

# The Church Times.

Rev. J. C. Cochran---Editor.

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## Calendar.

### CALENDAR WITH LESSONS.

Day & date	MORNING.	EVENING.
Oct. 24 (25) Sun. after Trin.	Joel 2 Eccles 4	Luko 19 Eccles 7
" 25 (26) Mon.	Joel 2 Eccles 4	Luko 19 Eccles 7
" 26 (27) Tues.	Joel 2 Eccles 4	Luko 19 Eccles 7
" 27 (28) Wed.	Joel 2 Eccles 4	Luko 19 Eccles 7
" 28 (29) Thurs.	Joel 2 Eccles 4	Luko 19 Eccles 7
" 29 (30) Fri.	Joel 2 Eccles 4	Luko 19 Eccles 7
" 30 (31) Sat.	Joel 2 Eccles 4	Luko 19 Eccles 7

The Athanasian Creed to be used.

## Poetry.

### "FOREVER WITH THE LORD."

"Forever with the Lord!"  
Amen. So let it be;  
Life from the dead is in that word:  
Thy immortality.  
Here in the body pent,  
Absent from Him I roam,  
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent  
A day's march nearer home.  
My Father's house on high,  
Home of my soul, how near  
At times, to faith's aspiring eye,  
Thy golden gates appear!  
Ah, then my spirit faints  
To reach the land I love:  
The bright inheritance of saints,  
Jerusalem above.  
Yet doubts still interrene,  
And all my comfort flies;  
Like Noah's dove, I flit between  
Rough seas and stormy skies.  
Anon the clouds depart,  
The winds and waters cease;  
While sweetly o'er my gladdened heart  
Expands the bow of peace.  
"Forever with the Lord!"  
Father, if 'tis Thy will,  
The promise of Thy gracious Word,  
E'en here, to me fulfil.  
Do Thou at my right hand,  
So shall I never fall;  
Uphold me, and I needs must stand:  
Fight, and I shall prevail.  
So, when my latest breath  
Shall rend the veil in twain,  
By death I shall escape from death,  
And life eternal gain.  
Knowing "as I am known,"  
How shall I love that word,  
And oft repeat before the throne,  
"Forever with the Lord!"

## Religious Miscellany.

### THE LANGUAGE OF JESUS IN REFERENCE TO LITTLE CHILDREN.

Mark x. 13-16. Pedobaptists justly regard this passage as containing a direction to bring infants to Christ for his spiritual blessing, which, now that he is personally removed from the earth, they feel that they can most appropriately do by presenting them to him in the solemn ordinance of baptism. And their convictions upon this point are strengthened by observing the reason assigned by our Lord for bringing them to him for his blessing,—'for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' If they are to be entitled to be members of his church or kingdom, they are to be formally acknowledged as such by the ordinance of baptism. To this our opponents object,—

First, that 'Jesus did not direct those infants to be baptized, which he would have done if it had been necessary.' Strange reasoning this! Would our Lord direct them to be baptized before his baptism was instituted? Would it have been consistent to direct them to be formally acknowledged members of his kingdom before that kingdom had really commenced, while the dispensation was still in force by which they had been regularly initiated into the church of God?—No, surely not. A moment's reflection must convince us of such a direction, at that period, would be premature, and, we may add, superfluous likewise; for Jesus thus decided, we see he did, that they were entitled to membership in his church, his apostles would certainly never hesitate, after the institution

of his baptism, to acknowledge their title by admitting them to that sacred ordinance. It was sufficiently soon for infants to be baptized when Jesus had said, 'Go, disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;' and, from that time forward, we are thoroughly persuaded they have been always admitted to that ordinance by the church of God.

Secondly, our opponents object that the term *such*, which our Lord here employs, does not mean *such in age*, but merely *such in disposition*,—humble persons. Let us calmly examine their reasons for this conclusion.

1. They say that, to suppose our Lord to speak of infants in point of age would imply that the kingdom of heaven was entirely or 'principally composed of little infants.' We deny this inference. Whatever proportion they may bear to the other members of Christ's church, and we do not doubt that the proportion is great, we maintain that the words 'of such is the kingdom of heaven' do not mean that they alone compose the kingdom, but that *the privileges of it belong to them*. They mean that the kingdom of heaven 'is theirs'; that they are *sharers in its blessings*. Let our readers turn to Matthew v. 10, where our Lord says of the persecuted, 'theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'—The words in the original are, 'of such is the kingdom of heaven.'—precisely the same words that are here applied to infants. But can we suppose that our Lord meant to say that the persecuted alone compose that kingdom? Then, indeed, infants who die, without persecution are excluded; than the favored disciples who have lived surrounded by the pious, and have been freed from opposition, are excluded; then they who lived under the millennial reign of Jesus will be excluded; then the angels themselves are excluded; for they, we presume, are exempted from the troubles of persecution. How absurd are these conclusions!—Yet they result inevitably from the interpretation which Baptists affix to the words 'of such is the kingdom of heaven.' Surely the interpretation must be wrong, and the objection they have built upon it must be utterly without foundation.

2. A further reason is urged for interpreting this expression to mean *such indisposition*, rather than *in age*. 'The context,' it is said, 'requires it.' Our Lord says, at verse 15. 'Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.' Here, it is urged, our Lord speaks of those who are humble in disposition, and this is to be considered as explanatory of the words, 'of such is the kingdom of heaven.' We reject the criticism. Our Lord's words, at verse 15, are a distinct reflection, grounded upon the whole transaction which the disciples and other spectators had just witnessed. They are not to be considered as explanatory of the words, 'of such is the kingdom of heaven.' The purport of our Lord's observations appears to be this: 'You greatly err in thinking that infants are not to be brought to me: suffer them to come, and forbid them not; for they are entitled to the privileges of my church, nay, further, I solemnly assure you that, so far from their being excluded, no man, who is not first brought to resemble them shall enter my kingdom.' Among other reasons for taking this view of the case we assign the following:—

In the first place, the use and application of the word 'such,' as employed in Scripture, teaches us that our Lord's words 'of such is the kingdom of heaven,' must at least include the children who are there alluded to. When, for example, we meet the expressions, 'such power,' 'such parables,' 'such things,' 'such miracles,' 'such mighty works,' it is not merely similar power, or similar parables, or similar things, miracles, or mighty works, that are meant, but the very power, parables, miracles, &c., that had just been witnessed. This, we affirm, is the manner in which the original word, translated 'such' in these passages, is constantly used; and this in itself should be sufficient to decide the question at issue.

But we further remark, that the very object of our Lord's declaration renders it plain that he speaks of children *in age*. Why does he say 'of such is the kingdom of heaven?' Is he not giving a reason why they should suffer little children to come to him? But what

kind of reasoning would it be to say, 'Suffer infants to come to me, for humble persons are members of my kingdom?' Surely it did not follow that infants ought to be brought to him for his blessing, and that the disciples were culpable in not knowing it because humble-minded men were to enter his kingdom. But if you understand our Lord to say, 'Suffer little children to be brought to me for my blessing, do not presume to forbid their approach; for these little infants, and such as these, are members of my kingdom;'—then all is plain; this is indeed a reason why the disciples should suffer them to be brought to their divine Master; this declaration is consistent with the object our Lord had in view, and would effectually teach the disciples, as it ought to teach us, to bring those little infants to Jesus for his blessing, who are as yet unable to know the value of this exalted privilege.

'Suffer,' says our blessed Redeemer, 'little children to come unto me:' he speaks not of those particular children only who were then before him, but of little children generally. And how, I would ask, are they to come to him? How are our infants, ere they are capable of exercising faith or repentance, to come to Jesus? They cannot come to his person, for that is in heaven; but they can come to his ordinance, and there be solemnly dedicated to him, and receive his blessing. There is something so reasonable in this, so congenial to the feelings of a pious parent's heart, so consistent with the acknowledged dealings of God under the Jewish economy, so perfectly in harmony with the more enlarged and diffusive benevolence of the Christian dispensation, that it is really wonderful a question should ever have been raised upon the subject. And why should we withhold our offspring from this privilege? 'Unless,' says Bishop Taylor, 'infants are incapable of the essentials of baptism, no reason can be assigned why they should not be admitted to it. Our Saviour's treatment of and conduct towards the children who were brought to him prove that they were incapable of none of its essentials; therefore no good reason can be assigned why they should not be admitted to it. If they are excluded on any just ground, it must be on account of the outward ministry, or the inward grace, or incapacity in themselves, or the absence of a precept. They are not excluded on account of the outward ministry, for Christ himself took them in his arms; or the inward grace, for he blessed them; or incapacity in themselves, for of such is the kingdom of heaven, nor through want of precept, for he said, Suffer little children to come unto me. Unless, therefore, they who come to Christ on earth cannot come to him in glory, unless they who received a blessing from the hands of the Saviour cannot now from the hands of his servants, unless baptismal water be more than baptismal grace, and to be admitted to the church be more than to be admitted to heaven, it cannot, upon any just ground, be pretended that infants should be excluded from this sacrament.'

### ABSOLUTION IN THE OFFICE FOR THE VISITATION OF THE SICK.

The following explanatory article on this subject is taken from a late No. of the *Episcopal Recorder*:—

"Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which confession, the priest shall absolve him (if he humbly and heartily desire it) after this sort: Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences; and, by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

The rubric then directs that the priests shall say the collect following in which God's mercy is besought for him who most earnestly desireth pardon and forgiveness, and the Lord is entreated to impute not unto him his former sins.

Now, it will be observed that there are important limitations in the rubric, as Bishop Mant has observed in his *Clergyman's Obligations* (second edition,) respecting the use of this form of absolution, viz.—"that the absolution is only to be pronounced after a special confession of his sins, made by the sick person under particular circumstances, and if the sick person humbly and heartily desire it." (ch. ix., p. 169, note.) And to the same effect speaks Wheatly in his *Illustration of*