

hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God, love his brother also."

*Verses 10.*—"Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican."—We have here brought before us two individuals, the representatives of two different classes. The one was a Pharisee. His sect plumed themselves on their superior sanctity, and their special favor in the sight of Heaven. Their creed was long and punctilious; their ritual ostentatious and burdensome; their lives severe and morose. The other was a Publican. The party to whom he belonged were distinguished, not by any religious, but by a civil peculiarity—that of being the tax-gatherers of the Romans. They were regarded as having no right to the honor claimed by the Pharisees. Being the collectors of the tribute imposed by a foreign yoke, they were treated with contempt, and classed with the very dregs of the people. Yet the judgment passed upon them seems to have been not a little harsh and unwarranted. Zaccheus, who was one of their number, "gave the half of his goods to the poor; and if he had taken any thing from any man by false accusation, he restored him four-fold." Here, too, in our text, we find one of them repairing to Mount Zion, to present himself as a suppliant before the Lord. And now that he and the Pharisee have gone up to the same holy hill, to worship in the same holy temple, to pray to the same God, surely they will lay aside all party and individual differences! surely they will come with brotherly and loving hearts, to present themselves as children of a common Father, as believers in common promises, as heirs of a common salvation! Though divided in the city, they are surely one, at least, in the house of God! Though formerly estranged, now that they meet before the Lord, surely, like Jacob and Esau, they fall upon each others neck and kiss one another, and lift up their voices and weep! Surely they seek to be "comforted together by their mutual faith," and to "provoke one another unto love!" But no!

*Verses 11 and 12.*—"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess."—The Pharisee "*stood*" while he prayed. There was nothing wrong in this. It was the custom of the country thus to pray, and several of the saints are recorded to have prayed in this manner when in the house of God. Thus, at the dedication of the first Temple, "Solomon *stood* before the altar of the Lord, in the presence of the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands towards heaven." The Saviour, himself, too, when discoursing to His disciples concerning prayer, recognized the posture of *standing* as suitable and

becoming:—"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them; and when ye *stand* praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any; that your Father also, which is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses." Had the Pharisee humbled his heart, the condition of his body could have mattered but little. Yea, the very posture in which he prayed might have symbolized to him, as it did to the early believers, the necessity of the Christian soldier standing ever to his arms, in readiness to repel the assaults of the wicked one; and reminded him, that though he had fallen, yet Christ had come to raise the bowed down; that He had come "to bring them up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, to set their feet upon a rock, and establish their goings." The Pharisee is said to have "*prayed* thus with himself." The mode of expression here used, is in accordance with the Hebrew idiom. It signifies simply, that he prayed thus in his heart, or that this was the burden of his prayer—if prayer indeed it can be called, which contains not one profession, or one request. If his empty boasting can be named prayer at all, it can be so called only either in that sense in which every address made by the creature to the Creator is designated prayer; or in that sense in which a substance or shadow is spoken of as being that which it pretends to be. The Pharisee begins with "*thanking*" God. So far, his prayer bids fair. Had he gone on to thank God for all the blessings which he continually received at His hand—to thank him for the good gifts of His Providence—to thank Him for the revelation of His Word—to thank Him that He had enabled him to see his own lost state by nature—to thank Him that He had sent His Son to save him from destruction—to thank Him that He had given His Holy Spirit to enlighten, to sanctify, and to comfort him—had he thus thanked his Maker and Redeemer, he would, at least, have made use of *one* of the parts of prayer, and have found the blessing of Heaven in so doing. But, alas! the self-blinded Pharisee proceeds in a far different strain: "I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers." Such is the *negative* part of his self-righteousness. He has not done what other men have done. He is not an "extortioner;" he has not wronged others by violence or force. He is not "unjust;" he has not wronged others by deceit or fraud. Thus he supposes that he has done his duty to his fellow men; that he has not wronged them in any way; and that, consequently, he is faultless in the great division of duty towards his neighbor. But, further, he is not an "adulterer;" he has not wronged his own being. He, therefore, supposes himself spotless also in reference to the great division of duty towards himself. The standard, however, whereby he tests himself, is not the