June 25

Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. Colossians 4:2

EVERY trial of faith and patience is an occasion for prayer for the promised succor. Every failure to gain victory is an occasion for a prayer for forgiveness, and as well for divine blessing, that the lesson of our own weakness may be deeply impressed, so that in the next similar trial we may promptly apply for and lay hold upon the "grace to help" promised. Every victory over self is an occasion for prayer that we be not high minded and puffed up, but kept humble and watchful for the next attack from the great adversary. Every service for the Truth becomes an occasion for a prayer of thanks for the privilege of serving the Great King, and mayhap to have suffered something for His cause; and a reason for supplication for further opportunities for service and grace to use them wisely. *Z.'96-163 R2006:1*

CONTEXT

Col 4:2-4 KJV "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; (3) Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: (4) That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak."

CR440 "There are certain cases in which we are told to pray. As the Apostle Paul says, "Dear brethren, pray for us." For what? What do we want each other to pray for? "O! that a door of utterance may be opened to us, to speak the mystery of Christ," says the Apostle. (Col. 4:3.) …Pray for opportunities of service. Pray for wisdom in presenting the message to others. Pray for the Lord to assist you in inculcating meekness, humility, and gentleness. That is what we are to pray for."

"CONTINUE IN PRAYER AND WATCH"

R2775 Concerning Mark 14:38 "Whenever we find the Lord's people attempting to live a life of holiness and consecration, yet ignoring the injunction of our Lord to watch and pray, we know that they are unwise; and that however much they may be virgins, pure ones, they are foolish: they cannot hope to gain the victory over self and sin and the Adversary, single-handed, alone. If the Master himself needed strengthening, surely we also need it; and if he received it in response to supplications with strong cryings and tears, it is an intimation to us of the way in which God is pleased to bestow the full assurance of faith which is able to strengthen us as good soldiers to endure any and everything in his name and service."

"CONTINUE IN PRAYER"

R4983 "The answer to our prayer is not always granted immediately; but after we have made sure that our requests are in accord with the promises, those things which lie very close to our hearts become our continual prayer, associating in our minds with all of life's duties and interests, the heart gravitating continually toward the thing we have desired of the Lord, and on suitable opportunities repeating to Him the request. This is the kind of prayer which the Lord commended, saying, "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." (Luke 18:1.) The Lord's people ought to continue asking for the right things with some degree of persistency, and should not grow weary, hopeless, faithless, faint in their hearts...

Undoubtedly one reason for the Lord's delay in answering us is often to test the strength and the depth of our desires for the good things that we request of Him…

The giving of His Holy Spirit is a gradual process; and we are enabled to receive it only in proportion as we are emptied of the worldly or selfish spirit. It requires time to become thus emptied of self and prepared for the mind of Christ; in some it requires longer for this than in others; but all need emptying in order to receive the refilling."

R1865 "All night, until the break of day, Jacob wrestled in prayer, saying, "I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me." Paul *thrice* besought the Lord until he was assured his grace would be sufficient for him. The Lord himself frequently spent *whole nights* in prayer, and he prayed earnestly and with many tears. (Luke 6:12; Matt. 14:23; Mark 6:46; 1:35; Luke 5:16; Heb. 5:7.) And the Apostle Paul says, "In everything, by prayer and supplication [earnest pleading] with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."--Phil 4:6…

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

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

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

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

R3127 "REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAY."—PHILIPPIANS 4:1-13...

This, the Golden Text of the lesson, represents the very essence of Christian living. Under present conditions it is not supposable that outward circumstances will always be favorable to rejoicing, from the natural standpoint. He, therefore, who would rejoice alway in the Lord must have faith in the Lord,-- trust, hope, love. Without these he could not so appropriate to himself the gracious promises of the Word as to be able to rejoice in tribulation and suffering and under trials and difficulties, and when falsely accused and misrepresented, and when slandered and evilly entreated for the truth's sake. The only ones who can rejoice *alway* are those who are living very near to the Lord, and who can feel always their oneness with him, and that his protection and care are over them, and that his promise is sure, that all things shall work together for their highest welfare, as New Creatures."

Psa 61:2-5 KJV "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. …(4) I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah. (5) For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear {reverence} thy name."

"WITH THANKSGIVING"

(Phil 4:6 ASV) "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

R3128 "We should make every request in a spirit of thanksgiving. This spirit of thanksgiving implies a recognition that the circumstances and conditions in which *we are,* have been supervised of the Lord, and that we are appreciative of his care and trust it for the future…

Even in the attitude of prayer and thanksgiving we probably do not discern one-half of our causes for gratitude…

We are not to be content to allow the opportunities and talents and privileges

which the Lord has given us to lie idly by, unused; but while using these talents and opportunities to the very best of our ability and intelligence, and while seeking in prayer and supplication, rejoicing and thanksgiving, to use them all as would please the Lord, we should be *content with the result of such efforts…*

The secret of the Apostle's success is stated in the last verse of the lesson. {i.e. Phil. 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."} It was his close relationship to the Lord, his intimate union with him, his reliance upon him: he was abiding as a branch in the Vine, and was strengthened by the same spirit, and thus was enabled to do all these things and to pass through all these experiences with gratitude, with thankfulness, with rejoicing. Let us all thus learn to "Rejoice in the Lord alway."

R5692 "The Prophet David…pictures the Christian in his distress coming to God in His appointed way: "…Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense." This is the same thought elsewhere expressed in the Bible--that the prayers of God's people rise up before Him as a sweet perfume. (Revelation 5:8.) And, by the way, we remember that the incense of old, which typified the prayers of the saints, was composed of a rare mixture of spices, giving forth a peculiarly sweet odor; and that nobody was allowed to make that incense except the priests who were to offer it. (Exo. 30:34-38; 37:29) Thus again the Lord shows us that the privilege of prayer, of approaching Him in an acceptable manner, is confined to the antitypical priests, called by St. Peter the Royal Priesthood.-- 1 Peter 2:9."

Frey192 "Frankincense—of heart, adoration, appreciation, and gratitude." (R3703)

"So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows." (Psa. 61:8)

Such then, must the prayer life, the life of prayer be, that it glorifies God, and ministers to our brethren. Thus, it calls for the deepest sincerity; and any simulation is but hypocrisy—an abomination unto the Lord. This is the reason why those of old were forbidden to make unto themselves anything like this "sweet incense" (Exod. 30:37,38), under penalty of being cut off from among the people of God."

T120 *"The Golden Altar* in the "Holy" would seem to represent the "little flock," the consecrated Church in the present sacrificing condition. From this altar ascends the sweet incense, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ—the willing services of the priests: their praises, their willing obedience—all things whatsoever they do to the glory of God. Those who thus offer incense acceptable to God (1 Pet. 2:5) come very close to their Father—close up to the "Veil" which separates from the "Most Holy"; and if *they* have requests to make they may be presented with the incense—"much incense *with* the prayers of *saints*." (Rev. 8:3) The prayers of such priests of God are effectual. Our Lord Jesus kept the incense continually burning, and could say, "I know that thou hearest me always." (John 11:42) So the under-priests, "members of his Body," will be heard always if they continually offer the incense of faith, love and obedience to God: and none should expect to have requests recognized who do not thus keep their covenant—"If ye abide in me and my words [teachings] abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7) The necessity of a clear apprehension of Christ's teachings as a guide to our requests and expectations, that we may not "*ask amiss*" and out of harmony with God's plan, is clearly shown by this scripture—but seldom noticed."

INCENSE OF TRUST, FAITH, LOVE, THANKFULNESS & OBEDIENCE ETC. FROM THE HEART

Meggison's Notes Ex. 30:35 "The sprinkling of the incense represents the contact of the divinely instructed new mind with our trials (the bringing of our trust, faith, etc., to bear upon our trials.) Incense was sprinkled gradually, not all at once. So we overcome our troubles gradually. The damping of the fire by the incense pictures our overcoming our trials. Smoke represents the memory of the lessons learned from our troubles, hope in Jesus' merit as sufficient for our sins (1John 1:9); lessons of faith and obedience unto God. This carried the sweet odor beyond the second vail to the Mercy Seat. The sweet savour shows how Jesus adds his merit to ours and thus it is a sweet odor, acceptable and pleasing, precious to God."

R2004 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

RESTITUTION, FAITH CURES, PRAYER CURES AND THE GIFT OF HEALING

--CONTINUED FROM OUR LAST--

THE privilege of prayer which God has provided for his people is one of the greatest boons imaginable. "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. 4:16.) The mercy has been provided by God in the great sacrifice of Christ, sufficient to cover all "the sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;" but we must by faith approach the throne of grace in order to obtain this mercy. So, also, with all of our necessities as new creatures in Christ; grace to help for every time of need lies waiting for us to claim it--at the throne of grace. Although our Heavenly Father knoweth what we need, and has made so abundant a provision for us, yet he will be inquired of, solicited, by his people, for these mercies which he assures us he is far more pleased to give than are earthly parents to do good unto their children.

God's appointment that his people should approach him in prayer is, therefore, not for the purpose of informing him of our needs, for these he knows far better than we do, but for our spiritual profit, that we may be kept in close touch with him, that we may continually realize his love and care and grace toward all who have come into the divine family through Christ and the New Covenant. For this reason, while sending rain and sunshine upon the world in general, God holds in his hand many favors, great and small, for "his people," which he will bestow only in answer to their faith and prayers.

{1}Prayer is not a privilege merely, but also a necessity; --commanded as indispensable to our Christian growth. (Rom. 12:9-13; 1 Thes. 5:17.) Whoever loses the desire to thank and worship and commune with the Father of mercies, may rest assured that he is losing the very spirit of sonship, and should promptly seek and remove the barrier--the world, the flesh or the devil. Every additional evidence of the Lord's confidence in us by the revealing to us of his character and plan, so far from diminishing our worship and prayers, should multiply them. If our hearts are good soil they will bring forth the more abundantly.

{1} April 5 Manna, Psa. 63:5-6

THE MODEL PRAYER.

All of our Lord's recorded prayers are beautiful in their simplicity, trustfulness and unselfishness; but the one usually termed "the Lord's prayer," given as an example of a proper prayer, is certainly in every way a model, which we do well to follow closely in all our petitions.--Luke 11:2-4; Matt. 6:9-13.

(1) Its opening address is full of filial reverence and trust,--"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name!" What could be more sweet and childlike! What could be more reverent than this bold approach, direct to the throne of the heavenly grace!

(2) It does not proceed hastily to the lesser things of a personal character, but, recognizing that God takes knowledge of all of earth's affairs, and has a gracious and sufficient remedy already provided, the model prayer acknowledges this, and thus expresses faith and interest in God's plan as revealed in his Word, saying: "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Yes, indeed, it is not only fitting that all who approach God in prayer should previously have searched to know something of what he has revealed concerning his will and plan, but also that after learning of it they should thus confess faith in God, that his plan, when fully executed, will more than meet all the necessities of our case. This is not a petition that God would bring in his Kingdom before his appointed time, nor an expression of an impatient longing for it; but an expression of hope and trust and patient waiting for that which we know will more than meet all proper expectations, and fulfill all the promises of God's Word. It also signifies our allegiance to the Kingdom and its laws and spirit; and hence implies that so far as we are concerned, we will do all in our power to conform our lives to its precepts even now.

(3) Then coming to personal desires, it requests only the necessities,--the "bread and water," which God assures us shall be sure to all who are truly his. It asks, "Give us this day our daily bread." The request is not for wealth, nor luxuries, nor overplus, nor dainties and delicacies. It is simply an acknowledgment of God as the great Provider, and of our reliance upon him and his promises, leaving quantity and quality and everything else to divine wisdom and love, to be ordered to our highest good.

(4) Although our sins have been forgiven, and we have been received into the family of God as sons before we have any right to pray "Our Father," yet we are very humbly to feel that we stand as "sons" by grace in Christ, and not in merit of our own. We therefore appropriately acknowledge that we are trespassers, daily, who do not and cannot do the will of God perfectly, praying, "Forgive us our trespasses," our shortcomings.

(5) Next we acknowledge a principle of God's justice, that mercy will be extended through Christ only in proportion as we realize the spirit of divine mercy, and are willing to exercise it toward others who come short of perfection in their dealings with us; hence we add, *"as* we forgive those who trespass against us." This is equivalent to a bargain with God, that we accept his terms of mercy, and will expect none, except as we ourselves exercise it toward others. What a thought! If fully appreciated, how it would influence all of God's sons to be kind and generous toward each other and toward all men *in thought* as well as in word and deed.--See Matt. 5:24; 6:15.

(6) "And lead us not into temptation;" or, rather, since chastisements and temptations (or trials) are necessary to our discipline and preparation for the Kingdom (James 1:2-12), we must understand this as the *Emphatic Diaglott* indeed renders it, "Abandon us not to trial." Since the trial of our faith worketh patience, experience and hope (1 Pet. 4:12; Rom. 5:3-5), and is needful for our perfecting in holiness (1 Pet. 1:6,7), the Father will not hinder us from having temptations, even though he himself tempteth no man. (Jas. 1:13.) A man is *tempted* when he is led astray and enticed by his own selfish, fallen desires; he *sins* when he yields to those desires. (James 1:14.) But in the hour of trial, temptation, who could come off conqueror without the promised "grace sufficient for every time of need" which will succor us and not permit us to be tempted above what we are able to bear, but will with the temptation provide also a way of escape?--1 Cor. 10:13.

(7) "But deliver us from evil," or, as some prefer it, Deliver us from the Evil One. [*]The great Adversary is as much on the alert to entrap us through the weaknesses of the flesh, as our Lord is ready to deliver us and give us victory. We are not sufficient of ourselves for such a contest against the powers of darkness, and hence have need frequently of this petition to the throne of grace, for as the Apostle declares, "our sufficiency is of God."--2 Cor. 3:5.

ASK IN FAITH, NOTHING DOUBTING.

Our prayers are not to be "vain repetitions," formal requests for what we do not expect. We are to "ask in faith, nothing wavering." (James 1:6.) And whatsoever things ye ask "believe that ye [shall] receive them," for whatsoever is not of faith is sin, hypocrisy. --Mark 11:11,24; Rom. 14:23.

The child of God must therefore be a close student of his Father's Word; because he is expected to ask that he may receive, that his joy may be full; and he is cautioned to ask only for such things as his Father has expressed a willingness to grant; and he must ask in faith or not at all.

There can be no doubt that in this matter of prayer, as in other matters, our Heavenly Father designs to cultivate faith in his people. He tells us that "Without faith it is impossible to please God;" and that "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." Hence, only those who exercise faith, and ask in prayer for the promised favors, are really ready to receive them according to God's judgment and arrangement. This being the case, it should be the prayer of God's people to-day, as amongst the Apostles, "Lord! increase our faith." And thus praying, and laboring to this end, each would be more and more helped in overcoming the world and its faithless influences.

True faith is not credulity. It is critical, and believes only upon good evidence. It criticizes closely and distinguishes clearly between the teachings of men and the substantiated Word of God. But, having found the Word of God, it trusts it implicitly, knowing that its Author cannot lie; and that all his purposes and promises will be accomplished.

True faith, then, makes sure of its ground by giving careful heed to the Lord's Word; and then, asking according to that Word, it has confidence in the results, and waits and prays and watches, perseveringly and patiently. "Watch and pray," and "believe that ye shall receive," were our Lord's frequent injunctions. He spake a parable about an unjust judge who was moved by the importunities of a poor widow to do her justice; and then inquired whether God, the true judge, would not in due time hear his elect Church, and avenge their cause justly, though he wait a long time,--until his own "due time." And we are told that he uttered this parable to the purport that God's people ought to pray continuously, and "not to faint [yield]."-- Luke 18:1.

{2}Whatever might be our natural inclinations with reference to definiteness and persistency in prayer, we must take our instructions from the Scriptures; and, overcoming our natural predilections, we must as "little children" and as "dear children" conform our views and conduct to the instruction which is from above. Let us all, therefore, remember the words, "Ask [in my name] and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." (John 16:24.) The Heavenly Father has multiplied mercies, blessings and providences in store for his obedient and faithful children *who will ask for them.*

True, some of these proper and authorized and much desired requests are long delayed;--for instance, the Church for more than eighteen centuries has prayed, "Thy Kingdom come! Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." God has heard, but has not answered yet. Nevertheless all who have thus prayed for and desired the Millennial Kingdom have been blessed by their faith in that Kingdom not seen as yet,--but evidently now very near. However, other requests--for daily food and for succor in temptation and deliverance from the Evil One,--have been promptly answered.

In this connection notice specially that the privilege of prayer, or any other favor of God, is not granted for selfish purposes. A thing which might be properly desired and asked for in one case might be improper if asked for from some other motive. To desire and ask for something good in itself, in order that we might be glorified before our fellows, is a wrong request, because of a wrong motive.

The desire for a good thing, simply for ease and convenience, is an improper, selfish motive. The Apostle refers to such cases, saying, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, to consume it upon your desires,"--*i.e.,* for vain-glorious purposes or other selfish reasons. (Jas. 4:3.) To ask for some good thing simply to make a test of it, thereby to establish our faith, is seemingly an improper request, for none but the faith-*full* are promised anything.

Besides, God's plan is that we should walk by faith and not by sight. Hence, we not only should not ask anything unauthorized, but as we grow in spirituality our petitions will be chiefly for spiritual favors; and even in asking for these we should be particular not to specify *how* they are to come. And we should look for the answers to our prayers in natural rather than supernatural channels, since God's usual method is to use supernatural means only where the natural means are inadequate.

The graces of the holy Spirit are specially stated to be open to our requests and corresponding efforts: Your Heavenly Father is more willing to give the holy Spirit to them that ask it, than earthly parents are to give good (earthly) gifts to their children.--Luke 11:13.

"YE HAVE NOT, BECAUSE YE ASK NOT."

--James 4:2.--

The trouble with many is that they do not avail themselves of the great stock of divine grace set apart for the benefit of those who, abiding in Christ, and his word abiding in them, do ask, do seek and do find. Let no one suppose that all prayer must be selfish. Quite to the contrary, we have a wide field of prayer-liberty in full accord with the Lord's Word and will.

{3}Every trial of faith and patience is an occasion for prayer for the promised succor. Every failure to gain victory is an occasion for a prayer for forgiveness, and as well for divine blessing, that the lesson of our own weakness may be deeply impressed, so that in the next similar trial we may promptly apply for and lay hold upon the "grace to help" promised. Every victory over self is an occasion for prayer that we be not high minded and puffed up, but kept humble and watchful for the next attack from the great Adversary. Every service for the truth becomes an occasion for a prayer of thanks for the privilege of serving the Great King and mayhap to have suffered something for his cause; and a cause for supplication for further opportunities of service and grace to use them wisely.

{4}If you have trials and temptations which you are able to overcome, and which are working out in your character patience, experience, brotherly-kindness, sympathy and love, rejoice and offer the prayer of thanksgiving and acknowledgment of divine mercy and help. If your trials seem heavier than you can bear, and likely to crush you, take the matter to the great Burden-bearer, and ask his help in bearing whatever would do you good, and release from all that would not do you good, but which would injure you. If your

[*] The remaining sentence with which this prayer is usually closed is spurious--not found in the ancient Greek MSS. It would appear to have been added at the time when an earthly exaltation of the Church had led some to believe that the Papal glory was the glory of God's Kingdom.

{2} Jan. 3 Manna, 1Thess. 5:17

{3} June 25 Manna, Col. 4:2

{4} Sept. 16 Manna, Psa. 29:11

heart is full of a desire to obey the Lord's injunction and "forget not the assembling," and you are *unreasonably* hindered in a way that you have tried to overcome but cannot, take the matter to the Lord in prayer, and watch and wait and strive according to your prayer, and you will soon see a manifestation of divine power on your behalf. If you see a true brother, a true "soldier" faltering and in danger, let your heart be so full of love for all of the Lord's "brethren" that you will not only run to his relief, but also supplicate the throne of the heavenly grace unceasingly, until you have regained him, or until in his wilfulness he has renounced the "narrow way" entirely. And should the fault be your own, your prayers and efforts will surely be blessed and overruled to your own profit. {5}If you have no burning zeal to preach the good tidings of great joy, pray earnestly and faithfully and persistently for it, and strive for it, and you will soon have it. If you have a zeal and love for the gospel, and lack ability to present it, pray for the ability while you make full use of what you have. If you have the zeal and the ability and lack an opportunity, take it to the Lord in prayer as soon as you can, telling him that you are faithfully using all the opportunities you have. Then watch for more opportunities without slacking your hand to use the very humblest and smallest within your reach.

Have you a quarrelsome disposition, or other bad habits, which you realize are a burden to your home and family, and to your brethren in the Lord's household? Take it to the Lord in prayer, asking grace and help to overcome, and meantime using your best diligence and effort in harmony with your prayer.

Do you lack wisdom, so that your efforts to serve the Lord and the truth are usually failures? Take it to the Lord in prayer, remembering the promise, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not."--James 1:5.

Have you business complications brought about by your lack of judgment, or the dishonesty of others, or your generosity to the poor, etc.? And do these perplex you and hinder your progress in spiritual matters, and thus threaten your welfare as a "new creature?" This surely is a proper matter to lay before the Lord at the throne of the heavenly grace. And although it would not be right for you to attempt to dictate how your relief shall come, and you should not expect the Lord to work a miracle to prosper your imprudent venture, yet you can ask his wisdom to guide and overrule in the results, better than your wisdom could do it.

Here is a wide range of subjects (and it might be widely expanded) upon which we may go to the throne boldly in the name of Jesus and ask and receive, seek and find, God's grace sufficient. But the range of subjects upon which we may not approach God in prayer is also large. We may not ask anything to minister to pride or selfishness or ambition, nor anything which would injure another; nor anything which would conflict with the Lord's plan as revealed in his Word. Oh! how many "ask and receive not, because they ask amiss," that they may consume the desired favor upon their earthly desires.

THE PRAYERS OF CHRIST UNSELFISH.

Our Lord's prayers, like all his acts and teachings, are models of unselfishness. Therefore, before we ask anything of the Father, one question should be carefully considered; *viz.*--Why do I want this? If the petitioner is consecrated and desires the healing of any that are sick, it should not be for his own glory, nor for his own comfort, nor in any manner for himself; for such requests are selfish and out of harmony with his covenant of sacrifice --"even unto death." Remember the course of our Lord and the apostles. Our Lord used divine power in feeding the multitude because of *their* necessity, and to glorify the Father; but when he himself was forty days without food he would not use the same power to feed himself, by commanding the stones to become bread, because this would have been contrary to his mission; for he came not to serve himself but others: not to preserve his own life, but to sacrifice it, to lay it down in the service of others. He created food for the multitudes, but not for himself or the disciples, though he referred to the miracle as an evidence that *if ever necessary* the same power would create bread for them. But it seems to have been the Father's plan to provide for his people by natural means, for there is no record of necessity for such a miracle on their behalf. Doubtless the Lord and his disciples partook of the bread and fish after they were made, and probably of the remaining fragments, but note that the object of their creation was the relief of the multitude and not their own refreshment. (Matt. 15:32; 16:5-12.) He healed the lame and the palsied miraculously when it would glorify God, but when he himself was weary, he "sat on the well" to rest, or used other natural means. Though he prayed often to the Father, and knew that he was heard always, and although sometimes heavy and sorrowful, as in Gethsemane, yet his prayers were requests for grace and strength to do the Father's will, and to finish the work he had come to do. And though he tells us that by asking he could have had "twelve legions of angels" to protect his person and his life, yet he would not ask--preferring to have the Father's will accomplished, which he had come to perform; namely, to give himself a "ransom for all." So notable was this a characteristic of his, that even his enemies noticed it, and said, "He saved others [from sickness, etc.], himself he cannot save." They could not appreciate the self-sacrifice which he was performing. And so, too, we may reasonably expect that many nominal Christians to-day will not understand the same motives and conduct in those who prefer to share in Christ's sufferings, to join with him in sacrifice, in order that they may share also in his coming glorious work of blessing and restoring "that which was lost."

APOSTOLIC GIFTS USED UNSELFISHLY.

Notice also the Apostles. They, too, had the gift of healing as well as privilege of prayer, but they did not use these selfishly. In all the records we find no instance of the exercise of the gift of healing on behalf of any of the apostles or any of the church; nor have we any record of prayer for health, or other earthly luxuries, being offered by any of them for themselves or each other, except in one case--that of Paul (2 Cor. 12:7-9), and his request was not granted; but he was told that instead he should have a sufficiency of grace to compensate and enable him to bear it patiently. This should command the attention of all.

Although Paul's request for himself was refused-- God seeing that his affliction of weak eyes could be made to work to divine glory and his own advantage --yet his gift to heal *others* was marvelous: "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul, so that from his body were brought unto the sick, handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them." (Acts 19:12.) Mark also the fact that though there is no account of the healing of the sick among the early disciples, it was not because they were never sick, for several instances of sickness are recorded. Paul writes to Timothy, "Trophimus have I left at Miletum *sick;"* and again he writes to Timothy, who was evidently often troubled with indigestion or dyspepsia, to use wine as a medicine; saying, "Use no longer water [exclusively], but take a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and for thine *often infirmities."* (1 Tim. 5:23.) In neither of these cases did Paul send handkerchiefs or aprons from his person, nor did he mention either praying for their recovery, or advise them so to pray. Evidently these cases should teach us that the gifts of healing, and prayer for the recovery of the sick were used, not upon the saints, but rather through them upon others, for the purpose of calling attention to the apostles and their gospel as being approved by God.

A special reason why the saints cannot properly ask for physical health and earthly luxuries, we have already intimated is, that they, like their Lord, have consecrated themselves, and pledged to God the exchange of all earthly favors and privileges for the heavenly favors and glories to come;--a foretaste of which they now enjoy through the exceeding great and heavenly promises which cheer and refresh and comfort and bless more than earthly blessings could. Who, that understands the matter, would renounce his heirship in the future heavenly glories, together with present hopes and spiritual joys or reexchange them, if he could, for future earthly restitution, and present occasional foretastes of it?

THREE CAUSES OF SICKNESS.

But some will inquire, If it is not proper for the consecrated to pray for the healing of themselves, what does the Apostle James mean when he says, "The prayer of faith shall save the sick?"

Accidents may and do occur so far as the world is concerned, but the saints are God's peculiar care; nothing can come upon them except as specially permitted. While God could take all the world under such special supervision, he pleases rather to let them be subject to the ordinary vicissitudes of the present condemned state--accidents, sickness, etc. Only the church (the consecrated) is comforted with the assurances of special care: "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things," and "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him," those that respect and love him, those consecrated to his service. Of such it is written, "All the steps of the righteous are ordered of the Lord;" and "the very hairs of your head are all numbered."-- Matt. 10:30; 6:31-34.

While therefore sickness may in a general way be considered, at least indirectly, the work of Satan who deceived mankind into sin, and hence into sickness and death, yet in view of what we see of God's special care of the saints, we know that, in their case at least, sickness could not come without the Lord's special permission; and hence it should be regarded in their case as from him, and not directly from Satan, who could have no power over us except it were given him of the Father.

{5} Apr. 7 Manna, Phil. 4:19

We accordingly classify the causes of afflictions, including sickness, as follows,--but only as applicable to the consecrated church. First,--Those which have been either produced or aggravated by our activity in the Lord's service. Second,--Inherited weaknesses and those brought on ourselves by violations of the laws of nature previous to our entrance into the family of God as sons. Third,--Such as come upon us as discipline or chastisement from the Lord for sins or wanderings or coldness, or for the sin of failing to fulfill our covenant of sacrifice; or as needed discipline to prevent these.

FIRST CLASS SUFFERINGS.

Of the first class were the sufferings of Christ-- his weariness, weakness, bloody sweat, ignominious buffetings, and all the reproaches and sneers, and bitter words, to which he meekly and quietly submitted until the sufferings of Calvary terminated his human existence. Of this first class were also the wounds of Paul and Silas, when scourged for preaching Christ, when stoned, beaten and imprisoned, and when in perils by sea and by land, among the Jews and among false brethren. Of this class was also the dyspepsia of Timothy, who, probably not naturally strong, studied and labored for the Lord, and in the interest of the church; and such we are distinctly told was the cause of the sickness of Epaphroditus, of whose sickness Paul writes, saying, "Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: *because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death,* not regarding [sparing] his life, to supply your deficiency."-- Phil. 2:29,30.

Yes, indeed, these and all such sicknesses and scars and wounds are honorable marks of distinction, which each soldier of the cross should be ambitious to bear, as Paul said referring to injuries endured in the service of the truth, "I bear about in my body *the marks* of the Lord Jesus." These he had received, not in money-seeking or fame-seeking, nor in self-indulgence, nor in quarrelling and disputing about the loss and dross of earth, but in the good fight of faith; in contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, against error amongst Jewish friends, and against philosophies and sciences falsely so called. He endured his wounds and tribulations in telling the glad tidings of the gospel of Christ of which he was not ashamed, and holding up the cross of Christ--to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to us who believe the power of God and the wisdom of God.

All the "overcomers," all the faithful in Christ Jesus, are likely to have some such scars as proofs of their faithful endurance. There is no escape in this war. It is war to the death with all as well as with our Head and Captain, and the first loyal soldiers in our army. And it is in this view that Rev. 20:4 represents all those who shall be accounted worthy of the first resurrection as being "beheaded." (The beheading is symbolic; for neither our Lord nor the apostles were literally beheaded. It signifies that all must suffer earthly disadvantages, and lay down their lives in the defence and service of the truth, if they shall be worthy to share Christ's glory.) All suffering for righteousness' sake is suffering for the truth. Our daily lives are to be "living epistles known and read of all men;" and if we suffer because we refuse to be conformed to this world, or because we give the testimony of our lives against sin and for holiness, we suffer for the truth's sake. If your talents and opportunities permit no more active service for the truth than such godly living and suffering therefor, rejoice! and reckon that yours are among the first class sufferings, and let patience do her perfect work of moulding your character by this means to our Lord's likeness.

The Apostle tells us also of a "fellowship of suffering" which may be experienced through mental sympathy. Those who cannot suffer personally and physically for the truth can sympathize with those who have such sufferings and can thus become "partakers," sustaining, encouraging and upholding those who are in the "great fight of affliction" for the Lord's cause, by their words, faith and prayers. Notice the promise to such in the Apostle's words in Heb. 6:10.

{6}Sickness and discomfort of any sort, incurred by our energy in the service of the truth, are permitted by our Father as evidences of our fidelity and love; because if not liable to such tribulations, or if relieved of them instantly by a miracle, the Lord's service would cost us no sacrifice and the test of our willingness to endure for the truth's sake would be wanting. As it is, however, every ache and pain or wound of person or of feelings, and beheading socially or literally *for the truth's sake,* becomes a witness of the spirit, testifying to our faithfulness. And in all such tribulations we should rejoice greatly--as say our Lord and the Apostle Peter.--Luke 6:22,23; 1 Pet. 4:13-16.

{6} Apr. 6 Manna, 1Pet. 4:16

SECOND CLASS SUFFERINGS.

Of the second class of sickness and afflictions are poverty, constitutional weaknesses, etc., which, like Paul's sore eyes, the Heavenly Father sees will be really advantageous to us. For he doubtless often sees better than we how weak we are, and how a little adversity is necessary, as ballast, to keep our poorly balanced little vessels from capsizing. These weaknesses God sees best to leave us under, but assures us, through Paul, of "grace sufficient" to counterbalance such weaknesses. A realization of such care for our real interests, while humiliating, in that it forces conviction of our weakness, is refreshing and inspiring, in that it proves our Father's love and care.

THIRD CLASS SUFFERINGS.

The third class includes chiefly such afflictions as God visits upon his children as special chastisements for special transgressions. These are mentioned in Heb. 12:5-11. "Son, despise not thou the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when thou art reproved by him; for whom the Lord loveth he disciplineth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure discipline, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father disciplineth not? But if ye be without discipline whereof all are partakers, then are ye spurious and not [real] sons....Now, no discipline for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are [properly] exercised [or trained] thereby." This description, it will be observed, covers not merely the reproofs or rebukes of the Lord (verse 5), of the unfaithful and wanderers and transgressors, but also the disciplinary trials which come to us in well doing, and are permitted for the developing and strengthening of character;--hence both second and third class sufferings.

It is only the rebukes and reproofs of the Lord for sin and unfaithfulness that we are examining in this third class of afflictions. We remark, too, that probably every son, except the one perfect one, our Lord Jesus, has at times needed and received rebukes by afflictions, for unfaithfulness. And it is well that we should learn to recognize these rebukes and to wisely apply their lessons. Rightly dividing, we shall neither err with some in crediting every affliction to the devil --receiving none as rebukes from our Father, nor will we err on the other hand and suppose every calamity and accident which occurs to the world in general and to the nominal church to be a divine rebuke. We should see clearly that only the consecrated "sons" are under God's special supervision, which includes rebukes by the Lord for sins and shortcomings, as well as afflictions in well-doing, permitted to test and perfect us. If therefore the saints experience serious afflictions, they should at once examine themselves conscientiously before God, to see whether their afflictions arise in any sense from faithfulness to the Lord and the truth. If they find that they do, they should rejoice in them, and wait patiently for recovery, which without our asking sometimes comes speedily; praying meantime with thanksgiving for blessings enjoyed and with supplications for further usefulness in the Lord's due time.

The Apostle Peter mentions some who *suffered,* not for righteousness' sake, but as evil-doers and as busy-bodies in other men's matters. Such, as he shows, have no right to rejoice in such sufferings, but contrariwise to be ashamed,--to lay the lesson to heart and by God's grace reform their methods.

While some, humble minded, do not readily recognize any sufferings as endured for the Lord's sake, and need to be encouraged along this line, others who do little and suffer little from any cause, imagine themselves martyrs for the truth. Let us avoid both extremes and think of ourselves soberly, underestimating rather than overestimating our little services and sacrifices.

But if we see no evidence that our afflictions have resulted either directly or indirectly from our zeal in the Lord's service, we should at once seek for a cause of the afflictions as a rebuke from the Lord, remembering that nothing could happen to us aside from our Father's permission, and that he never permits them except for a wise purpose.

Of the rebuking afflictions Paul wrote to the church at Corinth. (1 Cor. 11:21,22,27,29,30-34.) After recounting how careless and unappreciative of their covenant many of them were, failing to recognize their proper participation with Christ, to be broken with him and share his cup of suffering for the truth's sake, he says: *"For this cause* many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." This may refer to spiritual lethargy and sickness only; but not improbably also to the physical.

The general object of many such afflictions is our discipline and reformation; and happy is the son who shall speedily note a rebuke of the Father, and repent and come back quickly into full harmony; and who, exercised thereby, shall seldom need the rebuking rod of affliction. The Apostle refers to this also (1 Cor. 11:31-34), saying, "If we would judge ourselves we should not be judged

[by the Lord]." If we would critically watch ourselves and correct our own faults, disciplining ourselves, we should not need to be taken in hand and disciplined by afflictions. "But when we are judged by the Lord we are corrected, [in order] that we should not be condemned with the world." The consecrated are tried now, in order that they may not need any further trial in the future, during the Millennial age, when the world shall be on trial.

"Is any among you suffering [afflicted], let him pray," says the Apostle (James 5:13). This counsel will apply to all the trials and afflictions of God's people, mental and physical, especially such as are of the first class or the second class. Such sufferers may take all their troubles of every kind to the Lord direct, and be assured of his sympathy and grace to help and sustain. Such need no elders to pray for the forgiveness of their sins, as in the following verses (14,15), where, evidently, the third class afflictions are referred to,--sicknesses the result of rebukes from God for sins, and not sicknesses of the class first described, in which we may rejoice. James says: "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; *and though* he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him. *Therefore* confess your *sins* one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." * The prayer, as we understand it, should be for the *forgiveness of the sins* of which the sickness is a punishment or rebuke, rather than for release from the deserved punishment. But if the sickness was a judgment or discipline for sin, we should expect that when the sin had been confessed and truly repented of, the Lord would remove the chastisement and raise up the penitent son from the affliction, either partially or wholly.--Compare Matt. 9:2-6; John 5:14; and 1 John 5:16.

But let us remember that this statement does not refer to the various small aches and annoyances to which we, in common with the world in general, are subject; and which serve us a good purpose in the development of patience and sympathy for others. We know this, first of all, by the calling in of the elders of the Church [the senior, or chief, or official members] to pray over and anoint the sick with oil: because such extreme measures would be quite improper for a slight ailment. We know it secondly by the Greek word used for *sick* in verse 14, which has the significance of *helpless* or impotent.

OUR PRESENT STANDPOINT.

We see, then, that promiscuous praying for health during the Gospel age would have been improper, and that only by means of the *gift* of healing were the early cures of the age performed; that it ceased with the death of the apostles after accomplishing its object; and that the proper prayers relating to sickness, on the part of the saints, have been those offered for the forgiveness of sins--as a result of which healing followed. But we see, too, that as the Millennial age is dawning-- lapping upon the Gospel age which is closing--we should expect that healing and general restitution would begin to be manifested, much as we do see it. And this leads us to inquire,--In the light of the foregoing examination of the Bible teachings and in the light of our present location in the dawn of the Millennium,

FOR WHOM MAY WE NOW PRAY?

We answer, the saints cannot properly pray for their own health now, any more than could their Master. They cannot properly ask the restitution privileges which they have consecrated, nor can they ask that their sacrifices be nullified by having all the cost of weariness, exhaustion, stripes or sickness miraculously removed. But when they realize their afflictions to be punishments for sins, they can still feel at liberty to confess their sins one to another, and pray to God for forgiveness, and thus they may, as a result, be healed.

The saints who abide in Christ, and in whom his Word abides, may pray for others than themselves, especially in view of the fact that we are now in the beginning of the Times of Restitution; namely, in cases where they are sure their object is not self-exaltation; where their desires for the recovery of the sick are not selfish; where they have reason to believe that the restored health would be consecrated to good works and the glory of God. In such cases we may upon request pray for the recovery of the afflicted or imbecile *not of* the consecrated little flock--the sacrificers, the Royal Priesthood. Yet even in such cases, though our faith must necessarily be strong, because confident of asking from right motives, and at a time when the Lord is pleased to grant a beginning of restitution blessings, we should always say, as the Master did in his prayers,--"Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done."

However, it is not time yet to expect general healing and full restitution work, as that evidently will not be due until the entire Priesthood shall have finished sacrificing and entered with their Head and Chief Priest Jesus, into the glories and perfections of the heavenly state or condition, typified by the Most Holy of the Temple and Tabernacle.

HE MUST INCREASE, BUT I MUST DECREASE.

At first sight it might appear that as the gifts at the beginning of the age were exercised *through* the consecrated, so the healings to be expected in the Millennial dawn would be manifested mostly in answer to the prayers of the consecrated. But not so, we believe, will it be found; this would bring the saints into too great prominence, whereas, like John the Baptist at the first advent, we must expect to decrease here, while the Church Triumphant, on the other side the vail, will be on the increase. Our present relationship to the glorified Church--pointing out the nearness of the reign of glory--answers closely in correspondence to the work of John the Baptizer at the first advent. John proclaimed, The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, and added, "There standeth one among you whom ye know not. He must increase, but I must decrease." So, much the same, is our message; and while the Church on the earthly plane will decrease, the glorified Church on the heavenly plane will be increasing in power and influence during the time of trouble coming, while the John class will doubtless be put under restraints, as John was cast into prison by Herod.

In harmony with what we should thus expect, various methods of healing meet with some success, and indeed we have heard of more than one case of healing where no cure was attempted, or even thought of, by either the sick or the friends. One case was that of a sick girl, at whose bedside her friends had gathered, waiting for her to die; she immediately recovered, got up and went about as ever. The only explanation she could give was that she had a dream in which a man laid his hand upon her head, and she felt a shock like electricity pass down her spine. And this young woman did not even profess to be a Christian.

By various means the Lord would gradually prepare the world for restitution, so that when it comes the new order of things will still leave room for the exercise of faith toward God; for the proud and scientific to explain from natural causes, while others will be led thereby to recognize such things as the beginning of restitution. And since the overcomers have a great work to do in opposing error and instilling truth, and since, if they were much engaged in praying for the sick, it would detract from their real and important work of healing the spiritually sick and lame and blind, we see great reasons why we should expect these manifestations of restitution both *in* and *through* others than the saints.

SHOULD THE CONSECRATED USE MEDICINES?

This question naturally suggests itself. We are neither commanded nor forbidden to use medicines. In our consecration we gave up human advantages coming to us as to all believers through Christ in exchange for the spiritual advantages offered us. Hence all *restitution* blessings and privileges we are debarred from *asking;* although God, for his own wise ends, sometimes grants his "new creatures" special favors and manifestations of an earthly sort in their hours of need; even though they do not ask for them.--See Matt. 26:53,54; Acts 12:6-11; 14:19,20; Phil. 2:27.

It should be noticed, however, that (aside from Christ's work of redemption and restitution) condemned men are privileged to use such natural means as they can command, in food and medicines, for the relief of their ailments and the sustenance, as long as they may be able, of their condemned and dying bodies. And these privileges consequently the saints retain and possess, even after having exchanged the earthly advantages through Christ, for the heavenly advantages.

Nothing, then, in their covenant of full consecration, prevents the saints more than unbelievers from using natural means for their relief. We have the liberty to do so whenever our judgment indicates the expediency. And though we are not informed that our Lord used medicines, we should remember that he was perfect, and had only such pains and aches as he himself *took* from others. However, he certainly illustrated the principle of making use of natural means, not asking divine power for relief, by resting when weary instead of praying for supernatural restoration; and when hungry and thirsty he ate and drank instead of praying for strength and refreshment otherwise. So, too, it was with the apostles as far as we may know from the meagre scraps of history of their private affairs furnished us in Scripture. Paul tells us (2 Cor. 11:27,30) of his weariness and pains and hunger and thirst and cold and nakedness, and says he gloried in these marks of his faithfulness, but mentions not one word about praying for the removal of these by divine power; nor does he record one answer of such a prayer as a mark of favor with God. On the contrary, in the single instance he mentions of having prayed for physical restitution (the restoration of his sight), he does tell us that

* Old Greek MSS. read *therefore* and *sins*

the Lord refused his request, telling him it was best for him so--the grace sufficient being in spiritual and not earthly favors above those of natural men.-- 2 Cor. 12:9.

When Paul was thus needy at times, what did he do? Did he pray God to feed and clothe him? No; he well knew that God had promised that no good, needful thing should be withheld, so long as he was his servant. He did not ask God to create money in his pockets, nor to send some kind hearted person, not too lazy to work, with a basket of dainties for him to eat, while he studied or prayed? No! that was not Paul's sort, else he would not have been selected as "a chosen vessel" to bear the Lord's truth. When he was hungry Paul neither went out and begged nor staid indoors to pray for the things needed, but went to work at his trade,--tent-making, teaching publicly and privately as opportunities offered; unwilling to ask aid even of the *believers* whom he served; though he well knew that they were negligently losing, both the privilege of giving to his support and the spread of the truth, and also losing the valuable instruction which he could have imparted during those hours necessarily devoted to secular labor.

We remember, too, Paul's advice to Timothy regarding medicine--to take a little wine *(as a medicine,* not as a beverage) for his indigestion and "often infirmities." And this we find in perfect harmony with Paul's own course and that of our Lord, and therefore certainly a safe guide to us respecting our Father's will.

But, says one, even if it be right to use simple remedies, such as may come under our observation,-- would it be *right* to spend the Lord's money (as all the money which the consecrated have is the Lord's) upon physicians? We answer that our Lord and the disciples spent consecrated money for bread, which is the medicine needed when hungry. And we presume Timothy, following Paul's counsel, spent some consecrated money for the medicinal wine. Our Lord and the apostles did not commend medicines and physicians, and doubtless the art was so crude as to be unworthy of commendation; yet they were not condemned, and it was acknowledged that the sick need a physician. (Matt. 9:12.) But in all this we would not be understood as advocating drugs and doses;--moderation should be used in all that we do, that whether we eat or drink or take medicine or whatever, all may be done with reason and to the glory of God. Probably as many die of too much as of too little medicine. We should not fill ourselves with medicine nor with wine nor be gluttonous with food; but be temperate in all things.

We cannot for a moment concede as the superiors or equals of our Lord and Paul, in faith or divine favor, some who in our day claim to live by faith, "working not at all;" who do little to weary or pain themselves, and who rejoice that they have no such experiences as Paul had with hunger and cold, and thirst, and nakedness, as marks of special faith and holiness and divine favor. We believe that many such are sincere children of God, deceived on this question by following their own feelings and inclinations rather than carefully studying the perfect examples of God's will in this matter, furnished in Scripture.--See 2 Thes. 3:8-10,11-15.

In view of the Scripture teaching, we must therefore advise the consecrated to walk in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus and those who followed him most closely; ignoring in this as in other things their own preferences as to how they would *like* to think about it, and how they would *like* to do and have God do in such matters. Let us fully submit our wills and methods to God's plan and arrangement as expressed and illustrated in his Word. As "new creatures" we may ask freely and persistently for all spiritual blessings and graces, and unselfishly for all our necessities *promised.* Then, sure that such will come, we should seek for them and acknowledge them with thankfulness, by whatever agency or channel sent.

But in earthly matters we must be very careful: let us ask for nothing beyond our actual needs, as God (not we) sees the necessity and expediency--thankful always for the "bread and water" promised, as well as for every additional comfort. Realizing always God's superior wisdom and boundless love for us, we should fear to take our interests in any degree out of his hand. Thus we may always live rejoicing, realizing that, whatever may befall us, all is working out for good to us. We may need an acquaintance with pain, or to come into perplexity and almost to want, in order to have needful experience or testing or chastisement. And we should learn to search for and appreciate the lesson or chastisement quickly, and prove ourselves apt pupils in the school of Christ.

PRAYERS FOR OUR CHILDREN.

Especially in the case of their children, consecrated parents may well feel that, *now* in the dawning of the Millennial age, they have special privileges in prayer; for of all classes these are most surely the heirs of restitution blessings. The children of all believers are *justified* through the faith of their parents up to the time they reach years of mental discretion. (1 Cor. 7:14.) Hence they are heirs of the earthly blessings, restitution, etc. And now that the Restitution Times are upon us, we should feel great confidence in asking health and strength and life for such. It would seem indeed that now the children of believers might live on down into the full sunlight of Millennial glory and blessing, when none will die except such as sin wilfully against that light and favor. Yet in all our requests we cannot ask otherwise than as the Master did, saying--Nevertheless not my will but thine be done. And it should be the aim and patient endeavor of each parent to bring his children as nearly as possible to the proper point of full consecration--the reasonable service of all.
