathen also—those who *know not God*—may be brought to *fear the name of Jehovah*.²

We ‘hallow the name,’ then—

(1) First by the confession of a true *faith*: by adoring Almighty God as He has revealed Himself; by reverently accepting all that He has taught us, and is continually teaching, in regard to His ways and His attributes. We glorify Him by a faithful use of our intellectual and moral faculties in the search after truth; by openness, candour and receptivity of mind; by paying due attention to the indications of His purpose and of His guidance. We honour Him by recognizing that His self-revelation is progressive and continuous; that His voice is making itself heard to-day as in times past; that He is ever revealing to mankind

istic of Ezekiel and also of the ‘Law of Holiness’ (Lev. xvii.–xxvi.). ‘Jehovah is Israel’s owner, and as such, His name is “called over it.” Hence the name is said to be “profaned” when something is done bringing it into discredit, or, in virtue of His connexion with Israel, derogatory to Him; for instance, by the worship of Molech (Lev. xviii. 21, xx. 3), perjury (xix. 12), the humiliation of Israel in exile (Isa. xlvi. 11; Ezek. xx. 9, 14).’

¹ Tit. ii. 10; Phil. ii. 15.

² Ps. cii. 15.

His judgments and His methods of action. The faith which responds to His self-disclosure, which 'hallows' His Name, is above all things *expectant*, believes that He is not less truly *about* us and *before* us than *behind* us, 'speaking to us words which have not been heard before, guiding us to paths on which earlier generations have not been able to enter.'¹ In conscience, in Scripture, in the events of history, in the discoveries of science and in the teachings of experience, the Name of God is continually proclaimed, His character unfolded, His will made known. In praying to Him, we hold communion with a living Mind. We seek the truth from Him Who is *Holy and True*, grace and spiritual power from the *Holy and Strong*, fulness of life from the *Holy and Immortal*.² The Lord's Prayer is the utterance of a faith which by its trustfulness and courage, by its simplicity and expectancy, glorifies God—hallows His Name.

Faith is courageous because it is also steadfast. It looks out unalarmed from the stronghold of a creed once delivered, a creed the truth of which is attested by age-long experience.³ The Name of God has been once for all unfolded in the word of Christ as threefold. He bore witness to the Father, prayed to the Father, was well-pleasing to the Father; He spoke also of the Spirit as of One Whom He would send, Who should come in His name, and should testify of Him. In revealing His relationship to the Father and to the Spirit He made Himself known to us as equally with them the object of trust and worship. Thus, the faith of the Church, based on the teachings of the Saviour and of the Spirit, is faith in a Trinity; and this revelation alone adequately responds to the needs of human nature, alone

¹ Westcott, *The Historic Faith*, p. 41.

² See Rev. vi. 10; and cp. the *Trisagion* of the Greek liturgies
 ἅγιος ὁ θεός, ἅγιος ἰσχυρός, ἅγιος ἀθάνατος, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς.

³ Prov. xviii. 10: 'The name of the LORD is a strong tower.'

completely embodies the spiritual experience of Christendom. The threefold name is hallowed by us in proportion as we continue steadfast in this faith, and find in it the interpretation of the world and of life.

(2) We hallow the name of God in *worship*—that is, by moving among the things of time, and the interests and duties of life, in a spirit of expectancy and wonder, reverence and adoration. An ancient hymn which tradition ascribes to St. Patrick contains these lines¹:

'By this invocation of the Holy Trinity I bind to myself to-day :

The light of the sun,
The whiteness of the snow,
The force of fire,
The swiftness of the wind,
The depth of the sea,

The power of God to guide me
The wisdom of God to teach me.

* * * * *

The way of God to go before me,
The host of God to defend me.'

All things speak of God to the soul that continually seeks Him; all paths lead to Him; and worship means the realization of His presence in ourselves, in nature, in the every-day incidents of life. It means 'awareness of God' in all things; the acknowledgment of Him *in all our ways*.² Worship in this wide sense will have two special notes: the spirit of thanksgiving and the temper of obedience.

On the one hand, the Name of God, that is, the manifestation of His character, whether in created objects or in the circumstances of life, evokes *benediction*. The Name is to the

¹ I owe this reference to Fr. Congreve, who quotes the passage in *The Interior Life*, p. 32.

² Prov. iii. 6. Many of the Psalms illustrate this aspect of worship, e.g. Ps., xxix., which, in connexion with the marvels of nature, speaks of the 'worship' of Jehovah and 'the glory due unto His name.' See also Pss. civ., cxlviii.

saints an object of praise. *The righteous shall give thanks to Thy Name.*¹ If Scripture sometimes speaks as if religion consisted chiefly in the life of prayer, there are many passages in both Testaments which might almost seem to identify it with the habit of thanksgiving. *Give thanks*, says St. Paul: *for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*² The Christian believer's life is built on truth—the truth concerning God; and the possession of truth bears fruit in joy and praise. As we advance in spiritual experience we find that life is constantly opening wider views of the divine providence, and, therefore, fresh occasions of thanksgiving. As we look back upon the past—

‘the thought of what hath been, doth breed
Perpetual benediction.’

We realize the undeserved blessings that have enriched our character or disciplined it for the work of life. Moreover, there is the sense of present mercies, of evils averted or overruled for good, of gifts unasked and un hoped for, which have ministered to our usefulness or happiness. Above all, the thoughtful heart will be awake to the constant tokens of God's watchful providence; it will rest in the thought of His present care and love. *Thy Name*, it will cry, *is so nigh*. As Augustine beautifully says, God bestows blessings freely and takes them away: ‘but He withdraws not *Himself* from the heart that blesses Him.’³ Thanksgiving, then, is the very soul of worship. Just as the chief feature of the Jewish liturgy is the *Shemonch 'Esreh*, ‘the eighteen benedictions’—a formula which every Israelite was expected to repeat thrice each day⁴; so the central

¹ Ps. cxl. 13; cp. cxxxviii. 2; lxix. 31.

² 1 Thess. v. 18. Cp. Eph. v. 20.

³ *Enarr. in Ps. xxxiii. 2*: ‘Seipsum a benedicente se non tollit.’

⁴ See the benedictions in Schürer, *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, § 27 [E.T. div. ii, vol. ii, pp. 85–87].

service of the Church is the Eucharist: that which commemorates and renews from age to age the sacred moment when, on the eve of His Passion, the Son of man *gave thanks* to the Father; that which is the highest act of worship, because it is the adequate expression of man’s noblest function—the praise of God.

The other chief note of worship is that of obedience: the dedication of the *will* to the service of God. It is in this that worship culminates:—in inward self-surrender to Him Who has made known His Name to man, and Whose presence is vouchsafed to those who are gathered together in His Name. The crown of the Eucharistic service is the act of oblation which follows the reception of the sacred Gift. ‘Here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and lively sacrifice unto Thee.’ Worship necessarily has its outward and material side, but it is essentially a spiritual act. It is the response of man’s will to the self-revelation of God; the yielding up of the personal self to be, to do and to endure all that He wills, all that is capable of setting forth His glory, reflecting His character, or making known His Name. *Hallowed be Thy Name* is a petition that we may honour God by worshipping Him with the service He delights in; with the offering of a *free heart* and a *good will*.¹

(3) Again, *Hallowed be Thy Name* is manifestly a prayer for our sanctification: for grace to walk worthily of our vocation as God’s children. By holiness of life Christians glorify the Name of God and *adorn the doctrine* which they

¹ Bp. Gore, *The Body of Christ*, p. 284: ‘The culmination of sacrifice is the oblation of the faithful, made more deeply than before members of the body by their communion in the Lord’s body, and thus becoming themselves the sacrifice which, in Christ, is offered to the Father.’ See above, p. 95.

believe.¹ *Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness*, is a maxim engraved, as it were, upon the spiritual fabric of the Church.² 'It was a common answer of the ancient martyrs, "I am a Christian, and with us no evil is done."' The very name was thought to speak something of emendation, and whosoever put it on became the better man.'³ The word of Christ thus corroborated the constant message of Hebrew prophecy that the righteous Lord *loveth righteousness*; that only *the upright* should behold His face; that belief divorced from character, ceremonial observance without purity of life, was nothing worth. The earliest of the extra-canonical Christian writers puts this simply and plainly: 'Seeing, then, that we are the special portion of a holy God, let us practise the things that belong to holiness, forsaking evil speakings, impure and unholy embraces, revellings, tumults and hateful lusts, abominable adultery, and hateful pride.' 'We have seen that all the righteous were adorned with good works, yea, the Lord Himself also being so adorned, rejoiced. Seeing then that we have this pattern, let us conform ourselves with all diligence to do His will; let us with all our might work the work of righteousness.'⁴

Accordingly, we may follow Cyprian and others in regarding this petition chiefly as a prayer for perseverance.⁵ It

¹ See 1 Tim. vi. 6; 2 Tim. i. 12; Tit. ii. 10.

² Such is perhaps the meaning of 2 Tim. ii. 19, where 'the firm foundation of God' probably means the Church.

³ Pearson, *Exposition of the Creed*, art. ii. He refers in particular to the story of Blandina (Euseb. v. 1) and to Tert. *apol.* iii., who complains that the very name ('Christian') which implies reformation or exaltation of character is sufficient to secure condemnation. 'Oditur ergo in hominibus innocuis nomen innocuum.'

⁴ Clem. Rom., *ad Cor.* xxx. and xxxiii. Cp. E. A. Edghill, *The Spirit of Power*, p. 52.

⁵ Cyp., *de orat. Dom.* xii.: 'Id petimus et rogamus ut qui in baptismo sanctificati sumus, in eo quod esse coepimus perseveremus.'

follows the invocation of the Father with perfect appropriateness; for the main secret of perseverance is to be found in loving thoughts of God as One Who desires the highest good of His children, Who lays on them no burden that is above their strength, Who gives what He commands and imparts the holiness which His law demands. As we have seen, the title ‘Father’ not only designates a Person but connotes a character. It kindles love and trust. It is a pledge that He Who makes us His children by adoption will preserve and nourish in us the life of grace that He has bestowed. So this first petition of the Lord’s Prayer asks that we may be enabled to fulfil the true law of our nature and may glorify the Father by *bringing forth much fruit*.¹

Further, as the inconsistencies of Christians are the chief stumbling-block which hinders men from acknowledging God’s claim and hallowing His Name, so a good life acts as a missionary agency of incalculable power. A modern illustration of this truth may be found in the history of British India. Bishop Copleston² points to the solidity of British rule in India as a conspicuous proof of the power of righteousness. ‘Nowhere,’ he says, ‘have pure and noble lives had a finer field or one of greater triumphs. . . . It is true, of course, of India, as of every land, that bad Christians are among the greatest obstacles to religion. It is true in India, as elsewhere, that lives of good Christians have been and are its noblest advocates.’ So it has been in every age. *The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you, even as it is written*.³ Such is St. Paul’s warning to the Jew who gloried in God, and was confident that in the law he possessed *the form of knowledge*

¹ John xv. 8.

² Bishop of Colombo 1875-1902; of Calcutta 1902-1912.

³ Rom. ii. 24; cp. Isa. lii. 5; Ezek. xxxvi. 20, 23.

and of the truth. On the other hand the lives of consistent Christians are a living Gospel, bearing witness to the presence of God and manifesting the power of *faith in His Name* to bring strength out of weakness, and to transfigure human character.

(4) Once more, the name of God is hallowed by those who in every kind of occupation, and in every form of service to mankind, recollect that they live and act in the very presence of God. *Whatsoever ye do in word or in deed,* is St. Paul's precept, *do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.*¹ The aim and object of Israel's election was that in all the circumstances and surroundings of its common life, the divine holiness might find due expression. Even though the tendency was strong to emphasize and elaborate the merely external signs of national consecration, yet the call to inward holiness was enforced by the constant witness of prophecy. The perfect consecration of all life, however, is the fruit of the divine Incarnation. The Word made flesh has hallowed by His touch all common things, functions, duties and relationships; and the distinctively Christian spirit implies a reverent and meditative outlook upon Nature and upon human life as a whole. A true believer in Christ ever lives and works *before the throne of God.* To him 'Every creature is a divine word which tells of God.'² Nature is the veil of a spiritual presence. It is sacramental alike in its various processes and in its total significance; it is the sphere in which the living God makes manifest the thoughts of His heart, the modes of His operation, the mysteries of His truth. As the ceremonial law of the Jews was adapted to teach them the sanctity of the divinely appointed order of the world; so the most characteristic

¹ Col. iii. 17.

² St. Bonaventura. Cp. *de imitatione Christi*, ii. 4: 'Non est creatura tam parva et vilis quae Dei bonitatem non repraesentet.'

lesson of Hebrew prophecy was the sacredness of human history. Behind the events and vicissitudes of national life, the prophets of Israel discerned the controlling hand and the moral purpose of the Almighty. It was *His Name* that was revealing itself in the downfall of Israel's heathen foes, in the extension of the divine kingdom, in the sufferings of the faithful. *My Name, saith the LORD, is great among the nations. My Name is terrible among the heathen.*¹ The calamities that overtake the world are described as a coming of Jehovah's Name—a visitation of the heathen in judgment by the self-revealing God.²

Thus the petition *Hallowed be Thy Name* is a prayer that our eyes may be continually open to discern the living presence and activity of God in the world; that we may reverence all mental and spiritual gifts as bearing witness to the operation of the 'Creator Spirit' *distributing to every man severally as He wills*³; that in all the beauty and order of the universe, in all manifestations of the hidden force which underlies it, in all triumphs of genius and in all victories of love over the sin and misery of the world, we may recognize with wonder and awe the unsearchable riches of the divine wisdom and might.

(5) Finally, we should not overlook the connexion between this clause of the Lord's Prayer and the third commandment, which forbids the sin of taking the Name of God *in vain* by untruthfulness or insincerity of speech. We assuredly hallow the divine Name by truthfulness in the widest sense of the word: by *abiding* or *walking in truth*,⁴ by holding in reverence the nature that He has made, by reflecting in the

¹ Mal. i. 11, 14.

² Isa. xxx. 27; cp. Ps. lxxv. 2.

³ 1 Cor. xii. 13.

⁴ John viii. 44; 2 John 4. *Walking in truth* 'describes the general character of the life as conducted "in truth," really and in very deed in a certain fashion, even after the commandment of God' (Westcott on 2 John 4).

purpose of our life and the utterance of our lips the essential simplicity of the divine nature: *veritatem facientes in caritate*.² The truth in its totality—that is, all that God has disclosed concerning Himself—is intended to find expression in every element and faculty of man's nature: in his thought and in his utterance; in his dealings with his fellows, in his relation to other orders of created being, in his attitude towards God, towards *Him that is true*. 'Just as every being that exists,' says Gregory of Nyssa, 'has a certain distinctive quality which makes known its nature, so that which is characteristic of the divine Nature is *truth*.'² Christians are summoned to respond to the unchangeable constancy, persistency and dependableness of God by 'keeping' the word which has revealed His Name to man,³ or rather by seeking protection and guardianship in that Name. He Who says *I manifested Thy Name unto the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world*, uplifts for them the prayer, *Holy Father, keep them in Thy Name*.

III

One last thought may be connected with this petition.

The manifestation in Christ of the divine Name is a principle of *unity*. *Keep them in Thy Name*, is the prayer of our great High Priest, *that they may be one even as We are*. The petition *Hallowed be Thy Name* is thus plainly a prayer for the unity of the Church. This unity cannot be brought about by human effort; ⁴ it depends upon the display of

¹ Eph. iv. 15 Vulg. Cp. 1 John i. 16; John iii. 21.

² *Orat. mag. catech.*, xxxiv.

³ John xvii. 6, 11.

⁴ Pusey, *Eirenicon*, p. 45: 'Whatever duties may follow upon the unity of the Church, it is plain that no harmony of men's wills can constitute a supernatural and divine unity.' Cp. H. F. Hamilton, *The People of God*, vol. ii., chap. x., 'Unity'; and on the unity of the Church see more in *The Rule of Faith and Hope*, pp. 139 foll.

God's own power, *keeping* His people in His Name. Further, it is a transcendental unity, surpassing all that hath *entered into the heart of man* : a unity not merely of will and brotherly love, but in some sense of *nature* ; the petition is that they may be *one even as We are*. For this consummation the Church longs and waits ; meanwhile, we pray that the Name of God, the divine revelation vouchsafed in Christ, may be a true bond of fellowship uniting all believers in allegiance to one Lord ; and that there may be such a manifestation of this inward unity as may be possible here on earth. In effect *Hallowed be Thy Name* is a prayer (i) that each member, or group of members, in the Church may be loyal to the true idea of a church as it is expounded by St. Paul in such passages as 1 Corinthians xii., Romans xii. and xiv. : namely, ‘the sympathetic union in one body of very diverse members’ ;¹ (ii) that the organic unity of the Church—the unity of spiritual life derived from Christ Himself—may manifest itself partly in acts of love and interchange of service between the members, partly in such mutual trust and co-operation as may best help forward the work of evangelization. *Hallowed be Thy Name* is a missionary prayer in the widest sense, because it is a petition for that oneness of the Church through which alone the world will come to know that the Father sent His Son to be its Saviour and King.²

¹ Cp. Wilson, *Lectures on Pastoral Theology* (Macmillan, 1903), p. 152.

² John xvii. 23.

CHAPTER VI

'THY KINGDOM COME' (ST. MATTHEW, ST. LUKE)

'Regnum semper habet Deus; et nunquam est sine regno, cui servit universa creatura.'—AUGUSTINE.

WHAT our Lord meant by the 'Kingdom,' when He taught His disciples thus to pray, seems to be clear from the connexion of the present clause with that which follows.¹ Two expressions are, in fact, specially characteristic of His teaching: 'the kingdom of God,' 'the will of God.' It is evident that the kingdom in its widest sense is the sphere in which the will of God is consciously embraced and loyally fulfilled. The Lord Himself, in His earthly life, was the living representative and embodiment of the kingdom. *I do always*, He said, *the things that are pleasing to Him.*² In Him creaturely life perfectly responded to the spiritual purpose of its Creator; in Him there was actually achieved that perfect moral union of man with God which was the predestined goal and aim of all His dealings with our race. Nor should we forget that this response on man's part to the divine purpose carried with it the promise of a regeneration of Nature itself; a manifestation of the supremacy of spirit in the material universe. The coming of the kingdom in Christ meant the actual arrival of a new epoch in human history—an

¹ We should note also the connexion with what *precedes*. See the suggestive passage Zech. xiv. 9, 'The LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall the LORD be one and His name one.'

² John viii. 29.

epoch which, on the one hand, was the predestined climax and consummation of Israel's past history ; on the other, was to witness a fresh manifestation of Jehovah's redemptive love and power.¹ In Jesus Christ, then, the kingdom of God has actually *come with power* ; and it is at work in the world, as an order of things already present and operative, and only awaiting its final consummation. For it will only have ‘ come ’ in its ideal completeness and glory when, as an old writer says, ‘ in heaven and in earth only God's will is done ; when in all men God lives, God acts, God reigns, God is wholly present ; according to the Apostle's prayer that God may be all and in all.’² It will have finally come, in other words, when all creatures are what Christ as man Himself was, perfectly subject to the rule of the divine Spirit. But since the faith of man has only partially and fitfully responded to the call of Christ, the kingdom still tarries, or is at best only potentially present. *Nondum regnat hoc regnum*, as Augustine says.

I

The ‘ kingdom of God ’ is one of those leading ideas of the Jewish religion which Jesus Christ accepted, and in accepting transfigured. It was the theme of Psalmists and Prophets ; it was the hope which sustained the chosen people under the pressure of countless calamities and of painful disillusionments. *Jehovah is King* :—this it was that differentiated Israel from the other nations of the

¹ Cp. Hogg, *Christ's Message of the Kingdom*, p. 78.

² Petrus Chrysologus, *de orat. Dom.* i. : ‘ Hoc est regnum Dei, quando in caelo et in terra Dei voluntas est sola, quando in omnibus hominibus Deus vivit, Deus agit, Deus regnat, Deus est totus ; juxta illud Apostoli *ut sit Deus omnia et in omnibus nobis* (1 Cor. xv. 28 ; Eph. iv. 6).’ For the Scriptural teaching on the Kingdom of God see two sermons by Dean Church, *Advent Sermons* (1885), nos. 2 and 3.

world; that explained the inner meaning of the prolonged and severe discipline to which it was subjected. In our Lord's own day, however, though the word 'kingdom' was often on the lips of loyal-hearted Jews, and was constantly mentioned in prayer,¹ yet the essential characteristics of this kingdom were generally forgotten or overlooked. In the hands of the Hebrew prophets the idea of Jehovah's sovereignty—so vividly suggested in earlier days by the Mosaic institutions and at a later period by the theocratic kingship—was at once expanded and spiritualized. Prophecy was led by its study of the actual course of Israel's history, to insist on two aspects of the kingdom—its *universality*: it was destined to embrace mankind as a whole, Israel's ideal vocation being that of Jehovah's missionary to the heathen world; and its *moral and spiritual purpose*: it was to be a kingdom of holiness; Jehovah could be Israel's God only in so far as it recognized and fulfilled, in its social and moral life, the law of righteousness. To this conception of the kingdom corresponded a deeper view of the function assigned to the promised Messiah. In process of time, as the Hebrew monarchy lapsed into decay and dishonour, the vision of a theocratic king, belonging to the house of David, yielded to that of an ideal 'servant' of Jehovah, through whom, as the representative of the whole nation, Israel's lofty mission was destined to find its accom-

¹ There is a saying in the Talmud: 'That prayer in which there is no mention of the kingdom is not a prayer.' A typical instance of prayer is the 'Kaddisch' used in the synagogue: 'May His great Name be magnified and sanctified in the world which He has created according to His will. May He cause His sovereignty to reign and His redemption to shoot forth, and may He bring near His Messiah and redeem His people in your life and in your days, and in the life of the House of Israel speedily and at a near time. And say ye, Amen' (cited by Archdeacon W. C. Allen, *Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew* [International Critical Comm.], p. 60).

plishment. Both in His life and in His teaching, in His meek acceptance of a sublime and awful vocation, in His sacrificial sufferings, in His victory over the grave, He would manifest more completely than the ‘ king ’ of earlier prophecy the universal scope and the spiritual character of the divine kingdom. Coming into the world with the one supreme aim of fulfilling the will of God,¹ the Messiah would establish the reign of God on earth, would *make an end of sins*, would *make reconciliation for iniquity and bring in everlasting righteousness*.²

Such were the anticipations of the later prophecy, and it is with these aspects of the Messianic salvation that our Lord’s doctrine of the kingdom connects itself. To Him, the ‘ kingdom ’ signified that Rule of God which was typically manifested in His own sinless Humanity ; which was in Him a present and patent fact.³ The kingdom had been continually foretold ; the promise stood sure, but its fulfilment was conditional on the measure of man’s response to its claim. In Jesus Christ Himself, we see human faith answering unreservedly to the will and purpose of God ; and in Him, consequently, a higher order than the natural finds its starting-point. In germ and potency, at least, the kingdom was manifested in Christ as a present reality. Spiritual blessings hitherto unrealized, deliverance from the grasp of evil moral and physical, manifestations of power in the strictest sense supernatural, might be anticipated by faith as a matter of course. Hence we may conclude that by the coming of the kingdom, our Lord signified the arrival of a new age or order of things, in which ‘ God would at last let Himself act in the way in which faith had always felt it only natural that He should act, giving His omnipotence free play in the service of His

¹ Ps. xl. 7, 8.

² Dan. ix. 24.

³ Luke iv. 21 ; cp. Mark i. 15.

righteousness; an age in which, therefore, supernatural forces would be available for the conquest of suffering, evil and sin.'¹ In its universal range and in its spiritual character, the kingdom, thus conceived, was seen to correspond to the very nature of God: God Whom Christ revealed as the Creator, Saviour, Father of mankind; as Spirit, Light, and Love.

II

It does not seem necessary to dwell at length upon the perverted conception of the divine kingdom which was widely prevalent among our Lord's contemporaries. We cannot indeed suppose that the prophetic idea of the kingdom had altogether disappeared. There were doubtless groups of faithful Israelites who still looked for a spiritual kingdom: for the rule of Jehovah Himself over a regenerate people, purged from guilt and sanctified by the grace of the divine Spirit.² But this expectation had practically faded from the mind of the Jewish nation as a whole. The popular belief was that the Messiah would be manifested in power; that He would overthrow the heathen whose yoke pressed so heavily on Israel; that He would liberate His people from Gentile oppression and persecution, would bring back to Zion its captive and dispersed children; would, in a word, *restore the kingdom to Israel* in the sense of giving the Jews domination over their foes. The idea of a *moral regeneration* of Israel through forgiveness of sins and sanctification of the hearts of the people was not altogether absent. Indeed, it is clearly attested by the language of the *Benedictus*,³ which seems to represent the

¹ Hogg, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

² *The Psalms of Solomon* (c. 63-37 B.C.) seem to reflect the more spiritual side of the later Messianic expectation. See (e.g.) the penitential passages in Ps. ii. 16 foll., viii. 27-41.

³ Luke i. 74, 75.

later Messianic belief in its most spiritual form. But the idea of spiritual renewal naturally fell into the background, since there was no serious and urgent sense in the mass of the people of any need of deliverance from sin.¹ The root of this defect was an inadequate conception of Jehovah's character, and of His moral relationship to His chosen people. The Messianic hope had, in fact, become secularized. The Messiah for whom the Jews waited with passionate ardour was a victorious warrior; but even the thought of His personal glory and prowess was merged in glowing anticipations of *national* reunion and exaltation. The true Messiah, in proclaiming the advent of the kingdom, began by calling men to repentance and belief in the Gospel.² The prevalent, though not quite universal, belief among His hearers was that the revelation of the Messiah was not in any way dependent on Israel's repentance, but was unconditionally pre-ordained in the fixed purpose of Jehovah.

The phrase *kingdom of heaven* or *kingdom of God* is one which, as we have seen, was a kind of watchword characteristic of the later Judaism. It unquestionably meant the ‘ kingship ’ or ‘ rule ’ of Jehovah,³ which was to be manifested and embodied in the Person of the Messiah. But the nationalistic ideals of popular Jewish theology were destined to undergo a complete transformation in the teaching of Christ and His Apostles. The blessings of the kingdom were by them proclaimed to be not material but spiritual; not the liberation of the Jewish people from the yoke of the heathen, but the deliverance of individual souls from sin; not the vindication of Israel's righteousness but

¹ See Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. i., p. 167.

² Mark i. 15.

³ The phrase ‘ heaven ’ is virtually a synonym for ‘ God ’ (Schürer, *div. ii.*, vol. ii., p. 171).

the forgiveness of its transgressions; not the triumph of the Law's religion but the gift of the Spirit and the writing of the Law in human hearts; in a word, the actual reign of God in the sphere of thought, motive and desire. The Most High would rule as King in the hearts and consciences of His rational creatures.¹

That this reign of God may be manifested among men in its transforming power, in its supernatural effects and consequences, in its triumph over evil, in its healing virtue, in its triumphant vindication of the ways of God: this is the consummation on which the Almighty Creator of the world has set His heart.

III

Thy kingdom come. We may proceed to consider some of the devout desires which find utterance in this comprehensive petition.

(1) We may regard this prayer as, in the first instance, a petition for the grace of a true repentance: for the removal of all the sin, the unbelief, the lack of love and zeal, which hinder or restrain the coming of the kingdom.² That kingdom is, before all things, the heritage of *the poor in spirit*. It appeals to a deeply rooted sense of personal insufficiency and spiritual poverty. The kingdom which is *righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*³ belongs to those who have realized the essential emptiness and weakness of their own unaided nature. It implies the unuttered confession that *the way of man is not in himself*;

¹ On 'Thrones' (Col. i. 16) Bernard, *de consideratione*, v. 8, says: '*Throni dicuntur: et ex eo sedent quod sedet in eis Deus: neque enim sedere in eis, qui non sederent, posset.*'

² See the sections entitled 'Why does it tarry?' and 'It need not tarry' in Prof. Hogg's book, already referred to, pp. 24-52.

³ Rom. xiv. 17.

that *other lords have had dominion over him*.¹ The life of Christian holiness is rooted in the temper described in the Beatitudes: in the humility which realizes its need of divine grace; the sorrow which mourns for sin and feels the burden of the world’s pain; the meekness which patiently accepts the divinely-ordered discipline of life; the hunger and thirst which seeks in God the satisfaction of all heavenward aspirations. Repentance, in a word, lies at the very threshold of the new life, and to the penitent the kingdom comes as deliverance from the burden, the guilt, the power, the love of sin.² Thus Bishop Wilson, in one of his phrases of the Lord’s Prayer, interprets this clause as follows: ‘ Vouchsafe to reign in my heart, and let not Satan have dominion over me. Fit us, O God, for the coming of Thy kingdom. May I submit and rejoice to be governed by Thee. O that Thy Holy Spirit may direct and rule my heart; subdue in me all pride and covetousness, hatred, malice, envy, lust and all uncleanness, and whatever shall offend Thee.’³

The petition, then, reminds us of the hindrance caused by impenitence to the fulfilment of God’s purposes. The reconciliation of the sinner to his heavenly Father must precede the effectual ‘coming’ of the kingdom. It was in virtue of a death unto sin, an act of atonement offered for man’s transgression, that the Son of God was enabled

¹ Jer. x. 23; Isa. xxvi. 13. Aug., *de civ. Dei*, xiv. 12, observes that obedience is the essential and primal virtue for a rational creature: ‘quandoquidem ita facta est, ut ei subditam esse sit utile; perniciosum autem suam, non Eius a quo facta est, facere voluntatem.’

² ‘Hinc colligimus initium regni Dei in nobis esse veteris hominis interitum et nostri abnegationem’ (Calvin).

³ So Greg. Nyss., *de orat.* iii., says that the petition virtually signifies, ‘May I be delivered from corruption, set free from death, loosed from the bonds of sin.’ ‘Darkness,’ he adds, ‘must vanish before light, disease before health, death before life.’

to 'open the kingdom of heaven' to penitence and faith. Just as this petition, with divine fitness, precedes that for the fulfilment of God's will, so it appropriately follows the prayer for the hallowing of His Name. For the sinner gives glory to that Name when he acknowledges his guilt,¹ and when he looks heavenward for that release from the grasp of evil which is the characteristic blessing of the kingdom.

(2) Next, the petition is a prayer for personal sanctification, for growth in holiness. 'When you say *Thy kingdom come,*' is Augustine's comment, 'You ask for the grace of a good life.'² The extension of the kingdom in the world begins with its manifestation in the character of individual men. St. Paul's question in Romans vi. 16, *Know ye not that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey?* implies that as a rational being man necessarily stands in relation to law. There is a throne in every human heart which some power must occupy: whether *sin unto death or obedience unto righteousness*; and the law of man's perfection is conformity to the divine character: in other words, the rule of God established at the centre of his personality. He only fulfils the law of his nature, only wins the freedom which crowns his creaturely perfection, by submission to the sway of the divine Spirit, through Whose liberating power he becomes 'under the sole rule of God most free.'³ For the consummation of law is liberty. Men reign as kings when they themselves become *a kingdom*, and *priests* unto the God and Father of Jesus Christ.⁴ The kingdom, then, consists in this new relation of individual souls to God.

¹ Cp. Josh. vii. 19.

² 'Ut bene vivas tibi oras.' Aug., *serm. in Matt. vi., de orat. Dom. lvi.*

³ Aug., *de mor. Eccl. xxi.* Cp. 2 Cor. iii. 17.

⁴ Rev. i. 6, R.V. Cp. Bern., *tract. de gratia et lib. arbit., iii. 7:*

Thy kingdom come. To Jewish ears, the word ‘ kingdom ’ conveyed the idea of conflict and dominion over foes. Israel’s typical king was, like David, a warrior ; and in the vision of the Apocalypse (vi. 2) He Who wears on His head the kingly crown rides forth on a white horse, *conquering and to conquer. He must reign till He hath put all His enemies under His feet.*¹ Accordingly we may gather that we are here taught to pray for victory over the spiritual enemies that *war against the soul.* He who prays according to the mind of Christ will have something of the martial temper, as St. Paul plainly suggests in several passages of his epistles.² Christians are subjects of a militant kingdom, and as such they need vigilance, self-discipline and the power to endure hardness ; they need to be armed with the panoply of God, above all with the weapon of prayer, through which the soul abides in union with God, and finds in Him the source of all grace and strength to do His will.

Here it is in place to comment on the deeply suggestive form of the petition *Thy kingdom come* which is given by Gregory of Nyssa.³ ‘ May Thy Holy Spirit come upon

‘ *Qua libertate Christus nos liberabit cum nos utique tradet regnum Deo et Patri* ’ (referring to 1 Cor. xv. 24.)

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 25.

² See Rom. xiii. 12 ; 2 Cor. x. 5 ; Eph. vi. 10 ; 1 Thess. v. 8 ; 2 Tim. ii. 3, Pet. Chrys., *de orat. Dom.*, ii., says : ‘ Christus semper suo regnet in milite, ut miles semper suo triumphet in rege.’ The manual of Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani*, is well worth reading in this connexion.

³ *de oratione*, iii. 739 D. It appears from Tertullian, *adv. Marcionem*, iv. 26, that Marcion’s text of St. Luke xi. 2 contained a prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit. On the whole subject the reader is referred to Bp. Chase’s monograph, *The Lord’s Prayer in the Early Church*, pp. 25 foll. (‘ Texts and Studies,’ vol. i, no. 3, Cambridge, 1891). It is noteworthy that the witnesses to this reading do not agree as to its precise position. It is substituted either for ‘ Thy Kingdom come,’ or for ‘ Thy will be done.’ For

us and purify us.' Gregory observes that what St. Luke calls the 'Holy Spirit,' St. Matthew describes as 'the kingdom,' and that, in fact, 'the Holy Spirit is the kingdom.' Bishop Chase considers that this version of the petition came gradually into use when the Lord's Prayer was recited liturgically at the laying on of hands; and he suggests that out of this peculiar form of the clause may have been developed later invocations of the Spirit, *e.g.*, in the consecration of the Eucharist, in Confirmation, and in Ordination. In this connexion particular stress is laid upon the words 'upon us' (ἐφ' ἡμᾶς), which in one important manuscript (D) is found attached to the preceding petition 'Hallowed be Thy Name upon us.' The petition *Thy kingdom come* is in effect a prayer for personal sanctification: for the manifestation of the grace of the Spirit 'to usward,' that in our lives the Name of God may be glorified and the Rule of God established. Cyprian, indeed, observes that 'perhaps Christ Himself is the kingdom Whose coming we daily desire.'¹ For it is the indwelling of Christ by His Spirit in our hearts that bears fruit in righteousness, peace and joy. Where even one human will is wholly dedicated to His blessed service—realizing its entire dependence on Him and seeking in all action and suffering alike to abide in union with Him—there the kingdom is actually present and operative in the world.

We may say then that the kingdom is the life of Christ, or rather *Christ Himself Who is our life*, manifested in man as a regenerating and sanctifying force. The man who is thus *alive unto God* is himself, as Christ was, an embodiment of the divine kingdom. Indeed, the 'kingdom' of the synoptic Gospels and the 'eternal life' of the

the connexion of the promise of the Spirit with the coming of the Kingdom, see Acts i. 4-8.

¹ *De orat. Dom.*, xiii.

Johannine writings seem to correspond to each other as different aspects of one and the same divine gift: the gift of the indwelling presence of Christ, so that to each one of the regenerate He Himself becomes the very principle of life, *wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption*.¹ This thought of the essential identity of ‘life’ with ‘the kingdom’ perhaps underlies the deep saying of Irenaeus ‘Gloria Dei vivens homo’; and gives new significance to the characteristic petition of Sarapion’s liturgy: ‘We beseech Thee, make us living men.’ ‘Grant that this Church may be a living and clean Church.’ ‘We ask,’ says Peter Chrysologus, ‘that under the rule of God we being set free may reign unto eternal life.’²

(3) *Thy kingdom come* is also a petition for that which begins with the regeneration of individual souls, namely the salvation of all mankind. We know that such a petition is agreeable to the will of God (1 Tim. ii. 4). It corresponds, as Hooker points out, to God’s ‘general inclination’—His ‘antecedent will’—concerning our race, and the rule of our prayers is to be the rule of that will as interpreted by Christ-like charity.³ ‘Salvation,’ in the usage of the Evangelists, does not signify deliverance from some unknown condition of misery in a future state. It means actual and present liberation from all the evils that devastate the bodily life of men, or hold their will in bondage. It means the ‘saving’ of manhood in its entirety from being wasted

¹ Col. iii. 4; Rom. vi. 11; 1 Cor. i. 30. See Bp. Robertson, *Regnum Dei*, pp. 92–97.

² See the Eucharistic anaphora of Bp. Sarapion, with whom the word ‘living’ in this connexion is a favourite one. Also Pet. Chrys. *de orat. Dom.* i.

³ *Eccl. Pol.* v. 49, 3 foll. Hooker seems to borrow this phraseology from Chrys., *hom in Eph.* i. 766, where the same distinction is drawn between God’s ‘antecedent will’ (θέλημα προηγούμενον) and ‘secondary will’ (θέλημα δεύτερον).

by frivolity, wrecked by passion, embittered by envy, hardened and profaned by the love of wealth or ease, paralysed by doubt, emptied of all serviceableness and joy by luxury or sloth. Consequently we may regard this petition as a prayer for the overthrow of all those conditions, physical, moral and social, which hinder the manifestation of the Rule of God; which lay waste human lives; which hold men back from becoming what they are called to be—children of God in reality as in name. We pray for the downfall of all the organizations of error, superstition and wickedness which in heathen lands enslave the souls and bodies of men. St. Paul in one pregnant sentence has summed up the wretchedness of the Gentile world: *having no hope, without God in the world.*¹ Indeed, one of the chief incentives to zeal in the cause of missions is a vivid apprehension of the conditions which prevail where the light of the Gospel is unknown. We think of the heathen in India, Africa, the islands of the Pacific and elsewhere: tossed to and fro by forces of nature which they cannot comprehend or control; victims of their own unbridled passions; a prey to the deliberate wickedness of evil and unscrupulous men; divided and agitated by wild feuds; shaken by vain terrors; maddened by drink or disease; bowed down beneath the yoke of cruel superstitions. This misery of the heathen, *without God in the world*, is brought very near to us in days when science has to a great extent neutralized distance. We now know, and can with an effort imagine, for example, the wretchedness caused by the drink traffic among the child-races of Africa or the New Hebrides. 'These natives,' writes John Paton, 'when they are under the influence of liquor frequently shoot each other and shoot themselves.' We can dimly realize some of the appalling evils connected with the slave traffic, with the belief in

¹ Eph. ii. 12.

witchcraft, with devil-worship, with the institution of human sacrifice. We shudder to think of the ravages caused by famine, pestilence and tribal war in regions where the elementary laws of medicine and sanitation are unknown; or of the miserable lot of the many millions of native widows in India, a great proportion of them mere children: to-day petted and spoiled, laden with ornaments and tended by obsequious slaves; to-morrow shorn and polluted outcasts, beaten, starved, neglected, despised drudges—*fast bound in misery and iron.*

It is in view of these and similar facts that we are taught to pray *Thy kingdom come*: the kingdom which proclaims *liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound*, deliverance from the yoke of sin and from the bondage of nature; the kingdom which embraces in its scope the whole of man's complex nature, bringing ‘saving health’ and soundness alike to body and soul, and manifesting the great Creator as the Saviour, the Life-giver, *the hope of all the ends of the earth.*¹

Nor is it only the dark places of heathendom that are *full of the habitations of violence.*² When we pray for the coming of the kingdom, we should bear in mind those terrible conditions of life even in civilized States which make a pure and healthful moral life virtually impossible for multitudes of toiling people: the injustice, the callousness, the greed of gain, the commercial dishonesty which lead to the exploitation of the poor and helpless classes. In the Psalter the manifestation of Jehovah as King is hailed as bringing redress to *the poor*; it is He to Whom the poor look for deliverance, for defence, for the supply of their needs, for the maintenance of their right.³ For though the kingdom

¹ Isa. lxi. 1; Ps. lxxv. 5, P.B.

² Ps. lxxiv. 20.

³ See, e.g., Ps. ix. 7 foll.; x. 14; xii. 5; xxxv. 10; lxxii. 4; cix. 31; cxxxii. 15; cxl. 12.

of God is infinitely more than a mere condition of material well-being, it unquestionably includes the organization of human society on a basis of righteousness and the spirit of brotherhood.

The problem of the modern city must needs weigh heavily upon the heart of the Church. We think of the almost unmanageable evils that have followed in the train of the vast expansion of industry throughout the world: the poignant contrasts of wealth and poverty, luxury and want; the huddled masses of ill-housed and ill-nourished humanity; the swarms of neglected children; the hosts of unemployed and unemployable; the dark depths of destitution, squalor and crime; and all those other social conditions which are equivalent in fact, though not in name, to sheer slavery: the unrelieved and scantily paid toil of masses of workers, men, women and children; the desperate struggle for a bare subsistence; the ruinous curse of drink; the detestable iniquities of the so-called 'white slave' traffic.¹

Confronting these facts of present-day life in the modern city stands the Church with its gospel of a city or kingdom of God: its proclamation of Jesus Christ as the Lord of human life.

'The mission of the Church,' says a recent writer, 'was not restricted to the individual; . . . the value of religion lies not only in the fact that it voices individual emotions and needs. The mission of Christ was also a sociological mission; the duty of the Church resides also in the ensuring of social cohesion and integration.' Again, 'Religion is essentially an instrument of social evolution, seeing that the *raison d'être* of religion consists in the subordination

¹ I do not forget the seriousness and urgency of the *rural* problem. For a summary of the evils crying for amendment, see Dean Fry in *The Church and New Century Problems*, pp. 115-135.

of the individual to a power higher than himself in the interests of Society.' ¹ From the first, the Christian Church set before itself a twofold task. Its constant endeavour, on the one hand, was to mitigate by active charity the almost hopeless social evils incident to a decaying civilization; on the other, its aim was to pave the way for better conditions by regenerating the lives of individual men. The 'kingdom' or 'reign' of God was established in the hearts of men that their lives might act as leaven concealed in the inert mass of average humanity that surrounded them.² The leaven necessarily worked as a principle of social unrest and disturbance, affecting the traditions of family life, the force of age-long custom, the *status* of women, of children, of slaves, even the relations subsisting between the State and its members. Although owing to the world-wide growth of democracy, avenues of political influence are open to modern Christians which were unknown in the early period of the Church's history; though they are free in dealing with social disorders to protest, to agitate, to initiate reforms, to employ the force of organized public opinion; yet it remains true that the best contribution which an individual can make to the advancement of the divine kingdom on earth is that of his own regenerate personality.³ Again and again, as experience shows, it is the faith, the patience, the courage, the persistence of individual men that is enabled 'to use strength for the purposes of strength, to clear the path, dash obstacles aside,

¹ G. Chatterton-Hill, *The Sociological Value of Christianity*, pp. 4 and 185.

² Matt. xiii. 33. Cp. H. S. Holland, *God's City*, pp. 143-160; Harnack, *The Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*, bk. ii., ch. iii.

³ Cp. W. Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 351.

force good causes forward,'¹ and so permanently to improve the social conditions of their time.

It is plain that the petition 'Thy kingdom come' rebukes anything like apathy and indifference in regard to social evils. Used with sincerity, it is the utterance of a heart which feels, and a mind which intelligently considers, the problems of the modern world.

Moreover it implies a clear apprehension not only of the nature of God's kingdom, but also of the methods by which it is to be extended. *My kingdom*, says our Lord, *is not of this world.*² As contrasted with the world, that is, the order of human society organized in defiance or forgetfulness of God's will, it proclaims the spiritual principles of a new and eternal order: such principles as are implied in the Beatitudes, or in those profound and fruitful maxims of conduct which Christ illustrated in His own example; 'He that is chief among you, let him be as he that doth serve'; 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'; 'A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth'; 'Resist not him that is evil'; 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness'; 'Be not anxious for the morrow'; 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's'; 'Give and it shall be given unto you'; 'Love your enemies and do them good'; 'As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise'; 'He that humbleth himself shall be exalted'; 'He that loseth his life for My sake shall find it'; 'Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die it beareth much fruit.'³

The kingdom comes in proportion as these far-reaching

¹ Lord Morley, *The Life of W. E. Gladstone*, vol. i., p. 218.

² John xviii. 36.

³ See generally Hogg, *op. cit.*, part ii, 'Strangers and Pilgrims.'

principles are applied to the affairs of men ; in proportion, that is, as the revealed will of God is embraced and fulfilled by individual men and by the nations of the earth. It will be realized ‘ not by God without man but by God within man.’¹

(4) Thus the petition for the coming of the kingdom is a prayer for the perfecting of the Church, for the hastening of *the restitution of all things* through a wider knowledge of His will, and a more perfect obedience on the part of His redeemed people.

Not unnaturally, early writers show a tendency to refer the petition primarily to the second coming of our Lord : *the end, when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father* ;² and the question arises at this point : What was our Lord’s anticipation of the future ? Did He share the Messianic expectation current among His contemporaries and regard His own second advent as imminent—as even likely to take place within the life-time of some who listened to His preaching ?

The answer to this question is not quite simple. We undoubtedly find that the utterances of Christ suggest two distinct lines of thought about His future coming. On the one hand there are passages which imply that the advent of the Son of man in glory to judge and deliver His people is nigh at hand. *This generation shall not pass away until all these things be accomplished.*³ On the other hand there are sayings, especially in the parabolic teaching of the Gospels, which suggest that the consummation of all things is a far-distant event. This is certainly the general tenour of such parables as those of the wheat and the tares, the mustard seed, the leaven, the ten virgins, the unjust judge.

¹ *The Practice of Christianity* (Macmillan), p. 112.

² 1 Cor. xv. 24.

³ Mark xiii. 30 ; cp. Matt. xxiv. 30 foll.

We remember, too, the express statement that *the gospel must first be preached unto all the nations*,¹ which falls in with the mysterious reference to *the times of the Gentiles*, signifying, it would seem, a period analogous to Israel's *day of visitation*—the indefinitely long period during which the Church is engaged in evangelizing the heathen world. Again, the mere fact that our Lord instituted a Church in order to perpetuate His work and mission on earth, shows that He anticipated for His kingdom a long and eventful history. Such considerations seem to preclude any rigorous logical theory, such as that put forward by a recent school of eschatologists, respecting our Lord's view of the future. That He incorporated in His teaching some leading Messianic ideas prevalent in His day, can scarcely be doubted. But that He adopted the current eschatology with all its apocalyptic details, all its limitations, its conditions, its imaginative embellishments, must be emphatically denied. In His hands, as we have already seen, the Messianic beliefs of contemporary Judaism were transformed. Indeed, a great authority on this point assures us that Christ's teaching 'is almost as much a criticism of the popular ideals as a preaching of them.'²

The fact is that the 'kingdom' in Christ's teaching is something already existing, yet also future. It has already come, but in another sense is yet to come. This dual aspect of the kingdom is only one example of other similar 'antinomies' in the Gospel. God is transcendent, a Father in heaven, but at the same time immanent; the sonship of believers is a fact of present experience, yet *we wait for*

¹ Mark xiii. 10; cp. Luke xxi. 24.

² Prof. Burkitt in *Cambridge Biblical Essays*, p. 204. Mr. Streeter, in *Foundations*, p. 115, says on this point, 'We see here that same re-interpretation of contemporary religious beliefs in the light of their underlying principles, which we have already seen in His treatment of the Law.'

the adoption ; we are redeemed, yet we look for redemption ; we are saved, but are being *guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*¹

It is evident that the Christian Church did not feel itself obliged permanently to accept the interpretation which the earliest believers placed upon our Lord's allusions to His second coming. The expectation of its immediate approach yielded in process of time to the logic of facts, and the Church set itself deliberately to work upon a task which it foresaw might take ages to accomplish. Already, within the period covered by the New Testament, there are tokens that the earliest form of the Messianic expectation is undergoing a change. The idea of a sudden and catastrophic consummation of the kingdom is not lost, but other aspects of the Lord's teaching emerge and have their influence. Sayings which pointed to the delay of His coming would recur to the minds of His disciples ; in particular, the promise that His presence should be with them throughout the period preceding His final advent.² Possibly we have here an explanation of the frequency with which exhortations to *patience* occur in the later Apostolic writings. The writer of the Apocalypse connects the thought of 'patience' with that of the 'kingdom,' and St. Paul in his last epistle quotes what seems to be a fragment of a familiar Christian hymn : *If we endure, we shall also reign with Him.*³

¹ Rom. viii. 23 ; 1 Pet. i. 5.

² See Matt. xxviii. 20 (cp. xviii. 20), which seems to show that Christ looked forward not only 'to a final, and (He hoped) not very distant return in glory, but to an intervening ministry of prosperous activity' (Hogg, *op. cit.*, p. 218). Hogg thinks that in this connexion Christ may have applied to Himself the prophecy of Isa. liii. 10.

³ Rev. i. 9 ; 2 Tim. ii. 12. Bp. Westcott observes (on 1 John ii. 28) that in the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles the sub-

Thus we may think that the Church learned gradually to set aside the more crude interpretation of our Lord's Messianic predictions which were current among the earliest believers. It came perhaps to be recognized that as in ancient prophecy, so in Christ's own teaching, the precise time and manner of fulfilment is not of primary importance. The kingdom of God was actually present in power; but the hour of its final manifestation must needs depend upon the intensity, greater or less, of human faith. In much the same way the ancient prophets proclaimed the salvation of Judah as a blessing of the immediate future; yet the delay of the consummation did not shatter their confidence, partly because they regarded even a partial fulfilment as a pledge of an ampler and more decisive blessing yet to come; partly also because they recognized the *conditional* character of their message. Impenitence or apostasy on Israel's part must necessarily postpone the dawn of the Messianic age.¹ May we not believe that an analogous feature is to be traced in our Lord's proclamation of the kingdom? The rule of God established in His own Person was a sufficient pledge that the kingdom, already present potentially, would ultimately—might even in the near future—be fully and finally manifested. Meanwhile we may believe that His silence as to the precise date when *all these things* should *come to pass* was intended to kindle and keep alive in the heart of His Church a temper of watchful expectancy, of spiritual detachment, which might protect it from undue reliance on the essentially unstable order of an evil and perishing world.²

ject of Eschatology falls entirely into the background. This is significant of a change of proportion in the Christian view of the future.

¹ Riehm, *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, p. 222.

² Cp. Burkitt, *ubi sup.*, pp. 211 foll. Cp. R. Knox, *Some Loose Stones*, p. 121.

In the petition *Thy kingdom come* we pray for the perfecting of the Church ; for the hastening of the day when the faithful shall *receive the kingdom prepared* for them ; when the kingdom shall not only come, but come to us.¹ The visible Church is in essence and idea one, but its unity is marred by man’s wilfulness ; it is holy, but stained by human sin ; catholic in capacity, but leaving millions outside its pale ; apostolic in discipline and doctrine, but in methods and spirit too often worldly and of little faith. Therefore we say, *Thy kingdom come*. We ask that the Spirit of Christ may ever more perfectly direct and rule the Church ; that it may be cleansed from all worldliness and corruption, all lukewarmness and spiritual blindness, all divisions and heresies—all that hinders the manifestation of Christ to the world as its rightful Lord and King. The Church is not, strictly speaking, identical with the kingdom of God. It is rather the chief agent and instrument through which that kingdom is gradually established on earth.² We may certainly believe, however, that in the Church the kingdom is already present among men, especially if we accept that broad statement of St. Augustine : “ *Ubi cumque timetur Deus et laudatur, ibi est Ecclesia Dei* ” ; or of St. Irenaeus : “ *Ubi Spiritus Dei, ibi ecclesia et omnis gratia.* ”³ Indeed, we may say that the Church perfected ‘ shall be found to be the kingdom. ’⁴ For the kingdom is that sphere in which the will of God is intelligently embraced and fulfilled ; in which the Holy Spirit rules ; in which God Himself is worshipped as King, is loved and possessed as the chief good of man.

Finally we should not forget to connect this petition

¹ Aug., *serm.* lvii. 5.

² Bp. Robertson, *Regnum Dei*, pp. 75-77.

³ *Enarr. in Ps. xxi.* 24 ; Iren. iii. 24, 1. Cp. Ignat., *ad Smyrn.* 8.

⁴ Moberly, *Ministerial Priesthood*, p. 37.

with the elect people of God who from ancient times looked and still look for the coming of the Messiah's kingdom. *Thy kingdom come* may be regarded as in part a prayer for the hastening of the time when Israel shall turn to its Saviour, and the veil which still lies upon its heart shall be taken away ; when He Who shed His blood for the sanctification of His people shall pour out upon them the Holy Spirit for their illumination ; that those who have waited for the kingdom may obtain what they seek, and may have part with us in the glory of the heavenly Jerusalem.

IV

The petition on which we have meditated seems to correspond to a certain temper or attitude of mind in him who offers it, namely a temper of earnest expectancy which is ever looking for tokens of that—

‘one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves.’

St. Paul describes this in a single Greek word out of which, it has been well said, ‘an artist might make a statue of hope!’¹ In his earliest epistle he speaks as if *to wait* for the Son of God from heaven was the one characteristic duty of the regenerate Christian.² At the least we may say that it is an essential element in the true Christian's view of life. In the critical events of history, in the slow or sudden expansion of the Church, in the judgments which fall upon a world that forgets God, in the rise and fall of empires, in the social changes which slowly undermine the existing fabric of civilization and give birth to a new order

¹ Godet on Rom. viii. 19 ; cp. Phil. i. 20. The word in question (*ἀποκαταδοκία*) suggests the posture of one who waits with uplifted head, outstretched ear and absorbed attention, for the arrival of some great one whose coming is expected.

² 1 Thess. i. 10.

of things—faith sees the tokens of a final manifestation of the divine kingdom ; and lifts up its head as the hour of redemption draws nigh.

Accordingly a Christian will endeavour to live as one who prays for the coming of the kingdom. He will pass through things temporal in a spirit of detachment ; He will

‘ stand in freedom loosened from this world,’

neither unduly elated by the blessings of earth nor cast down by adversities ; since he knows that here he has *no continuing city*, but that in fulfilling the will of God he belongs to *a kingdom that cannot be shaken*.

In living only *unto God* he possesses the pledge and earnest of his immortality. *The world passeth away and the lust thereof ; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*¹

¹ See Heb. xiii. 14 ; xii. 28 ; 1 John ii. 17. Cp. Cyp., *de orat. Dom.*, xiv. : ‘ Qui in aeternum manere volumus, Dei qui aeternus est voluntatem facere debemus ’ ; Aug., *enarr. in Ps. xci.* 8 : ‘ Junge cor tuum immortalitati Dei et cum Illo aeternus eris.’ The same lesson of detachment is based by Chrysostom, *in Matt. hom.* xix. 250 E., on the words *Thy kingdom come*. Reference may also be made to Dean Church’s *Advent Sermons* (1885), no. 1, ‘ Faith amid changes.’

CHAPTER VII

‘THY WILL BE DONE AS IN HEAVEN SO ON EARTH’ (ST. MATTHEW)

‘Voluntas Dei est quam Christus et fecit et docuit.’—CYPRIAN.

‘Vita in voluntate Eius.’—BERNARD.

AUGUSTINE’S reflection on the clause *Thy kingdom come* is that whether we will or no, the kingdom will certainly come. In the same way, the will of God will certainly be accomplished *in us* if not *by us*. Tertullian, in whose version of the Lord’s Prayer the present petition precedes that for the coming of the kingdom, makes a similar comment. God’s will shall be done, even though we do not pray that it may be so.¹ ‘Who,’ asks Cyprian, ‘hath resisted,—who can resist His will?’ *Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven and in earth and in the sea and in all deep places.*² The purport of this petition is, therefore, that the will of God may be fulfilled *by us* as well as *in us*, and that through this fulfilment the kingdom of God may come. Since the divine purpose embraces things on earth as well as things in heaven, the petition *Thy will be done* is a summary of all prayer. It includes our-

¹ Aug., *ep. cxxx ad Probam*, 21. Cp. *serm. lvi. 7*: ‘Fiet enim voluntas Dei in te et si non fit a te’; and Tert., *de orat. iv*: ‘Non quod aliquis obsistat quominus voluntas Dei fiat,’ etc. (see Rom. ix. 19); Cyp., *de orat. Dom. xiv.*; cp. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, i. 15: ‘Si [quis] vult fugere de sub voluntate jubente, currit sub voluntatem punientem.’

² Ps. cxxxv. 6 (P.B.); see also 1 Chron. xxix. 11; 1 Macc. iii. 60.

selves and all mankind in one comprehensive supplication that all may be brought into union with God in Christ. But it also embraces the whole of created being. We ask without limitation that God's will may be fulfilled always and everywhere: that earth may become as heaven—the scene of a universal service of God; and that so, not the race of man only, but *all things* may be reconciled to God, all things gathered together in one, all things drawn to His feet; that all things may fulfil, in order and in peace, the eternal law of their being.¹ *Thy will be done.* It is the utterance of man's *desire*, seeking the beatitude for which he was created; and of man's *submission*, yielding himself up to a wisdom, love and might higher than his own.

Thy will be done. The thought that this was the prayer of Gethsemane, leads us to consider it primarily as the voice of submission.²

Bishop Butler, in his sermon 'Upon the love of God,' declares that 'resignation to the will of God is the whole of piety. . . . The consideration, that the course of things is unalterable, hath a tendency to quiet the mind under it, to beget a submission of temper to it. But when we can add, that this unalterable course is appointed and continued by infinite wisdom and goodness; how absolute should be our submission, how entire our trust and dependence!' ³ This is the real point. A Christian can meekly and patiently acquiesce in the will of God, as manifested in the course of His providence, because he knows that *by subjection to the*

¹ Consider such passages as Col. i. 20; Eph. i. 10; and John xii. 32 (where the Vulg. reads not 'omnes' but 'omnia traham ad Me ipsum').

² Tert., *de orat.* iv: 'Jam hoc dicto ad sufferentiam nosmetipsos praemonemus.'

³ *Sermons*, no. xiv. 3 (ed. J. H. Bernard). 'Religion,' Butler elsewhere says, 'consists in submission and resignation to the divine will' (*Serm.* xv. 9).

*Father of spirits*¹ he is yielding himself into the hands of One Who seeks only his highest good, of One Who *doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men*,² but chastens them only for their *profit that they may be partakers of His holiness*. It is needless to enlarge on what is a commonplace of Christian experience. We may, however, remind ourselves that, in breathing the petition *Thy will be done*, we acknowledge our own need of discipline ; we confess that our salvation depends as much on bearing as on doing ; on patience as on effort. We express our willingness to *suffer according to the will of God*, committing ourselves to Him as *unto a faithful Creator*.³ For in the following of Christ men learn once for all that the escape from pain is not the proper object of life ; since suffering is the school of character, the secret of spiritual power, and the occasion of the noblest victories. They learn, too, that the power of God *is made perfect in weakness*,⁴ and that in spite of all seeming defeat and ruin—

‘He always wins that sides with God.’

If they tread the way of the Cross, they do but follow the footsteps of their Master and look to share His throne.⁵

Moreover, the religion of Christ has taught us to discover in patience under suffering a form of heroic activity. Even our Lord’s Passion was a triumph of love and power, as the language of St. Paul in Col. ii. 15 suggests. It was a supreme display of the moral energy of a righteous and steadfast will, persisting in its course under conditions of inconceivable difficulty and distress. So, according to the Christian idea, all suffering is transfigured ; it is a form of *activity* in so far as it heightens life and gives occasion to the will to triumph over adverse circumstances ; it is a

¹ Heb. xii. 9, 10.

² Lam. iii. 33.

³ 1 Pet. iv. 19.

⁴ 2 Cor. xii. 9.

⁵ Rev. iii. 21.

display of divinely-imparted strength, and is crowned with the joy of spiritual achievement and victory.¹

Thy will be done is not merely a cry of submission, but a voice of expectant hope. It is the confession of our steadfast conviction that *If we endure, we shall also reign with Him*. Taught by the experience of the saints, *we call them blessed which have endured*.²

The words ‘ Thy will be done ’ give utterance to the spirit of resignation and submission ; they also exclude the self-confidence and boastfulness of the worldly temper, which in forming plans for the future ignores both the uncertainty of human affairs and the all-disposing will of God. In the fourth chapter of his Epistle St. James rebukes this godless self-reliance : *For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall both live, and do this or that*.³ ‘ Worldliness ’ means the fulfilment of life’s duties, and the enjoyment of its pleasures, without reference to God and His will. The sin of the world, which the Lamb of God came to take away, is not primarily the active infringement of moral law, but despite done to the love of a divine Father ; non-attention to His claim ; forgetfulness of His benefits ; the absence of response to His call ; the attempt to be independent of Him, and to seek satisfaction in something that is not God. Sin could only be effectually done away by One Whose law of life was expressed in the sentence, *Lo I come to do Thy will, O God*.

I

It is natural to consider, next, some different ways in which the revelation of the divine will is vouchsafed to us.

¹ Cp. Col. i. 11 : ‘ Strengthened with all power, according to the might of His glory, unto all patience and longsuffering with joy.’

² 2 Tim. ii. 12 ; James v. 11. Cp. 1 Pet. iv. 12-19.

³ James iv. 15.

1. In *Nature* the law of God manifests itself, and that law is the embodiment of a moral will.¹ The Hebrew Psalmists, as they contemplated the order, variety and beauty of the physical world, discovered in it always and everywhere the presence, the 'wisdom,' the direct personal operation of the living God Whom they worshipped. They gloried in the steadfastness with which all created things observed the limits of their appointed course. They knew nothing of 'secondary causes.' Looking out upon the universe, on the starry heavens, on the motions of planets, on the succession of the seasons, on the habits and movements of animals, on all the multitudinous sights and sounds of inanimate Nature, they glorified Jehovah as manifesting Himself in all that met their senses. They called upon Nature to uplift with them the voice of benediction.² They exulted in the fixity and regularity of the natural order: *He hath made them fast for ever and ever: He hath given them a law which shall not be broken.* That which we regard as the settled axiom of Western science, the uniformity of Nature, the reign of law, was equally an axiom to the Jew, but it was not so much the inevitable result of observation as a plain consequence of the Hebrew idea of God. To the devout Israelite Jehovah was a Being Whose 'word' was perpetually discovering itself to man, Whose eternal 'truth' and 'faithfulness' was everywhere reflected in His ways and in His works. Christianity inherits this characteristically Hebraic conception of Nature. Our confession of belief in 'God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,' is an act of faith in the spirituality of Nature. By the fixity of its order, by its rationality, its harmony, its beauty, its

¹ Aug., *de civ. Dei*, v. 9: 'Ipsas naturales [causas] nequaquam ab Illius voluntate sejungimus, qui est auctor omnis conditorque naturae.' Cp. Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.*, i. 3, 2.

² Ps. cxlviii. 5, 6.

gradation of life, its manifestation under various forms of one and the same fundamental force, it bears witness to the presence within it of Will and Personality. Beneath all the forms of power or loveliness which stir his awe and gratitude, a believer in God is aware of a moral purpose controlling and directing the order of the universe ; of a holy and invincible will that bears all things onward in their appointed course. For him, Nature is sacramental ; it is the veil of a spiritual presence, the contemplation of which begins in wonder and culminates in worship.¹

The will of God, then, reads itself out in Nature—‘ the Law which God with Himself hath eternally set down to follow in His own works.’² But the problem which presses upon the human heart is not whether the order of Nature bears witness to rational purpose in the Creator, but whether it be morally intelligible ; whether its Author is manifested therein as good and beneficent.

On this point all we can say is that there are grounds for hope and encouragement. As our knowledge of the universe is enlarged, we are learning to revise the somewhat premature judgments of an earlier time. We are discovering that the prevalence of waste and suffering in Nature has been exaggerated in the past, and that utility and moral purpose are discernible in much that formerly seemed incompatible with creative wisdom and goodness. Moreover, the whole problem has come to present itself in a new light. The rudiments of a power analogous to freedom of will appear to be present in regions where its existence was formerly undreamed of ; and it may ultimately appear that the ‘ defects ’ (as they were once called) of the physical universe are the counterparts of that moral failure and waste which

¹ Cp. J. B. Mozley, *University Sermons*, No. 6, ‘ Nature ’ ; and Wordsworth, *Lines composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey*.

² Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* i. 16, 1.

result from the misuse of liberty by rational beings.¹ However this may hereafter prove to be, our present knowledge points to a moral justification of all that perplexes us in the order of Nature. We have reason to hope that there also mankind will learn to recognize the operation of the *good, acceptable and perfect will of God*.²

2. The will of God is also made known by the light of reason and conscience. The 'law of Nature' is a revelation of the divine requirement. It is the view of some early Christian writers that this law is virtually identical with the Decalogue, which sets forth the essential rudiments of piety and justice.³ In any case, the law of Nature, whether substantially embodied, or only presupposed, in the Decalogue and in other primitive codes, proclaims that *this is the will of God, even our sanctification*; ⁴ that it is the duty of man to live according to the nature bestowed upon him, and that sin is contrary to that nature.

Conscience again, is a faculty which reflects the authority of the 'universal reason'; which bears witness to the claim upon us of a transcendent and holy will, implying the existence of a personal Lawgiver and Judge. By educating this faculty of conscience and obeying its dictates, we attain to a clearer perception of the divine requirement. We gain that keen moral insight and spiritual intelligence which is the fruit of a progressive *knowledge of His will*.⁵

3. Further, we may study the unfolding of the divine will in history. The great theme of Hebrew prophecy is that in the events of history, in the judgments which fall

¹ On this subject, see a useful and suggestive little book, *God and the World: A Survey of Thought*, by A. W. Robinson, D.D. (S.P.C.K.).

² Rom. xii. 2.

³ See on this point, *The Rule of Life and Love* (Lib. of Hist. Theol.), pp. 6 foll.

⁴ 1 Thess. iv. 3.

⁵ Col. i. 9. See Bp. Lightfoot's note, *l.c.*

upon personal or national transgression, Jehovah makes known His moral purpose. He reveals Himself as educating His chosen people, as controlling the restless movements of the heathen nations, as chastening sin, and steadily aiming at the moral perfection of man. Human history is, in fact, when rightly understood, the manifestation of a supra-mundane mind and will. It is the progressive self-disclosure, not of mere force, nor even of moral principles, but of a Person—of a living will—of *Him Which is from the beginning*.¹ It is this view of history that is characteristic of the Bible, which looks upon the world in this simple view as God’s world, as the sphere in which the divine will for creation is continually manifested.

‘ In all these books of Scripture,’ writes Augustine, ‘ those who fear God and meekly submit themselves to the rule of piety seek to discover the will of God.’ ‘ Scripture,’ he says again, ‘ teaches no lesson except charity, censures nothing except selfishness, and in this way forms the character of men.’² On this peculiarity of Scripture Augustine bases its claim to entire sufficiency ; it supplies, he says, a rule of faith and of morals, of hope and of love ; it declares the unchanging purpose of salvation which inspires all God’s dealings with our race ; it passes judgment on all that does not come from God nor lead to God ; its message from end to end is one and the same : God and His will.

4. So, finally, we find a culminating manifestation of the divine will for man in our Lord Jesus Christ. Cyprian beautifully expands this thought. ‘ The will of God is that which Christ both did and taught. Humility in be-

¹ 1 John ii. 13, ἐγνώκατε τὸν ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς. Contrast i. 1, ὃ ἦν ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς, and see Westcott *ad loc.* Even heathen writers bear witness to this truth in their use of the word *Numen* (from *nuo*), signifying a being who manifests or exercises *will*.

² Aug., *de doctrina*, ii. 9 ; iii. 10.

haviour, steadfastness in faith, modesty in speech, righteousness in action, mercifulness in works, self-discipline in character, incapacity to inflict an injury, readiness to endure it patiently when inflicted, peaceableness towards brethren, whole-hearted devotion to God, love toward Him as Father, sacred fear of Him as God. To prefer nothing in the world to Christ, to cling inseparably to His love, to stand patiently and trustfully beside His cross when His Name or honour is at stake; to display self-possession in speech when we are called to confess Him, confidence in trial when we meet our foes, and in death patience which obtains the crown—this is to be a co-heir of Christ, to fulfil the commandment of God, to do the will of the Father.’¹

In Christ our manhood is exhibited as it was divinely intended to be: dependent in all things on God, aided by God, raised to the height of its capacities by God.² In Christ we see human nature under the sole rule of the Holy Spirit, with every instinct and faculty subjected to the divine will. To Him that will is the rule of work, of patience, of desire, of prayer. He comes into the world simply to fulfil it: to proclaim it in His teaching; to accept it in His sufferings; to find in it the life and sustenance of His spirit.³ We learn by His human example that religion consists in such a relationship of dependence toward God as shall ensure to us the knowledge of His will and the grace

¹ *de orat. Dom.*, xv. In the last sentence Cyprian seems to be referring to arraignment as a Christian before a heathen court (in *quaestione* fiduciam . . . in morte patientiam).

² Weston, *The One Christ*, p. 138. Christ came ‘to exhibit manhood to God . . . at its best . . . with those excellencies that are possible to it when constituted in God the Son, the creative Word. Ideal manhood is manhood dependent upon God and God-aided.’

³ John iv. 34: ‘My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to accomplish His work.’

needful for fulfilling it. The rest of the New Testament may be regarded as a kind of commentary on the ideal manifested in the Lord Jesus. Through mystical union with Christ and through the renewal effected by His Spirit, Christians are enabled to discover and to ‘ put to the test ’ what God’s present will for them actually is.¹ This they are to do in two ways : first, by following obediently the indications of that divine providence which orders the course of events, and apportions the lot of individual men, in accordance with a predestined purpose of grace ; secondly, by being loyal to the moral light they already possess in Scripture and in conscience.²

II

The first two petitions of the Lord’s Prayer find in the third a kind of natural climax ; consequently the words ‘ as in heaven so on earth ’ are supposed by many commentators to qualify all three clauses alike. ‘ Heaven ’ is the sphere in which the Name of God is perfectly hallowed ; in which the Rule of God is perfectly established and fulfilled ; in which His Will is perfectly done.³ Our prayer is that earth may be made a heaven ; that to all orders of creatures alike the divine will may be a law and a delight. Accordingly we may regard this petition as a request for three things in particular : for a true conversion ; for grace to co-operate intelligently with the revealed purpose of God ; for perseverance in the service of God in spite of hindrances and difficulties.⁴

I. We pray for a true conversion ; we ask that with our whole personality—the reason, the affections, the will and

¹ Rom. xii. 2 ; cp. Phil. i. 10.

² John vii. 17.

³ This is the teaching of the Roman Catechism put forth at Trent.

⁴ Pet. Chrys., *de orat. Dom.* v., says : ‘ Tunc jam totum est caelum . . . quando omnes solius Dei sapiunt et faciunt voluntates,’ etc.

the body which is the instrument of our service—we may turn to God and live *unto Him*. But man's central and dominant faculty is his *will*. 'The will is the man.'¹ It is to the will rather than to emotion or reason that our Lord invariably appeals. Faith and repentance are coordinate movements of the will: faith being an act of personal adhesion to God, while repentance is the voluntary repudiation of sin: the opposition of the entire self to sin. As the prayer for the coming of the kingdom is primarily a request for spiritual victory in our conflict with the enemies of the soul, so the petition, *Thy will be done*, is a request for grace to overcome all that hinders a perfect conversion: all weakness and waywardness of intention, all obstinacy and self-will, all inordinate affection, all self-delusion and half-heartedness which may hold us back from a complete surrender of our whole nature to God.² Sanctification, which is the will of God for us,³ implies the dedication of every thought and impulse to God; concentration of purpose on a single object—that of pleasing Him. Conversion, therefore—at least in its initial stage, for it is a lifelong movement of the soul—lies at the threshold of the life in God and unto God to which we are pledged in baptism. 'This,' says Bernard, 'is the beginning of our salvation—when we begin to abhor what we once loved, to grieve for that in which we used to delight, to embrace what we used to fear, to follow what we used to avoid, to choose what we used to despise.'⁴ We are born anew in order that we may live henceforth *no longer to the lusts of men, but to the will of God*.⁵ Conversion is an entire change of heart and mind,

¹ T. H. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 179. Augustine has the same thought, *de civ. Dei*, xiv. 15.

² Chrys., *hom. in Matt.* xix. 251 C, says that this petition is a prayer for perfection—that we may no longer do God's will 'by halves' (ἐξ ἡμισείας).

³ 1 Thess. iv. 3.

⁴ *Serm. in circumcissione Dom.*, ii. 5.

⁵ 1 Pet. iv. 2.

by which a new direction is given to life. Since, then, this is necessarily the work of God Himself, *Thy will be done* is a prayer for the manifestation of the Spirit in our lives. This is the law of the new life to which we are called.¹ Where the living Spirit effectually works, human life is ordered according to the will of God and responds to His creative purpose, by devoted obedience, brave patience, persevering prayer and perpetual thanksgiving.² That this Christ-life may be ever more perfectly manifested in us we pray, *Thy will be done*. *Perfectionem optamus quando hoc oramus* is Augustine’s comment.

It is obvious that in this petition we pray for the conversion of sinners. Augustine mentions as ‘ a pious interpretation ’ the suggestion that heaven signifies the Church, and earth its enemies.³ In any case we may regard this as a prayer for all those who in any way resist or ignore the will of God, choosing what He abhors or practising that which He forbids ; for all who wilfully sin against Him, ignorantly dishonour Him, or neglect to serve Him. We ask that they too, with us, may submit to His rule and embrace His purposes ; that being cleansed, renewed and sanctified, they also may learn to glorify His name and to set forward His kingdom.

2. St. Paul lays stress upon the virtue of practical wisdom, or insight—the quality which enables the Christian to *understand what the will of the Lord is*.⁴ *Thy will be done* is a request for grace to co-operate intelligently with the purpose of God. Religion is a relationship of love between man and God, and the object of prayer is to obtain such a comprehension of God’s ways and methods of action, of His thoughts and

¹ T. Aquin., *Summa*, i. ii^{ae} 106, 1 concl. : ‘ Lex nova principaliter ipsa gratia est Spiritus sancti in corde fidelium scripta ’.

² Cp. Eph. vi. 6 ; 1 Pet. iii. 17 ; 1 Thess. v. 18.

³ *Sserm.* lvi. 8.

⁴ Eph. v. 17.

intents, as may enable man to act, and to organize life, as a whole and in detail, in harmony with God's revealed will. Now it is evident that, according to the divine ideal for humanity, each individual fulfils his true function, and finds his highest happiness, in contributing to the common good of human society. We are *members one of another*, and it is only through the discipline of corporate life that we attain to the measure of perfection of which each is capable. This law of life may be illustrated alike in the example of the Church and of the State. In 1 Corinthians xii. St. Paul applies to the Church the analogy suggested by the bodily organism of man. The welfare of the whole body depends upon the due fulfilment of function by each member. It is noteworthy that the Apostle lays great stress on the fact that this law of the dependence of all on the ministry of each is an ordinance of the divine *will*. It is *the same God Who worketh all things in all ; the one Spirit Who distributes diversities of gifts, dividing to each one severally even as He will*. God, says the Apostle, *hath set the members each one of them in the body even as it pleased Him ; has tempered the body together with a view to its unity, that the members should have the same care one for another.*¹ The same general idea is developed in Romans xii., namely, that the special gift or endowment of each member of the Church is consecrated to the service of the whole body. The keynote of the chapter is the acknowledgment of the *good and acceptable and perfect will of God* as the law of man's social life. This law is fulfilled by each in so far as he estimates aright his significance and place in the body, and diligently uses on behalf of the body his own special gift. We attain to the perfection of our nature by living in accordance with the divine idea of a Church ; by obeying the rule, *Through love be servants one to another.*²

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 6, 7, 11, 18, 24, 25.

² Gal. v. 13.

That which is true of the Church is true also of the State. If indeed we survey human civilization as a whole we are obliged to confess that it represents a vast perversion of the ideal which St. Paul's analogy of the body suggests. It displays on a large scale the triumph of the forces of self-assertion and self-seeking. The idea of a bond of common interest, or mutual dependence, uniting all classes, is lacking ; and individualistic theories of society are tacitly taken for granted which apply to it, not the scriptural analogy of the body, but that of the ‘ cosmic process ’ with its ruthless struggle for existence, its elimination of the weak, its disregard of the individual. But we have been opportunely reminded that ‘ the cosmic process has no sort of relation to moral ends ’ ;¹ rather it has to be combatted by free moral effort on man's part. For the spirit of individualism is in fact the outcome of a naturalistic and unspiritual view of the universe. The social life of humanity is not a mere competitive struggle. The spirit of competition unqualified, or, as we might say, *immoralized*, is the very negation of unity—indeed, can only be a principle of separation and division—and is therefore manifestly contrary to the will of God. *Thy will be done* is a prayer by which we throw ourselves upon the side of the moral and spiritual forces which are at work in the universe, and which find their home in the Church : faith, mercy, brotherly love, self-control, self-sacrifice, charity. These are agencies which tend, if they are allowed free play, to make *the kingdom of the world the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ*.² We pray that the Church may be delivered from the spirit of worldliness, from excessive dependence on material agencies, from blindness of heart, from the waning of love ; and in so praying we ask for that which will build up and make sound the

¹ T. H. Huxley, *Evolution and Ethics* (Romanes Lecture for 1893), p. 34.

² Rev. xi. 15.

fabric of the State. We ask that through the moral and spiritual regeneration of individual men, through the spread of nobler ideals of life and higher standards of action, the sores of modern civilization may be healed.

This, then, is a prayer that each individual may discover and fulfil his true vocation, and may learn to understand its relation to the divine purpose for mankind ; a prayer that we may understand the times in which we live, and ' buy up ' the opportunities which it offers.¹ We may recall the vivid appeal of the martyr Ignatius to his brother-bishop Polycarp : ' The season requireth thee as pilots require winds or as a storm-tossed mariner a haven, that it may attain unto God. Be sober, as God's athlete. . . . Learn by heart the seasons. Await Him that is above every season, the Eternal, the Invisible, Who became visible for our sake.'² We best serve our generation by recognizing the significance and the limits of the task assigned to us, and by finding in the indications of His providence the tokens of His will.

It is not for their own sake merely, but for that of others also, that Christians ought to make their vocation in life a matter of prayer. For ourselves we should certainly ask, *Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do ?*³ prepared to find that we are led onwards step by step without any immediate vision of ' the distant scene,' and confident that in loyally fulfilling the duty of the moment we are in the path which leads, as it led Saul of Tarsus, to that knowledge of God's will which we seek.⁴ Vocation is seldom made immediately clear ; certainty in this matter, as in others, is the reward

¹ Eph. v. 16.

² Ignat., *ad Polyc.*, 2, 3. So Bernard writes to Pope Eugenius III : ' Disce exemplo prophetico praesidere non tam ad imperitandum, quam ad factitandum quod tempus requirit ' (*de consideratione*, ii. 6, 9).

³ Acts ix. 6, A.V. (omitted in R.V.).

⁴ See Acts xxii. 14.

of patience ; it is ‘ the crown of obedience, not the fruit of laxity.’ Nor must a Christian forget that he is bound by the very law of the kingdom, and by the very terms of the Lord’s prayer, to consider the bearing of his decision upon the well-being of others. For *no man liveth to himself* ; and the welfare of human society as a whole depends upon the diligence with which each individual seeks to discover the will of God for himself, and labours faithfully to fulfil it.

3. The petition which we are considering is also a prayer for perseverance. There have been many different interpretations of the phrase ‘ as in heaven, so on earth.’ Cyril of Jerusalem and others naturally find in it a reference to the angelic hosts, to whose service and ministry, indeed, our Lord frequently alludes. They dwell upon the loyalty and promptitude of angels in fulfilling the will of God ; their utter freedom from envy, rivalry or discontent in the discharge of their appointed tasks ; their joy in ministering to the future *heirs of salvation*.¹ Augustine in one place suggests that ‘ heaven ’ means the saints, and ‘ earth ’ ordinary Christians. Others (Tertullian and Cyprian) regard ‘ heaven ’ and ‘ earth ’ as equivalent to spirit and flesh,² and interpret the petition as a prayer that the flesh may in all men be subdued to the spirit, and that the conflict between the higher and the lower natures may cease ; that every thought and impulse may be brought into subjection to the rule of Christ. But perhaps the most probable suggestion is that our Lord, while primarily referring to the example of the angels, also desired to draw the attention of His disciples to the beauty, glory, order and harmony displayed in the visible heavens. There the thought of the Psalmist finds its most perfect illustration,

¹ Heb. i. 14, A.V.

² So Augustine in *serm.* lvi. 8 : ‘ Mens caelum est, caro terra est,’ etc.

*O Lord, Thy word endureth for ever in heaven.
Thy truth also remaineth from one generation to another :
Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth and it abideth.
They continue this day according to Thine ordinance :
For all things serve Thee.*¹

The fixed order of the constellations, the regular return of the seasons, the unfailing ' ordinance ' of the sun and of the moon, these are repeatedly mentioned in the Old Testament as typifying the covenant faithfulness of the God of Israel.² They also illustrate that unbroken obedience to divine law, that unwearied persistence in the fulfilment of an appointed function, which is the condition of well-being for all God's creatures alike. Accordingly, we are justified in thinking that in this petition we pray for *patient continuance in well-doing*³ ; for a fixed habit of obedience which may serve to sustain us and keep us faithful even in times of weariness, depression, torpor and spiritual dryness.

Origen⁴ suggests that ' heaven ' may well signify Christ, and ' earth ' the Church. In the life of Christ we see the will of God done ' as in heaven ' ; for His own words are, *I do always those things that please Him*.⁵ Like the stillness of the far-off heavens is the divine quietness with which He works. All is done opportunely and in due order, without haste, impatience, or undue delay. Our prayer is that we ' may follow the example of His patience,' that in toil and suffering alike we may *continue with Him* and overcome as He overcame.⁶

We have already seen that the sovereign aid to perseverance is to be found in loving thoughts of God. If we look to Him, reverence Him and trust Him as ' our Father,' we

¹ Ps. cxix. 89 foll. (P.B). Cp. Ps. xix. 1 foll. ; cxlviii. 1 foll.

² See Jer. xxxi. 35, 36 ; xxxiii. 20, 25 ; Isa. liv. 9 ; Ps. lxxxix. 37.

³ Rom. ii. 7 (A.V.).

⁴ *de orat.* xxvi. 3.

⁵ John viii. 29.

⁶ Luke xxii. 28 ; Rev. iii. 21.

shall be assured of His unchanging goodwill towards His children, His readiness to help, to give, to bless. The whole experience of life will encourage us to persevere, since it will strengthen our conviction that God is a Father Who calls us to work or to suffer only for our good, lays on us no burden which He does not strengthen us to bear, and carries us steadily onward towards that ‘ perfection ’ which is the goal of our pilgrimage.¹ Overshadowed by His mercies we pray, *Thy will be done* ; upheld by His arm, we may run our race with patience and good hope.

III

It is obvious that the words *Thy will be done* are a compendium or summary of all prayer, infinite in range, all-inclusive in content. The petition stands broad-based on an unbounded faith in the providence and power, the love and wisdom of God, who is *able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think*, whether for the overthrow of evil or for the establishment of His kingdom on earth ; for the conquest of sin or for the sanctifying of His people. An English mystic has defined prayer as ‘ a true lasting will of the soul united and fastened into the will of our Lord by the sweet inward work of the Holy Ghost.’² Prayer is will embracing the divine will ; and since the will of God is the salvation of men, the prayer *Thy will be done* is a sacrifice pleading with power on behalf of all men ; that all may effectually respond to His call, and may, by dedicating themselves to His service, make earth what heaven is, the sphere in which creaturely life, fulfilling the will of God, finds its blessedness and its peace.

¹ Rom. viii. 26 ; Heb. vi. 1 (φέρωμεθα).

² Julian of Norwich.

'Come del suo voler gli angeli tuoi
 Fan sacrificio a te, cantando *Osanna*,
 Così facciamo gli uomini de' suoi.'¹

For this unfathomable petition corresponds to the very substance and reality of religion. *Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father that is in heaven.* It is a prayer bringing the soul into mysterious and sacred affinity with Him Who said, *Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother.*

¹ Dante, *Purgatorio*, cant. xi, 10-12. See Aug. *de civ. Dei*, x. 7, and cp. the lines in *Paradiso*, cant. iii, 79-82, 85.

Anzi è formale ad esto beato esse
 Tenersi dentro alla divina voglia,
 Per ch' una fansi nostre voglie stesse.

E la sua volontate è nostra pace.

CHAPTER VIII

‘GIVE US *THIS DAY* OUR DAILY BREAD’

(ST. MATTHEW)

‘GIVE US *DAY BY DAY* OUR DAILY BREAD’

(ST. LUKE)

‘Christus panis noster, quia vita Christus et vita panis.’—TERTULLIAN.

THE remaining petitions of the Lord’s Prayer, of which this is the first, are unlike those which precede, inasmuch as they have respect only to this present life. They are ‘prayers of our pilgrimage.’ From the thought of God, His Name, His Kingdom and His Will, we turn to our own needs as His children. We need strength to do His will; pardon for past offences; guidance in the way that leads to life; protection and deliverance from the enemies that withstand or assail us. But our most elemental need is sustenance. ‘True it is,’ says Hooker, ‘that the kingdom of God must be the first thing in our purposes and desires. But inasmuch as righteous life presupposeth life; . . . therefore the first impediment, which naturally we endeavour to remove, is penury and want of things without which we cannot live.’¹ The end of life is the service of God. Therefore we pray, *Give us our daily bread*; ‘Deal with us after Thy goodness, *Who givest food to all*

¹ *Eccl. Pol.* i. x. 2. He is perhaps thinking of Aug. *de civ. Dei* xix. 3, 1: ‘Qualiscunque vita sine ulla virtute potest esse; virtus vero sine ulla vita non potest esse.’

flesh: fill our hearts *with joy and gladness* that we also, always *having sufficiency in all good things, may abound unto every good work.*¹

I

The exact interpretation of this clause has been a matter of almost interminable discussion. The epithet translated 'daily' (ἐπιούσιος) is remarkable, not only as being the only adjective used in the Lord's prayer, but also as being unique in itself. It is conjectured by Origen that the word was coined by the Evangelist in order to render in Greek the Aramaic expression used by our Lord Himself. Touching its meaning there have been many suggestions: e.g., 'bread for the day,' 'to-morrow's bread,' 'continual bread' (with a possible allusion to the shew-bread),² 'sufficient bread,' 'our each-day bread,' 'the bread appointed as our portion,' 'the bread pertaining to our essential' or 'eternal' life, 'our supersubstantial' or 'spiritual bread.' The most satisfactory explanation, however, is that given by Bishop Chase in his work on *The Lord's Prayer in the Early Church*. He thinks that the original petition probably ran as follows:—

'To us give our bread of-the-day';

and he suggests that, according as the prayer was used at the morning or at the evening service of the Church, the clause was adapted to suit the hour. Thus, in the *morning*, the phrase would be, 'our bread of the day'; in the *evening*,

¹ From the intercession in the Liturgy of the Coptic Jacobites. See Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, p. 168; and cp. p. 128. The references are to Ps. cxxxvi. 25; Acts xiv. 17; 2 Cor. ix. 8.

² Num. iv. 7 (οἱ ἄρτοι οἱ διαπαντός); 2 Chron. ii. 4.

'our bread for the coming day.'¹ It would appear, then, that St. Matthew gives the common formula used at morning prayer (σήμερον), St. Luke that of the evening (τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν). If it be asked, What is the relation of the petition in its present form to the words used by our Lord Himself? the answer seems to be that the original phrase 'of the day' is *twice* represented: (1) in St. Matthew's 'this day' and St. Luke's 'day by day'; and (2) in the epithet ἐπιούσιος, which early established itself in the *liturgical* use of the prayer. It seems most probable that this word was *not a part of the original clause*, but that it came into use among Greek-speaking Christians at a very early period, and so secured a permanent place in the Greek form of the prayer. As to its meaning, there can be little doubt that it had a temporal, not a mystical sense: in other words, that its meaning is 'needful for the morrow' or 'for the coming day,' rather than 'spiritual' or 'super-substantial.'²

Such seems to be the best account that can be given of the way in which the petition for daily bread reached its present form. In any case it strikes the keynote of man's *dependence* upon God for the supply of every need. Our

¹ In Prov. xxvii. 1 the Heb. word *Yôm*, 'a day' (R.V.) is translated by the LXX., ἡ ἐπιούσα. But early in the verse occurs the expression *Yom mâhâr* = 'day of to-morrow' (αὔριον). Possibly the Gk. ἐπιούσα was coined to represent the Heb. *mâhâr*. Jerome on Matt. vi. 11 says: 'In evangelio quod appellatur secundum Hebraeos, pro *substantiali pane* reperi *mâhâr* quod dicitur *crastinum*; ut sit sensus *Panem nostrum crastinum, id est futurum, da nobis hodie.*' Cp. Matt. vi. 34 as illustrating this sense.

² Dr. C. Taylor, *Sayings of the Jewish Fathers*, pp. 180 foll., observes that the *mystical* sense assigned to the word seems to be characteristic of the African Fathers, who interpret 'daily bread' as meaning the Eucharist; and who probably supposed that a request for temporal sustenance was out of place in a divine form of Prayer.

physical life is a derived, dependent life : upheld, protected, nurtured by the care and forethought of parents, guardians, teachers and friends, who have been to us the ministers of the divine providence. Indeed, the whole order of human society is so constituted as to provide the elemental conditions necessary for the maintenance of life.¹ Our spiritual life, again, is a *derived life*. The sanctity at which Christians aim is a derived, dependent sanctity : a *righteousness of God*—imparted, nourished, approved by God : an *eternal life* which is theirs only in and through the Person of another. *This life is in His Son.*² The spirit of dependence is, in fact, a law of creaturely life ; and we see its archetypal embodiment in the Only-begotten of the Father Himself. *As the living Father sent Me, He says, and I live because of the Father, so he that eateth Me, he also shall live because of Me. As the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself ;*³ and therefore, as St. Basil says, ‘ Toward Him (the Son) all things turn with irresistible desire and ineffable yearning ; looking to the Author and Giver of life, according to that which is written, *The eyes of all wait upon Thee.*’⁴

II

We may notice the following characteristics of this petition :—

(1) Its *unworldliness*. We approach God as One Who knows our necessities before we ask ; to Whom all our secret fears, hopes, anxieties, griefs, lie open. We are encouraged to yield ourselves up without misgiving to the care and guidance of One *Who careth for us.*⁵ ‘ We ought

¹ Arist., *Pol.* i. 2, 8 ; iii. 6, 3, 4, lays this down as an axiom.

² I John v. 11.

³ John vi. 57 ; v. 26.

⁴ *de Spiritu sancto*, v., § 7.

⁵ I Pet. v. 7.

not,' says Cyprian, 'to extend our desires too far.' We need not ask 'to see the distant scene.' We are taught to be content with little, so long as it be sufficient: 'bread for the coming day'; and thus the petition seems to rebuke all inordinate anxiety about the future, all excessive shrinking from poverty or hardship. It falls in with our Lord's teaching in Matthew vi. 34, and with His warning that care is not only a heathenish thing in itself—*After all these things do the Gentiles seek*—but a dangerous foe to character. Christ regards care as an outrage done to God, as a practical denial of His Fatherhood. He implies that 'a man is not really free, strong and invincible until he has put aside all his cares and cast them upon God.'¹ We are reminded, too, of His temptation, and of the Scripture with which He foiled the tempter, *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*—words which in their original context (Deut. viii. 3) embody the lesson which Israel was intended to learn from the discipline of the wilderness, namely, that those who are called to fulfil a spiritual mission to mankind must learn to rely, not on earthly and material resources, but on God alone. Again, we can scarcely fail to note the connexion between the 'daily bread' of this petition and the gift of the *manna*, which was to be gathered, *a day's portion every day*,² and which the Saviour contrasts with *the true bread out of heaven*. We learn to seek from God Himself the supply of every need, whether of body or spirit, but especially to look to Him for the Bread of life without which

¹ A. Harnack, *What is Christianity* [E.T.], p. 86. See the entire passage. Dr. Taylor, *Sayings*, etc., quotes a Rabbinic comment on Exod. xvi. 4: 'Whosoever has what to eat to-day, and says "What shall I eat to-morrow?" lo, such an one is lacking in faith; for it is said, *That I may prove him whether he will walk in My law or not.*' ² Exod. xvi. 4; cp. John vi. 32.

we cannot fulfil His will.¹ Finally, a thought which may appease earthly anxiety is that our Lord seems ever to have taken care during His earthly life that none who followed Him should be in actual want or distress. We recall His divine compassion for the hunger, bodily as well as spiritual, of the multitudes who followed Him ; and of the prophetic promise, often so strangely fulfilled, *They that seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good.*²

(2) Its *simplicity* : mere 'bread,' or 'necessary food.'³ This petition seems to sanction all prayer for temporal blessings of every kind in so far as they are needful to render us efficient in fulfilling the duties to which we are called. It teaches us to consider carefully what is *sufficient* in view of our place and function in society, and to be content with what is really essential. 'They are blessed in worldly respects,' writes Hooker, 'that have wherewith to perform sufficiently what their station and place asketh, though they have no more.'⁴ We ask in effect for all that will sustain health and vigour of mind and body ; but we also learn from this petition the wisdom of becoming more and more independent of superfluities and luxuries, and of looking to God Himself as the true and only source of well-being. *I have learned*, St. Paul tells the Philippians who had contributed to his support, *in whatsoever state I am to be content. . . . In all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want ;*

¹ Cp. Dante's paraphrase, *Purgatorio*, xi. 13.

'Dà oggi a noi la cotidiana manna,
Senza la qual per questo aspro deserto.
A retro va chi più di gir s'affanna.'

² Ps. xxxiv. 10 ; cp. xxxvii. 25, and Isa. xxxiii. 16.

³ The word is perhaps used generally, meaning 'food,' in Mark vii. 27 and elsewhere.

⁴ *Eccl. Pol.* v. 76, 5. Cp. vii. 24, 18. Augustine writes to much the same effect in *ep. cxxx. ad Probam*, xii, and specially refers to 1 Tim. vi. 6.

and the reason of this freedom from bondage to bodily necessities is that he is Christ's and possesses Christ: *I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me.*¹

This petition, then, implies the duty of aiming at simplicity in the scale and standard of living, and of being satisfied with what is necessary for the work of life. How much mental disquiet and dissatisfaction would disappear if all had learned that independence of external circumstances which was the 'secret' of St. Paul's spiritual power. Certainly, in view of our present social conditions, there is great force in the remark of a thoughtful writer on Ethics that it is 'a clear duty on the part of every one who is convinced that the share of good things enjoyed by the few is disproportionate and unjust, to seek to limit his own personal expenditure, wherever he can do so without a less efficient discharge of his own social function.'² Much of our expenditure is apt to be purely conventional, bringing us no adequate return either in usefulness or happiness; and when we consider the terrible inequality that exists in the present distribution of wealth and of leisure, we shall be ashamed to surround ourselves with such superfluous luxuries and comforts as tend to harden our hearts, or deafen our ears, to the cry of the poor.

The petition for daily bread, and no more, suggests also the desirability of being, so far as possible, independent even of those spiritual helps on which we are apt to lean too heavily. We have to learn by experience that no created thing can permanently satisfy a nature that is created for friendship and converse with God Himself. To be wholly or in part deprived by circumstances of external aids and accessories to devotion is a blessing if it throws

¹ Phil. iv. 11-13. Cp. Cyp. *de orat. Dom.*, xxi. 15: 'Cum Dei sint omnia, habenti Deum nihil deerit, si Deo ipse non desit.'

² Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, vol. i., p. 272.

the soul more completely on God ; if it teaches it to realize everywhere His nearness, and to find in every spot of earth a sanctuary of His presence. This is a point that some people, who are perhaps unduly dependent on external aids to devotion, need honestly to consider. For experience teaches us that the multiplication of such aids sometimes chokes the spirit of prayer ; that form and system in devotion need to be carefully guarded lest they gradually make worship itself barren or mechanical, lest they overcloud the joy and spontaneity of what should be a filial service. True simplicity is the habit of mind which strives to use profitably all outward things that minister to devotion, but withal learns to pass through them upwards and onwards to God, using them as

‘ blessed means to holiest ends,
Not masters but benignant friends.’¹

Simplicity is the spirit which prizes and reverences the wholesome ordinances of the Church, but does not unduly exalt them ; which finds in God Himself the satisfaction of every spiritual need, and in the accomplishment of His will, its sole object of desire.

(3) Its *unselfishness*. We ask for ‘ *our* daily bread,’ thus including in our prayer all who have to struggle for the necessaries of life, all who have to work hard for a livelihood, all who are exhausted or overpressed by bodily toil, all who are destitute and in bitter poverty. The spirit of the petition is that of a prayer contained in an ancient liturgy, ‘ Bless the crown of the year with Thy goodness for the sake of the poor of Thy people, for the sake of the widow and the orphan and the stranger and the sojourner, and for the sake of all who hope in Thee and supplicate Thy

¹ Whittier, *The Meeting*.

holy Name ; for the eyes of all wait upon Thee, O Lord.’¹ Nor can we rightly overlook the spiritual needs of the teeming multitudes in our great towns, or of those in our colonies who are far removed, not only from the means of grace, but from the wholesome pressure and support of civilized society. Again, we should remember those who are engaged in missionary work among the heathen, and who are exposed to the subtle perils of spiritual isolation, of moral degeneration, of paralysing despondency. ‘Here is the real trial of missionary life,’ writes one who has laboured long and faithfully in Africa, ‘that we are so few, so weak, so faulty, so busy, so worn-out ; that we can do so little ; that we must stand face to face with a starving multitude, and can give so little to so few. God help us and them !’² Often, indeed, from sheer lack of imagination, we fail to realize the needs of workers in the foreign mission-field : the trials of climate, the daily discomforts and hardships of travel, the moral perils of work in isolated places, the crushing apathy of the heathen—their depravity and cruelty, their pride and hardness of heart. ‘From what I suffer in this city,’ wrote Henry Martyn from Shiraz (Feb. 1812), ‘I can understand the feelings of Lot. . . . Such a painful year I never passed, owing to the privations I have been called to on the one hand, and the spectacle before me of human depravity on the other. But I hope I have not come to this seat of Satan in vain.’ We ask, then, when we pray for ‘our daily bread,’ that all the far-reaching needs of toilers in God’s vineyard, whether at home or abroad, may be supplied ; that they may be supported, protected, guided ; that they may be blessed with health and vigour for their work ; that they may withstand the temptations

¹ From the Lit. of the Coptic Jacobites in Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, p. 167.

² Bishop Alan Gibson.

that beset them ; that they may be successful in labour, *fervent in spirit, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation*, persevering in prayer. We ask for them, as for ourselves, the daily bread of divine grace and help ; confiding in God's power to *fulfil every need, according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus*.¹

The petition is unselfish ; it therefore excludes all unlawful means of obtaining daily bread. 'Do Thou give me my bread' is Gregory of Nyssa's paraphrase ; 'that is, may I obtain my sustenance as the fruit of lawful toil.'² The bread for which we ask is the reward of honest work ; not *the bread of deceit* acquired by gambling, by fraudulent work, or commercial trickery ; not *the bread of idleness*, provided by the unrequited and unregarded labour of other men ; not *the bread of wickedness*,³ earned by shameful courses, by the ruin of other lives, or by ministering to the vices and follies of a corrupt Society ; but bread of God's providing—proportioned to our need, dependent on our own efforts, and sufficient to enable us for the fulfilment of our vocation. Indeed, we may regard the petition in its widest aspect as a prayer for deliverance from the characteristic sins of an industrial people : a prayer for honesty in trade and business, for right relations between capital and labour, and for the due recognition on all sides of the great principles of social justice, social service and social responsibility.⁴ Our request for daily bread is emptied of meaning if we needlessly accumulate luxuries, if we heap up riches for ourselves, if, in a word, we ignore the claim of God on our devotion, or that of human society on our labour and service.

¹ Rom. xii. 11, 12 ; Phil. iv. 19.

² *de orat.* iii. 748 D.

³ See Prov. xx. 17 ; xxxi. 27 ; iv. 17.

⁴ See *The Social Teaching of the Lord's Prayer*, by the late Bp. C. W. Stubbs (of Truro), esp. Serm. III.

(4) Its *spirituality*. There can be little doubt that the primary reference of the words 'daily bread,' as used by our Lord, was to bodily needs. But He Himself taught us that *a man's life consisteth not in the multitude of the things which he possesseth*, and He revealed Himself to man as *the Bread of God which cometh down out of heaven*.¹ Naturally, therefore, from the earliest times Christian writers have seen in this petition a reference to the sacred food of the Eucharist: the meat which *abideth unto eternal life*; which *giveth life unto the world*. 'Christ is our Bread,' says Tertullian, 'because Christ is life, and bread is life.'² Cyprian clearly regards the petition as implying the practice of daily communion, through which the believer realizes his vital union with Christ's Body, the Church. Cyril of Jerusalem says: 'This bread goeth not into the belly, but is distributed throughout your whole being for the benefit both of body and soul'; he adds that 'this day' implies reception of the sacred food, 'every day.' Jerome, again, in revising the Old Latin version of Matthew vi., substituted the word *supersubstantialem* for *quotidianum*—meaning, probably, 'spiritual bread,' that which transcends all material and created substances.³ Once more, Calvin, while rejecting the Latin rendering *supersubstantialem* as 'absurd,' points out that since Almighty God deigns to provide for the nourishment of our bodies, it is manifest that He is much more concerned for the life of our souls.

It seems clear, then, that the common instinct of Chris-

¹ Luke xii. 15; John vi. 33. See also vi. 27.

² Tert. *de orat.* vi.; cp. Cyp. *de or. Dom.* xviii; Origen, *de orat.*, xxvii. 9; Cyr. Hieros., *cat. myst.* v. 15; Pet. Chrys., i.-iv.

³ Jerome regards *επιούσιος* as equivalent to *περιούσιος*, which he translates *praecipuus* or *egregius*. He adds: 'Quando ergo petimus ut *peculiarem* vel *praecipuum* nobis Deus tribuat panem, Illum petimus qui dicit Ego sum panis vivus qui de caelo descendi.'

tians has interpreted the 'daily bread' of this petition as at least including the divine food of the Eucharist. A curious exception is the paraphrase contained in the Lutheran Catechism. 'Daily bread' is there explained to mean 'everything necessary to the support and comfort of existence; as food and raiment, house and land, money and goods: a kind spouse, good children, faithful servants, righteous magistrates, good weather, peace, health, honour, true friends, good neighbours, and the like'—certainly a very 'unspiritual catalogue of the conveniences of life.'¹ But the explanation of 'daily bread' in the English catechism, 'All things needful both for our souls and bodies,' agrees with that of most commentators. To give two instances: 'We ask such bread as is apt and meet for our sustenance; that is, not only earthly, but heavenly bread, because we consist not only of a terrestrial but also of a celestial substance: so, then, our desire is, that God would give us not only *panem jumentorum* but *panem angelorum*; and our suit is, as well for *panis caeli*, as for earthly bread.'² Bishop Nicholson († 1671) explains daily bread as signifying 'Christ and His benefits, represented, sealed and exhibited to us in the Sacrament. This,' he adds, 'we are to desire, this to entreat God to give.'

It is, then, *the Bread of Life* for which, above all other gifts, we ask in this petition; nor can we wonder that the very words 'daily bread' were regarded by some Christian writers as giving sanction and encouragement to the habit of communicating daily.³ This point cannot suitably

¹ Luther's paraphrase is quoted with this comment by Bp. Knox, *Pastors and Teachers*, p. 86.

² Sermons on Prayer attributed to Bp. Andrewes and included in his works, *Serm.* xiii. See also Bp. W. Nicholson, *Exposition of the Catechism* [Oxford, 1849].

³ The daily Eucharist was not a primitive custom. 'While the custom of daily Eucharists was neither universal, nor perhaps

be discussed here. The form of the petition rather invites us to dwell on the fact that the gift received in the Eucharist is bestowed by a Father's hand ; is the token of His love and the pledge of His willingness to sustain with the heavenly food those whom He makes *partakers of a heavenly calling*.¹

The words *Give us this day our daily bread*, regarded thus as referring to the Eucharist, suggest that the most simple thoughts about that divine and life-giving mystery are the deepest and truest. The Eucharist is infinitely precious because it is the Father's gift. *My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven*. In all ages the worship of the Church in the Eucharistic service has been directed to the Father Who gave His Son to be *the Saviour of the world*.² None of His gifts is superfluous ; none can be neglected without infinite loss. Each, and this above all, is bestowed in order to lead us onwards in that life of filial intimacy with God which finds its perfect utterance in the Lord's Prayer ; and we may be sure that we do not use this petition in the fullness of its meaning if we either neglect to receive simply that which the Father simply gives, or if we fail to bear in mind the spiritual needs of others. For as the Eucharistic Feast is the outward sign and vehicle of a heavenly gift, so it is the means whereby we enter into fellowship one with another ; it is the symbol of unity the sacrament of fraternity,³ as well as the food of immortality. Both these aspects of the Eucharist are nobly expressed in the liturgy of Sarapion : 'Be reconciled to all of us and be merciful, O God of truth ; and as this bread

earlier than the third century—it arose partly out of Christian devotion, partly out of the allegorical interpretation of the "daily bread,"—the weekly Eucharist was both primitive and universal.'—Turner, in *Camb. Medieval History*, vol. i., ch. 6, p. 158. See also Freeman, *Principles of Divine Service*, vol. i. 186-193.

¹ Heb. iii. 1.

² John vi. 32 ; iv. 42.

³ 1 Cor. x. 16.

had been scattered on the top of the mountains and gathered together came to be one, so also gather together Thy holy Church out of every nation, and every country, and every city and village and house, and make one living catholic Church.' ¹

But it is not only in the sacrament of love that the life-giving presence of Christ is imparted to man as the food of the soul. The Word of God contained in Holy Scripture, and daily recited or expounded in the church, is our daily bread. From the very earliest times, as may be gathered from Justin Martyr's description of the Eucharistic Service in his first *Apology*, the reading of Scripture has been a constant and invariable feature of Christian worship. We feed on Christ both in the reception of the Eucharist and in the hearing or reading of the word.² In Scripture He Who is *the Wisdom of God* visits, illuminates and nourishes the soul. 'Our daily food here below is the Word of God which is always imparted in the churches.' 'The lessons which you daily hear in church are daily bread'—so Augustine repeatedly assures his catechumens.³ There is, indeed, nothing which tends more powerfully to keep alive in our hearts the love of God than devout meditation on His word. For in Scripture Christ is present, manifesting Himself to each soul according to its capacity; guiding and enlightening, purifying and healing it, according to its need.⁴

¹ *Bishop Sarapion's Prayer Book*, translated and edited by Bp. Wordsworth, p. 62 [S.P.C.K., 1899]. The earlier form in the *Didaché*, ix., is closely similar.

² See Freeman, *Principles of Divine Service*, vol. i., pp. 348-350; Bp. Gore, *The Body of Christ*, p. 291.

³ Aug., *serm. in Matt. vi., de orat. Dom.* lvi., 10; cp. lvii. 7, lviii. 5, lix. 6.

⁴ Henri Perrève, *Méditations sur les ss. ordres*, p. 27: 'Votre Écriture sainte est une autre Eucharistie; vous êtes vivant, présent dans les pages sacrées, dans chacune des paroles de vos Écritures, comme au Tabernacle.'

III

Christus Panis noster—this is, in fact, the sum of what is asked in the prayer *Give us our daily bread*. The end of all spiritual discipline, the object of all sacred ordinances, the crowning element in the spirit of prayer is dependence upon God Himself as the Source of all good and the response to every desire of the human heart. The petition is the only one that asks for a definite gift—*Give us*. But we know that there is only one gift that can satisfy the yearnings of a being made in the image of God ; hence we can but echo the prayer of saints :—

'Non quaero datum Tuum, sed Te.'

'In Te habeamus omnia quem elegimus super omnia.'¹

In some sense 'poverty' is a state enjoined upon all Christian people ;² poverty, at least, in the sense of dependence for happiness and well-being on no created thing. So Augustine observes that in this petition 'you acknowledge yourself to be God's beggar (*mendicum Dei*) ; but be not ashamed ; however large be a man's earthly riches, he is nevertheless *mendicus Dei*.'³ The New Testament not only dwells repeatedly on the thought of God's infinite power, as One Who is *able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think*. It suggests also for our consolation the truth that He is infinitely rich. It speaks of the 'riches' of His grace and of His glory, *the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, the unsearchable riches of Christ*. He is able freely to bestow whatever the spirit

¹ *De imit. Christi*, iv. 8, 1 ; and part of a prayer (adapted) from the 'Leonine Sacramentary,' in Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, p. 425.

² Erasmus, *Enchiridion mil. Christ.*, 47 C : 'Tu credebas solis monachis interdictam esse proprietatem, indictam paupertatem. Errasti ; utrumque ad omnes Christianos pertinet.' See the Note at the end of the chapter.

³ Aug., *serm. in Matt. vi.*, lvi. 9.

of man needs for its sustenance and healing: *all things that pertain unto life and godliness.*¹

These are truths of faith and of spiritual experience by which we are encouraged to follow our Lord Himself in that life of royal independence which belongs to the soul which is wholly devoted to the Father, looks to Him for the supply of every need, yields itself up to be guided by His Spirit, nourished by His word, upheld by His power, gladdened by the perpetual light of His countenance. All that happens to a believing Christian—joy or sorrow, adversity or prosperity, success or failure—has this as its end and purpose—that he may find in God alone *the strength of his heart and his portion for ever.*²

‘Ecce Deus meus et omnia. Quid volo amplius et quid felicius desiderare possum? Deus meus et omnia.’³

It is with this faith in God as the all-sufficient Source of grace, as the Giver of all that is needed for a worthy human life, that the Christian Church confronts the practical materialism which tends to be the sole creed of the modern world. Materialism is the habit of mind which, for the regeneration of humanity, for the solution of moral and social problems, looks to external agencies: to a more scientific hygiene, to a more equitable distribution of wealth, to a heightened standard of bodily comfort; in a word, to a drastic change in man’s physical environment. A believer in God, as He has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ, has learned that, apart from the action of divine grace and the regeneration of human nature *from above*, all improvement of the material conditions of life is vain. The petition *Give us this day our daily bread* is a prayer that the Father of all will not forsake the nature that He has created for Himself, nor leave it destitute of His grace and

¹ Rom. ii. 4; Eph. i. 7, 18; iii. 8; 2 Pet. i. 3.

² Ps. lxxiii. 26.

³ *De imit. Christi*, iii. 34.

help ; that by His own heavenly gift He will enable it to respond to the purpose of His love ; so manifesting Himself as the giver of that meat in the strength of which His children may attain to the Mount of God—to the kingdom prepared for them *from the foundation of the world.*¹

NOTE.

The following comment on this clause of the Lord's Prayer is of exceptional interest. The author, Swami Ram Tirath, was originally a Brahman, of Lahore ; he was educated at the Forman Christian College and had a very distinguished University career. ' His heart, however, was wholly given to religion, and he left college work to become a wandering monk and preacher. He went into the wildest regions of the Himalayas, where he lived alone with Nature.' ²

' In the Lord's Prayer we say, " Give us this day our daily bread " ; and in another place we say, " Man shall not live by bread alone." Reconsider these statements : understand them thoroughly. The meaning of the Lord's Prayer is not that you should be craving, wishing—not at all. The meaning of that Prayer is such, that even a king, an emperor, who is in no danger of not having his daily bread, may offer it. If so, evidently " Give us this day our daily bread " does not mean that we should put ourselves in a begging mood, that we should ask for material prosperity : not that. The Prayer means that everybody, let him be a prince, a king, a monk, is to look upon all these things around him, all the wealth and plenty, as not his, but God's ; " not mine, not mine." That does not mean begging, but renouncing, giving up ; renouncing everything unto God. The king, while he is offering that Prayer, puts himself into that mood where all the jewels of his treasury, all the riches in his house, the house itself—all these he renounces, he gives them up, he disclaims them. He is, in offering this prayer, the monk of monks. He says, " This is God's ; this table, everything on this table is His, not mine. I do not possess anything. Anything that comes to me comes from my Beloved One." '

¹ 1 Kings xix. 8 ; Matt. xxv. 34.

² C. F. Andrews, *Renaissance in India*, p. 132. I owe the knowledge of this passage to Father Congreve, S.S.J.E., and am grateful to him for communicating it to me.

CHAPTER IX

‘AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE ALSO HAVE FORGIVEN OUR DEBTORS’ (ST. MATTHEW)

‘AND FORGIVE US OUR SINS : FOR WE OURSELVES ALSO FORGIVE EVERY ONE THAT IS INDEBTED TO US’ (ST. LUKE)

‘De remissione peccatorum sufficere debet sola credulitas. Quis enim causas aut rationem requirat, ubi indulgentia Principis est?’—RUFINUS.

‘Non nisi peccatis homines separantur a Deo, quorum in hac vita non fit nostra virtute, sed divina miseratione purgatio; per indulgentiam Illius, non per nostram potentiam.’—AUGUSTINE.

I

THERE is some doubt touching the original form of this petition. The Old Syriac version has for the present tense a future, ‘we shall forgive.’ The petition would thus be a prayer for forgiveness followed by a *promise* on the suppliant’s part. Bishop Chase points out that this finds support in the parable of the unmerciful servant (Matt. xviii. 23 foll.), *Lord, have patience with me and I will pay thee all.* Tertullian also says, ‘We declare in our prayer that we will forgive our debtors (*debitoribus dimissuros*)’¹; and it would seem that in Matthew vi. 14 (cp. Luke vi. 37), our Lord speaks of divine forgiveness as a blessing which in the first instance is provisional, and which needs to be continued and consummated: *If ye forgive*

¹ Tert., *de pudicitia*, ii.

*men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.*¹

Again, it seems probable that the word ‘sins’ (Luke) is a paraphrase of the original Aramaic expression ‘debts,’ which might easily be misunderstood by Gentile readers.² The view of sin which the Prayer suggests is that it consists in failure to discharge obligations which a man owes, or rather perhaps, failure to fulfil the relationship in which he stands, to others. Origen refers in illustration to St. Paul’s precept, *Render to all their dues. Owe no man anything, save to love one another.*³ We are debtors unto all men; to our own personality in its entirety; above all to Him Who made us and Whose we are. ‘It is not possible,’ Origen says, ‘so long as one lives not to be at every hour of day or night a debtor.’ Sin consists not so much in a positive breach of some particular divine commandment as in the omission of duty; in lack of love; in slackness of will; in failure to respond to the just claim of God, of our own nature, and of our fellow-men.

In the Lord’s Prayer the thought of *spiritual*, follows that of *bodily*, need.⁴ We might, indeed, as Calvin points out, have supposed that the petition for forgiveness was the first thing needful since we cannot expect to receive

¹ Bp. Chase suggests that possibly the Old Latin Version had the future, *dimitemus*. In any case the general sense is clear. We ask for forgiveness as those who either have forgiven or intend to forgive others. The principle implied is one which commends itself to man’s natural sense of justice. See Ecclus. xxviii. 1-6. On the idea of forgiveness as something conditional, ‘inchoate, provisional, educational’ and liable to be forfeited or reversed, see Dr. Moberly, *Atonement and Personality*, ch. iii, pp. 61 foll. He goes so far as to say, ‘As there is, upon earth, no consummated penitence, so neither is there any forgiveness consummated.’

² Cp. Plummer on *Luke xi. 4* (Internat. Crit. Comm, p. 297).

³ Orig., *de orat.* xxviii. 1 foll. See Rom. xiii. 17.

⁴ Cyp., *de or. Dom.* xxii: ‘Post subsidium cibi petitur et venia delicti, ut qui a Deo pascitur, in Deo vivat.’

gifts and blessings from one to whom we are not already reconciled. But the context seems to suggest that the sins for which we ask pardon are not wilful, presumptuous and heinous offences, but those daily faults of infirmity which are inevitable in this life: wanderings of desire, sins of thought and imagination, sins of the eye, the ear or the tongue, from which the soul needs to be daily cleansed by penitential prayer.¹ The Lord's Prayer is the prayer of children, abiding in their Father's love, and dreading even the lightest shadow that may obscure the sense of His presence and favour. This petition is, in fact, an acknowledgment of human frailty: an expression of self-distrust, of compunction, of sacred fear.

II

This petition teaches us how constant is our need of forgiveness. It rebukes all self-complacency; all that shallow optimism which, in minimizing the fact of sin, tends to reject the very idea that human nature needs redemption. The broad contrast between the traditional creed of Christendom and certain tendencies of modern thought is perhaps most evident in relation to the problem of sin. The analogies drawn from human law and government have given way to those suggested by the study of biology. There is an 'evolutionist' view of sin, which regards it even as a necessary condition of man's moral and intellectual progress. For sin implies the consciousness

¹ So Augustine repeatedly insists: e.g., *Enchir.* 71: 'De quotidianis autem brevibus, levibusque peccatis, sine quibus haec vita non ducitur, quotidiana fidelium oratio satis facit. . . . Delet omnino haec oratio minima et quotidiana peccata'; *serm. in Matt. vi.*, lvi. 11: 'Vivendo contrahimus quod quotidie dimittatur'; and in 12 he speaks of the 'quotidiana mundatio sanctae orationis'; *serm. ad catechumenos*, 15 (referring to this clause of the Lord's prayer), 'Semel abluimur baptisate, quotidie abluimur oratione.'

of law, which marks (we are told) a higher stage in moral development than that of mere innocence. According to this view sin is only the survival of animal instincts and anti-social tendencies. What was at first non-moral becomes, in virtue of its survival, immoral. What is called 'sin' is generally the fruit of pardonable ignorance, or of a self-regard which is rather short-sighted, or mistaken, than culpable. With this optimistic estimate of sin is associated an anthropomorphic idea of God as indulgent to the ignorance and error of man, rather than hostile to his sinfulness. The Christian idea of *the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men*¹ is set aside as a relic of barbarism. 'God is Father rather than Judge; and the parable of the Prodigal Son gives a truer and more Christian view of His attitude to the human sinner than all the imposing imagery of the Great Assize.'²

This position is open to much criticism.³ For one thing, it seems to judge of sin almost exclusively by its social effects. If sin means merely selfishness, it is a fair conclusion that 'there is no sin except offences against the altruistic principle,' 'Sin against God is sin against the common life,' etc. Further, this view of sin fails utterly to do justice to the spiritual experience of man—to the fact of remorse, the feeling of guilt, the presages of retribution, the agonizing sense of an inner contradiction in human nature. But it will be more in accord with our present purpose to omit any detailed discussion of what may be called the 'modernistic' view of sin. Let it suffice to say that its mistake lies in its

¹ Rom. i. 18.

² Mr. W. H. Moberly thus describes the point of view of 'liberal' thought, before passing upon it some thoughtful criticisms, *Foundations*, p. 278. See in illustration, *The Practice of Christianity*, pp. 92 foll.

³ See esp. Bp. Gore, *The New Theology and the Old Religion*, lect. iv., 'The Idea of Sin.'

one-sidedness. It overlooks the facts of life which support and justify the Scriptural view of sin as a movement of lawlessness or rebellion on the part of man's will—a movement not merely appealing to the pity, but provoking the righteous displeasure of Almighty God.

We find in fact that two different conceptions of God's relationship to man are equally prominent in Scripture, and they seem to be plainly implied in the Lord's Prayer itself: one, in the very language which describes sin under the metaphor of 'a debt,' the other, in the title, 'Father,' by which Christ teaches us to address God. On the one hand, God is the Judge and Moral Ruler of the universe; or rather He is the living embodiment and representative of that law of righteousness which annexes to sin the suffering of penalty.¹ Thus 'Redemption' necessarily implies a twofold deliverance, (1) from the displeasure of a Holy Being Whose holiness and love manifest themselves as 'wrath' in the retribution that overtakes sin; (2) from the sinful habit or character which is the abiding consequence of wrong-doing. On the other hand, God is revealed in Christ as a Father of infinite wisdom and compassion, to Whom we owe not only fear and obedience, but filial love and submission. We are indeed children of God, but the petition 'Forgive us our debts' serves to remind us that, as rational creatures we stand in a conscious relation to law; though we are the objects of an unfathomable *mercy* we are also amenable to an exact and unerring *judg-*

¹ It has been justly pointed out that the truth of the 'juristic' view of man's relation to God lies in the fact that 'Law deals with the relations of persons; while Biology blurs what Coleridge calls "The sacred distinction between things and persons." Moral evil . . . belongs to "will" rather than to "nature" . . . and physical metaphors, such as "disease" and "medicine," "the infection of sin" and "the infusion of grace" are largely misleading.' See *Foundations*, p. 281.

ment. God is *Father*—the object of our trust and affection, but also *Holy Father*, moral union with Whom is necessarily a union of *will*. The sinner, as such, cannot be acceptable to a Being of perfect goodness and love; he must submit himself to that law which is the very expression of God’s character, the law that sin shall suffer. Only as penitent can he find acceptance. His will must be changed and renewed; and because this is a work beyond man’s own power, he is taught to pray *Forgive us our debts, Forgive us our sins*.

III

The absence of the sense of sin, which is often said to be a common feature of present-day life is probably due to many causes, some of which are not perhaps wholly regrettable.¹ But the fact that the modern man ‘is not worrying about his sins at all, still less about their punishment,’ if true, is serious in so far as it implies a misconception of the nature and scope of Christ’s religion. For Christianity is meaningless except as a message of salvation. It appeals to the sense of spiritual need, of moral impotence; it makes repentance and conversion the very foundation of character; its promise of the kingdom is addressed to the *poor in spirit*; it aims at something infinitely beyond that ‘mediocrity of virtue’ in which we too easily acquiesce.² It promises the transfiguration of

¹ On this point see G. A. Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, ch. xii., ‘The Consciousness of Sin’—a very suggestive passage. Prof. Coe thinks that a characteristic feature of our time is not the blunting, but the quickening of conscience; not the *decay* of morality but a revival of the sense of personal and corporate responsibility.

² W. E. Channing, in a discourse on ‘The Christian Ministry,’ energetically denies ‘that Christianity has spent all its energies in producing the mediocrity of virtue which characterizes Christendom.’

human life ; it looks for results which the Gospel describes as *great things, strange things, glorious things*. But these 'great things' are the divine response to great desire and a deep sense of spiritual need. Further, the transforming and ennobling power of Christian faith has ever been most signally manifested in those who have most keenly realized their imperfection, their moral helplessness, their failures in love. It is in proportion to the intensity of their consciousness of sin that men gain a hold on the true meaning and scope of Christianity ; that they realize its power as the Religion that releases the soul from the grasp of evil, from the bondage of nature, above all, from that temper of self-satisfaction which is the one fatal obstacle to spiritual advance.

Now the mere use of the Lord's Prayer, if we enter at all into its spirit, is an aid towards gaining that sense of need and unworthiness which alone makes religion a power in the personal life.

But other aids may be mentioned.

(1) The experience of life plays a great part in teaching men the malignity and the ruinous issues of sin. It is no doubt sheer lack of experience that prevents the young from having, as a rule, any deep-seated sense of personal sinfulness. It is only as they grow riper in age and knowledge that the meaning of sin comes forcibly home to them. They see for themselves instances of the havoc it produces in family and social life ; the defeat or failure of good causes through pitiable poverty of character or fatal lack of self-control. They become bitterly conscious of an ignorance or spiritual blindness, in themselves or in others, which they know to be the fruit of some early unfaithfulness to duty ; a difficulty in doing right which is the result of former perversity or self-indulgence ; an inability to endure strain, or to work with others, caused by habitual evasion

in the past of salutary discipline. Such probably, in some measure at least, has been the experience of us all; and it has taught us that sin is no light or transient evil, no mere ‘moral mistake,’ pardonable error in judgment, or trivial ‘relic of our brute ancestry’; but a debt requiring remission, an offence needing pardon, an outrage done to a law of righteousness that necessarily exacts penalty and satisfaction.

Or we watch the outcome of personal sinfulness in national life; we see plainly how social disorders are ultimately traceable to the greed or selfishness or callousness, either of individual men, or of the classes to which they belong. Our own observation confirms the teaching of Scripture. We see how diseased and unstable the fabric of human civilization becomes apart from the recognition of the claim and will of God. *The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it.*¹ We learn to measure the real significance of sin by studying its effects on a large scale, and by realizing in the school of experience the vanity of all merely human efforts and hopes. It is actual observation of the facts of life that brings home to us the true meaning of that which the Lamb of God alone can take away, *the sin of the world*: that ‘false nature,’ that perversion of a divinely appointed order, that idolatry of self, which lie at the root of human degradation and wretchedness.²

(2) But the Lord’s Prayer itself suggests that the sense

¹ Isa. i. 5, 6.

² G. A. Coe, *op. cit.*, p. 395: ‘The awfulness of sin is revealed, not by any abstract juridical notions, but by actual observation of life. The use of talents, the spending of our means, the hunger and nakedness about us, the sick and the prisoners, the little children—turn upon these and our relations to them the strong light of the Kingdom of God, and no man’s conscience can escape conviction.’

of sin is most effectually roused by recollection of the relationship in which we stand to God. Such is the lesson taught by the parable of the lost son (Luke xv.). God is *our Father*, and we are His *beloved children*.¹ He pities us in our solitariness, our ignorance, our frailty. He is on our side in the conflict with evil. His heart is grieved by our ingratitude, our forgetfulness of Him, our blindness to our true happiness. When we seek in His creatures what He alone can bestow, He yearns for our return into the paths of peace. To Him are known all the perils and difficulties of our course; He bestows the presence and the grace of His Spirit to guide and strengthen us. He rejoices in our victories; He Himself vouchsafes to be our *exceeding great reward*. It is the thought of His watchful providence, His unchanging good-will towards man, that awakens the spirit of filial contrition. *The goodness of God* rather than His severity leads men to repentance.² Thus in emphasizing the *personal* character of our relation to God, the Gospel teaches us to judge of sin aright as a lack of response to a Father's purpose, as despite done to a Father's love.

At this point, another thought suggests itself. Sin, we say, is despite done to God's love, and where is that love manifested if not in the travail, the sufferings, the victory over evil of *the Son of His love*? There is no hint given in the Lord's Prayer, nor in the parable of the Prodigal, of the mystery of mediation and atonement. But we cannot isolate either passage from the general tenour of Christ's teaching. The familiar words of St. Paul certainly contain the very sum and substance of the Gospel message: Jesus Christ is *the Beloved, in Whom we have our redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of our trespasses*.³ Nor can

¹ Eph. v. 1.

² Rom. ii. 4.

³ Eph. i. 7. See Dale, *The Atonement*, lect. 3, 'The Testimony of Our Lord.' On the relation in which our Lord stood to the sins

we forget that our Lord taught His Prayer to disciples steeped in the habits of thought suggested by an elaborate and symbolic system of atonement for sin and transgression. He did not explicitly set aside the Jewish ordinances, He brought into prominence those spiritual truths which the sacrificial worship was designed to suggest: the truth that sin could only be expiated by the shedding of blood, that the remission of guilt required the sacrifice of a sinless life, that man's condition is one of perpetual indebtedness to God: in other words that moral obligation is virtually infinite, that forgiveness is a free movement of love on God's part but a movement *conditional* on faith, penitence, and willingness to deal with others as we would have God deal with us. It is in the light of these truths that we utter the prayer *Forgive us our trespasses*. In the single word 'Father,' it is implied that whatever needed to be done for the vindication of the law of righteousness, and for the absolution of the sinner, has been accomplished. Moreover, it was in the culminating moment of His self-oblation that the Son of God uttered that prevailing prayer for the forgiveness of the sins of men, through which alone our petition for pardon can find acceptance.¹

(3) Once more, if we would see sin in its true light and judge it in union with the mind of God, we must seek the aid of the Spirit Whose office it is to *convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement*.² It is His work to reveal us to ourselves, to show us the real character and issues of our action, to enable us to judge ourselves *according to truth*. The unfathomed depths of human personality lie open to Him, and while He stimulates and enlightens conscience He alone can allay the fears and

of men, see *The Rule of Faith and Hope* (Lib. of Hist. Theol.), pp. 39, 40.

¹ Luke xxiii. 34: 'Father, forgive them.'

² John xvi. 8.

misgivings which spring from a real self-knowledge.¹ Love and peace are the fruit of His indwelling: love, with its quickened sense of what is due to God; peace, rejoicing in the sense of His fellowship. In dependence on the Spirit of truth, the soul is enabled to see itself as it is in God's sight; to realize what it might have been and what it may yet become, through the power of His grace.

Again, the sense of sin may be deepened by using the teaching of the Spirit in Scripture as a standard of measurement. Our Lord in the Beatitudes, St. Paul in his 'Psalm of charity' (1 Cor. xiii.) or in his description of 'the fruit of the Spirit' (Gal. v.), St. Peter in his sketch of the development of the Christlike character (2 Pet. i.), St. James in the picture of *the wisdom that is from above* (James iii.),—exhibit to us a positive ideal of holiness. When we compare our lives with this ideal, we seem to learn, first, that sin consists not so much in wrong action, as in the misdirection of will and desire; secondly, that the standard to be aimed at is progressive and transcendent; that in this life at least we can but approximate to holiness; that, consequently, even at the best, we are but *unprofitable servants*; that our 'debt' to God cannot be discharged, and can only be freely remitted.

IV

The petition which we are considering implies that an essential element in the Christian character is an habitual and continuous penitence. Daily and hourly we have need to confess our shortcomings and to seek forgiveness. However carefully we conquer habits of sin, however free we may be from wrong propensities, there yet remains even in the regenerate the frailty of a disordered nature. *In many things we offend all. The flesh lusteth against the*

¹ 1 John iii. 20.

spirit,¹ and passionate desire even when kept in control 'hath of itself the nature of sin.' Moreover, our negligences and ignorances need forgiveness. Even ignorance is guilty when, as is so often the case, it is the fruit and penalty of past transgression. Even actions which have seemed praiseworthy have been tainted by self-consciousness, self-complacency, the desire of human esteem. Even our repentances are marred by imperfection and need to be repented of. Even the Christian who is far advanced in spiritual experience feels himself compelled, like Ignatius, to cry, 'Now do I begin to be a disciple!' ²

Another reflection suggested by the form of the petition 'Forgive *us*' is the call of God to what may be called *corporate* penitence.³ In the sacrificial system of the Jewish Church, provision was made for a solemn act of common and public repentance on the day of Atonement. A special sacrifice was solemnly offered in propitiation for the sins of the whole nation. The high priest was directed to *make an atonement for the holy place because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel and because of their transgressions in all their sins*. He was to lay upon the head of the scapegoat *all the iniquities of the children of Israel*, and thus to renew, as it were, that covenant relationship between Jehovah and the people which sin had interrupted.⁴ So in all ages of history, there have been those who have mourned for

¹ James iii. 2 ; Gal. v. 17. Cp. Article IX.

² Ignat., *ad Rom.* 5. Cp. *ad Eph.* 1, 3 ; *ad Trall.* 5 ; *ad Magn.* 12 : 'The righteous man is a self-accuser.'

³ Cp. Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* v. 72, 14. Hooker refers to the Communion service as illustrating his point. This service, in the Prayer Book of 1552, was not confined to Ash Wednesday, but was ordered to be used 'divers times in the year.' In 1576 Abp. Grindal directed his clergy to use it three times at least in the year. The present rubric orders it to be used 'on the first day of Lent and at other times as the Ordinary shall appoint.'

⁴ Lev. xvi. 16, 21.

the offences, shortcomings and failures of their Church and nation ; those of whom the prophet says that they *sigh and cry for all the abominations done in the midst thereof*.¹ Indeed, the Old Testament constantly refers to social sins and social acts of repentance.² Repentance means the spirit of entire antagonism to sin ; it means an act of ' turning ' from sin to God ; and men need, not only as individuals, but as members of a church and nation, to repudiate those false standards and ideals, those corrupt customs and evil traditions, which prevail in the community, and are mainly responsible for the moral disorders and social iniquities that infest it. ' There must be real social contrition ; sorrow at the injustice of modern conditions of life and labour ; sorrow at the misery of the poor, the misery of the rich, the cramped, starved, stunted, half-educated, joyless, spiritless lives in all classes.'³ In the same spirit of penitence we should lament the faithlessness and shortcomings of the Church. We should mourn for the disunion, lukewarmness, indifference to principle, self-satisfaction, and worldliness of temper and policy which neutralize the influence of the Church and hinder in countless ways the progress of the divine kingdom.

Thus in using the Lord's Prayer faithfully, we acknowledge our indebtedness to all men, since all in God's sight are brethren and bound together by ties of mutual obligation and service. We confess a corporate responsibility and a corporate failure. We sorrow for all those social arrangements, and for that absence of a righteous public opinion, which are responsible for the oppression or exploitation

¹ Ezek. ix. 4.

² See, e.g., Ezra ix., Neh. ix., Dan. ix., Isa. lix. ; also Jonah iii. 5 foll., Jer. xviii. 7 foll.

³ J. G. Adderley, *The Creed and Real Life*, p. 64. See also the remarks on ' missionary penitence ' on pp. 102 foll.

of individuals and classes.¹ We ask pardon for all our known and unknown failures to realize the law of love ; and we implore the mercy of God on behalf of all who in their dealings with others forget or ignore His righteous will.

V

Forgive us our trespasses. We are naturally led to consider the conditions, and the effects, of divine forgiveness.

(1) Of repentance something has been already said. The gift of pardon is God’s response to a real change of mind or heart, which involves the co-operation of every element in personality : reason, emotion, will. It means ‘the entire opposition of our entire selves to sin.’² Here we should notice that the whole Lord’s Prayer is the expression of penitence ; for penitence implies not merely the forsaking of sin but the positive ‘turning’ of the heart towards God.³ It is the fruit of faith—faith looking to God alone as the source of blessedness, as the Giver of all that the soul needs, as the Father Whose will is the supreme law of life, Whose kingdom is the one worthy object of endeavour. The petition for forgiveness, if sincerely uttered, embodies the very spirit of penitence : the humility which waits upon God, which realizes its need of healing and pardon, which yields itself up to the fulfilment and acceptance of the divine will. Tertullian points out that the petition plainly proves the acceptableness of repentance,⁴ as a part of God’s will for man, and as the outcome of reliance upon the gracious promises and the Fatherly character of God. Thus the petitions which *precede* this request for forgiveness throw light

¹ As Augustine reminds us, *epist.* cxxx. 13 : ‘Nemo est in genere humano cui non dilectio, et, si non pro mutua caritate, pro ipsa tamen communis naturae societate debeatur.’

² Du Bose, *The Gospel in the Gospels*, p. 148.

³ Acts xx. 21 : ‘Repentance toward God.’ Obs. in Luke xxiv. 45 *repentance and remission of sins go together.* ⁴ *de orat.* vii.

upon its spirit and intention. This is no mere expression of desire to escape punishment, or to be 'let off' our debts. It is the prayer of a son, whose whole-hearted desire is to live and to pray in accordance with the Father's mind, who humbly claims God's promised gift, and pledges himself to life-long service and obedience. Penitence, as we find it expressing itself in the Lord's Prayer, is essentially a spirit of self-surrender: asking nothing for itself but needful strength to do God's will, and deliverance from sin and the evil which results from it. For the rest, it commits itself wholly into the Father's hands, knowing that the acceptance of His will is blessedness and peace.

Penitence, then, and the faith which inspires it—these are the primary conditions of forgiveness. The other essential condition is that the penitent sinner should imitate in his own behaviour to others the goodness to which he appeals. It is needless to remind ourselves of the solemn emphasis laid on this condition by our Lord. It is enforced in the comment which follows the Lord's Prayer in the sixth chapter of St. Matthew; it is vividly illustrated by the parable of the unmerciful servant.¹ Gregory of Nyssa says with striking boldness: 'We are, as it were, asking God to imitate us: "I have forgiven; do Thou forgive. Imitate the kindness of Thy servant, O Lord."' So let him who approaches his Benefactor be a benefactor; let him who approaches Him Who is good, just, forgiving, kind, be himself good, just, forgiving, kind.'² Thus the petition not only sets up an ideal standard of human conduct; it lays down a principle of the divine governance. God deals with men as they themselves deal with others. *With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.*³ Further,

¹ Matt. vi. 14, 15; xviii. 21 foll.

² *De orat.* iii. 753 A.

³ Matt. vii. 2; Luke vi. 38. Cp. Eccus. xxviii. 1-5.

it should be noticed that the reference in this passage is not to definite *actions*, but to temper and *judgment*. It is the harsh, vindictive, censorious spirit, *extreme to mark what is done amiss*, that is here prohibited; the habit of mind which imputes evil, puts a bad construction on the words or conduct of another, and judges him mercilessly or ungenerously. It is the merciful in speech as well as in behaviour who *shall obtain mercy*. *Judgment is without mercy to him that hath showed no mercy.*¹

It is evident that this teaching made a very deep impression on Christ's followers. In early Christian writers it is brought into striking prominence. Clement, for instance, in exhorting the Christians of Corinth, beseeches them ‘most of all to bear in mind the words of the Lord Jesus, which He spake enjoining forbearance and long-suffering. For thus He spake, “Have mercy that ye may obtain mercy; forgive that it may be forgiven you; as ye do shall it be done unto you; as ye give, so shall it be given unto you; as ye judge, so shall ye be judged; as ye show kindness, so shall kindness be shewed unto you.”’ In the same spirit Polycarp bids the Philippians ‘remember the words of the Lord, “Judge not, that ye be not judged; forgive, and it shall be forgiven unto you; have mercy that ye may receive mercy”’; and he exhorts presbyters in particular to be compassionate to all, ‘not quickly believing anything against any man, not hasty in judgment, knowing that we are all debtors of sin. If then we entreat the Lord that He would forgive us, we ought also to forgive.’² To these testimonies may be added that of Bishop Butler, who in a celebrated sermon on this subject mentions some considerations which, as he says, ‘common sense should suggest,’ impelling us to forgive those who have done us

¹ James ii. 13. ² Clem., *ad Cor.* xiii; Polyc., *ad Phil.* ii. and vi.

any wrong. He points out how apt is self-love to magnify an injury ; how anger or ill-will is usually ' a false medium of viewing things, which always represents characters and actions much worse than they really are ; how fruitful a cause of enmity is sheer misunderstanding and erroneous inference.'¹ But the New Testament does not appeal primarily to considerations of this kind. It points us plainly to the divine example ; we are to forgive *even as God also in Christ forgave us.*² It records the intercession of the Redeemer for His murderers. It reminds us continually that we share with those who offend us a frail and imperfect nature. It teaches that sin is a just object not only of indignation but of pity, since ' no one ever did a designed injury to another, but at the same time he did a much greater to himself.'³ Indeed, it is obvious that the entire prayer of which this petition forms part, excludes the spirit of mutual hatred and ill-will ; partly because it is a prayer of intercession for all, partly because it puts us in mind of our own sinfulness and need of mercy.

(2) We have considered the conditions of forgiveness : what may be said as to its meaning and effects ?

Forgiveness plainly implies the remission, at least in some measure of the penal consequences of sin. ' In some measure ' only : for even if we are mercifully exempted from those more severe judgments which fall upon sin as by a self-acting law, it is impossible that it should be altogether unpunished. Sin is invariably followed by penalty of one kind or another, spiritual or temporal.⁴ But the chastisement by which God vindicates His outraged law changes its character in accordance with the changed atti-

¹ *Sermons*, no. ix., ' Upon Forgiveness of Injuries.'

² Eph. iv. 32.

³ Butler, *ubi sup.* Cp. Chrys. in *Matt. hom.* xix. 255 A-257 C.

⁴ On this subject see *The Rule of Faith and Hope* (Lib. of Hist. Theol.), pp. 183 foll.

tude of the penitent sinner. It becomes a healing and purifying discipline, corrective and remedial, tending so to separate the sinner from his sin, so to strengthen the infirmity of the paralysed will and the disordered affections as gradually to educate and perfect the offender's character. When we pray for forgiveness, we implicitly acknowledge our need of spiritual discipline. We profess, as it were, our readiness to accept difficulties, trials, disabilities, perplexities which are the just recompense of our own past wilfulness. We desire to submit to God's dealings with us in the spirit of trustful faith which breathes in the words of the prophet : *I will bear the indignation of the Lord because I have sinned against Him, until He plead my cause and execute judgment for me : He will bring me forth to the light and I shall behold His righteousness.*¹ In any case, what we supremely desire is not only release from the outward consequences of wrongdoing, but deliverance from the *sinfulness* which is the most bitter fruit of sin : from the hard and cold heart, the weak and wayward will, the defiled conscience, memory or imagination, the disordered affections, the darkness of mind and blindness of spirit by which sin is invariably punished.

Forgiveness, then, does not mean the entire release of the sinner from the consequences of his sin. On the contrary, the chastisement that overtakes him is the messenger of the divine mercy. It is a token that Almighty God yet deals with him as a son, still persists in the fulfilment of His purpose of grace. *Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord,* cries the Psalmist.² But at least remission implies the cancelling of the extreme penalties which await the unforgiven : the loss of God, the separation of the soul from Him Who is its life.

On the other hand forgiveness implies a change of feeling

¹ Mic. vii. 9.

² Ps. xciv. 12.

in Him Who forgives, responding to the changed mind or will (*μετάνοια*) of the penitent sinner. It involves the reconciliation of the sinner to God : a reconciliation rendered possible by the change in the sinner himself. Forgiveness means the renewed outflow towards the sinner of a love which his sin had thwarted and restrained.¹ Love recognizes in the sinner the possibilities which penitence brings within his reach. It deals with him, and looks upon him, not as he now is, but as he will become when the new-born spirit of contrition has had its perfect work. It treats him as good, and therefore as a fitting object of divine love ; because the main factor that makes goodness for him a future possibility is already present, namely the converted will, the penitent heart.²

At the same time we gather from this petition that forgiveness is provisional and conditional. It may be forfeited or revoked, if we forget the law by which forgiving love is guided. The remission of sin by God depends on conditions which may be broken or forgotten. He only who lives, and deals with his fellow-men, in the spirit of love, can hope for that remission of sin which is the effect and seal of love. Thus, says Peter Chrysologus, 'the power of obtaining pardon is in thine own hands ; on thyself, O man, depends the forgiveness of God ; thou art made to thyself the author of divine remission.'³

Forgiveness, then, is no isolated or occasional incident in the life of the Christian, but a continuous outflow of healing and transforming love, dependent on the soul's persistence in the temper of penitence and in the spirit of charity which penitence inspires. Even the sins of infirmity

¹ Cp. Isa. lxiii. 15.

² On all this mysterious subject see the third chapter of Dr. Moberly's book, *Atonement and Personality*, esp. pp. 60 foll.

³ *De orat. Dom.*, serm. iv.

which we sorrowfully confess may be so overruled as to minister to the eternal good of the soul. As a medieval bishop says: ‘Assuredly, Lord Jesus Christ, if Thou hast purposed to save me, even a fall into sin, in which I have so often and so basely been involved, will work together with everything else for my good; because I am rightly bound henceforth to be more humble, more watchful, more careful in all things.’¹

The forgiveness of sins is at once an object of future hope and a present experience. To hope for forgiveness consummated is to cherish what St. Paul calls *the hope of righteousness*²: for it is only when we are actually holy that we are such as righteous love can wholly welcome and accept. To pray for forgiveness is to pray that more and more the fruit of the Spirit may be manifested in our lives, that the love of sin may be subdued in us, and the victory of grace completed.

On the other hand, divine forgiveness is the supreme Christian experience. This experience has had a history. It has been from the first a well-spring of spiritual joy, power and inspiration, since it has brought countless souls in all ages of Christian history into direct communion and contact with One Who not only claimed with divine authority on earth to forgive sins, but Who also declared that in beholding Him and receiving Him, men behold and receive the Father that sent Him.³

¹ Simon of Ghent, bishop of Sarum, 1297-1315. See also the note, p. 176.

² Gal. v. 5. Cp. 1 John v. 16 and see R. C. Moberly, *ubi sup.*, pp. 72, 73.

³ John xiv. 9; xiii. 20.

NOTE

THE MORAL FRUITS OF FORGIVENESS

St. Bernard, in *Cantica* xiv. 7, speaks of the Church as the spouse to whom much is forgiven and who therefore 'loveth much.' He proceeds to describe the way in which forgiveness, corresponding to a deepened sense of sin, develops the life of grace in the absolved soul.

'Inde mansuetior [fit] ad correptionem, inde patientior ad laborem; inde ardentior ad amorem, inde sagacior ad cautelam; inde humilior pro conscientia, inde acceptior pro verecundia; inde ad obediendum paratior, inde ad gratiarum actionem devotior ac sollicitior.'

CHAPTER X

'AND BRING US NOT INTO TEMPTATION' (ST. MATTHEW, ST. LUKE)

'Absit ut Dominus tentare videatur. . . . Diaboli est et infirmitas et malitia.'—TERTULLIAN.

THE repentant sinner is forgiven ; he is released from the guilt and from the extreme consequences of his sin, but not that he may merely sit still and rest in the assurance of the divine favour. The pilgrimage of life lies before him. He is absolved in order that with the 'brightness' of 'the happy warrior' he may go on his heavenward way, may face the perils of his spiritual warfare, rejoicing in the sense of God's mercy and protection. Hence we pray, *Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.* The words *Lead us not* imply that a new *direction* has been given to life. *O Lord*, cries the prophet, *I know that the way of man is not in himself. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.*¹ The converted and forgiven soul places itself under the direct guidance of God. manifold trials and conflicts await the pilgrim ; but *the Lord is his Shepherd* ; his life henceforth is a guided life ; a course lies before him of which each step is known and ordered by God. This petition encourages us to enter boldly on the untrodden path, but in a spirit of self-distrust and humility, deprecating trials that may be above our strength and not rushing impetuously into them. 'If we are forced

¹ Jer. x. 23.

into them we must play the man and stand fast ; but when we are not summoned to battle, we must abide in quietness.' ¹ It is evident that this prayer is the expression of a diffidence that is appropriate and natural, of a spirit that is the opposite of presumption. In the trials that overtake us we are to yield ourselves up in confidence to Him Who at once leads His children and upholds them.² For we should observe that the actual Greek word used in this clause (*εἰσενέγκης*) suggests the thought of God's sustaining arms carrying the soul onwards towards its appointed tasks and conflicts, a thought which reappears in Hebrews vi. 1, *Let us be borne on (φέρόμεθα) unto perfection.* If, in one aspect, the Christian life depends on a man's strenuous personal effort, in another it consists in his self-surrender to a sustaining power which *worketh in him both to will and to work* in fulfilment of God's good pleasure.³ So it was with Jehovah's ancient Church in the wilderness of temptation ; *He bare them and carried them all the days of old.* So in all generations the promise stands sure : *Even to hoar hairs will I carry you : I have made and I will bear you ; yea, I will carry and will deliver.*⁴

A preliminary word is needed touching the precise form of this petition. The old Syriac version of St. Luke xi. 4 runs as follows : ' And do not make-us-to-enter into temptation '—a phrase which suggests a connexion between the Lord's Prayer and the narrative of the betrayal in Gethsemane.⁵ It also implies that the word 'temptation' is

¹ Chrys., *hom. in Matt. xix. 253 D.*

² Pet. Chrys. i. : ' Rogamus ut nos nostro arbitrio non relinquat, sed in omni actu paterna nos pietate constringat, et in vitæ tramite caelesti moderatione confirmet.'

³ Phil. ii. 13 ; cp. 1 Thess. v. 24. See also Isa. lxiii. 9 ; Deut. xxxiii. 27 ; Ps. lxxviii. 52.

⁴ Isa. xlvi. 4.

⁵ See Luke xxii. 40 (Matt. xxvi. 41) : *προσεύχεσθε μὴ εἰσελθεῖν εἰς πειρασμόν.*

used in a wide sense. 'Temptation' includes everything of the nature of a *fiery trial* which comes upon men to prove their constancy; everything that 'overtakes' them in the course of life, and tends either to lead them astray, or to hold them back, from the service of God.¹

It has been felt as a difficulty by many commentators on the Lord's Prayer that God should be supposed to 'lead' men into temptation, when *He Himself tempteth no man.*² Tertullian and Cyprian, for example, both paraphrase the petition, 'Do not suffer us to be led into temptation'; while others explain it in one of two ways. It signifies either (1) 'Leave us not to ourselves when we are heedlessly running into danger': God being said to 'lead' those whom He abandons to their own choice when they are set upon doing evil; or (2) 'Suffer us not to be overwhelmed by temptation'; that is, to fall into violent or prolonged temptations that may overtax our strength or endanger our power of perseverance.' Augustine appears to combine the two explanations when he writes, 'We pray that we may not be so deprived of His assistance as to yield to any temptation either through being deceived, or through being overcome'; and this corresponds to his statement that temptation is twofold, arising either from the hope of attaining some temporal good, or from the fear of losing it.³

I

In this petition and in that which follows it, two possible sources of temptation seem to be indicated.

¹ For an account of temptation in terms of modern Psychology, see the Note, p. 190.

² James i. 13.

³ See Aug., *ep.* cxxx. 21; *de serm. in monte*, ii. 25, 82. Cp. *serm. in Matt. vi. lvii.* 9: 'In illa tentatione qua quisque decipitur et seducitur, neminem tentat Deus: sed plane iudicio suo alto et occulto quosdam deserit. Cum ille deseruerit, invenit quid faciat tentator. Ne deserat ergo nos, ideo dicimus *Ne nos inferas.*'

It has its origin, first, in the weakness and imperfection of our own nature. Temptation is often the penal consequence of past carelessness or self-indulgence, which has left a weak spot in our character, laying us specially open to attack. Men are often involved in spiritual perils through sheer heedlessness. They drift into situations which others might possibly occupy without risk, but which for them, considering their own peculiar faults and infirmities, are fraught with danger. They fall through the weakness of nature, unprepared and unfortified. This petition is an antidote to such heedlessness. In using it we put ourselves under the fatherly protection and guidance of God, and pledge ourselves, as it were, to prayerfully consider each step in life in the light of His will. Only when we have sincerely besought God to 'lead us not into temptation' can we pursue our way with quietness and confidence. Every calling in life, of course, involves *probation*; and in this sense at least 'temptation' is a discipline which no one can expect or even desire to evade altogether.¹ This is one of the lessons suggested by the Book of Job, which teaches that Satan, however violent his assaults, is nevertheless wholly under the control of God; that temptation may beset us in its most dangerous forms, not in youth but in mature life, at a time when character is, relatively speaking, fixed and stable, and when circumstances might seem to favour a minimum of change and disturbance. But the chief purpose of the book is to illustrate the law that temptation besets not only the evil but the righteous. Job is the very type of the sinless sufferer, tried and tested in the furnace of adversity, and coming forth *as gold*.² The narrative of his trial and its

¹ Aug., *de serm. in monte*, ii. 9, 32 : 'Non ergo hic oratur ut non tentemur, sed ut non inferamur in tentationem.'

² Job xxiii. 10. Cp. Pet. Chrys. *l.c.* : 'In hoc saeculo est ipsa vita tentatio.'

issue is plainly intended to impress upon the godly in Israel a new and deeper view of suffering, as at once probationary and disciplinary, testing faith and perfecting patience.

Christian experience corroborates this teaching. It is plain that in any sphere of life character is continually tested by the constant demand for vigilance, patience, sobriety, self-control, persistence in the fulfilment of duty under the pressure of adverse circumstances. There will always be a constantly recurring demand for moral decision ; for acts of choice, which in their issues will either weaken or confirm character. Life is a 'warfare' or 'temptation' just because it is an opportunity for serving God and overcoming hindrances to the advancement of His kingdom. Thus Origen refers to a passage in the Book of Judith (viii. 25-27) which speaks of temptation or trial as a matter of thanksgiving, showing that God is dealing with men as with His saints in times past, and exercising them with a discipline that is for their good.¹ We may remember, too, some lines in *The Ring and the Book* :—

'Was the trial sore ?

Temptation sharp ? Thank God a second time !

Why comes temptation but for man to meet

And master, and make crouch beneath his foot,

And so be pedestalled in triumph ? Pray

"Lead us into no such temptations, Lord !"

Yea, but, O Thou Whose servants are the bold,

Lead such temptations by the head and hair,

Reluctant dragons, up to who dares fight,

That so he may do battle and have praise !'²

Men are 'delivered' from temptation, not by being simply exempted or protected from it, but by being enabled to withstand it. They are 'led' into temptation, or 'enter

¹ Orig., *de orat.* xxix. 1. Cp. James i. 3, 'Count it all joy when ye fall into manifold temptations' ; 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13.

² R. Browning, *The Ring and the Book*, bk. x, 'The Pope,' ll. 1183 foll.

into' it, when God gives them up to their own hearts' lusts or suffers them to incur the penal consequences of their own heedlessness and presumption.

It is noteworthy that St. James, after dwelling on the necessity of probation in human life, at once proceeds to speak of the duty of praying for the gift of wisdom. Wisdom, or moral thoughtfulness, is the faculty which gives men insight into the meaning and issues of life as a whole, and which therefore guides them to a right decision in particular matters of conduct; it is the habit of watchfulness which distinguishes between those things which should be sought, and those which should be avoided, by the soul that desires to attain to God.¹

Bearing then in mind the weakness of human nature, we are taught to deprecate trials that threaten to be beyond our strength. According to the quarter from which these trials assail us, we usually speak of them as temptations of the flesh or of the world. Temptations of the flesh are such as appeal to those impulses and appetites which belong to the animal side of our nature, and are as yet 'imperfectly moralized'; in other words, are only partially restrained by the power of will. These propensities may have been intensified either by the force of heredity or by undue indulgence in the past; but they are not in themselves sinful.² Rather they are the material, so to speak,

¹ Aug., *de serm. in monte*, ii. 9, 35: 'Sapientia . . . ea est ut id quod Domino revelandum fugiendum esse intellexerimus, cautiissima vigilantia fugiamus; et id quod Domino revelante appetendum esse intellexerimus, flagrantissima charitate appetamus.' So again, in *de mor. eccl.*, 25, he defines 'Prudence' thus: 'Amorem bene discernentem ea quibus adjuvetur in Deum, ab iis quibus impediri potest.' Westcott, *Epp. of St. John*, p. 59: 'The essence of wisdom lies in the recognition of the unity of purpose which runs through the whole development of being.'

² Cp. Tennant, *The Concept of Sin*, ch. v.

out of which the disordered will produces sin, by identifying itself with the animal craving in defiance of the warnings of conscience. ‘Temptation’ implies a struggle between natural impulse and reason; sin consists in the yielding of the will to natural impulse in opposition to the promptings of reason.

Temptations of the world, on the other hand, are those which arise from the pressure of average human custom or opinion in regard to matters of conduct. Men are largely dependent on the goodwill of their fellows, and that forfeiture of such goodwill which usually follows any deviation from the accepted standard is, to most men, an object of dread. It is the average opinion of mankind that constrains us to bow down to the idols which it worships—wealth, ease, comfort, success, popularity—and to aim merely at conforming to a conventional standard of morality. The world tempts men to pursue desirable objects, and to organize life as a whole, without reference to God and His will. Worldliness is the temper which, so far from seeking to be ‘led’ by God, leaves Him out of sight altogether. It means (to use an expressive term) ‘God-blindness.’ It means the worship and service of the creature rather than the Creator;¹ and this involves an entire misdirection of personality.

II

Temptation, then, as we have seen, usually originates in ourselves. *Te vince, et mundus est victus*, says Augustine.² It is a struggle between lower and higher elements

¹ Rom. i. 25.

² *Serm. in Matt. vi. lvii. 9.* The distinction between temptations of the *flesh* and of the *world* is implied in a prayer of Bishop T. Wilson (*Sacra Privata*, Wednesday meditations): ‘Give me grace that I may never follow the inclinations of corrupted nature, nor govern myself according to the maxims of an evil world.’

in our own nature. But the teaching of our Lord plainly suggests another possible source of temptation : the malignant activity of an invisible and supernatural enemy, ' the evil one.' There is at work in the world a personal being who is the deliberate and relentless *enemy of all righteousness* : the adversary and accuser of the individual soul, assailing it either by violence or by guile, approaching it either as the lion or the adder.

It was as a lion that Satan assaulted the church of the martyrs and confessors. St. John represents the conflict of the early church, in one of its aspects at least, as a struggle between the *Church*—the true Society—the Bride of the Lamb, and a *wild beast* which represents the world-power, based on luxury and *the pride of life* ; organized and directed by a personal enemy of God and of His saints. Wherever churches or individual Christians are oppressed and persecuted for their faith ; wherever men are called to endure contempt, reproach, or spiteful usage for the name of Christ—there the enemy seeks to attain his end through violence. But more often, perhaps, he comes as the serpent, the deceiver, using the weapon of *guile*. He comes clothed as an angel of light : perverting what is innocent, working insidiously through friendships, through literature, through the sense of beauty, through generous instincts and noble ambitions. Augustine's words are applicable to any seemingly peaceful and uneventful period, either in the Church's history, or in that of an individual : ' As our forefathers had need of patience in their conflict with the lion, so have we need of watchfulness against the serpent. . . . Satan is more to be feared when he uses deceit than when he openly rages.' ¹

In this connexion the temptation of our Lord in the

¹ Aug., *enarr. in Psalm. xxxix. 1.*

wilderness is an object lesson for Christians. *In Him*, says St. John, *is no sin*; yet it is also true that He was *in all points tempted like as we are*.¹ In His case the assaults of the tempter took place immediately after the descent of the Spirit at the Baptism, teaching us, what the experience of life corroborates, that those are most liable to temptation who have recently received some spiritual gift, or have been restored by forgiveness to a state of grace.² In His case again, not only in the wilderness, but throughout His ministry on earth, Satan appealed to the sinless instincts and cravings of nature: to such affections as hunger, weariness, repugnancy to suffer, the fear of death. What temptation meant to Christ has been described by a wise and careful teacher as follows: ‘If the highest virtue does not exclude that instinct inseparable from humanity, to which pain is an object of dread, and pleasure of desire; which prefers ease and quiet to tumult and vexation, the regard and esteem of others to their scorn and aversion; to which ill-requited toil or experienced unkindness are sources of corroding anguish and depression: then every conjuncture, which presents but one of these objects of dread as the concomitant of doing God’s will, or associates one of their desirable opposites with neglect or disobedience—every such conjuncture must produce a conflict between duty and these necessary instincts of humanity sufficient to constitute temptation in the strictest sense.’³ In the wilderness Satan approached our Lord with guile: in Gethsemane and on Calvary he strove to overwhelm Him with violence. In any case the Gospel narrative certainly suggests that through the sinless instincts of a perfect

¹ 1 John iii. 5; Heb. iv. 15, with Bp. Westcott’s note.

² This thought is also suggested by the copula, ‘*And lead us not into temptation.*’

³ W. H. Mill, *Five Sermons on the Temptation of Christ our Lord*, p. 35.

human nature, our blessed Lord was assailed by a personal adversary, who strove by every means to seduce or to terrify Him into some course of action contrary to the will and purpose of His heavenly Father.

What precise relation subsists between the propensities or cravings within us and the suggestions of Satan from without, we have no power to determine. What we know is that the *will* is the seat of sin, that the will is often responsive to suggestions from without, and that such suggestions may conceivably reach us through the agency of a personal and invisible being. The secret operation of Satan may be illustrated by what we know of the phenomena of hypnotism or suggestion, and of the influence of one will upon another. At the same time it is clear that suggestion acts powerfully in proportion to the weakness of the recipient's will. Hence the peril of constantly yielding to temptation, and so laying the will open to diabolical influence.¹ The whole subject, however, of Satanic suggestion is involved in impenetrable mystery. If we regard the fact of such suggestion as possible and even probable in a world like ours, we may believe that Satan 'displays and calls attention to the charms of the lower world, as they appeal to the senses, the imagination, and the intellect. What would have tempted silently and almost unheeded without him becomes through him, articulate, aggressive, insistent.'² He solicits the soul to claim its liberty, to seek the gratification that lies within its reach, to identify itself with the impulse of the moment, forgetting its true destiny and spiritual vocation.³ At the same time we know that

¹ See a thoughtful article in *The Interpreter* for Oct., 1913, 'A Trinity of evil,' by the Rev. W. K. L. Clarke.

² Mason, *The Faith of the Gospel*, p. 108.

³ Tennant, *op. cit.* 188: 'There will always be the appeal of that which is momentary but immediately present, to be put into its place in the whole order. There will always be desires requir-

Satanic suggestions of this kind can only reach us when, and as, God Himself permits; and that they are sent, not for the overthrow of our weakness, but for the confirmation of faith, or for the chastening of presumption.¹

III

But the petition *Lead us not into temptation* does not encourage us to dwell on the thought of our own personal trials of faith or constancy. Like all the petitions of the Lord's Prayer, this is an unselfish request. It is a prayer of the Church itself for its own children: a prayer, too, for those who are, like the Gentiles described by St. Paul: *separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, . . . having no hope, and without God in the world.*² Not to dwell particularly on the special temptations that beset members of the Church: worldliness, uncharitableness, lack of zeal, self-complacency, refusal to be fellow-helpers to the truth, rejection of the preaching of the Cross, forgetting *to do good and to communicate*, fear of openly confessing Christ, factiousness, self-will, self-seeking: we should call to mind those multitudes of average men, women and children whom the very circumstances of their lives expose to an almost incessant pressure of temptation. In factories and shops, in mercantile houses and places of business, in the streets and common lodging-houses of our cities, in places of recreation and amusement, in the over-

ing to be inhibited by concentration upon what, to creatures of time, will be, if higher, yet remoter, considerations. "This present evil world" will never lose for us its mighty power of saying "*Now!*" in which "the one great secret of the world's victory" lies.'

¹ Aug., *serm. in monte*, ii. 9, 34: 'Fiunt tentationes per Satanam, non potestate ejus sed permissu Domini, ad homines aut pro suis peccatis puniendos, aut pro Domini misericordia probandos et exercendos.'

² Eph. ii. 12.

crowded cottages of country villages, in ships, in barracks, in mines, in farmsteads, in solitude and in the society of their fellow-men,—there are those whose life is full of temptation—fierce, constant, persistent. The grace of God is indeed ever working marvels even in the darkest places and amid the most unhopeful surroundings.¹ But we ought not to forget how sore is the conflict for multitudes: how great the strain upon temperance, honesty, chastity and self-respect. In the words *Lead us not into temptation*, we are taught to pray for all these, that they may not be overcome of evil, not driven to recklessness and despair. Nor can we ignore the even greater perils of the rich and prosperous, who not only in tribulation, but ‘in all time of’ their ‘wealth,’ need so urgently the help of our intercessions.

IV

The last petition of the Lord’s Prayer really forms the concluding part of that which we are now considering. But before leaving the subject of temptation, we may fittingly remind ourselves of our Lord’s warning addressed to the disciples in Gethsemane: a warning which, as we have seen, suggests a connexion between the petition *Lead us not* and the Agony in the Garden.

*Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.*²

The wakefulness which our Lord enjoins is the necessary condition of effectual supplication. The soul must collect all its powers if it is to prevail in the conflict of prayer.³ So St. Peter bids his converts *be sober unto prayer*, and *watchful*, as having to contend with a sleepless adversary.

¹ For examples see Mr. H. Begbie’s books, *Broken Earthenware* and *In the Hand of the Potter*.

² Matt. xxvi. 41; Mark xiv. 38. Luke xxii. 40 has simply ‘Pray (46, Rise and pray), that ye enter not into temptation.’

³ Col. ii. 1; iv. 12. Cp. 1 Pet. iv. 7; v. 8.

We need, indeed, to have something of the martial temper in dealing with our spiritual foes : to be keen, alert, vigilant, ready to endure hardness ; above all things, trustful of our Leader. We have to avoid occasions of falling. We *enter into temptation*, we are ensnared and overwhelmed, when we place ourselves heedlessly in situations which we know to be hazardous. St. Peter, standing beside the fire in the judgment hall of the High Priest, had placed himself in a false position and was, as it were, taken by surprise. ' Watchfulness ' is the habit of mind which is sensitive to danger, which has a wholesome distrust of itself, which looks continually to God for guidance in the conduct of life. Moreover, it is careful to leave no known duty undone, for patient continuance in the work of our calling is a great safeguard in temptation.¹ But though our Lord speaks of watchfulness in this connexion, it is to be observed that the sovereign aid in temptation which He prescribes is that of *prayer*. Prayer is not so much an act, as a spirit. It is the habit of unbroken dependence upon God, unflinching confidence in His character, unswerving loyalty to His revealed will. Prayer itself suggests the considerations which act most powerfully upon the will and strengthen it to resist evil. It is addressed to One Whose fatherly relation to us is a pledge of His *faithfulness* : He *will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation make also the way of escape* ;² of His *wisdom* : He knows the precise discipline that our character needs ; and of His *love* : *Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth*.³ Constant recollection of the divine love is a supreme safeguard in trial. It inspires the tempted with courage and with cheerfulness. It is an antidote to the depression and fear

¹ Perhaps this is implied in Rev. iii. 10 : ' Because thou didst keep the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial.' Cp. John xvii. 6, 11.

² 1 Cor. x. 13.

³ Heb. xii. 6.

which are apt to unnerve us in the spiritual combat. Lastly, it guards us from being absorbed in the thought of our own troubles. The words *Lead us not* should help us to overcome all selfishness ; to bear in mind the trials and difficulties which others share with us ; to bear their burdens as we find opportunity, to minister to them as we ourselves would be ministered unto.¹ Thus to come to the aid and encouragement of our brethren, thus to take part in their restoration after spiritual failure and defeat, is to fulfil the law of Christ. More than this, it is to acquire that spirit of meekness and gentleness which often disarms the violence of temptation, for

‘ gently comes the world to those
That are cast in gentle mould.’

Indeed, it seems to be suggested in the Book of Job, as elsewhere in Scripture, that the fruit of suffering, patiently and steadfastly endured, is a larger and more effectual power of intercession.² He Who ever lives to make intercession for us on high is He Who *suffered being tempted* ; Who having been *in all points tempted like as we are* is able to offer the prevailing prayer through which we *find grace to help us in time of need*.³

NOTE

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF TEMPTATION

‘ We are tempted when we experience an appetite towards any kind of conduct (not necessarily to be manifested in outward deed) to which we assign a lower moral value, or away from any to which a higher value is similarly assigned. Temptation can only be undergone by a moral subject, conscious of the presence within him of at least two conflicting impulses or de-

¹ Cp. Gal. vi. 1, 2.

² Job xlii. 8.

³ Heb. ii. 18 ; iv. 15, 16.

sires and also of their difference in moral value. It arises when of two springs of action simultaneously present, the one of lower worth possesses the greater intensity and the one of lesser intensity possesses the higher worth. A strong temptation is one in which discrepancy between intensity of appeal and position on the scale of values is marked. When the lower impulse is by far the more intense, ‘passionate,’ that is to say, the temptation involved is said to be ‘violent’; when, on the other hand, the lower impulse (often spoken of as ‘the temptation’) is but feebly felt, the temptation is slight: but little struggle is necessary to subdue it. To be overcome by a temptation or a lower impulse which solicits with only slight allurements and importunity, involves greater shame than to be vanquished by one requiring much effort of will and bracing of the moral self to resist.’

* * * * *

‘The fierceness of the conflict between different springs of action, and the call made upon the will’s reserves of strength to quell it, differ widely in different individuals with their different psycho-physical constitutions, and voluntarily formed habits and characters; and indeed in the same individual at different stages of his moral career. But no mortal, perhaps, who attained to moral consciousness, was ever wholly exempt from the lusting of the flesh against the spirit. In all persons, in other words, the scales of intensity and worth co-exist but disagree.’

F. R. TENNANT, *The Concept of Sin*, pp. 189, 190.

CHAPTER XI

' BUT DELIVER US FROM THE EVIL ONE ' (ST. MATTHEW)

' Petimus ergo unum, ut munere hoc a malis omnibus cum malo careamus auctore.'—PET. CHRYSOLOGUS.

THE present petition simply completes that which precedes it. As we have been taught to trust in God as our Leader and Guide amid the perils of our Christian course, so here we appeal to Him as the Saviour Who is able to deliver us from the evil that besets us in a world which *lieth in the evil one*;¹ is alienated from God and subject to the influence of His adversary.

There is a large consensus of opinion among early Christian writers that our Lord here teaches us to pray for deliverance, not from 'evil' in the abstract, but from 'the evil one.' On this point the Greek Fathers appear to be practically unanimous; and their interpretation is apparently favoured by the Syriac versions of the Lord's Prayer, and is taken for granted in the Greek Liturgies. On the other hand, the neuter sense seems to be preferred by Tertullian and Cyprian, and is undoubtedly accepted by Augustine and later Western writers. It is probably owing to Augustine's influence that, in the West at any rate, the neuter, 'evil,' finally supplanted the masculine, 'evil one.'²

¹ 1 John v. 19.

² Pet. Chrysologus perhaps attempts to combine both explanations when he says (*serm.* iii): 'Diabolus natura fuit caelestis, nunc est nequitia spiritualis, aetate major saeculo, nocendi usu tritus,

The phrase ὁ πονηρός, 'the evil one,' is characteristic of the New Testament,¹ but the idea which it conveys has its roots in later Jewish theology, which showed a tendency to personify the evil impulse² within the heart of man—the impulse which drives him to sin—and even to identify it with Satan. As a matter of fact the expression 'the evil one' is found in Rabbinical writings, and this circumstance lends support to the view that our Lord in this petition refers to a personal being. Further, the Lord's Prayer seems to gain force and clearness when studied in connexion with the account of our Lord's temptation. We have already noticed that there underlies it the thought of a conflict between God and Satan, which is also characteristic of the Apocalypse.³ Here it may suffice to observe that in the last two clauses of the Prayer the reference to the tempter seems to be indisputable; and in view of other allusions in the Gospels to 'the evil one,' the presumption in favour of a masculine sense of the words τοῦ πονηροῦ is very strong.⁴

We are justified, then, in thinking that Christ here teaches us to ask for deliverance from Satan, as from one in whom 'evil' finds its personal embodiment, who is the enemy of God and of goodness and of the very spirit of prayer. 'All the devil's quarrels and assaults,' says a mystical writer,

laedendi arte peritissimus. Unde non tam *malus* quam *malum* dicitur, a quo est omne quod malum est.'

¹ The following passages should be studied in connexion with each other: Matt. v. 37, 39; vi. 13; xiii. 19, 38; John xvii. 15; Eph. vi. 11, 16; 2 Thess. iii. 3; 1 John ii. 13, 14; iii. 12; v. 18. It is a further point that the phrase *ῥέσθαι τινα ἀπό* seems to be always used of *persons* in N.T. See Rom. xv. 31; 2 Thess. iii. 2; 2 Tim. iv. 18.

² Heb. *Yetser harâ'*. ³ See above, p. 8.

⁴ For further details see the well-known works of Dr. Taylor and Bp. Chase, and cp. Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles of St. Paul*, pp. 125, 126.

'are chiefly, if not only, against *prayer*, the which if he can extinguish, he has all that he aims at—separating us from the fruition of God and adhesion to Him, and therewith from all good.'¹ At the same time, since the evil principle manifests itself in many different forms, we may use this petition in a comprehensive sense as a prayer for deliverance from all that assaults and hurts the soul, all that holds us back from God or endangers our perseverance: from the evil of sin, the evil of punishment, the evil that springs from a fallen nature or from the snares and deceits of an evil world. It is these manifold forms of evil that make life *a warfare upon earth* and a sphere of temptation in which we need continual help and protection. We ask in this petition for all that is included in the idea of 'salvation.'

I

It is natural to inquire, first, as to the exact meaning of the 'evil' from which we seek deliverance.

At the outset we must bear in mind that the only real 'evil' in the world is the evil *will*. Our Lord seems expressly to remind us of this when He bids us pray for deliverance from 'the evil one.' Trouble and calamity, even when they are the punishment of sin, may often be a blessing. It was the error of the heathen that they regarded evil as an element in the environment of man's life, and not a defect in the man himself.² The only evil, we repeat, is

¹ Fr. Baker, *Holy Wisdom*, § i., ch. 1. See also a passage in *The Practice of Christianity* (Macmillan), p. 87, in which the writer suggests that the suffering which follows wrong choices on man's part 'is educative as well as destructive, because it incites to *the escape into communion with God*, which is the only education.'

² Aug., *de civ. Dei*, iii. 8, censures the false ideas of Paganism on this point: 'Quasi hoc sit hominis maximum bonum, habere bona omnia, praeter se ipsum.' Cp. *ibid.* i. 8.

the evil will, which is the principle of sin ; and certainly for a believer in God ' a monistic interpretation of Evil is as necessary as a monistic interpretation of the physical universe.' ¹ Just as God is ' the good ' (*ὁ ἀγαθός*), a personal Being in Whom the Law of righteousness and love is alive and reigns upon the throne of the universe, so the primal evil that appears in the world seems to have its source in the will of a person. Scripture throws light on the mystery by teaching that evil had a pre-mundane origin in a movement of rebellion on the part of a created being, who though originally good by nature, *abode not in the truth*, but misused his moral freedom by claiming a false independence as against his Creator. This conception of the origin of evil is re-enforced by Christianity, and has held its ground for two plain reasons : first, because in its main outlines it is expressly sanctioned by the authority of Christ ; secondly, because it alone makes intelligible certain features in man's spiritual history and experience. The Christian doctrine of Satan stands in decisive contrast with the heathen (Manichæan) idea of two co-ordinate beings, good and bad. Satan is a rebellious creature of God : an enemy whom the Son of God came to unmask and to overthrow, and whom in the Gospels He identifies with ' the devil ' or ' Satan ' : that adversary who accuses man to God and slanders God to man. Christ speaks of this dread being as *a murderer from the beginning ; a liar and the father of it.*² He calls him *the prince of this world*, who uses the gifts of God as a means of withdrawing from Him the allegiance of His rational creatures. Elsewhere in the New Testament ' the evil one ' is represented as directly antagonistic in character to the Son of God. Christ is *the*

¹ See the article by Mr. Clarke, already referred to, p. 186. Cp. C. C. J. Webb, *Problems in the relations of God and Man*, pp. 269 foll.

² See John viii. 44, xii. 31 ; xiv. 30 ; xvi. 11.

Truth, Satan is a *liar* ; Christ is *the Life*, Satan a *murderer* ; Christ is the *Intercessor*, Satan *the accuser* ; Christ is *not of the world*, Satan is its *prince* ; Christ is the *Saviour*, Satan the *destroyer* (Apollyon). But although the evil one is the inveterate enemy of God, he nevertheless exercises power only by the permission, and under the control, of his Creator. Against those who cleave to God and commit themselves whole-heartedly to His care and guidance, Satan is powerless. For the sake of testing their faith he is allowed to assail them, but he cannot hurt their true life. *The present evil age* is in a measure subject to his sway, and for that very reason abounds in 'evils' which God employs as instruments of judgment or discipline, to punish His foes or to prove His elect ; but in any case Satan exercises only a delegated and limited power. He is *strong* indeed,¹ but he is in the hand of One Who is stronger than he, and his malice is overruled for good ; his fierceness is turned to God's praise. We have already observed that it is impossible to define clearly the relation of this mysterious and formidable being to the internal desires and impulses of the human soul, or to that perverted order of things—that false nature, antagonistic to the will of God—which we call 'the world.' But it is certain that there lies behind the different sources of temptation—the desires of the flesh and the allurements of the world—an evil will, in other words, a personal enemy, who is the ruler and representative of an organized kingdom of wickedness.² Moreover,

¹ Mark iii. 22 (ὁ ἰσχυρός). On the divine limitation and control of Satan's power, see a fine passage in Tertullian, *de fuga in persecutione*, ii.

² Eph. vi. 12. It seems impossible to believe that in His references to evil spirits our Lord was either Himself deceived, or was purposely accommodating Himself to the beliefs of His contemporaries. He spoke of what He knew ; and even the perversions and distortions which His teaching has undergone in popular theology

there are temptations which are only explicable when they are regarded as direct suggestions made to the human mind by an evil being: wicked thoughts and shameful blasphemies; voices of unbelief and despair urging us to rebellion against God; impulses to malignant cruelty or to cold-blooded deceit which contradict the entire tendency of our character. It is true that men are apt by yielding constantly to temptation to render themselves specially liable to these 'devilish' impulses and suggestions. But in view of those startling and exceptional portents of wickedness with which we sometimes meet in the course of life, the most reasonable view is that which the teaching of Christ expressly sanctions, namely, that the enemy from whom we seek deliverance is a personal being, ever antagonistic to God and goodness, *purposed to overthrow our goings*, and striving by every means to draw human wills into rebellion against truth and light. The closing petition of the Lord's Prayer reminds us that the relentless hostility of this subtle spiritual foe is a permanent fact of human experience, not to be forgotten or made light of except at our infinite peril.

But there are other conditions of life in this present world that are 'evil' in the sense that they actually are, or may easily become, a real hindrance to the soul of man in its ascent to God.¹ St. Bernard mentions, as instances, those bodily needs—the need of food and sleep—which often hinder devotion; faults of character and temperament, such as levity, or motions of impatience, vanity, envy and other sins of infirmity; worldly prosperity on the one hand and adversity on the other, weighing down the soul with cares and distractions; our own perilous ignorance, which bear witness to real facts of the spiritual world which cannot otherwise be adequately explained.

¹ Cyprian, *de orat. Dom.*, xxvii. says that the word 'evil' comprises 'adversa cuncta quae contra nos in hoc mundo molitur inimicus.'

hinders us from knowing how to act or even what to ask in prayer ; the companionship of false brethren, who by persuasion or example, by flattery or detraction, hinder or divert us from the service of God.¹ It is evils of this kind which St. Paul has in mind when he cries, *Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?* and of which our Lord seems to speak comprehensively as *the evil of the day*. Christ, indeed, does not teach us to pray 'that God will deliver us from them absolutely, but from that evil which is in them ; and in this sense we may pray to be delivered *a malo panis*, "from the evil of plenty," as well as *a malo famis*, "from the evil of scarcity" ; for bread, which of itself is good, may turn to our hurt.'²

It is thus evident that all conditions of life are apt to be 'evil,' not in themselves, but in their relation to the weakness and imperfection of mankind. Like the petition *Lead us not into temptation*, the prayer *Deliver us from evil* is the utterance of humility and self-distrust. We echo the frequent cry of the righteous man in the Psalter ;³ the cry of him who, in view of the perils of life in a sinful world, places himself without reserve in the protecting hand of God, imploring deliverance from deceitful men and workers of iniquity, from persecutors and cruel foes, but above all from transgression and its train of bitter consequences ; from the mire of sin and the deep waters of despondency and fear. In effect, then, we may regard this petition as a prayer for deliverance from the evil which has come into the world through sin : from evil in ourselves ; from hardness of heart, waywardness or weakness of will, defilement

¹ Bern., in *Septuag. serm.* i. 4. Cp. Rom. vii. 24.

² *Sermons on the Lord's Prayer*, attributed to Bp. Andrewes, No. xvii.

³ Note the extraordinary frequency in the Psalter of the deprecation 'Deliver me' or 'deliver us.'

or entanglement of conscience, pollution of memory or imagination, vexation of spirit, confusion of mind, recklessness and despair ; from *the power of the enemy* ; from final impenitence and separation from God. Augustine surely goes to the root of the matter when he interprets the clause as meaning *Deliver us from ourselves*.¹ For in proportion as we forsake ourselves and find refuge *in Christ*, we learn by experience that *all things work together for good to them that love God*.

II

The prayer for deliverance from the evil one may be regarded as an act of faith in the reality of the divine victory over evil. Jesus Christ revealed Himself not only as the antagonist but as the conqueror of Satan. The prince of this world came and had nothing in Him. Satan was the *strong man armed* but the Stronger than he had overcome him and spoiled his house.² The joy of redemption is an object of future hope : we are *sealed unto the day of redemption* ; but redemption is also a present fact of experience. Satan is already overthrown, already bound. He assails men, not in virtue of his own power, but by the permission of his Creator. He is already *judged and cast out*,³ and prayer disarms and controls him. The elect are secure in God's keeping : *hid with Christ in God : kept safely by the power of God through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time*.⁴ *We know*, says St. John, *that*

¹ Aug., *serm.* clxxxii. 4, 5 : ‘ Quid est *Libera nos a malo* ? Nonne possemus et possumus haec verba dicere *Libera nos a tenebris* ? A quibus tenebris ? *A nobis ipsis*, si quae in nobis sunt reliquiae tenebrarum, donec in totum lux efficiamur, nihil habentes in nobis quod resistat caritati, quod repugnet veritati, quod subjaceat infirmitati, quod conditione mortalitatis deficiat.’

² John xiv. 30 ; Matt. xii. 29.

³ John xii. 31 ; xvi. 11.

⁴ 1 Pet. i. 5.

*whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not : but He that was begotten of God keepeth him, and the evil one toucheth him not.*¹

The Christian is the object of a relentless and vigilant hostility : but he has a Guardian Who upholds him, through Whose grace he reaps the fruits of a victory already achieved.

He, then, who offers this petition pledges himself to use faithfully all available means of union with Christ ; by a sustained effort of will he must cleave to God ; through recollection, thanksgiving and earnest prayer ; through steadfast persistence in well-doing and ever-renewed dedication of the will ; through mortification of desire and detachment from the world ; through devout and thankful reception of the Eucharistic gift. It is only by sharing St. Paul's disciplined life that we can come to share his confidence : *The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto His heavenly kingdom.*²

For the deliverance which we seek is vouchsafed in Christ the eternal Son, Who sets us free from the thralldom of Satan. Against the subtilty of the serpent we are protected by Christ, Who is *the Wisdom of God* ; against the violence of the devouring lion we are armed by Christ, *the Power of God*. In Christ we have liberty, security, enlightenment, peace. We are delivered *from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God*. Calling on God with true hearts as Father, we experience His faithfulness as Saviour ; His power to *use* evil for His own purposes, and to overrule for good even that which violates His holy law.³

¹ 1 John v. 18.

² 2 Tim. iv. 18.

³ Aug., *de civ. Dei*, xi. 17 : 'Deus, sicut naturarum bonarum optimus creator est, ita malarum voluntatum justissimus ordinator ; ut cum male illae utuntur naturis bonis, ipse bene utatur etiam voluntatibus malis' ; and 23 : 'Nec mala voluntas, quae naturae ordinem servare noluit, ideo justus Dei leges omnia bene ordinantis effugit.'

III

Regarded as an intercession, this petition is of infinite range. We offer it for all sorts and conditions of men, each of whom is subject to evils from which he needs deliverance.

The Puritans of the sixteenth century criticized the Litany as deprecating dangers which, they said, 'are nothing near us.' They regarded it as an 'abuse' of prayer that supplications in this form should have 'crept into the Church.'¹ Hooker's answer to this contention is worthy of his large-hearted wisdom and piety. He reminds his opponents that experience shows how suddenly men are apt to be overtaken by calamities which they might 'in regard of times or circumstances imagine to be furthest off'; and he proceeds to ask, 'If we for ourselves had a privilege of immunity, doth not true Christian charity require that whatsoever any part of the world, yea, any one of all our brethren elsewhere doth either suffer or fear, the same we account as our own burden?'² In days like our own, when intelligence from every part of the earth is transmitted so rapidly and so constantly, Hooker's words gain additional force. But from the earliest times, in its Eucharistic intercessions, the Church has commended to God in trustful faith the needs and sorrows of all men everywhere. 'Thou art He that loosest them that are bound, and liftest up them that are cast down, the Hope of the hopeless, the Help of the helpless, the Comfort of the weak-hearted, the Harbour of the tempest-tost. To every soul that is in affliction and that is oppressed, give mercy, give rest, give refreshment, give help.'³ This is a typical form of intercession, and it

¹ T. Cartwright ap. Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.*, v. 41, note.

² *Eccl. Pol.*, v. 41, 4.

³ Liturgy of the Coptic Jacobites (Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, p. 62). Cp. passages in other liturgies, Brightman, pp. 62, 126, 127, etc.

comes, as it were, from the very heart of the Church, which surveys the great mass of suffering humanity with the keen eye of pastoral compassion and commends all sorts and conditions of men to the fatherly mercy of their Creator.

We may think of this petition, once more, as offered on behalf of mankind by those who have passed beyond the veil. In the *Purgatorio* Dante represents the souls of the faithful as saying the Lord's Prayer on behalf of themselves and of the living. In reference to the concluding petition, they say:—

‘ This last petition, dearest Lord, is made
Not for ourselves, since that were needless now,
But for their sakes who after us remain.’¹

We cannot doubt that the departed intercede for the living with that deeper insight which love imparts. ‘ We must suppose,’ writes Origen, ‘ that the saints who have fallen asleep bear love towards those who are still engaged in life's warfare, in far higher degree than do they who, like ourselves, are still subject to human infirmity.’² Doubtless they aid us with their prayers, and hasten the day for which Creation waits, when there shall be no more death, nor mourning, nor crying, nor pain, but God shall *make all things new*.³

IV

The experience of godly men in every age of history has borne witness to the fulfilment of the petition *Deliver us from evil*. In the Psalter, for instance, thanksgiving for deliverance is not less frequent than the cry for deliverance.

¹ *Purgatorio*, canto xi, ll. 22–25 (tr. Cary)—

‘ Quest’ ultima preghiera, Signor Caro,
Già non si fa per noi, chè non bisogna,
Ma per color che dietro a noi restaro.’

² *De orat.* xi. 2.

³ Rev. xxi. 4, 5.

Almighty God is continually manifesting His power to remove or avert the evils and calamities which burden the hearts and embitter the lives of His faithful servants. Even in dealing with those who sin against Him or neglect to serve Him He tempers His righteous displeasure with mercy. He provides remedies and compensations for affliction ; He overrules evil for good ; He brings to light the fruitfulness and blessedness of pain and sorrow ; He teaches men to see that it is good for them that they have been in trouble.¹ Accordingly, in an epistle devoted to the subject of prayer,² Augustine is led to dwell upon the uses of adversity, whether for exercising patience, testing faith, or healing faults of character. He points out that the teachings of experience should make us hesitate to ask too fervently for deliverance from tribulation. We do indeed yield to a natural instinct when we ask for such deliverance, but as we *know not what we should pray for as we ought*, so there should be a certain reserve or restraint in deprecating calamity : there should be a readiness to believe that patient endurance of evils may secure for us an ampler blessing than exemption from them. He points to our Lord’s prayer in Gethsemane as the true form which our petitions should take ; and whatever be the answer to our request—whether we are delivered from some threatened evil or not—we are to be patient and to give God thanks, assured that in accepting His will we are embracing our highest good. For, indeed, just as the true good of men does not consist in earthly blessings, so the calamities, distresses and privations that befall them in life are not strictly to be accounted evil. They are only evil in so far as they have their origin in human sin, or in so far as they tempt us to fretfulness, rebellion and distrust. We learn, in fact, from such a passage as Daniel iii. 17 what should be

¹ Ps. cxix. 71. ² *Epist. cxxx. ad Probam*, esp. chh. 25, 26.

the temper of God's servants when called to suffer: *If it be so, our God Whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; but if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods.* The words *if not* bear witness to the faith of the three martyrs that they will find deliverance, if not from the flame of the furnace, yet from evil—the evil of doubt, of fear, of distrust.

It is natural, perhaps, in considering the divine response to this petition, to connect with it the thought of the ministry of angels.¹ This is a subject on which we are bound to speak with great reserve, but at least we are justified in believing that the existence and activity of the angels is revealed for our comfort and support in view of the bodily and spiritual perils that encompass us. We may believe that, in part at least, our deliverance from evil, of whatever kind, is accomplished through the agency of *ministering spirits sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation.*²

It is a consequence of that union of heaven and earth which the divine Incarnation involves, that the Christian is brought into vital connexion and communion with a whole world of spiritual beings and forces. By his bodily organism man is linked to creatures below him in the scale of being; by his spiritual faculties he is united to beings above him: to angels, glorified saints and *the spirits of just men made perfect.* The centre of that invisible world is God; His throne is encompassed by a host of blessed and glorious beings who worship with us and render with us their creaturely service to the Most High. Now, for

¹ As in the primitive Egyptian Liturgy of Sarapion (c. 350), in which the 'Invocation' is followed by the prayer, 'Let this people receive mercy; . . . let angels be sent forth as companions to the people for bringing to naught of the evil one and for establishment of the Church' (Bp. Wordsworth's transl., p. 64).

² Heb. i. 14.

faith, it suffices to know that we are in the hand of God : the God Who has made Himself known to us in the Incarnation, the Passion and the Victory of His only-begotten Son ; the God Who has deigned to visit man and to enter into his history ; Who bears the burdens and heals the sin of humanity ; Who watches over each single soul in its loneliness and weakness ; Who marks the fall of a sparrow and numbers the very hairs of our heads. *The help that is done upon earth, He doeth it Himself.*¹ He stoops to hear the prayer of the least and lowliest. He rescues this man from some hidden peril, comforts that in some overwhelming distress, succours another who is beset by temptation and gives him victory. God Himself, a heavenly Father, always and everywhere most dear, most near to His children—this is the treasure of faith, the mystery of divine love to which the Saviour in His life and death *set to His seal*. Yet our Lord's words encourage us to believe that there is a host of glorious spirits through whose agency God carries on His providential governance of the world. Scripture reveals to us their tender interest in man : their reverence for that nature which the divine Son took upon Himself and perfected in merit ; their joy at the Saviour's birth ; their ministry to Him in the days of His humiliation and in the hour of His agony. We find *a vision of angels* associated with the solemn triumph of the Resurrection ; their presence fills with light the empty tomb.² St. Paul describes the angels as bending a reverent and wondering gaze upon the mystery of the redeemed Church, through which *unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places is made known the manifold wisdom of God.*³ Our Lord Himself speaks of their joy *over*

¹ Ps. lxxiv. 13 (P.B.).

² 'This,' observes Bp. Andrewes, 'the first news of angels in that place. Blessed angels! not but in a blessed place.'

³ Eph. iii. 10.

one sinner that repenteth; and He encourages us also to think of them as exercising care and guardianship over the *little ones* who believe in Him.

Naturally, perhaps, Christians have sometimes been tempted to build upon these statements too confidently, and to be wise beyond what is written in regard to the ministry of angels. But at least we may be sure that, whatever be the exact function of these blessed beings and their relation to ourselves, it is Almighty God Himself Who through their ministry watches over His creatures and redeems them from evil. It is to the heavenly Father Himself, and to Him alone, that we commend one another: leaving Him, through agencies and instruments of His own appointment, to succour and defend us. Certainly the guardianship of angels cannot be supposed to cease when the age of childhood is passed. The *little ones* of whom our Lord makes mention include all child-like souls: all who in meekness and purity of heart look continually heavenward for needful guidance, protection and strength, till they attain to the vision of Him Whose face *their angels do always behold*.¹

How this divine control and superintendence of human life is carried on—whether to each individual soul is attached a single guardian spirit or many in succession—we do not know. But we read in Scripture of angels as shielding men from accident, as supplying their bodily needs, as rescuing them from danger. It may, of course, be argued that language of this kind is not to be interpreted literally, as describing matters of fact, but rather as suggesting in a vivid and pictorial manner the truth of God's omnipresent care and intervention even in the least things of human life.² This,

¹ Matt. xviii. 10.

² See a thoughtful sermon (No. xi) in Dr. Skrine's book, *Saints and Worthies* (Skeffington, 1901). Cp. the remarks of Dr. Milligan

after all, is the point of real importance. For our knowledge of angels—their nature, their order, their power—is very limited. What is essential to faith is a living belief in a heavenly Father Who has ways beyond *all that we ask or think* of answering our prayers for help and protection; He has surely revealed to us the existence of angels, not that we may render them undue regard and reverence, but that we may be confirmed in confidence toward God, and encouraged to persevere in His service by the thought that there are heavenly beings, fellow-servants with us of the Most High, who are earnestly watching our conflict, and are continually bringing us such aid and comfort as the divine laws permit. The familiar lines of Spenser have seized this point—

'And is there *care in heaven*? And is there love
 In heavenly spirits to these creatures base
 That may compassion of their evils move?
 There is:—else much more wretched were the case
 Of men than beasts. But O! th' exceeding grace
 Of Highest God that loves His creatures so,
 And all His workes with mercy doth embrace
 That blessed angels He sends to and fro
 To serve to wicked man, to serve His wicked foe.

How oft do they their silver bowers leave
 To come to succour us that succour want!
 How oft do they with golden pinions cleave
 The fitting skies, like flying pursuivant
 Against foul fiends to aid us militant!
 They for us fight, they watch and duly ward,
 And their bright squadrons round about us plant;
 And all for love and nothing for reward:
 O why should heavenly God to men have such regard?'¹

on Rev. xii. 7-12 in *The Book of Revelation* ('Expositor's Bible'), ch. ix.

¹ *The Faerie Queene*, Bk. II, canto 8, 1 and 2.

V

Augustine, in a certain place, points out that the love of angels for mankind displays itself chiefly in this, that they yearn to bring us into subjection to Him in the contemplation of Whom they themselves are blessed.¹ Their ministry is a self-forgetful, self-effacing service. In all time of our tribulation, in our conflict with temptation, and with the evils 'which the devil or man worketh against us,' they would have us look for help and deliverance only to Him Whose creatures and messengers they are. They would have us put our whole confidence in His Fatherly compassion and divine power, and in the redeeming virtue of all those actions and sufferings through which the Word of God made flesh once *delivered us* from evil and *will yet deliver.*²

*Clamet, clamet homo ad Deum, clamet Libera nos a malo, ut a tanto malo, solo Christo vincente, liberemur.*³

The cry of the soul for deliverance is uttered in union with *His, Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death.*⁴ That cry prevailed for Himself: He was *heard for His godly fear.* Will it not also prevail for His brethren, whose one desire is to be *found in Him*, and to be conformed, whether in prayer or suffering, to His image and likeness?

¹ *de civ. Dei*, x. 16.

² 2 Cor. i. 10. Cp. the 'deprecations' and 'obsecrations' in the Litany.

³ Pet. Chrys., *serm.* iii.

⁴ Heb. v. 7.

CHAPTER XII

‘ FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, THE POWER AND
THE GLORY, FOR EVER AND EVER. AMEN ’

‘ Ad locum unde exeunt, revertantur flumina gratiarum, ut iterum fluant.
. . . Qualiter inquis? Qualiter dicit Apostolus: *In omnibus gratias
agentes.*’—BERNARD.

THE Doxology, as is well known, forms no original part of the Lord’s Prayer. It is a conspicuous example of the influence of a liturgical usage which was inherited by the Christian Church from the synagogue. Of the numerous doxologies found in the New Testament, the one that most closely resembles this of the Lord’s Prayer is the passage 1 Peter iv. 11: *Whose is the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*¹ It is practically certain that the use of the Doxology at the close of the Prayer was customary in sub-apostolic times, but there is some doubt as to its original form. It is not clear, for example, when the word ‘kingdom’ was introduced, but doubtless it is to be connected with Old Testament usage. It recalls such passages as Psalm cxlv. 11: *They [the saints] shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom and talk of Thy power;* and 1 Chronicles xxix. 11: *Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the*

¹ Gk. ψ [prob. $\tau\hat{\omega}$ θεῶ, or possibly Ἰησοῦ Χριστῶ] ἐστὶν ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων· ἀμήν. The *textus receptus* of Matt. vi. 13 has: *ὅτι σοῦ ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας· ἀμήν.* *Didaché*, 8 has *ὅτι σοῦ ἐστὶν ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνα.* For a collection of N.T. doxologies, see Westcott, *Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 464. Bp. Chase observes that the mere addition of ἀμήν stamps the doxology as purely liturgical.

power and the glory . . . Thine is the kingdom, and Thou art exalted as head above all. The reference to the kingdom was natural for those who knew by experience that the reign of Jehovah, foretold by prophecy, had actually come. *Now is come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down. We give Thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, Which art and Which wast; because Thou hast taken Thy great power and didst reign.*¹ This idea seems to be in the mind of Chrysostom, when he comments on the context in which the Doxology occurs, as if it formed an original and integral part of the Prayer: 'Having mentioned the great enemy,' he says, 'Christ again encourages us and lifts our thoughts heavenward by naming the King under Whose sway we live, and shows that He is more powerful than all, saying, *Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory.* Since, then, the *kingdom* belongs to Him, we must be afraid of none. For Satan also is only one of the servants of God, and does not dare to assail any of his fellow-servants unless permitted to do so. To God belongs the *power* to order all things and even through man's agency to bring them to a successful issue. His also is the *glory*. He does not exempt His athlete from danger, but brings him through tribulation to glory and honour.'²

This passage shows that the form of Doxology which is so familiar to us was already current in the fourth century.³ Whatever may be its history, we are justified in regarding it as the *response* of the Church to the teaching of the Prayer; and following the example of St. Chrysostom, we may briefly indicate its doctrinal significance.

¹ Rev. xii. 10; xi. 17.

² *In Matt.*, hom. xix, 254 B, C.

³ Bp. Chase thinks that this form of the Doxology is a 'conflation' of two distinct types of doxology; that it was appended to the Lord's Prayer in the Syrian text of St. Matthew's Gospel, and soon became the common and recognized form.

I

Two thoughts suggest themselves at the outset.

1. The last three clauses of the Lord's Prayer are petitions of the Church militant. The Doxology forms a link between the present and the future. It anticipates the time when the Church will be triumphant and at rest: when the redeemed will be able to praise God because their prayer is finally fulfilled, and to say 'The Kingdom *has* come; the Father's will *has* been accomplished; He *has* bestowed upon us the forgiveness of sins; He *has* carried us safely through the wilderness of temptation; He *has* delivered us from the evil one.' We are thus taught that all prayer to God is to be quickened and inspired by hope. The remembrance of our many pressing needs of soul and body, of our sins and failures, of our conflicts and perils, might well plunge us in sadness or despondency. The Doxology summons us to *lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh*. We are to pray with cheerful confidence, with steadfast expectation of *good things to come*. We are encouraged to rise above ourselves, our fears and our distresses, and to return to those high thoughts of heaven—of divine love and might—with which we entered on our prayer when we said, *Our Father, Which art in heaven*.¹

2. Again, we may reflect that the Doxology only gathers up those truths which are implied in the different petitions of the Prayer. We have already implicitly ascribed to God the kingdom and the power and the glory when we call upon Him as Father, King and Lord of all, as the Author and Sustainer of life, as the Absolver of sin, as the Leader and Saviour of His people. The Doxology is in effect an act of faith. It sums up the grounds of our confidence in the

¹ Cp. Archdeacon Wakeford, *The Way to the Father* (a devotional instruction on the Lord's Prayer), p. 102.

power of prayer. It ascribes to God those attributes which are the stay of the soul. It dwells on the universality of His rule, the boundlessness of His might, the unchangeableness of His character. It addresses Him as One Who *is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think* ;¹ to satisfy every need, to heal every infirmity, to subdue and overrule for good all forces, material or spiritual, that hinder the fulfilment of His purpose.

II

Thine is the Kingdom.

By the act of prayer we unite ourselves to the will of God. We accept it as the law of life and the secret of blessedness. We desire that the reign of God, which prevails in the order of nature, should also manifest itself in the moral sphere—in the hearts and wills of men ; should extend itself through the whole of human society and so gradually transform the condition of the world. In Jesus Christ the Kingdom came ; it was manifested as a present and available reality, responding to the wholehearted self-dedication of the Son of man to the service of God. Prayer is, as we have seen, essentially the soul's consecration of itself to God. It is the resolute endeavour of the will to embrace His purpose for humanity. It is an act of homage to Him Who *sitteth above the water-flood and remaineth a King for ever.*²

Thine is the power.

From another point of view prayer is an act of faith in the boundless power and unfathomable resources of God. In the Incarnation of the Word and in its consequences God is revealed in a pre-eminent sense as *ὁ δύνατος*, 'He that is mighty.' His power displays itself, now as a spirit of might *in man*, enabling him to receive and to apprehend the indwelling presence of Christ ; now as *miracle*, that is, creative

¹ Eph. iii. 21.² Ps. xxix. 10 (P.B.).

action, modifying or controlling the outward order of physical nature¹; now as *divine forbearance*, waiting for man’s conversion; always and in any case as a *force* directing and overruling events towards the fulfilment of a spiritual and moral purpose.

Thine is the glory.

Once more, prayer finds its warrant and justification in the revealed character of God. His ‘glory’ means the outward manifestation of His holiness. It was displayed pre-eminently in the humiliation and self-sacrifice of the eternal *Son of His love*. But it is continually manifesting itself in answers to prayer, in the forgiveness of sin, in the conquest of evil, in the healing of spiritual disease, in the exaltation of the meek and the abasing of the proud, in the judgments which overtake transgression, in the salvation which crowns the hope of the righteous. When we say *Thine is the glory*, we praise God for what He is: we express our hope of what shall be. For He is *bringing many sons unto glory*,²—to that perfect and unhindered life which is the fruit of His own indwelling. For us, ‘glory’ means that state in which man will know God and worship Him as He is; will render Him a perfect service and will dwell with Him in holy fellowship. But this ‘glory’ we look for, only as His own inalienable possession and as His crowning gift to His creatures.

For ever and ever.

The Lord’s Prayer is a kind of summary of faith’s experience in the past, but it carries our thoughts and desires onward to an unending future. The God Who in Jesus reveals Himself as Father, is the great Jehovah, ‘He Who will be’: He Who progressively manifests Himself to His people as the answer to their prayers and the *exceeding*

¹ Eph. iii. 16, 17; i. 20.

² Heb. ii. 10.

great reward of their service. Ages yet to come will disclose new riches of God's grace, new triumphs of His might, new extensions of His kingdom, new depths of His *kindness toward us through Christ Jesus*.¹ The Lord's Prayer is not only the utterance of man's faith and love : it is also the voice of hope—anticipating what shall be—what *must* be—when in very deed *the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*.² In this prophetic hope we find ourselves united to the whole company of the faithful who in every age have *seen the promises of God and greeted them from afar*.³ They were sustained in the life of prayer and spiritual effort by the recollection of the eternal *years of the right hand of the Most High*.⁴ Thus the Doxology strikes the note of progress and advance. It bids the children of Israel *go forward* ⁵ ; it reminds them that their appointed destiny is to draw indefinitely nearer to God ; to have their part in an unending dominion. *They shall reign for ever and ever*.⁶

III

Amen.

In the ordinary usage of Scripture we find the word *Amen* employed in at least three different ways :—

(1) First, it is used as an assurance or pledge of the divine faithfulness, confirming the truth of the divine promises. God is declared to be *the God of the Amen*,⁷ and all His promises are fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the personal or living *Amen*. With this significance the word *Amen* is used to

¹ Eph. ii. 7.

² Rev. xix. 6.

³ Heb. xi. 13.

⁴ Ps. lxxvii. 10 ; cp. Ps. cii. 27, 28.

⁵ Exod. xiv. 15.

⁶ Rev. xxii. 5.

⁷ Isa. lxxv. 16 : *The God of truth* (R.V.). Targum paraphr. *The God of the oath*. LXX. τὸν θεὸν τὸν ἀληθινόν. Cp. Rev. iii. 14, *These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness* ; see also 2 Cor. i. 20.

introduce a statement. In teaching, for instance, the doctrine of Baptism, and in expounding the mystery of the Eucharistic gift, our Lord says *Amen, Amen, I say unto thee, or unto you.*¹ With the same form of speech He bears witness to the efficacy of prayer. Christ, indeed, speaks with the authority of One Who is *the Truth* embodied in human form. He Himself is the living pledge that God hears and answers prayer, that He is true to His own essential nature, that He *cannot deny Himself.*² In the mouth of His worshippers, on the other hand, the word *Amen* expresses a living confidence in the self-consistency and dependableness of the divine character ; in the stability and perpetuity of the divine kingdom. Possibly, this is one reason why the Hebrew word *Amen* is retained in the churches of the Gentiles. It testifies to the fact that God’s elect, gathered from every nation of the earth, form but one mystical body, and that the God Whom they worship is one and the same eternal Being, revealing Himself to every generation of men as *the God of truth,*

‘ In all His words most wonderful
Most sure in all His ways.’³

(2) Again, the word *Amen* is used to express the response of human will and desire to the revealed purpose of God. It is the utterance of one who accepts with utter simplicity the word of God and builds his life upon it. In particular we may regard the *Amen* which closes the Lord’s Prayer as our response to that other *Amen* with which Christ ratifies the promise, *If ye shall ask anything of the Father, He will give it you in My name.* It is the utterance of faith taking

¹ John iii. 5 ; vi. 32, 53. Cp. xvi. 23.

² 2 Tim. ii. 13.

³ See the fine statement of this truth in Irenaeus, *c. haer.* iv. 5, 1, and 7, 3.

its stand securely upon the faithfulness of God,¹ and confiding wholly in His goodwill, in His power and in His love. *Faithful is He that calleth you, Who also will do it.* By our use of the word *Amen* we set our seal to this, that *God is true* and has once for all manifested in His Son, born for man, crucified, risen and exalted, the glory of His character and the truth of His promises. But our *Amen* is not a mere verbal assent. It implies, if we use it with sincere and deliberate purpose, that with our whole being we desire to respond to God's claim. For *the truth of God*, His utter dependableness as an object of trust and devotion, demands wholehearted sincerity in man. Christian life is *response*: it is *converse* in which the soul makes answer to the voice of God and is answered again. 'The glory of the Christian life,' says a devout writer, 'is that it is all a life of correspondence between the creature and the Creator, between our emptiness and Christ's fullness. The Christian is not more wise or full than other men, but he is more conscious of his emptiness; his life means his appeal to God and God's response to that appeal.'² This sincerity of response must colour the whole of life. Trustworthiness is of the very essence of Christian character, a necessary element in the effort to imitate God. For God is 'the simplest of all beings,' and we reflect this simplicity in ourselves in so far as we *speak* or rather *do, the truth, in love*,³ and endeavour, by showing mercy, to obtain mercy.⁴

(3) Once more, we may think of the word *Amen* as an

¹ See Rom. iv. 21; Heb. x. 23; xi. 11; 1 Thess. v. 24; John iv. 33.

² Fr. Congreve, *Christian Life a Response*, serm. i.

³ Eph. iv. 15, where Vulg. has *veritatem facientes in caritate*.

⁴ Augustine says very beautifully: 'Sinceritas autem et veritas est, etiam si proficit aliquis; meminisse quid fuerit, et multo magis misereri lapsorum; quandoquidem ipse erectus est a lapsu suo per Christi misericordiam, qui sine ullo suo peccato se pro peccatoribus humiliavit' (*c. epist. Parmen. iii. 5*).

utterance of praise and thanksgiving. We find it thus employed on the lips of angels in heaven: *Amen. Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*¹ Each book of the Psalter—Israel’s book of Praises (*tehillim*)—ends with an *Amen*, except the last, which closes with *Hallelujah*. So, again, the Church of the redeemed on earth ratifies the solemn ‘giving of thanks,’ which constitutes its central and supreme act of worship, with the *Amen* of the congregation.² Thanksgiving, indeed, is the crown and climax of worship. We praise God for all that He has revealed concerning Himself; all that He has wrought for man; all that He has given; all that He has promised; all that He *is* to His creatures. We bless Him for the means of grace whereby He unites us to Himself; for *the hope of glory*, that is, of perfected life, which is the predestined goal of our pilgrimage.

Thus, to use a familiar image, the streams of thanksgiving return to the ocean of divine love which is their source. *Thine is the glory.* ‘All the communications of Thy goodness, as they flow from Thee, return to Thee again in sacrifices of love, of praise and adoration.’³ In saying *Amen* we not only sum up all that we have asked in our prayer—we gather up all that we have already learned, and are yet to learn, touching the heavenliness, the majesty, the unsearchable riches of wisdom and love that are hid in Him Who has taught us to say *Our Father, Which art in heaven.*

*Whatsoever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*⁴

The Prayer which we have been studying is a rule not

¹ Rev. vii. 12; xix. 4.

² 1 Cor. xiv. 16.

³ Bp. Ken, *The Practice of Divine Love*, part 4, s. fin. Cp. Bern. in *Cant.*, xiii. 1.

⁴ Col. iii. 17.

only of *worship*, but of *work*. It is the divinely-taught response to truths which are intended to be at once the support of faith and the rule of action. It is in the Son of God incarnate that those truths are revealed; it is the Spirit of God Who glorifies Him by taking of that which is His and declaring it to the faithful.¹ In Christ are manifested the Kingdom, the power and the glory which we ascribe to the Father. In Him the Kingdom is once for all shown to be the perfect fulfilment, by all created beings, of the divine will; through Him is imparted to the Church that power whereby she is enabled to wage her warfare and to bear her testimony; in Him as the Only-begotten Son is revealed the essential glory of the divine holiness. Thus, when we ascribe to our heavenly Father the Kingdom, the power and the glory, we attribute to Him that which is made known only in *the Son of His Love*, that which we have experienced only through the operation of the Spirit of grace. We acknowledge, in a word, the glory of the eternal Trinity.

¹ John xvi. 14.

APPENDIX

THE LORD'S PRAYER

I

ST. MATT. vi. 9-13

Πάτερ ἡμῶν, ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς·
 ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου·
 ἐλθάτω ἡ βασιλεία σου·
 γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου,
 ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς·
 τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον
 δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον·
 καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν,
 ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν
 τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν·
 καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πει-
 ρασμόν,
 ἀλλὰ ῥύσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονη-
 ροῦ·

ST. LUKE xi. 2-4

Πάτερ,
 ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου·
 ἐλθάτω ἡ βασιλεία σου·

 τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον
 δίδου ἡμῖν τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν·
 καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν,
 καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἀφίομεν
 παντὶ ὀφείλοντι ἡμῖν·
 καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πει-
 ρασμόν·

II

FROM THE DIDACHÉ ch. viii. [before A.D. 150] (with the variations in St. Matt. vi. noted below).

πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ,¹
 ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου,
 ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου,
 γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου
 ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ² γῆς·

¹ τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

² + τῆς.

τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον·
καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὴν ὀφειλὴν¹ ἡμῶν
ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφίεμεν² τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν·
καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πείρασμόν,
ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ·
[ὅτι σοῦ ἐστιν³ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα
εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας· ἀμήν].

¹ τὰ ὀφειλήματα.² ἀφήκαμεν.³ + ἡ βασιλεία καὶ.

III

CYRIL OF JERUSALEM (c. 348) COMPARED WITH THE TEXT OF
ST. MATTHEW [WH] AND ST. LUKE⁴

πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς
ἀγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου
ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου
γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου, ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς·
τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον
καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς
ἀφίεμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν
καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πείρασμόν, [κύριε]
ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

4] om. Luke. της : om. Matt.

5] δος κτλ : διδου ημιν το καθ' ημεραν. Luke.

6] τα οφειληματα : τας αμαρτίας. Luke.

— ως και ημεις : και γαρ αυτοι. Luke.

7] αφιεμεν · αφηκαμεν Matt. αφιομεν Luke.

τοις οφειλεταις ημων : παντι οφειλοντι ημιν Luke.

IV

FROM THE LATIN FATHERS AND VERSIONS

(I) *Tertullian*

Pater qui in coelis es, Sanctificetur nomen tuum :
Fiat voluntas tua in coelis et in terra

⁴ The form commented on by St. Cyril corresponds exactly with that which appears in the *Liturgy of St. James* (West Syrian). See Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, p. 60.

Veniat Regnum tuum :
 Panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie
 [Et] dimitte nobis debita nostra
 [Sicut et] remittimus¹ nos debitoribus nostris
 [Et] ne nos inducas in tentationem
 Sed evehe nos a malo.

(2) *Cyprian*

Pater noster qui es in coelis
 Sanctificetur nomen tuum
 Adveniat regnum tuum
 Fiat voluntas tua sicut in coelo et in terra
 Panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie
 Et remitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos remittimus debitoribus
 nostris
 Et ne nos patiaris induci in tentationem
 Sed libera nos a malo.

(3) *Augustine (ep. cxxx.)*

Paternoster qui es in coelis
 Sanctificetur nomen tuum
 Adveniat regnum tuum
 Fiat voluntas tua sicut in coelo et in terra
 Panem nostrum quotidianum² da nobis hodie
 Et dimitte nobis debita nostra sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus
 nostris
 Et ne nos inferas³ in tentationem
 [Sed] libera nos a malo.

- (4) The Lord's Prayer from *codex Bobiensis* (k)—a fifth century MS. now preserved at Turin, but said to have belonged to St. Columban, the founder of the monastery of Bobbio ; 'perhaps the most important of the O.L. MSS.' (E. Nestle). The MS. contains only fragments of St. Matthew and St. Mark.

¹ ? remitemus (remittere profiteur, *de orat.* vii.).

² supersubstantialem (Vulg.).

³ inducas (Vulg.).

Pater noster qui *es* in caelis sanctificetur nomen tuum ueniat regnum tuum fiat voluntas tua in caelo et in terra panem nostrum cottidianum da nobis hodie et remitte nobis debita nostra sicut et nos remittimus debitoribus nostris et ne passus fueris induci nos in temptationē set libera nos a malo quoniam est tibi uirtus in saecula saeculorū.

- 2] *ueniad*: adueniat (b) (q).
 3] *in caelo*: Sicut in caelo et in terra (g₁) (q).
 4, 5] *remitte . . . remittimus*: dimitte . . . dimittimus (g₁).
 dimitte . . . remittimus (b): remitte . . . dimittimus (q).
 5, 6] *ne passus*, etc.: ne inducas nos (g₁) (q), ne nos inducas (b).
 7] *quoniam*, etc.: quoniam tuum est regnum et uirtus et gloria in saecula (g₁) (q).

(5) The Lord's Prayer (Luke xi.) from *codex Corbeiensis* (ff₂), containing the Gospels with some lacunae (including Matt. vi.); probably belonging to the sixth century.

Pater sancte qui in celis est sanctificetur nomen tuum ueniat regnum tuum fiat uoluntas tua sicut in celo et in terra panem nostrum cottidianū da nobis hodie et dimitte nobis debita nostra sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris et ne nos inducas in temptationē sed libera nos a malo.

- 1] *sancte*: noster (q) (b).
 est: es (q) es in caelis (b).
 4] *hodie*: cottidie (q).
 5] *debita*: peccata (q).
 sicut: quomodo et ipsi dimittimus omni debenti nobis (q).
 7] *a malo*: ab inimico (b).¹

(6) *The Lord's Prayer from the Vulgate* (Matt.)

Pater noster qui es in caelis
 sanctificetur nomen tuum
 adueniat regnum tuum

¹ The other Old Latin versions collated above are *cod. b, veronensis* (of fourth or fifth century), g₁, *sangermanensis* (ninth century), q, *Monacensis* (sixth or seventh century).

fiat voluntas tua sicut in caelo et in terra
 panem nostrum supersubstantialem da nobis hodie
 et dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos
 dimittimus debitoribus nostris
 et ne nos inducas in tentationem
 sed libera nos a malo. Amen.

(Luke xi.)

Pater, sanctificetur nomen tuum
 adveniat regnum tuum
 panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie
 et dimitte nobis peccata nostra siquidem et ipsi
 dimittimus omni debenti nobis. Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.

V

- (1) EARLY VERSION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER FROM *The Ayenbite of Inwyt* ('Remorse of Conscience') of DAN MICHEL OF NORTHGATE (KENT): c. 1340 [edited for the Early English Text Society by Dr. Morris in 1866]

Vader oure þet art ine heuenes: y-halzed by þi name: cominde þi riche: y-worþe þi wil as ine heuene and ine erþe, bread oure echedayes yef ous to-day. and uorlet ous oure yeldinges, ase and we uor-leteþ oure yelderes: and ne ous led nazt in-to uondinge. ac vri ous vram queade. zuo by hit.

OTHER VERSIONS OF THE LORD'S PRAYER [see Maskell, *Monumenta Ritualia Eccl. Anglicanae* (1846), vol. ii. pp. 238, 239]

- (2) *From a MS. of the thirteenth century*

Fader oure that art in heve, i-halgeed bee thi nome, i-cume thi kinereiche, y-worthe thi wyll also is in hevene so be on erthe, oure iche-dayes-bred 3if us to day, and for3if us oure gultes, also we for3ifet oure gultare, and ne led ows nowth into fondinge, auth ales ows of harme. So be it.

(3) *From a MS. of the fourteenth century*

Fader oure that art in heuene, halwed be thi name, come thi kyngdom : fulfild be thi wil in heuene as in erthe : oure ech day bred ȝef us to day, and forȝeue us oure dettes as we forȝeue to oure dettours : and ne led us nouȝ in temptacion, bote deliuere us of euel. So be it.

(4) THE LORD'S PRAYER FROM WYCLIF'S TRANSLATION (*circ.* 1382)

(*St. Matthew*)

Oure Fadir that art in hevenes,
halwid be thi name,
thi kyngdom cumme to
be thi wille don as in heven and in erthe ;
ȝif to us this day oure breed over other substance ;
and forȝive to us oure dettis as we forȝeue to oure
dettours ; and leede us nat into temptacioun,
but delyvere us fro yvel. Amen.

(*St. Luke*)

Fadir, halewid be thi name
Thi kyngdom come to
ȝyve to us to day oure eche dayes breed
And forȝyve to us our synnes as we forȝyven to eche
owyng to us,
And leed not us into temptacioun.

(5) FROM A PRYMER OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Oure Fadir, that art in heuenes, halewid be thi name : thy rewme come to thee : be thi wille do as in heuene and in erthe : oure eche daies breed ȝyue us to day ; and forȝyue us oure dettis, as and we forȝeuen to oure dettouris, and ne lede us into temptacioun : but delyuere us fro yuel. So be it.

(6) T. MATTHEW'S BIBLE (1537)

St. Matthew

O oure Father which arte in
 heven halowed by thy name
 Let thy kyngdome come
 Thy will be fulfilled as well in
 erth as it is in heven
 Geve us this daye oure dayly
 bred
 And forgeve us oure treaspases
 even as we forgeve oure tres-
 pacers
 And leade us not into tempta-
 cion; but delyver us frō
 evyll
 For thyne is the kyngedome
 and the power and the
 glorye for ever. Amen.

St. Luke

O oure Father which arte in
 heaven halowed be thy name
 Thy kyngdome come
 Thy will be fulfilled even in
 erth as it is in heaven
 Oure dayly breed geve us ever-
 more
 And forgeve us oure synnes
 For even we forgeve every
 man yt trespasseth us
 And leade us not into tempta-
 cion but delyver us frō
 evyll.

(7) THE GREAT BIBLE (1539)

[The Bible in Englyshe, etc., *printed by Edwarde Whitchurch*]

Oure Father whych arte in
 heaven, halowed be thy name
 Let thy kyngdome come
 Thy wyl be fulfilled as wel
 in earth as it is in heaven
 Geve us thys days oure dayly
 breade
 And forgeve us oure dettes as
 we forgeve our detters
 And lead us not into tempta-
 cion but delyver us from evel.
 For thyne is the kyngdome
 and the power and the
 glorye for ever. Amen.

O oure Father whyche art in
 heaven halowed be thy name
 Thy kyngdome come
 Thy wyl be fulfilled, even in
 earth also as it is in heaven
 Our daylye breade geve us
 thys daye
 And forgeve us our synnes, for
 even we forgeve every man
 that trespasseth us
 And leade us not into tempta-
 tion
 But delyver us from evell.

(8) THE BISHOPS' BIBLE (1568)

*St. Matthew**St. Luke*

O our Father which art in
 heaven
 Halowed be thy name
 Let thy kyngdome come
 Thy wyll be done as well in
 earth as it is in heaven
 Geve us this day our dayly
 breade
 And forgeve us our dettes
 as we forgeve our detters

And leade us not into tempta-
 tion but delyver us from
 evyll

For thyne is the kyngdome,
 the power and the glory for
 ever. Amen.

O our Father which art in
 heaven
 Halowed be thy name
 Thy kyngdome come
 Thy wyll be fulfilled even in
 earth also as it is in heaven
 Our dayly breade geve us this
 day
 And forgeve us our synnes, for
 even we forgeve every man
 that trespasseth us
 And leade us not into tempta-
 tion but delyver us from
 evyll.

(9) FROM THE RHEIMS (ENGLISH) VERSION (1582)

St. Matthew

Our Father, who art in heaven
 Hallowed be thy name
 Thy kingdom come
 Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven
 Give us this day our supersubstantial bread
 And forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors
 And lead us not into temptation
 But deliver us from evil. Amen.

St. Luke

Father, hallowed be thy name
 Thy kingdom come
 Give us this day our daily bread
 And forgive us our sins for we also
 forgive every one that is indebted to us
 And lead us not into temptation.

VI

EXPOSITION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER TAKEN FROM THE *Lay Folks' Catechism* (an adaptation of Archbishop Thoresby's Catechism put forth in 1357, 'probably from the hand of the reformer [John Wyclif] himself')¹

Our fadyr that art in heuyn : halwyd be thy name.

In whyche wordys we mow lerne that men worthy to be herd must be knyght in charite and meknesse of herte :

sythen al the holy trinite ys fadyr of us alle

and Holy chyrche is moðyr, we schulde loue as brethern.

And sethen God ys so hygh in heuyn aboue al his angelys

and we be so low in erthe, wrappid with many myscheuys,²

we schulde be resoun³ be meke and buxum⁴ to this Lord

and mekely pray to oure fadyr thatt halwyd be his name.

So as his name ys halowyd nedlych⁵ in hym-self,

Se be his name halwyd and stedfast in oure sowle

For when oure sowle was mad to lyknesse of the Trinite

Goddis hygh name was prented thereyn.

The secunde askynge of this prayer stondys in these wordys

Thy reme come to the, in-to the blysse of heuyn.

In so as the furste askynge answerys to the fadyr

so the secunde askynge answerys to the sone.

For he is that nobyl man that com down in-to erthe

to gete hym a Reme, and aftyr to turne agen.

The Reme of this fadyr ys callyd Holy chyrche

that at the day of dome schal go hennys in-to heuyn.

The thrydde askynge seyth thus **Be thy wille don**

as yt ys fully don in heuyn, so be yt don in erthe.

And this thrydde askynge answeris to the holy Gost

ffor he ys good loue of the ffadyr and of the sone.

And al-thaw these askynges most nedelynge⁵ be fulfyllyd,

natheles mannys sowle ys lyfte up with charite

with desyre heyghed⁶ with God, and that ys a prayer.

¹ *The Lay Folks' Catechism*, etc., with introduction, notes, glossary and index by T. F. Simmons and H. E. Nolloth [Early English Text Society's publications, orig. [series, No. 118, London, 1901].

² Evils, adversities.

³ According to reason.

⁴ Submissive.

⁵ Necessarily.

⁶ Raised up.

Thus we seye Blyssyd be God, and other thyngys that nedis mot ¹ be.

And these thre askynges arn to the holy Trinite,
And therefore we schape oure wordys only to God.
The secunde part of this prayer conteynes foure askyngys.
Furst we preye oure faðyr thus :

Fadyr, oure eche day bred gyf us to day.

And this may be wel undirstonde on thre manerys,
as seynt Austyn seyth be wit of God almyghthy.
Furst we aske oure bodely fode for to serue oure faðyr ;
after we aske the sacrament to haue mende² of oure faðyr :
and aftyrward we aske Goddys word to fede with oure sowle.
And for we haue nede of alle these yche day
therfore Crist callys hem oure eche day bred.

And for we schulde be trewe and ete oure owne bred
[and not in wrong ete our neeghboris breed]

therfore Crist techis us to aske of hym oure bred.
And for Crist wolde that oure hope were freschyd³ in hym,
oure thoght and oure mynde and alle oure desyre,
therfore he byddys us aske this mete of hym to day.

The secunde part of this askyngse sewyth⁴ in these wordys
For-geve us our dettys as we do to oure dettours.

These dettys that we owe to God are seruyse that we owe to hym.
And as ofte tymes as we fayle we renne in-to dette of peyne :
and but God for-geve us this dette of synne
we be nat worthy to haue aught of oure faðyr.

And for God wyl that we loue oure bretheryn,
He knyttys to a condicioun undyr whyche we aske this bone
that He schulde forgeve us oure dettys as we forgeve oure
dettowrys :

so that gif we be un-merciful to men that be oure dettours,
trist we to oure faðyr that he wyl punysche us :
And so we praye oure hyghe juge agens oure owyn hed.
But undirstonde we that we mowe lefully⁵
aske of oure brothern dette of erthelyche thyngys,
but this askyngse mot⁶ be in resoun and charite,
and than⁷ yt [is] for charite and loue and profyt to oure
neyghebore.

¹ Must.

² Remembrance.

³ Refreshed, renewed.

⁴ Follows.

⁵ May allowably.

⁶ Must.

⁷ Then.

And here we mot fle bothe rancour and hate
and envye to oure [neyghbore] with other schrewde castys.¹
The thrydde askynge of this part swyt² in these wordys

Our fadyr, lede us nat in temptacioun

Soth³ it is that Crist was temptyd and God temptys man for
loue,

but hard it ys and greuouus peyne to be lad in temptacioun.
For whan man of his foly in-to myre of synne fallys,
ryght jagement of God wol make hym synke deppyr.

And herfore⁴ we pray hym our faðyr
that he lede us nat into this hardnesse of synne
lest we come neuer owt.

And herfore the laste askynge sewyth in these wordys :

But gracios fadyr delyvere us fro evyl.

The worst thyng in this world is wykkydnesse of synne
sytthe a man for nothyng schulde wylle to do synne,
sythen for al this world ne noght ther-yn schuld ony man do
synne.

But sythen sum synnes be moche werse than sum
in this last askynge we pray delyveraunce of the werste synne.
The werst synne ys the deuelys synne,
that man deyes yn withoute repentaunce
that euyr schal be punyschyd : and that callys the gospel
synne agenst the holy Gost.

God for his grete mercy kepe us fro this euyl
and than schulen we have euer-lastyngge fredam. Amen.

¹ Devices, plots.

² Follows.

³ Truth.

⁴ For this reason.



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