

name stands for all his attributes. Everything relating to God is to be treated with reverence (Isa. 6: 3; Ps. 111: 9; Deut. 28: 58). **Thy kingdom come**—Christ's kingdom comes whenever a sinner is converted. It will be a world-wide kingdom when all the heathen are evangelized (Rev. 11: 15; Ps. 2: 8). **Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth**—With the willing and perfect obedience of the angels (Ps. 103: 20; John 5: 30; 6: 38).

3. Give us day by day our daily bread—We are not taught to pray for luxuries, although we may enjoy these thankfully if God sends them. Those who have fewest wants are happiest (Prov. 30: 8, 9; John 6: 27).

4. And forgive us our sins—Matthew has "debts." The use of the word "trespasses" comes from the episcopal prayer book version. **For we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us**—Unforgiving is unforgiven (Matt. 6: 14, 15; 18: 34, 35; Mark 11: 25, 26; Eph. 4: 32; Col. 3: 13). **And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil**—God does not tempt us (Jas. 1: 13, 14), but he permits us to be tempted (John 17: 15; Rev. 3: 10). "Let not the tempting opportunity meet the too susceptible disposition. If the temptation comes, quench the desire; if the desire, spare us the temptation." (Farrar). (1 Cor. 10: 13).

II. AN EARNEST PETITIONER. 5. And he said unto them—Jesus assures his disciples of the efficacy of prayer by a parable (5-8), by appeal to common experience (9, 10), and from the Fatherhood of God (11-13). (Lindsay). **Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves**—By this parable, like that in ch. 18: 2-8, Christ teaches us that we should not cease praying because the answer does not come at once. If a selfish man will be prevailed upon by importunity, how much more will our bountiful Father yield to our earnest pleading (Matt. 15: 27, 28).

6. For a friend of mine, in his journey, is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him—Orientals often travel at night to avoid the extreme heat of the day. It has never been customary with them to keep a supply of prepared food at hand. Like many of our Saviour's illustrations, this is drawn from the home life of the poor.

7. And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not; the door is now shut and my children are with me in bed. I cannot rise and give thee—A rough and churlish answer. In the humble homes of the poor the "bed" was a raised platform, or dais, occupying one end of the room. Each person had a separate rug and covering.

8. I say unto you, Though he will not

rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity—Greek, "shamelessness," "unblushing persistency" (Isa. 62: 6). **He will rise and give him as many as he needeth**—The one point taught is that we are not to cease praying until our request is granted in some form or other. Instances of importunate prayer, Gen. 18: 23-33; 32: 24-32; Neh. 1: 4-11; Jas. 5: 16-18.

III. A HEAVENLY FATHER. 9. And I say unto you—"Also I say unto you." If persistency will avail to overcome man's unwillingness much more may you rely upon the readiness of your Heavenly Father to give what you ask for. **Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you**—We ask for what we wish; we seek for what we miss; we knock for that from which we feel ourselves shut out. For similar promises see Matt. 7: 7-11; Mark 11: 24; John 18: 7; Jas. 1: 6; 1 John 3: 22.

10. For everyone that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened—Certain conditions are, of course, implied. 1. We must ask for what is good. 2. In Christ's name (John 14: 14; 16: 23). 3. Believing (Matt. 21: 22). 4. And in submission to God's wisdom as to what is best for us (Matt. 26: 39, 42).

11. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone?—The small loaves used at that time were not unlike stones in color and shape. **Or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?**—Which might, until fully disclosed, be supposed to be a fish.

12. Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?—The white scorpion, with the tail folded under it, would look not unlike an egg at a careless glance. The scorpion resembles a lobster in shape but is only a few inches in length. No earthly father would mock his child's hunger by offering him what was uneatable or hurtful, how much less would our heavenly Father withhold any blessing from his dear children.

13. If ye, then, being evil—Morally imperfect, sinful, selfish, &c. Know how to give good gifts unto your children—Few are so "unnatural" as not to give the best they have, even life itself, for their children. **How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him**—Matthew (7: 11) has the more general expression "good things." The Holy Spirit is the sum and source of all blessing (Rom. 8: 16; Gal. 3: 2, 3; 5: 22, 23; Luke 12: 12). Doubtless the teachings of our lesson were repeated on more than one occasion with slight variations.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. We learn to pray by praying. Forms of prayer are helpful but cannot bring the soul into that sweet fellowship with God which is enjoyed when its own spontaneous desires and

holy affections are expressed in its own words. The habit and practice of prayer develops the spirit of devotion in the heart and facilitates its expression in suitable words. Begin to pray