

out his nationality. He was a man—a human being in distress—and on the broad ground of a common humanity, he claimed a relationship to all, and had a claim upon all.

Went down—whichever way one travelled from Jerusalem, he was said to go down, and from all parts of the country it was *so* to Jerusalem, as it is now up to London from Leeds or Liverpool, as well as from Dover or Plymouth. But the journey from Jerusalem to Jericho, 16 miles, was literally down hill nearly all the way, through a very difficult and dangerous way. About to miles from the city, the traveller enters what Jerome calls the "*bloody way*," which even to the present time has been the haunt of Arab and other robbers. The ravines, the caverns, and the almost inaccessible cliffs furnish admirable lurking places for robbers. It is very common, even at the present day, for travellers to be robbed and even murdered here.

"Those among whom he fell did their best to maintain the infamous character of the spot, for they stripped him of his raiment, and because, perhaps, he made some slight resistance, from mere wantonness of cruelty, wounded him and departed, leaving him half dead."—*Trench*.

Behold what sin does! It makes man an inhuman monster, and the enemy of his race. And there is not one of us but would be guilty of similar conduct, if left to himself.—2 Kings, 8: 13.

THE NATURAL SELFISHNESS OF THE HUMAN HEART.

By chance. "The original word would justify us in saying rather 'by coincidence' than by chance—by that wonderful falling in of one event with another, which often seems to men but chance, yet is indeed of the fine weaving in by God's providence of the threads of different men's lives into one common woof."—*Trench*.

If we could see all things in their relations and in their far-reaching results, there would be no chance, but all wondrous harmony. Like some Persian tapestry of wondrous beauty, the under side only of which we now see. But by-and-by we shall see the other side.

A certain priest. Many priests had their abode at Jericho, who, as their turn came, discharged the service of the sanctuary at Jerusalem. I asked by. Strange contradiction: professedly the servant of a merciful God, who required that even a beast in suffering or danger, should be rescued, to pass by a *human being* in distress, and then returning from the service of the sanctuary.—Hos. 6: 6. Probably his excuse was that he did not know but he might be a Samaritan heretic, a dog, or that he would contract ceremonial defilement: thus making his religion an excuse for neglecting the common duties of humanity. Possibly, also, he gave way to selfish fears of a like fate.—Mark 7: 11.

Likewise a Levite. The Levites were a class who assisted in the service of the sanctuary, but were not permitted to serve at the altar.—Ex. 6: 16-25; Num. 3: 6-10; 18: 2-7. The context of this Levite was, if possible, worse than that of the priest, for he appears to have come nearer, and noted more particularly his condition, and then *passed on*.—Matt. 23: 23.

HUMAN KINDNESS WHERE LEAST EXPECTED.

A certain Samaritan. The Samaritans inhabited the central part of Palestine. This man was exposed to at least the same danger, and he did not know but that he might be giving aid and comfort to one who would curse his nation, and deem his touch pollution; nevertheless, "*he had compassion on him*." While the priest and the Levite marked out those who should have been foremost in showing pity and exercising mercy, passed by, it was left to the excommunicated Samaritan, whose very name was a byword, to show what love to his neighbour was.

Bound up his wounds—probably with strips torn from his own garments. Oil and wine—wine to cleanse, and oil to mollify and heal. Both these, especially oil, were carried on journeys.—Gen. 28: 18.

Set him on his own beast. "Real love does not ask *how little*, but *how much* we may do."—*Facobus*. An inn—"The only place where an inn, as we understand the term, is spoken of. Not an empty caravansary, but a place kept by a host for the reception of travellers."—*Alford*.

Two pence—about 28 cents. Equal to two days pay, and sufficient to provide a meal for twenty-five men.

QUESTION AND PRECEPT, OR GOD TAKING NOTE OF AND JUDGING MEN'S ACTIONS.

Which of these three. The Lord makes men their own judges and pass sentence on themselves. The question is turned from "Whom am I to love as my neighbour?" to "Who is the man that shows that love?" from the objective to the subjective: the state of the heart that will lead to deeds of mercy, rather than to the persons upon whom it should be bestowed. The Lord looks on the heart. Opportunities reveal what is in the heart, and they are numberless.

Go and do thou likewise. True religion is a practical thing. "What noble Christian institutions have not such words founded, all undreamed of, until that wondrous One came to bless this heartless world with His incomparable love."—*F. & B. James* 2: 14-18; 1 John 3: 10-15. The question of the lawyer was a *legal* one. "What must I do?" to be right? We must first be right, and that can be only by believing in the Son of God, the Good Samaritan. In His love and mercy, and trusting in the finished work: then shall we have the experience of Paul.

John 1: 12-13; 6: 28-29; 2 Cor. 5: 14. "The word of God spiritualizes this parable." The wounded man represents the sad state and condition of mankind by the fall. Jerusalem signifies peace: there God's visible presence in the Shekinah was. Jericho, a city accused by Joshua, and a very wicked place in the days of Christ. Falling among thieves, his falling into the hands of sin and Satan, which have robbed man of his innocence, honor, and defaced the image of God in him. His raiment, his original righteousness, beautiful but lovable, and he now stands naked before God. Wounded, his diseased condition.

Near death and unconscious, the sad state into which disease brings man—exposed to temporal, spiritual and eternal death. The priest and the Levite represent the moral and the ceremonial law, and both, the whole law of Moses, that looks on a man, but has no mercy for him; makes no statement of its demands, and leaves him as it finds him. The Samaritan represents Jesus Christ. The journeying, His assumption of our nature, and sojourn on earth. His coming where he was, His putting Himself in the sinner's place and bearing his sins, the oil, the Grace of the spirit of God; and wine, the doctrines of the gospel. The inn, the church of Christ, full of abundant provision for his wants. Two pence, the Old and the New Testaments. The host, the ministers of the word, who are placed in charge. And the charge to take care of him, the work ministers have to do; while the promise of reward when he comes again, is the reward goodly ministers shall have when Christ returns."

Sept. 15.—Importunity in Prayer.—Luke

11: 1-13. A. D. 29.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Men ought always to pray and not to faint.—Luke 18: 1.

IN THE STUDY.

"The lesson contains our Lord's teaching, on one particular point, connected with prayer. But

it should be remembered that He often spoke about prayer, gave a model of prayer, and presented examples of prayer in His own conduct. His model of prayer is indeed part of the lesson before us.

Luke is the evangelist who gives frequent references to our Lord's habits of prayer. There are intimations of our Lord's regular daily custom of retiring for personal communion with God; instances of special prayer in connection with special events; occasions on which our Lord lifted up sudden and ejaculatory prayer, as Luke 10: 21; and the account of His attendance on public prayer in synagogue and temple. For allusions in this gospel, see at Christ's baptism, 3: 21; in the wilderness, 5: 16; before the appointment of the apostles, 6: 12; and also 9: 18, 28, 29. The only personal prayer of our Lord that is fully recorded, is that found in John, 17th chapter.—S. J. U. Notes.

"The correct reading is even briefer than that found in our Bibles, and is as follows: 'Father, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.' We infer from this that our Lord did not enjoin the prayer as a *set form*, to be universally used in public worship, for if both reports are correct, then our Lord repeated it in an abridged form, and the briefer form is the one prefaced by the words: 'When ye pray, say.' Furthermore, Luke wrote after Christianity had made some progress, and if the longer form had been in liturgical use, he would not have omitted it in his account of the Sermon on the Mount, and insert this one at this point. Yet, opposition to the public use of this inspired model, may be a kind of formality quite as much as the too frequent repetition of it. It contains all the essential objects of prayer, and therefore a sufficient answer to the request of verse 1. Our Lord adds further instruction. We need not be taught both to *pray*, for, and *how to pray*, the lesson teaches us both *how* and *why*, and assures us of the efficacy of prayer."—*M. B. K.*

"The perseverance in prayer which the Savior commands on this occasion must be distinguished from the praying without ceasing of which Paul speaks, 1 Thes. 5: 17. The latter is a continual prayerfulness, and living of the soul in dependence upon God, even when it has nothing definite to entreat. The former, on the other hand, is *persevering* prayer for something one does not immediately receive, but as to which, nevertheless, we may expect that God will give it to us in His own time and way."—*VanOuterve*.

This record is not to be considered as a report of a part of the Sermon on the Mount, but as the substance of that prayer given at a later time, for verse 1, evidently refers to the ministry of John as having been completed. The leaves here spoken of were not as large as those in common use amongst us, but were of the shape and size of a Scotch *shawl*, small round and flat leaves, each one about sufficient for a single person. This will help to explain the miracles of the loaves and fishes. *Matt. 14: 17; 15: 36*. They were made of wheaten flour or barley, the latter being chiefly used by the poor. *John 6: 9*. As the loaves were small and thin they did not *cut* them with a knife as we do, but *broken* them with their hands; this will explain the formula in the Lord's Supper. *Mark 14: 22; Luke 22: 19*.

Note the gradual advance in the illustration; the friend who gives not for friendship, but because of importunity the loving father giving from affection to his children; our heavenly Father in infinite wisdom and mercy giving His Holy Spirit—the best of all gifts and insuring all others—to those who ask Him; and the conclusion: If a *selfish* man, will give what is pressed by importunity, *how much more* will God, whose benevolence is boundless, give when entreated to do so.