

been a great object-lesson to Pharaoh, leading him to derive most valuable profit by it, but he spurned his opportunity. He could have seen, if he wished to, that the God of heaven especially favored those who trusted in and worshipped him, and this fact ought to have led the king to yield himself to the same God and serve him.

Then note that when the plague of hail visited Egypt it smote all that was in the fields of the Egyptians, but in the land of Goshen, where the Israelites dwelt, there was no hail. Thus again did God especially favor his own people. That was worth very much to the Israelites. Again, when God by his angel destroyed the first born in every Egyptian home he spared every one of the Israelites.

Verily, God is a respecter of persons, when the question has reference to obeying him, on the one hand, or to disobeying him, on the other hand. The idea that God loves all people equally strongly and affectionately has no support either in these instances or in the Bible generally. In the New Testament, as well as in the Old, the truth is made thoroughly manifest that God does very especially favor those who are his children indeed, and who are his children because they have accepted the atonement of God's Son by an obedient faith.

#### A Prayer.

Thou hast given us light in the face of Jesus Christ, Thy Son; this is a light indeed above the brightness of midday, this is the true glory that shone in the eternal past. Throughout the year the Son of God has been with us in holy memory, in uplifting and ennobling impulse, in sanctifying and renewing grace. What shall we render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards us? Behold, how good the Lord is, how loving is His love, and how merciful is His mercy! No man can express it; it is loving kindness, it is tender mercy, it is pity all tears. Where sin abounds grace doth much more abound, or we could not stand before Thee even if we clustered round the Cross; our sins would burn us with the fire of shame; we dare not look up to heaven, for heaven is all purity; we dare not look at ourselves, for we are all pollution. We think we do good things, yea things sweet and lovely, and when the sun of noonday comes to look at them we run away if haply we may escape the gaze of God. We are so poor-minded, so cold hearted, and we commit the irreligion of unintentional mistakes; we have built up a little character of our own, and we think it will delight God; but when Thou dost look upon it, for Thou knowest the heart, Thou dost detect the rottenness, and we know it, for Thy look is judgment, and we shake off our best selves as men might shake off leprous garments.

#### Steady Living.

Let us banish the word "Hurry" from our lives. Let us care for nothing so much that we would pay honor and self respect as the price of hurrying it. Let us cultivate calmness, restfulness, poise, sweetness,—doing our best, bearing all things as bravely as we can; living our life undisturbed by the prosperity of the wicked or the malice of the envious. Let us not be impatient, chafing at delay, fretting over failure, worrying over results, and weakening under opposition. Let us ever turn our face toward the future with confidence and trust, with the calmness of a life in harmony with itself, true to its ideals, and slowly and constantly progressing toward their realization.—William George Jordan.

## Our Young People

Sun., Dec. 20. A Vision of World-Wide Peace.

Isa. 11: 6-9; 9: 6. (Christmas)  
The Prince of Peace.

Christ was the Prince of Peace, yet he himself said that he had come not to bring peace, but a sword. The battle is not over yet, nor can it end until Christ's kingdom overcomes evil utterly.

The birthday of the Prince of Peace, therefore, should not lead us to lay down our arms or relax the battle. The trouble with many Christians is that they dislike to fight evil. They want to be comfortable. Christmas is not a day of mere creature comfort. Peace is coming; but we must serve through the war first. When we forget this, and make the birthday of Christ a luxurious festival, we play into the hands of the enemy.

#### In Troublesome Times.

Isaiah wrote this prophecy of peace when his nation was rushing down the path of disobedience to ruin. Not in the present, but in the far future, Isaiah saw his glorious vision. Yet he held to it and proclaimed it.

John upon Patmos, a fugitive from persecution, saw the power of the Roman empire turning against the handful of obscure men who constituted the early church. The woes that were yet to come were present to his eyes, but he looked beyond and above to the peace and glory of the New Jerusalem. These glorious visions of peace and joy seen by prophet and apostle gain greater beauty and power when we remember how hopeless this earthly outlook was.

To look beyond trouble to joy, beyond battle to peace, beyond earth to heaven, is true Christian vision. Our Christmas always will be joyful if we learn to do so. The Son of God has saved the world; his kingdom will come, and "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." It is in this hope that we rejoice this Christmas day.

#### Adding Our Part.

Each of us can bring Christ's kingdom of peace a little nearer every day by practicing peace ourselves. Every home that is a center of peace and love helps to show Christ to men. Every passion curbed, every sin subdued, means that much more peace on earth. We have a part in the coming peace, a part that no one but ourselves can contribute.

The world, to-day, is restless and rushing. It does not greatly believe in peace. It needs it, but it cannot find it, and so doubts its existence. Every Christian to-day ought to have the peace of God dwelling in him richly—so richly that others can share its treasure and so learn to desire it for themselves. Thus new followers will be won for the Prince of Peace, and his kingdom will be brought a little nearer, through all the battles of the present.

What is true rest? Not idleness, but peace of mind. To rest from sin, from sorrow, from fear, from doubt, from care; this is the true rest. Above all, to rest from the worst weariness of all—knowing one's duty, and yet not being able to do it. Perfect rest, in perfect work; that surely is the rest of blessed spirits, till the final consummation of all things.—C. Kingsley.

#### God's Help.

Our need of God's for the meeting of the petty vexations and the minor trials of our every day life is as real as it is for the supremest struggle of our being in the final conflict with the arch enemy of our souls. And as to the relative measure of God's power requisite for our aiding who shall say what is much or what is little for God to do? God is as ready to aid us in one time of need as in another. We can depend upon him alike when to us our requirements seem great or seem small. He who will help us in our dying will help us also in our daily living. He knows your need. It seems to you that no one can know it, it is so vast. He knows it better than you do yourself. The multitude of your own aspirations are not present to you, are lost to you, but he has caught them all in his own vessel, and will see to it that all are duly fulfilled. He knows your need, your bodily and your social need, your need to-day, your need yesterday, and your need to-morrow. And he knows it that he may supply it.—George Bowen.

If we have any trial which seems intolerable, pray—pray that it be relieved or changed. One disabled from duty by sickness may pray for health, that he may do his work; or one hemmed in by internal impediments may pray for utterance that he may serve better the truth and the right; or if we have a besetting sin, we may pray to be delivered from it, in order to serve God and man, and not be ourselves left to Satan to mislead and destroy. But the answer to prayer may be, as it was to Paul, not the removal of the thorn, but, instead, a growing insight into its meaning and value. The voice of God in our soul may show us that his strength will enable us to bear it.—James Freeman Clarke.

#### Daily Readings.

- Mon., Dec. 14.—Peace in the animal world. Isa. 65: 20-25  
Tues., Dec. 15.—Among mankind. Isa. 2: 2-4  
Wed., Dec. 16.—Christ's peace. John 16: 32, 33  
Thurs., Dec. 17.—With nature. Mark 4: 35-41  
Fri., Dec. 18.—A fruit of the Spirit. Gal. 5: 19-26  
Sat., Dec. 19.—Like a river. Isa. 48: 16-18  
Sun., Dec. 20. Topic—A vision of world-wide peace. Isa. 11: 6-9; 9: 6. (Christmas.)

In heaven everybody will be beautiful. For, as the righteous soul is naturally beautiful, as the spiritual body is but the visibility of the soul, . . . and as happiness beautifies all that it penetrates or even touches, ugliness will have no more place in the universe, and will disappear with grief, sin, and death.—Alexander Maclaren, D. D.

God cannot forgive unrepented, unconfessed sin; God cannot do anything else than forgive the sin that is turned from and confessed with contrite heart and trembling faith. Reader, are your sins forgiven? Don't snirk or shrink at the question. Are your sins forgiven? If not, why not?